



# Highlights: 2008 - 2011

# **Grand Bay-Westfield - “A Community of Friends”**

**With the endless possibilities of 2012 ahead of us, we would like to share some of the highlights from 2008-2011.**

## **Fiscal**

Responsible fiscal management is of vital importance to us:

- The municipality has in place a General Capital Reserve Fund. Council strives each year to transfer monies into this fund to pay for larger capital projects and to purchase much needed vehicles, e.g. fire rescue vehicles and works vehicles; this approach minimizes long term borrowing and the related interest charges resulting in the responsible use of tax dollars;
- A Sewerage Capital Reserve Fund is in place which minimizes costs for sewerage capital projects;
- We participate in joint purchasing programs to achieve cost savings;
- Town Council considers tax rate stability very important for our community; the tax rate of a \$1.37 has been maintained for six years;
- We took advantage of CMHC loan opportunities for financial savings on the construction of Col. Nase Boulevard.

## **Emergency Measures Organization**

A committed local Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) serves our community:

- Upgrades were made to the Centrum power supply to facilitate use of our Emergency Operations Centre in the event of a power failure;
- EMO purchased emergency alert/ planning/control software in conjunction with area municipalities;
- The town’s Severe Winter Storm Plan, Health Response Plan, and Severe Flood Plan were updated.

## **Economic Development and Tourism**

- Numerous rentals and activities continue to occur at the Brundage Point River Centre;
- An active Tourism Committee sponsors Movie Nights and numerous Sunday Family Events at the River Centre, and coordinated two Open Air Festivals;



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- Free wireless Internet access continues to be in place at the River Centre; a webcam has been installed at the Centre;
- Our Visitor Information Centre, located at the River Centre, had approximately 6,466 visitors for 2008 - 2011;
- We are a member of the Lower River Marketing Co-operative, the Saint John River Society, and the Stonehammer Geopark promoting tourism for our community;

## **Economic Development & Tourism continued**

- Our popular Canada Day events continue to be held annually in the community;
- Our Heritage Committee is working on a memory project for the town and registration of local historic places on the government register with 19 sites currently listed on the register;
- An updated Grand Bay-Westfield street map has been created;
- A marketing strategy study has been completed for the River Centre;
- Approval was granted for the River Valley Lions Club to use a portion of town property at 27 Inglewood Drive for a seniors housing project;
- A Tourism Development Study was completed;
- Supported Guila Inch Memorial Scholarship fundraiser;
- We are a member of Enterprise Saint John promoting economic development for the region and our community including:
  - business counselling, business plan development, and financing advisory services which led to 28 new entrepreneurial business start ups, 3 new investment companies, and expansion of 5 existing businesses in the region;
  - marketing of Col. Nase Blvd. by promoting development opportunities;
  - coordinating a job fair with 28 employers to find employment for 300 displaced workers.

## **Transportation Services**

- Shannon Road and Brandy Point Road low areas raised to allow for continued police/fire and ambulance protection during a high Spring freshet;
- Public Works Superintendent hired to supervise Works Department crews in the field to enhance communication and scheduling of resources (labour/equipment /materials); additional seasonal hired to assist with maintenance items between Spring and Fall;



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- Spare pumps purchased for various sewerage lift stations to limit the potential for station overflows in case of a pump failure;
- Street improvements and drainage work were a priority with costs being covered by town funds and available provincial and federal funding. Examples of capital work are:
  - Thompson Road blind knoll removal and upgrades;
  - storm sewer extension River Valley Drive, Epworth Park Road to Stevens Court;
  - sanitary sewer extensions on Riverside Park, Nerepis Road, and Country Club Drive;
  - storm sewer Highland Road Phases 1 and 2;

## **Transportation Services continued**

- new ComeX parking site and shelter constructed south of River Valley Community Center (Arena) and a parking site created at Fire Station 2;
- intersection re-alignment on Woolastook Drive in order to create a safe turn onto Macdonald Avenue;
- sanitary sewer force main twinning Inglewood Drive;
- Woolastook Drive upgrades followed by complete asphalt resurfacing, as well as installation of additional sidewalks/Inglewood Drive upgrades followed by complete asphalt resurfacing for a total investment in excess of \$3.5 million over two years;
- Centrum front and back parking lots were repaved;
- Sanitary sewer treatment lagoon dredged to restore treatment capacity;
- Manhole repairs made on Inglewood Drive and Woolastook Drive;
- New storm sewer and sidewalks from Epworth Park Road to Stevens Court.
- New salt shed was constructed to replace an old smaller structure allowing for more storage of salt, sand/salt mix under cover and to provide increased protection to the environment;
- New five-year contract entered into with Morin Curbing Inc. (MCI) for winter snow and ice control from Fall 2009 to Spring 2014;
- New ¼ ton, ½ ton, and ¾ ton trucks purchased to replace old works vehicles;
- Ratified new four year collective agreement with CUPE Local 2404.



