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# Village of Halkirk Viability Review Update

Pre-Vote Public Information Session  
September 24, 2024

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# Objectives

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What's happened to date?



Review the updated Viability Review Report



Answer questions about the upcoming vote



What happens after the vote?

# What's happened to date?

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Completion of Halkirk  
viability review

Update to the village's viability  
review report

March 2022

May 2024

Late 2024

Request from village council for an  
additional vote on the question of  
dissolution

# Review the updated Viability Review Report

- Executive Summary
- Review & Findings
  - *Preamble and Current State*
  - *Options Comparison*
  - *Recommended Actions*
- Appendices



# Sustainable Governance

*Council defines the  
policies and direction  
that municipal  
administration puts  
into action*



# Sustainable Governance

## As a Village...

- Represented by locally elected councillors, with an expectation for residents to take advantage of public participation opportunities.
- Undertake a bylaw review and determine how bylaw enforcement would be conducted.
- Develop a comprehensive plan, including realistic financial projections and partnership opportunities to minimize financial burden where possible.

## ...As a Hamlet

- Represented by elected Division 4 councillor, Halkirk residents would be eligible to run for Division 4 position on council.
- Continue to be represented on numerous committees through the county.
- County will review village bylaws to adopt, repeal, or amend, if beneficial for the community.
- County has bylaw enforcement officers to address needs in Halkirk.

# Sustainable Governance

## Recommended Actions

- Council should participate in training to ensure compliance with provincial legislation.
- Council still needs to complete a comprehensive plan for the village inclusive of a services review, staffing needs assessment, and capital plan, with realistic operational and capital financial projections to achieve the plan.
- Council still needs to complete a bylaw and policy review to address the needs and interests of the community, including how the village will enforce its bylaws.
- Council still needs to promote opportunities for residents to participate on council and committees.
- Council should explore operational and capital support opportunities with the county and other potential partners.

## Administration & Operations

*Municipal administration implements the policy and directions of council*





# Administration & Operations

## As a Village...

- Review operational needs to ensure staffing levels meet the needs of the municipality.
- Village would ensure capable staff are employed and trained to fulfill required duties.
- Ensure capacity challenges due to limited staff are addressed adequately.
- Formalize any “handshake” agreements and explore additional shared service opportunities.

## ...As a Hamlet

- Administrative functions through the county office.
- County offers multiple options to contact administrative staff or make payments for services.
- County currently provides several services to the village and has the qualified staff to assume all administrative and operational responsibilities of the community.

## Recommended Actions

- Council would still need to review its operational (administrative and public works) requirements and adjust its annual budget to adequately attract, train, and compensate qualified staff.
- Council and administration should develop a comprehensive succession plan to address the challenges of limited organizational human resources.
- Council would still need to formalize existing 'handshake' service agreements with the County of Paintearth (or other partners) to ensure common expectations are communicated to future councils.
- Council should explore additional shared service opportunities.

# Finances, Assessment, and Taxation

- *Audited financial statements*
- *Financial plans and budgets*
- *Revenues and expenditures*
- *Borrowing and debt limits*



# Finances, Assessment & Taxation

- Village Accumulated Surplus:
  - \$3,149,938 - \$2,680,403 (equity in tangible capital assets)Total: \$469,535 (\$124,703 in restricted, \$344,832 in unrestricted)
- 2023 Revenue over Expenses:
  - Revenue: \$112,260 (net municipal taxes) + \$373,677 (other revenue) = \$485,937
  - Expenses: \$690,303
  - Other: \$445,740 (donations, government transfers, etc.)

