



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Canso Taxation Review Study

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG) is seeking qualified proposals for the provision of a taxation review and study for the Community of Canso, Nova Scotia. The considered institutions will demonstrate recent experience in audits for public sector entities with revenues that exceed \$10,000,000 annually.

PART 2: BACKGROUND

The Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG) is a rural NS municipality comprising of more than 80 defined communities with a total population of 4585 inhabitants. All of the communities located in the municipality are considered rural, with the communities of Guysborough and Canso having a core of municipal services that exceed most other communities within the municipality. The Council for the MODG relies on a taxation system that is based on property assessments provided by the Property Valuations Services Corporation (PVSC) and an area rate tax structure that is used to ensure fairness in the tax burden for all property owners across all communities within MODG.

The former town of Canso dissolved as a legal municipal entity on July 1, 2012, and became a community within the MODG. Since amalgamation, some residents of Canso through various iterations of ratepayers groups, have expressed displeasure over their tax rates, tax rate structure, and amount of taxes paid (tax burden).

Canso is located on the north-eastern tip of mainland NS, next to Chedabucto Bay and with a population of approximately 700 people. The area was first settled as a fishing settlement in the 1600's and incorporated as a Town in 1901. Unfortunately, with the downturn in the fishery and the closure of their largest employer, the former town was unable to recover from the significant loss in their tax base and employment.

In 2010 the former town of Canso submitted an application to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) for dissolution of town status as continuing as an independent municipal unit was financially unsustainable. Before agreeing to support the dissolution and amalgamation of the former town with MODG, the Municipality needed to be satisfied that dissolution of town status would not impose any undue hardship or liability upon the current residents of the Municipality. At the time, MODG's main goals for Canso included stabilization of tax rates, improvement of existing infrastructure and improvement of the economic conditions of the former town.

Following a series of lengthy negotiations with the Province, the Municipality and the former town signed a Letter of Intent with the Province setting out a framework for a financial agreement between the parties that would allow tax rates in Canso to be stabilized and the condition of core infrastructure to be improved. In addition, the former town residents insisted that there be no change to policing; therefore, the NSUARB Order included a provision that the community of Canso maintain 1.5 dedicated RCMP positions for Canso only and that the Canso Detachment would remain open.

In addition to tax rate stabilization which ensured that Canso residents paid the same tax rate on the day before and the day after amalgamation, MODG implemented a number of cost savings measures directly impacting the Canso taxpayer as follows:

1. Environmental Fee: This was an annual fee charged to the taxpayers, in addition to their regular tax bill. The elimination of this fee saved each household \$115.00 annually.
2. Minimum Tax: Prior to dissolution, the former town imposed a \$500.00 minimum tax on those residents whose tax bill was less than \$500.00 annually. The minimum tax was removed and all residents simply paid based on rate x assessment going forward.
3. Low Income Tax Exemption: Prior to dissolution, the former town did not offer a low-income tax exemption to residents. Following dissolution, residents qualified for the MODG Low Income Tax Exemption program. Today any household making \$50,000 or less qualifies for a \$300.00 tax exemption off their tax bill.

Since 2012, significant time and money has been spent upgrading and enhancing the community of Canso while keeping tax rates stable as Council had committed to do in 2011. Canso has more direct municipal services than most communities within the MODG and are similar to those provided in the community of Guysborough.

Please refer to Appendix A which outlines an opening statement provided to the NSUARB at a hearing held on December 11, 2011 regarding the Municipality's position on amalgamation; and further a newsletter that was forwarded to every resident of Canso prior to the NSUARB hearing outlining to the residents what they could expect from joining the MODG as it pertains to the stabilization of tax rates and other matters.

PART 3: GENERAL

At a public Council meeting held May 21, 2025, Council passed the following motion: "THAT on the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole, that the Council of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough hire, through an RFP process, a nationally recognized accounting firm to do an in-depth taxation review on tax rates, property assessments, and tax burdens pertaining to the community of Canso in comparison to a similarly municipal serviced community in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough;

AND THAT they provide recommendations as appropriate on the current tax rates and tax rate structure in Canso;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the cost of the study be funded from the operating reserves."