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## Planning Services

- A municipal plan review, during 2008 and 2009, guided by ADI Planning Consultants, provided updated municipal policy statements and objectives to direct future land use issues in our town. Highlights are as follows:
  - a development strategy, supporting economic development with mixed use zoning, (supported the completion of the Col. Nase Blvd. project);
  - stronger environmental protection through mandatory sanitary sewer extension for all new development;
  - support for a regional transit system (COMEX);
  - smart growth planning, concentrating development centered on a serviced core and the highway interchanges on Route 7 highway;
  - emphasis on tourism, heritage assets, and alternative transportation (*In-motion*) community resources;
  - support provided for Blueberry Hill Nature Preserve;
  - successful lobbying at provincial and federal levels together with municipal funding resulted in the \$9.1 million Col. Nase Blvd. project and related interchange;

## Planning Services continued

- The Col. Nase Boulevard project redefined the heart of the community with new commercial property fronting both sides of the boulevard, including high visibility showcase properties along Route 7 highway, with:
  - over 400 acres of raw land for development to be serviced by the extension of the sanitary wastewater sewer main to this area;
  - provincial/federal governments contributing almost 2/3 of the cost to construct the boulevard (the town will recoup a percentage of its direct cost to build the road and services through subdivision approvals);
  - acts as an incentive to developers to locate within our community;
  - the ability to attract new retail and service businesses to our town has been our primary goal, to grow a more stable tax base, and improve the quality of life to the existing residents, as well as make the town a more attractive destination for growing our population, through managed sustainable growth.
- Col. Nase Boulevard Construction highlights:



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- construction of Rosetta stone wall landscape features, activity stations, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes;
- re-alignment of the Highland Road as a T- intersection;
- successful lobbying for new highway exits;
- River Valley Drive intersection changes with new underground services;
- energy efficient LED street lights creating savings in energy costs;
- opening of vehicle traffic coincided with the opening of provincial highway ramps on Route 7 at exit 86 onto the new boulevard;
- new Heritage Trail signage honours the Loyalist settlers, particularly Col. Henry Nase, noted for his personal diary (held by the Provincial Archives) which is being used as a marketing symbol to welcome new development to share our vision and become a part of our community “story”.
- Building permits have remained strong over the 2008 -2011 period, having an average of 16 new residential dwellings constructed each year, with building permit fees generating over \$18,000 each year (and permit values exceeding \$4 million per year) which translates into a tax assessment base increase of over 4.5 % annually. Totals for the four years are:

<u>Number of Building Permits</u>	<u>New Home Values</u>	<u>Permit Fees</u>	<u>Total Permit Values</u>
386	\$11,490,075	\$73,845	\$17,116,557

- The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) has a bi-weekly meeting schedule addressing various items ranging from variances for accessory and main buildings, decks, discretionary and temporary uses, subdivision approvals, and issues referred to the Provincial Assessment and Planning Appeals Board. PAC items for 2008 -2011 numbered 164;

## Planning Services continued

- Subdivision approvals have produced over 82 new building lots, with new streets in Panoramic Estates (Boyd Drive, Maplecrest Drive, Rockingham Terrace and extensions to June Avenue and Florence Drive); Valley View Estates (Emma Avenue); and Chestnut Hills Estates (Myles Terrace).
- New signage was created for the entrance and access to the Blueberry Hill Nature Preserve from River Valley Drive along Station Street and Bayview Road, with a new walking trail access and parking lot.



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- New highway Community Welcome sign on Route 7 was installed (the second sign will be located at the northern end at the new exit 71 interchange in 2012).
- A water resource conservation program in 2011 was provided with an Environmental Trust Fund grant to promote water quality and conservation, with specific focus on Col. Nase Boulevard for best practices for development based on private wells (continuing in 2012).
- The town has been a partner in the New Brunswick Regional Adaptation Collaborative project for the Lower Saint John River, looking at the effects of increased weather events associated with climate change; the town has also been chosen to work within the project to assess a prototype planning workbook for New Brunswick municipalities, dealing with flooding.
- Our municipality signed an agreement with the province introducing a federal initiative called the BIZPAL which links to our website, integrating municipal services to an online directory to aid business development.
- The town signed an agreement with the province to manage an online civic address data base through Service New Brunswick, reducing confusion for responders.
- Our community partnered with New Brunswick Energy Efficiency to post energy tips on a monthly basis on our website;
- A new Name Bank for new development was instituted for local input on naming new streets and municipal properties; residents may make submissions by email to: dtaylor@towngbw.ca

## Fire Services

- Construction of a gear room for Station # 2 to provide a clean and dry space for firefighters to store their protective gear;
- Accepted delivery of a new 28' rescue equipment trailer to store and transport the Department's specialized rescue equipment; this trailer is specifically designed to respond to calls for off road rescue and ice rescue, and will respond to other select emergencies;
- Following extensive research and planning, an order was placed for a new pumper truck to replace a 1979 pumper, delivery is expected in early 2012;
- Rebuilding of the Westfield Crescent water supply was completed; this new system refills apparatus at almost twice the rate of the old system;