2023: revenue over expenses excess of \$241,374

2022: revenue over expenses shortfall of \$135,436

# Finances, Assessment & Taxation

## As a Village...

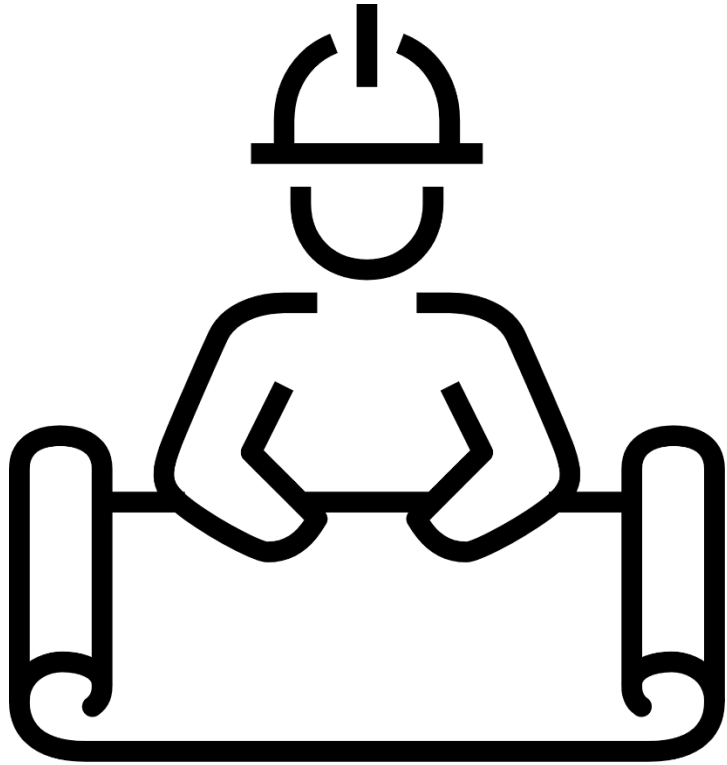
- Property taxes may need to increase, or special taxes utilized.
  - To cover operational capacity costs.
  - To address current infrastructure maintenance and repairs, along with reserves for future replacement.
- User fees to reflect full cost-recovery.
- Dispose of buildings and equipment not integral to municipal operations

## ...As a Hamlet

- Initial residential mill rate would be levied based on the 2024 village mill rate.
- Periodically review the hamlet tax rate to ensure fairness with anticipation to harmonize the property tax rates over time.
- County fee structure for hamlet utilities based on cost-recovery, services without a fee policy, the county would review the former village's fee structure and determine if it is adequate for the service.

## Recommended Actions

- Council would still need to review the village's current service levels and develop a service delivery strategy that balances future service levels with financial capacity.
- Council would still need to develop a plan to build reserves for future capital repairs and replacement of infrastructure, including funding sources such as taxation, user fees, and grant allocations.
- Council would still need to assess the needs of the municipality and dispose of buildings and equipment not integral to municipal operations.



## Infrastructure

*A municipality's ability to provide infrastructure for core services expected by residents.*

# Infrastructure

## Village Infrastructure Audit:

- Total infrastructure investment identified: \$8 million
- Average per-year expenditure estimate: \$868,000

## Current Capital Project Funding Sources:

- 2024 Local Government Fiscal framework (LGFF) capital allocation: \$181,533
- 2024 Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) allocation: \$55,360
- Restricted and unrestricted surplus includes the 2022/2023 surplus balances
  - Potential surplus for investment: \$469,535



# Infrastructure

## As a Village...

- Review infrastructure audit and develop a prioritized plan to complete necessary projects.
- Addressing critical infrastructure needs is a high priority, includes identifying funding sources.
- Assess infrastructure inventory and the ability of the municipality to fund maintenance, repairs, and replacement.
- Financial capacity may necessitate difficult decisions on non-essential assets.

## ...As a Hamlet

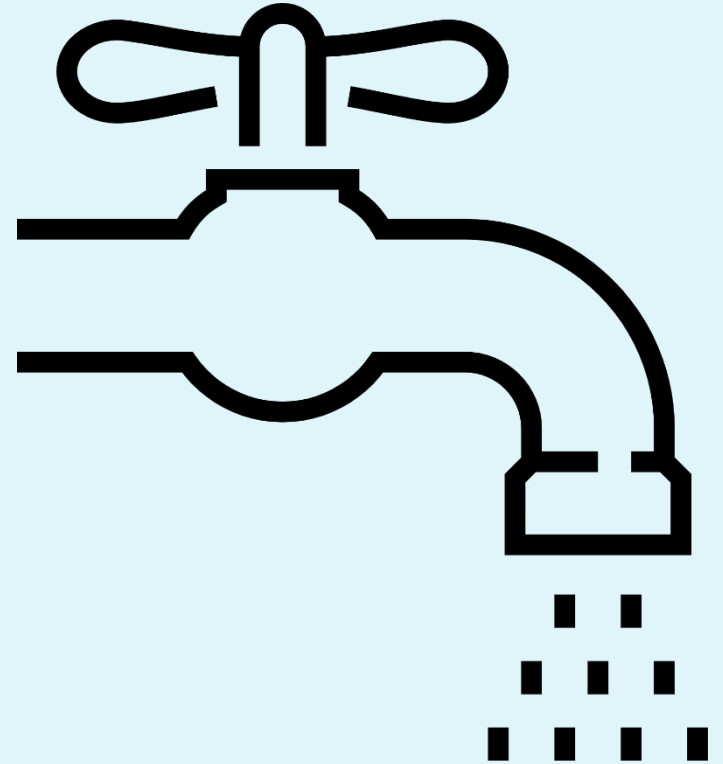
- County would review the infrastructure study and develop a prioritized plan to complete necessary projects.
- Addressing critical infrastructure needs is a high priority, with funding from Halkirk such as reserves, deferred revenue, grants, tax and utility fee increases, special taxes, etc.
- County would review the use and condition of assets to determine the best approach to each.