The Council for the MODG strives to have fairness (close to equal) for the taxes that property owners pay (tax burden) across the entirety of the Municipality. It is important that the selected Firm become familiar with how the tax rate structure is applied across the entire Municipality, how assessments and tax rates affect the tax burden, while still focusing on the task at hand. Fairness of tax burden to ensure that residents pay fairly is

the ultimate goal of the MODG, across the entirety of the Municipality, based on services provided.

The task at hand and thus the purpose of this study, is to assess the tax rates and assessments for Canso property owners, with the ultimate goal to evaluate if they are paying a fair tax burden in comparison to a similarly municipal serviced community in the MODG; and for the consultant to make recommendations to Council, if necessary and as appropriate, to ensure that if fairness is not in place in the comparative study, one way or the other, that actions are recommended to fix the unfairness.

PART 4: SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS

4.1 General Requirements

- a) Proposals must include information on the firms capabilities and methods to meet all of the requirements as outlined in this proposal document.
- b) Proposals should include an itemized cost sheet broken down by review component sections, including staffing rates, travel, incidentals, etc. Included with this should be a detailed curriculum vitae of all involved with the project team.

4.2 Submission of Proposals

To: Magdelyn Connolly, Municipal Clerk
Municipality of the District of Guysborough
33 Pleasant Street, PO Box 79
Guysborough, NS, B0H 1N0

PART 5: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Below will be the Terms of Reference that will act as the guiding principles for which this study will be conducted. This list will fundamentally form the basis for your submission, all the while, never losing focus of viewing the entire project through a “What is Equitable” lens for the entirety of MODG.

1. Engage with MODG Senior Staff regarding the history of the Dissolution of the Town of Canso, prior to July 1, 2012, up to the present.
2. Evaluate the pros and cons of various potential models of taxation and tax burden.
3. Review and interpret all historical data related to this study, which shall include, but is not limited to past studies and reports, past and current budgets, relevant Utility and Review Board hearings and decisions, NS Assessment Act, NS Municipal Government Act, Presentations,

Community Flyers, relevant Municipal By-laws and Policies, Correspondence.

4. Compare services and levels of services between specified communities in MODG in relation to tax burden.
5. Review assessed values as provided by Property Valuations Services Corporation between communities. These values shall include market versus capped values and impacts these values have on tax burden for the residents.
6. Review current tax bill structure, focusing on naming, itemization, utility billing (sewer).
7. Conduct two open houses to gather feedback from residents in serviced areas, Canso and Guysborough, on tax burden, assessments, services, etc. These open houses should have relevant and accurate data displayed based on current data to generate discussions and feedback.
8. In addition to the public open house, a meeting shall take place with the ratepayers group in Canso.
9. Production of charts and visual displays shall be produced with relevant information, both for the open house, as well as forming part of the final document to be received by Council.
10. Review of the current policing structure in MODG as per the Utility and Review Board order from 2012, including costs associated with this service.
11. Presentation of reports and findings as laid out in the project schedule. Analysis and unbiased summations should be easy to read and interpret for consumption by the general public.

PART 6: PROPOSAL CONTENT

You are urged to structure your response in accordance with the requirements contained in this document. It will be by these criteria that we will determine whether a response is complete, appropriate and competitive. Proposals that do not conform to these requirements may not be considered. All information supplied in response to the RFP must contain sufficient details to support the services being proposed.

All bids shall be provided on company letterhead. All bids represent an irrevocable offer and shall be valid for a period of 90 days following the closing date for submissions. All bids must be received before 2:00 pm local time June 26th, 2025.

Proposals shall be submitted electronically to tenders@modg.ca.

If delivered by mail or in person:

Magdelyn Connolly, Municipal Clerk
Municipality of the District of Guysborough
33 Pleasant Street, PO Box 79
Guysborough, NS, B0H 1N0

This document is not intended to limit a Respondent's submission, but rather to provide a common framework for the Municipality to assess each proposal in a professional manner, in a demonstrably fair process. Bidders are encouraged to provide any unsolicited information or material not specifically covered in the sections of this RFP.

