



**Public Council Meeting**  
Town of Truro  
Monday, April 13, 2026 – 1:00 p.m.  
Town Hall – Council Chambers

**AGENDA**

<b>1)</b>	<b>Approval of Agenda</b>
<b>2)</b>	<b>Approval of Minutes</b> a) Public Council Meeting Minutes March 2, 2026
<b>3)</b>	<b>Petitions, Delegations, and Correspondence</b> a) Letter to MLA Ritcey re: Provincial Funding for Colchester- East Hants Public Library b) Letter to Chief Gloade re: Re-election
<b>4)</b>	<b>Old Business</b> a) RFD: Central Nova Scotia Civic Centre Society Repayable Grant Write-off b) Briefing Note: Replacement of CN Pedestrian Crossing c) Briefing Note: Affordable Housing
<b>5)</b>	<b>In-Camera Summary Report</b>
<b>6)</b>	<b>Department Reports</b> a) CAO Report b) Corporate Services Report c) Fire Service Report d) Planning and Development Report e) Police Service Report f) Public Works Report g) Parks, Recreation & Culture Report
<b>7)</b>	<b>Questions by Members</b>
<b>8)</b>	<b>New Business</b> a) Request for Decision: Approval of 2026/27 Operating & Capital Budget and Tax Resolution b) Request for Decision: Highway of Heroes – Fly Past Request c) Request for Decision: Set Public Hearing Date for 219 Queen Street
<b>9)</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>

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*Mayor C. Hinton will begin the meeting with a Land Acknowledgement*

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# Replacement of the CN Pedestrian Crossing

Briefing Note Prepared for Truro Town Council

## Subject

Replacement of the CN Pedestrian Crossing

## Prepared By

Michael Dolter, Chief Administrative Officer

## Date

03/11/2026

## Background

The issue of reinstating the pedestrian crossing that CN removed in August 2025 has recently been raised by Councillor McGrath.

The crossing, connecting Esplanade St with Brunswick St, and located directly behind the Truro Centre, had served as an important route for residents and visitors to access the downtown area and visit Victoria Park more conveniently. Although this crossing was frequently used by the public, it was originally designed as a pathway for platform access for a former passenger rail line that ceased operation decades ago.

Consequently, the crossing was never intended for public use and did not comply with current Transport Canada standards for pedestrian crossings. As a result, CN determined it posed a safety risk and had it removed. With the crossing gone, pedestrians are now required to cross at Young Street, which some residents find less convenient.

## Discussion

Although Council has not yet taken an official position on reinstating the crossing, staff were directed to engage with CN to explore what would be required to establish a safe pedestrian crossing in that location. Following discussions with CN officials, their Public Works division provided a preliminary, rough order of magnitude estimate for the work and associated costs of installing a new pedestrian crossing.

This estimate provides Council with a general overview of the scope of work. Should a more formal estimate be needed for broader dissemination, CN would require additional time to

prepare a comprehensive assessment. Further consultation with VIA Rail would also be necessary regarding aspects of the project that affect their operations.

## Preliminary Cost Estimate

At this stage, the estimate provided by CN is considered rough, but it indicates the project would cost more than \$3 million. A significant portion of the work and proposed mitigations are aimed at ensuring CN can maintain its no-whistle status in the area by preventing new trespassing risks.

The following items are considered minimum requirements to provide reinstatement of the pedestrian access:

- Install high-security fencing along the entire corridor from Young Street to Prince/Cottage Streets, covering an estimated 3 kilometres.
- Provide a full warning system at the crossing, including lights, bells, and gates.
- Construct a new pedestrian crossing using either rubber or concrete materials for ease of maintenance.
- Relocate the VIA Rail platform 50 meters to the west to ensure the crossing is not within the platform area. This adjustment would need to be discussed with VIA, as passenger rail lines typically prefer not to have a public crossing within their platform area. VIA may also request additional security measures to prevent trespassing onto the platform.
- Install anti-trespass mats at both ends of the platform to deter unauthorized access.
- Complete associated track work around the passenger platform installations.

## Conclusion

While restoring the pedestrian crossing would benefit certain residents and visitors by improving access, the project represents a major capital expenditure for the Town. This initiative falls outside the Town's current long-term capital planning, and moving forward would require delaying or possibly cancelling other projects. Currently, there is a pedestrian crossing on Young Street that is approved, maintained, and funded in cooperation with CN.

## Recommendation

Although the project would provide added convenience to the public, it is not considered essential for the wellbeing of residents. Based on a basic cost-benefit analysis, several current projects should take precedence over reinstating the crossing. Staff recommends that Council not pursue this project further.

# Affordable Housing

Briefing Note Prepared for Truro Town Council

## Subject

Affordable Housing

## Prepared By

Michael Dolter, Chief Administrative Officer

## Date

04/07/2026

## Overview:

### General

The Town of Truro has identified an affordable community as one of its strategic outcomes within the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. As part of this, Council is focused on improving access to affordable housing by advocating to the Province for programs and funding that support the development of new housing units. These efforts aim to increase the availability of below-market-rate options for residents who need greater affordability.

### Program Funding

The Town is preparing to apply for federal funding programs designed to assist municipalities in providing serviced land to reduce development costs and enable lower-cost residential construction, helping developers pass savings onto new home buyers or tenants. Staff have completed most of the work, allowing us to submit applications as soon as the programs open.

### Municipal Government Act (MGA)

The MGA allows municipalities to provide direct financial assistance to businesses for the purpose of increasing the availability of affordable housing in municipalities (Article 57 (4)). This allows Council to provide tax relief to a developer who either converts existing commercial or residential space into new units or constructs new units, increasing affordable housing as determined by Council. Municipalities have typically aided charitable or non-profit organizations that commit to administering or operating the facility for the term of the assistance agreement.

The MGA does not permit the reduction or exemption of existing property taxes unless the property owner is a registered Canadian charity and the property is used directly and solely for a charitable purpose.

There are other categories for commercial properties to qualify for reductions, by policy, but this would only allow them to be assessed at the residential rate. This applies to nonprofit community, charitable, fraternal, educational, recreational, religious, cultural, or sporting organizations.

## Recent Requests

Current legislation would not permit the Town to consider tax exemptions or reductions for existing residential multi-units, unless they meet the requirements above.

According to the CMHC, Housing Market Outlook for Nova Scotia 2026, Halifax's housing market is shifting from rapid, population-driven price growth to a more balanced pace. Strong employment will continue to support the market, but slower migration and labour constraints will temper this momentum. In Halifax, prices and housing starts are expected to stabilize.

At the local level, a similar forecast is expected. There are signs of a slowdown in market demand for units, even as numerous new development projects remain under construction. If market conditions remain the same, we would expect this to put some pressure on rental rates in the area, due to the increase in supply of available units. Market conditions of supply exceeding demand will help to stabilize prices and may provide more affordable units as developers compete to fill them.

## Recommendation

Council should remain open to the options provided to it under MGA Article 57(4), however, given the apparent changes in market conditions, the availability of units will likely continue to improve the affordability issues for most renters in the short term.