## Recommended Actions

- Council should identify essential and non-essential infrastructure, and align infrastructure inventory with financial capacity, to develop a strategy for managing infrastructure deficit.
- Council would still need to develop a 10-year capital plan based on the village's infrastructure deficit strategy to realistically address the critical repairs, maintenance, and replacements identified in the infrastructure study; this plan should include a projected funding model.

# Services

*Municipalities determine what services, such as water, sewer, or paved roads, to provide to residents.*



# Services

## As a Village...

- Assess service levels and financial capacity to adjust services to sustainable levels.
- Review full cost-recovery for appropriate services.
- Review membership agreements to ensure they meet the communities needs.
- Develop a strategy for funding support to community organizations and events.

## ...As a Hamlet

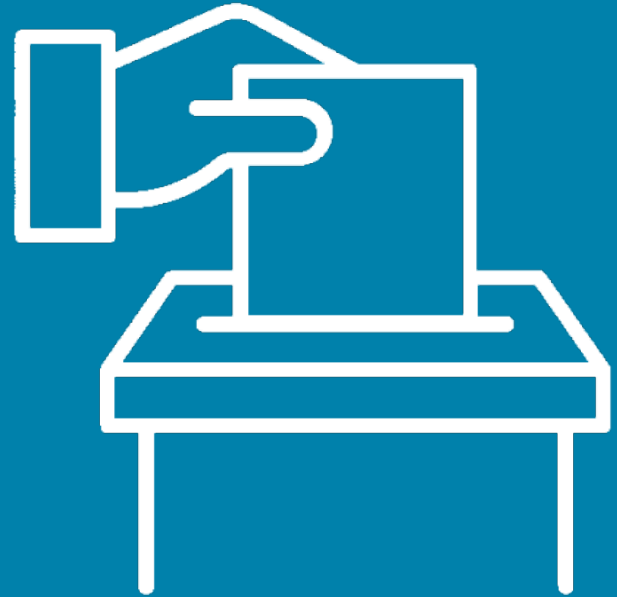
- County would maintain most service levels and assess needs and services to ensure sustainability.
- Council direction on solid waste pickup required, including cost-recovery practices the county may consider. Residents could also use county transfer stations.
- County would allocate funding for recreation purposes to identified groups as per county policy.
- Mowing and basic maintenance of parks would continue.

## Recommended Actions

- Council should align service levels with the village's service delivery strategy to ensure sustainability.
- Council would still need to review utility fees annually to reflect full cost-recovery, including emergency repairs, invoicing, and infrastructure replacement.
- Council would still need to review its membership agreements with community service providers to ensure they are aligned with municipal goals and expectations.
- Council would still need to develop policies and procedures on funding support to community organizations and events.

# Upcoming Vote of Electors

- *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)*
- Vote is held by Municipal Affairs
- Eligibility to vote
- Special ballot option
  - “Mail-In” option



# Upcoming Vote of Electors

- Vote over 2 days at Community Hall

**Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024: 4 pm to 8 pm**

**Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2024: 10 am to 4 pm**

- Results posted on completion

# What happens after the vote?

**Electors vote to remain a village**

**Electors vote to dissolve and become a hamlet**

**Community as a village or a hamlet**



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# Thank you for participating!

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