PART 7: EVALUATION PROCESS

All proposals will be evaluated for completeness and suitability for the requirements. Bidders will be contacted, if necessary, to clarify any major items in question. Preferred bidders may be required to meet with the RFP Evaluation Committee. Based on the analysis of the Proposals, a ranking of Bidders will be established. A successful Bidder will be selected and will be recommended to the Municipal Council. A decision of the successful bid will be based on:

DESCRIPTION	RATING
Compliance with the RFP	Pass/Fail
Reputation of Service	15 pts
Technical Qualifications	30 pts
Methodology	35 pts
Service Value	20 pts
TOTAL	100 pts

PART 8: TIME FRAME

This Request for Proposal process will be governed by the following timetable of events. Although the Municipality will attempt to meet all dates, it specifically reserves the right to modify any date(s) at its sole discretion by notifying all Respondents in writing at the addresses noted in the Proposals submitted to the Municipality.

ITEM	DATE
Availability of RFP	June 5, 2025
Proposal Submission Deadline	June 26, 2025
Submission Evaluations	June 27 – July 16, 2025
Preferred Respondent Recommendations to Council	July 16, 2025
Receive Draft Report	December 18, 2025
Presentation of Draft Report, Planning Session	January 30, 2026

PART 9: GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The following is the general terms and conditions for the Request for Proposals (RFP) except as modified by addenda issued by the Municipality of the District of Guysborough prior to the RFP closing date.

9.1 Notices

By submitting a response to the RFP, the Respondent represents and warrants that such bid is genuine and not false and collusive or made in the interest or in behalf of any person therein named, and that the Respondent has not, directly or indirectly, induced or solicited any other Respondent to put in a false bid, or any other person, firm or corporation to refrain from bidding, and that the Respondent has not in any manner sought by collusion to secure to the Bidder an advantage over any other Respondent.

If at any time it shall be found that the person, firm or corporation to whom a contract has been awarded has in presenting any bid or bids, colluded with any other party or parties, then the contract so awarded shall be liable to the Municipality for all loss or damage which the Municipality may suffer thereby; and the Municipality may advertise for a new contract and for said labour, supplies, materials, equipment or service. Unauthorized conditions, limitations or provisions attached to an RFP may cause its rejection.

The Respondent, by submitting a bid, shall represent and warrant that they have sufficiently informed themselves in all matters affecting the performance of the work or the furnishing of the labour, supplies, materials, equipment or service called for in the quotation documents; that they have checked their bid for errors and omissions; and, that the amounts stated in their bid are correct.

The Respondent shall confirm in their submission that the Respondent agrees to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in the RFP. Submissions which do not have this confirmation will not be considered.

The submission of a bid shall be deemed to indicate that the Respondent has read, understood and considered all addenda issued prior to the closing date and time.

9.2 Inquiries

All questions concerning this Request for Proposals shall be directed to Danita Imlay, Director of Finance by calling (902) 533-3705, Extension 226 or Shawn Andrews, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer at (902) 533-3705, Extension 231.

Any attempt by the Respondent or any of its employees, agents, contractors or representatives to contact members of Municipal Council or Municipal Staff not identified in Section 10.2 of this RFP may lead to disqualifications.

Any changes to this RFP shall be stated in writing by Addenda. All requests for clarification must be received in writing at least four (4) working days prior to the closing date to allow written clarification to be issued to all respondents. Verbal responses are only binding when confirmed by written addenda.

Written addenda, in addition to the RFP will be posted on the following website: <https://procurement.novascotia.ca/ns-tenders.aspx> . Written addenda will be posted on this site no later than 48 hours before RFP closing. All potential Respondents who download the RFP documents from this website are advised that they should periodically check this website for any addendums that may be issued. This website does not record or otherwise track information on persons downloading RFP documents.

9.3 Privilege

The Municipality reserves the right to suspend or cancel any RFP at any time for any reason without penalty.

The Municipality reserves the right to reject any and all bids or accept any bid or part thereof and may award all or portion of the work to one or more Respondents.

The Municipality reserves the right to accept other than the lowest fee offered.

The Municipality reserves the right to award a contract on the basis of the initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best or final offers.

The Municipality reserves the right to waive any informalities, formalities, technicalities or to reject any or all RFP's based on the Respondent's lack of proven experience, performance on similar projects or the suitability of proceeding with the execution of the work.

In the event that a number of suppliers submits bids in substantially the same amount or score, the Municipality may, at its discretion, call upon those Respondents to submit further bids.

The Municipality reserves the right to inspect any products supplied as a result of this quotation, either during or after manufacture and delivery, and shall be the sole judge as to whether product supplied meets specifications.