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## Fire Services continued

- Two officers completed Dalhousie University Certificates in Fire Service Leadership, with two more set to complete this program in the first part of 2012;
- A successful recruitment campaign in 2011 resulted in a record setting 10 new members in one recruitment drive;
- The Department hired its first summer student in 2010 which helped greatly with administrative and statistical work;
- Revised the volunteer shift scheduling system and honorarium structure to provide better coverage;
- Completed an addition to the training facility to provide more realistic training scenarios to the firefighters;
- Minor renovations were conducted in the firefighter training room at Fire Station # 1 to provide a quieter environment for classroom training sessions;
- Purchased three new breathing apparatus units;
- Replaced firefighters’ protective clothing to meet current standards and to provide a safer working environment;
- Purchased fire resistant coveralls for fighting grass, brush, and forest fires;
- Purchased voice amplifiers for firefighters face masks to allow better communications between firefighters during a fire;
- Firefighters Association began an annual food drive which takes place the end of November and beginning of December; the 2011 drive was the third year for this venture and brought over 7,000 pounds of food to our local food bank;
- Introduced a web-based system that displays in the fire stations which firefighters are responding to an emergency call;
- Over the four-year period of 2008-2011 volunteers dedicated over 14,000 hours to firefighter training: 2008 - 2,625 hours; 2009 - 3,125 hours; 2010 - 3,497 hours; 2011 - 4,907 hours;
- Over the four year period firefighters responded to just over 1,000 emergency calls: 2008 - 265; 2009 - 265; 2010 - 242; 2011 - 237;
- Purchased stabilization struts to better secure vehicles involved in accidents where the jaws of life are used to rescue victims.

## Recreation Services

Recreation Services add to our quality of life and enhance our community. Examples of efforts to date include:



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- In May 2008 we celebrated the official opening of 140 kilometres of recreational trail (water route) in the Lower River Passage section of the Trans-Canada Trail within our town;
- Town Council provided an additional \$9,000 towards the construction of the River Valley Running Track on River Valley Middle School property;
- Capital improvements made to Centrum washrooms - now handicap accessible;

## Recreation Services continued

- The Summer Stage program was provided at Unity Park by our dedicated Summer Stage Committee, celebrating local talent;
- 153 special events were held at municipal recreation facilities;
- Facilitated use of the Centrum and Lions building with 44,942 users;
- Provided continued financial support to the River Valley Community Center (Arena) with the final mortgage payment being made in November 2011;
- Installation of batting cages in partnership with River Valley Baseball and resurfaced the tennis courts in conjunction with funding from the Recreation Infrastructure Canada program;
- *In Motion* was launched as a community based health promotion strategy within our town to get people more physically active;
- The Olympic Torch Relay visited our town as part of the celebration build up to the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver;
- We are participating in the Greater Saint John Winterfest for the fourth year;
- The Municipal Heritage Trail retaining walls and deteriorating wooden footbridges were removed and sections of the Trail were upgraded; the town kiosk panels were reconditioned and upgraded;
- The Relay for Life has been held twice in our community raising over \$90,000;
- A new play area was installed at the Brundage Point River Centre;
- a new recreation master plan prepared by Amulet Consulting Ltd. was completed;

## General

- The town’s operating budget is listed on our website at: [town.grandbay-westfield.nb.ca](http://town.grandbay-westfield.nb.ca)
- Joint provincial/federal/ town funding provided numerous students with summer jobs;
- We maintain a strong voice in regional matters with Mayor Losier as Chair of the Regional Mayors Caucus;



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- Coast Guard Services continue to be located within our community with annual rental revenue received; this arrangement provides an enhanced local water safety response;
- The Provincial Ambulance Service continues to be located within our community with revenue received for rental of space in our facility on Nerepis Road;
- Donations were provided to local groups and individuals under our new grant policy;
- An Energy Audit of Municipal Facilities was completed which identified energy retrofits to reduce municipal energy costs; Phase 1 of the recommended work was completed in 2011 and Phase 2 is planned for 2012;
- Annual beautification program provided by our dedicated Beautification Committee;
- We continue to participate with other area municipalities in the Regional Facilities Commission, the Regional Economic Development Commission, and the Fundy Region Solid Waste Commission;

### **General continued**

- Implementation of the pay equity program will be completed in 2012 ensuring people are compensated on the basis of equal pay for work of equal value;
- We participated in the Mothers Against Drunk Driving *Campaign 911* program and *Red Ribbon campaign*;
- We continue to hold our annual volunteer appreciation night for town volunteers;
- Support provided to our Neighbourhood Watch Committee and the Crime Stoppers program;
- We are participating in the Regional Sculpture project for the acquisition of a sculpture for our community;

## **Our Mission**

**“To be recognized as a community committed to enhancing the quality of life by fostering a spirit of neighbourly pride in a**



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positive thriving environment second to none.”

## **Our Team**

**Grace Losier, Mayor**

**Diane McGowan,  
Deputy Mayor**

**David Calvin, Councillor  
Day, Councillor**

**Beverley**

**Michael Likely, Councillor  
Murphy, Councillor**

**Brenda**

***Special thanks to our  
residents,  
businesses, and volunteers:  
through partnership we  
achieve success***