The Municipality reserves the right to reject any Respondent, if after an investigation of the evidence submitted by the Respondent, fails to satisfy the Municipality that the Respondent is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work contemplated therein.

No term or condition shall be implied, based upon any industry or trade practice or custom, any practice or policy of the Municipality or otherwise, which are inconsistent with the provisions contained herein.

9.4 Confidentiality

RFP documents (including all attachments and appendices) may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of a proposal. By submitting a proposal, the Respondent agrees to public disclosure of its contents subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act relating to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy. Anything in the submission that the Respondent considers to be “personal information” or “confidential information” of a proprietary nature should be marked confidential and will be subject to appropriate consideration of the Municipal Government Act as noted above.

The work described in any RFP is being conducted with public funds, and the fees and expenses proposed in the Respondent’s submission will be made public.

9.5 Law

The law applicable to the RFP and any subsequent agreements shall be the law in force in the Province of Nova Scotia.

In responding to the RFP, Respondents warrant their compliance with all appropriate Municipal, Provincial and Federal regulations, laws and orders.

Respondents must agree to indemnify the Municipality and its employees if they fail to comply, and the Municipality reserves the right to cancel an agreement arising from the RFP if the proponent fails to comply with the above.

The successful Respondent shall indemnify the Municipality, its officers and employees against any damage caused to the Municipality as a result of any negligence or unlawful acts of the successful Respondent, its employees, agents or manufacturer of the products sold to the Municipality. Similarly, the successful Respondent shall agree to indemnify the Municipality, its officers and employees against any claims or costs initiated by third parties as a result of any negligence or wrongful acts of the successful Respondent, its employees, agents or manufacturer of the products sold to the Municipality.

9.6 Submission and Evaluation

Preparation: All expenses incurred in the preparation and presentation of submissions of the response to the RFP is entirely the responsibility of the Bidder. This includes, but is not limited to, labour, materials and the cost of site visits if applicable.

Method of Submission: Hard copy or Email proposals will be the only form. Facsimile or telephone proposals will not be considered unless otherwise specified.

Completeness: It is the Respondent’s responsibility to ensure that their submission is complete and is delivered to the Municipality by the date and time indicated. Proposals submitted after the above noted time will be returned unopened.

Changes to Submissions: Changes in a submission will only be considered if submitted in writing in a sealed envelope or by Email, and providing such change is received by MODG prior to the

established closing date and time. Faxed amendments or withdrawals shall not be accepted. Changes to a submission will not be accepted after the established closing date and time.

9.7 Quotations

Prices must be in Canadian funds, and shall include all handling, freight, duty and any other charges which are applicable at time quotation is awarded. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to find out from the appropriate authorities what rates and charges are applicable to this quotation.

9.8 Data and Documents

All data materials, and information collected and work products created (i.e.: calculations, reports, etc.) either directly for, or in support of the work outlined in the RFP is the property of the Municipality. The Bidder shall not be permitted to publish or in any way use said information without the expression or final approval of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough.

PART 10: SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Sealed proposals plainly marked "*Request for Proposals – Canso Tax Review Study*" will be received until **2:00 P.M., Thursday, June 26th, 2025** by email at tenders@modg.ca or by mail at the following address:

Municipality of the District of Guysborough
Attn: Magdelyn Connolly, Municipal Clerk
33 Pleasant Street
PO Box 79, Guysborough, NS B0H 1N0

PART 11: PROJECT CONTACTS

Shawn Andrews, Deputy CAO
Municipality of the District of Guysborough
33 Pleasant Street, PO Box 79
Guysborough, NS, B0H 1N0
Telephone: (902) 533-3705, Extension 231
Email: sandrews@modg.ca

Danita Imlay, Director of Finance
Municipality of the District of Guysborough
33 Pleasant Street, PO Box 79
Guysborough, NS, B0H 1N0
Telephone: (902) 533-3705, Extension 226
Email: dimlay@modg.ca



Appendix A

Canso Taxation Review Study

**OPENING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF GUYSBOROUGH**

The Municipality of the District of Guysborough supports the application of the Town of Canso for an Order for Dissolution. We look forward to the amalgamation of the two communities into one municipal unit. We will strive to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by Municipal Government for all our residents.

Like the Town, the Municipality has had to face the challenges associated with declining population, aging population, declining economic activity and the need to upgrade and maintain municipal infrastructure. For the Municipality, these changes have been temporarily eased by natural gas infrastructure within the Municipality but Municipal Council has been continuously mindful of the fact that the municipal tax revenue associated with this development is in a state of decline which will continue.

Before agreeing to support the dissolution of the Town, the Municipality wished to be satisfied that the dissolution would not impose upon the current residents of the Municipality an unmanageable burden of liabilities. The Municipality has therefore reviewed carefully all the filings made by the Town in support of the application. In particular, it has looked carefully at the engineering assessments of Town assets and infrastructure. There is clearly a need to invest significant funds in bringing many of the assets up to municipal standards. The cost of this needed investment has some measure of uncertainty.

The Municipality recognized that its ability to fund such investments was limited. It was, however, able to negotiate with the Province of Nova Scotia as represented by the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations a Letter of Intent which provides it with assurances regarding Provincial support for funding and assurances that risks of unforeseen liabilities associated with the dissolution are manageable.

On the strength of this Letter of Intent, the Municipality has also been able to reach agreement with the Town regarding the essential terms of the Order for Dissolution. A copy of this Agreement has been provided to the Board.

The Municipality, having completed the analysis outlined above, supports the application of the Town to Dissolve. It is now embracing the challenge

of bringing the two communities together as one and providing to all its residents an efficient and stable government.

The Municipality seeks the support not only of the Board but also of all its residents for this new municipal unit. As part of our effort to promote integration of the two municipal units, we have provided to all the residents of the Town and the Municipality an Information Bulletin, a copy of which has been filed with the Board. As indicated in the Information Bulletin, the Municipal Council's overall goals for Canso include stabilization of tax rates, improvement of the condition of the infrastructure, and the improvement of economic conditions in the community amongst other things.

We would respectfully request that the Board grant the Application to Dissolve in accordance with the terms agreed to by the Municipal units.

RECEIVED
NOV 12 2011

Nova Scotia
Utility and Review Board



33 Pleasant Street
Guysborough, NS
(902) 533-3705 www.modg.ca

Information Bulletin—November 2011
Re. Town of Canso Dissolution & Integration with Municipality

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to inform residents of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG) and the Town of Canso of the progress to date regarding the dissolution process for the Town of Canso and to provide an overview of the Municipality's integration plan if dissolution is approved by the NS Utility & Review Board (UARB).

Background

As most residents are aware, in September 2010, the Town of Canso submitted an application to the UARB for dissolution of Town status. The application for dissolution was necessary as a result of many factors, primarily related to the decline of the fishery and the closing of the large-scale fish plant in the Town, resulting in a significant loss of commercial taxation and employment opportunities. In addition to the loss of fishery-related revenues, the cost of operating and upgrading the infrastructure in the Town has been dramatically increasing resulting in failing infrastructure and unsustainable tax rates.

Dissolution Process

As soon as the application for dissolution of Town status was filed by the Town of Canso with the UARB, the Province (Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations) appointed a Transition Coordinator (Reg Ridgley, Accountant) for the Town and the UARB developed a dissolution process and schedule. The dissolution process included:

- i. Preliminary Hearing (November 2010)
- ii. Board Order (May 2011) (requiring infrastructure, financials & governance studies)
- iii. Submission of Studies (September/October 2011)
- iv. Information Requests re. Studies (October/November 2011)
- v. Filing of Evidence (October/November 2011)
- vi. Formal Hearing (December 5 & 6, 2011)
- vii. Board Order (response to application) (Winter/Spring 2012)

As shown, the formal Hearing by the UARB to consider the application for dissolution from the Town of Canso will be held on December 5 & 6, 2011. Details on locations, times and procedures for submission/presentations are shown on the official Notice of Hearing, which is included on the back cover of this information bulletin.

As shown in the Notice of Hearing, the Town of Canso applied to the UARB to dissolve the Town in accordance with Section 395 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Section 399 of the MGA states "after the application for dissolution is heard, the Board may dissolve the Town upon such terms as it considers advisable". It is anticipated by the Province and the Municipality that the UARB will dissolve the Town and Canso will then be a community of the Municipality.

The Municipality of the District of Guysborough participated in the dissolution process by assigning senior staff to the file and joining a Transition Advisory Committee, which had representatives from MODG, the Town of Canso and the Province. The purpose of this committee was to ensure that the interests of all parties were considered for each decision in the process. Working with this committee, MODG insisted that detailed studies of the infrastructure, finances and governance related to Canso be carried out. Following the Preliminary Hearing held by the UARB in November 2010, the Board ordered the detailed studies as requested by the Municipality.

Infrastructure Studies

MODG was very concerned about the condition of the core municipal infrastructure in the Town. Therefore, MODG Council insisted that the Province fund detailed studies of all major infrastructure in the Town. As a result of the UARB Order, the following infrastructure studies were completed:

- i. Wastewater Treatment Plant & Collection system
- ii. Water Treatment & Distribution System
- iii. Streets, Sidewalks & Associated Infrastructure
- iv. Stormwater Infrastructure
- v. Water & Electrical Rate Studies
- vi. Electrical Distribution Infrastructure
- vii. Building/Property Assessments
 - Arena & Pool Facility
 - Seaside Manor Inn
 - Whitman House Museum
 - Town Administration Building
 - Old Post Office
 - Fire Hall
 - Others (potential demolitions)
 - Old Fire Hall
 - Old Car Wash
 - Public Works Garage
 - Canso Academy (if closed)

CBCL Consulting Engineers Ltd. were tasked with completing the various engineering studies. Their assessments showed 2 categories/pieces of municipal infrastructure were in good to excellent condition, 3 were in average condition, 1 in poor to average condition, 3 in poor condition, and 10 were in failing condition. Based on the studies, the estimated cost to upgrade the infrastructure to average or better condition would be in the \$7 to \$10 million range. A 10-year infrastructure program will be developed to target the infrastructure deficits. Also, a short-term program will be implemented to address emergency, safety, and visual infrastructure concerns. MODG negotiated a special reserve fund with the Province, which would be used if Canso Academy is closed, and if demolition is required.

Financial Studies

Grant Thornton, Chartered Accountants, were engaged to complete the financial studies ordered by the UARB. Financial information for MODG and the Town was taken from annual financial statements and budgets for each municipal unit. The financial studies order by the Board were:

- i. 2-year forecast for Canso—no dissolution
- ii. Transition Review for Canso
- iii. 5-year forecast for MODG—no dissolution
- iv. 5-Year Forecast for MODG and Canso after dissolution

Governance Study

The UARB ordered that a governance study be carried out in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough and the Town of Canso. The Town engaged Stantec Consulting Ltd. to complete this study. The study, which has been submitted to the UARB, has scenarios with a range of 8 to 10 councillors for the combined Municipality and Town areas. The recommended scenario has 8 councillors with adjustments made to the boundaries of District # 5 (Dover, Hazel Hill, Tickle) and District # 8 (Canso) as well as other minor adjustments to balance (within acceptable limits) the number of voters in each district.

Essentially, under the recommendation, the majority of Canso residents will vote for one councillor in District 8, while some Canso residents who live along Route 16 will vote for one councillor in District 5. It should be noted that Section 399 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states: "The Order of the Board dissolving a Town shall determine that the area be an additional polling district or shall form part of another polling district of the Municipality to which it is annexed."

Funding Agreement

The information in the infrastructure and financial studies was used by MODG Council to develop a dissolution funding request to the Province. After lengthy and substantive negotiations, the Municipality, the Province and the Town have signed a Letter of Intent, which is the framework for a financial agreement between the parties that would allow tax rates in Canso to be stabilized and the condition of core infrastructure to be improved. The agreement will provide specified equalization-type funding and provincial capital funding for a 5-year period. Also, the Province will assist MODG in accessing infrastructure-type funding (cost-shared) for a 10-year capital improvement program. The Province will also assume other costs related to dissolution such as current debt, legal costs, employee severance packages, and other specified transition costs. The funding in the Letter of Intent is a balanced solution that recognizes the Province's responsibilities, helps with improving infrastructure and stabilizing tax rates for Canso residents, and mitigates the impacts on the residents of MODG.

Go-Forward Strategy

MODG will focus on the following core municipal services within the community of Canso:

- i. Water Treatment & Distribution
- ii. Wastewater Treatment & Collection
- iii. Streets & Associated Infrastructure
- iv. Solid Waste Collection & Management
- v. Fire Protection
- vi. Recreation/Parks & Playgrounds
- vii. Administrative & Planning Services
- viii. Economic Development & Tourism

The core services in the community will be reviewed in detail as part of the process to develop short-term and long-term infrastructure improvement programs. The short-term program will target emergency, safety and visual upgrades. The long-term program will target improving overall condition of infrastructure to average or better and right-size all infrastructure for today's community requirements to reduce operating and capital costs. The Department of Transportation will be responsible for the maintenance of Canso streets after dissolution. MODG will pay a per km fee to DOT for this service. The Municipality will assume the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of all core municipal services in Canso if/when dissolution occurs.

It should be noted that any buildings and/or properties that are not required for the provision of core municipal services will be sold or disposed of in accordance with municipal policy.

On the dissolution date, the municipal office in Canso will close and all administrative services will be provided out of MODG offices. MODG officials have met with officials from Bell Aliant to discuss the elimination of all long-distance calling charges within MODG and Canso. If this is not achieved in the short-term, MODG will institute a 1-800 number. MODG will be issuing additional newsletters with more information on the provision of municipal services.

Overall Goals

MODG Council's overall goals for Canso are:

- i. Stabilize tax rates
- ii. Improve the condition of infrastructure

- iii. Reduce operating costs
- iv. Right-size infrastructure , liabilities and operations
- v. Review programs and services and sustain or integrate with MODG's programs and services where appropriate
- vi. Integrate MODG by-laws and policies where appropriate
- vii. Develop communications and community relations with Canso residents and organizations consistent with all other communities within MODG.
- viii. Work with the RDA and other economic/tourism agencies to help build on economic development opportunities.
- ix. Assure Canso residents that MODG will work diligently to build on the rich history in Canso and improve the economic conditions in the community.

In closing, Guysborough Municipal Council and Staff look forward to Canso joining our family of communities in the Municipality if dissolution is approved by the UARB. For more information on MODG services, please visit www.modg.ca.

Following are contacts for the Canso file.

Barry Carroll, Chief Administrative Officer, bcarroll@modg.ca

Gary Cleary, Managing Director, gcleary@modg.ca.

NOVA SCOTIA UTILITY AND REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

THE TOWN OF CANSO has applied to the Board under section 395 of the *Municipal Government Act* to dissolve the Town and amalgamate with the Municipality of the District of Guysborough.

The Hearing will be held as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| COMMENCING: | Monday, December 5, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.
Canso Fire Hall
1134 Union Street
Canso, Nova Scotia |
| EVENING SESSION: | Monday, December 5, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.
Canso Fire Hall
1134 Union Street, Canso |
| EVENING SESSION: | Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.
Guysborough Municipal Council Chambers,
33 Pleasant Street, Guysborough |

THE PURPOSE OF THIS HEARING is to hear evidence and argument on the merits of the application.

ALL PERSONS MAY ATTEND THE HEARING. PERSONS WHO ARE NOT PARTIES, BUT WHO WISH TO SPEAK, MAY DO SO AT THE EVENING SESSIONS, AND MUST NOTIFY THE BOARD OF THEIR INTENTION TO DO SO NO LATER THAN TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2011. All such persons shall be scheduled on a speakers list which will determine the order of speakers at the evening sessions. Depending on the circumstances, the Board may limit the time for each speaker. Any person wishing to make written submissions, whether or not they are speaking at an evening session, must file such submissions with the Board, to be received by the Board no later than **Tuesday, November 29, 2011.** Filing can be by delivery, mail, fax or e-mail.

The Board can be contacted at: Clerk of the Board, Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, PO Box 1692, Unit "M", Suite 300, Summit Place, 1601 Lower Water Street, Halifax, N.S. B3J 3S3, Fax: (902) 424-3919, Telephone: (902) 4244448, E-Mail: board@gov.ns.ca

Documents filed by the Town are available for inspection at the Canso Town Office and at the Office of the Board or on the Board's website at www.nsuarb.ca under the Evidence Tab, Matter Number M03578. The documents filed by other formal intervenors, including the Municipality of the District of Guysborough, can be accessed through the Board's website or at the Office of the Board.