

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY



2014

Town of Bridgewater

Approved by Bridgewater Town Council: November 10, 2014

Effective date: December 24, 2014

Contains amendments to: February 3, 2026

Amendments

Effective Date	Description
December 2, 2015	To allow residential conversions in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of two dwelling units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.
May 25, 2016	Re-designate 150 Churchill Street from Low Density Residential to Institutional
May 25, 2016	Re-designate 324 Jubilee Road from Comprehensive Residential to Institutional
September 7, 2016	To add new policy, I-9 and re-number following subsections accordingly, to permit by site plan approval in the Institutional (I1) zone: Sustainable energy system facilities that provide direct heat and/or power to a permitted Institutional Use, following consideration of its environmental impacts pursuant to the performance standards of Section 8.2.4 of the Land Use By-law.
September 14, 2016	Re-designate 317, 321 and 325 King Street from Institutional to Medium Density Residential and to Re-designate 307 King Street from Institutional to High Density Residential
June 20, 2018	Amend Group commercial (C4) Zone to increase threshold for site plan approval to 5,500 m ² (60,008 sf).
March 6, 2019	Text amendments to the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone and map amendments to the Future Land Use Map for 144 Victoria Road, 126 Victoria Road and 229 York Street.
August 2, 2019	Site specific text amendments to Policy C-36 to enable self-storage facilities at PID 60031697.
October 16, 2019	Text amendments to enable negotiation of the Land Use By-law's maximum building height for any development fronting on King Street, and the Land Use By-law's urban design requirements, each through the development agreement process within the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone
February 22, 2021	Text amendments to the Special Commercial (C8) Zone to enable additional uses by development agreement and amend the criteria on building expansion.
March 3, 2021	Text amendments to enable transit facilities and park facilities within the recreation (REC) Zone.
November 17, 2021	Text and Map amendments to incorporate the 2020 Active Transportation Plan into the Municipal Planning Strategy.
August 3, 2022	Text amendments to section 17: Implementation in order to outline the new requirements for engaging with neighbouring municipalities when amending planning documents as required by the province.
December 14, 2022	Text and map amendments to incorporate a new Highway Commercial (C9) Zone on the lands located on the proposed Bridgewater Business Park Expansion north of exist 12A.
December 14, 2022	Text amendments to incorporate an incremental increase in the housing supply in Bridgewater.
April 10, 2024	Text and map amendments to redesignate and rezone properties in the Special Commercial (C8) zoned and to expand the permitted uses in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone.

June 26, 2024	Text amendments to address development and wastewater capacity issues for as-of-right development
December 10, 2024	The purpose of these amendments is to exempt a change of use to the permitted uses of the zone from a development agreement process within the LaHave River Development Agreement Area.
December 30, 2024	Map Amendment to redesignate 44 North Park Street, PID 60023454 from an Industrial designation to a Low Density Residential designation
January 9, 2025	Text Amendments to amend definitions of certain institutional uses, remove the permission for residential institutional uses, and remove the permission for residential institutional uses to locate in the C1 and C2 Zones.
January 29, 2025	Text amendment to developments permitted in Special Commercial (C8 Zone) and map amendment to redesignate 255 Victoria Road to Comprehensive Residential
June 4, 2025	Text amendments to Section 7, LaHave River Development, and Section 12.2.5, Flood Hazards along the LaHave River, and changes to Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) Map 6, Environmental Constraints, to reflect updated flood risk information and recommendations. Text amendments to policies C-14, C-16, C-17, and policy CDA-10 to allow for the construction a two-storey building containing a bar, a restaurant and a single-unit dwelling on the lands located at 440 King Street, PID 60042207.
October 1, 2025	Map and text amendments to reflect the intent of the Exit 12A Concept Development Plan. Including changes to the C9 (Highway Service Commercial) Zone and the addition of the C10 (Highway Display Commercial) Zone.
February 3, 2026	Future Land Use Map amendment to redesignate 1233 King St, PID 60020948, from Low Density designation to a Medium Density Residential designation

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- Map 5 – Active Transportation
- Map 6 – Environmental Constraints
- Map 7 – Open Space Network
- Map 8 – Architectural Control Areas

POLICY REFERENCE TABLE

General Development Policies:

G	Pages 29-39
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Residential Development Policies:

R , RDA	Pages 41-58
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Commercial Development Policies:

C , CDA	Pages 59-82
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LaHave River Development Policies:

LR , LRDA	Pages 83-86
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Industrial Development Policies:

IN , INDA	Pages 87-94
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Institutional Development Policies:

I	Pages 95-100
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Agricultural Development Policies:

AG	Pages 101-102
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Open Space Policies:

OS	Pages 103-112
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Environ. Management Policies:

EM	Pages 113-118
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Built Heritage Policies:

H	Pages 119-122
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Transportation Policies:

T	Pages 123-128
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Municipal Infrastructure Policies:

INF	Pages 129-132
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Subdivision & Lot Access Policies:

SUB	Pages 133-134
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Implementation Policies:

IM	Pages 135-140
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This Municipal Planning Strategy supersedes the Municipal Planning Strategy approved by the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs on August 12, 1997. This Strategy is the product of a review process begun in 2010, in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act, 1998, c. 18, s. 1*.

A Municipal Planning Strategy provides the policy framework for land use and development control. The *Municipal Government Act* provides Council with the power to make statements of policy with respect to a broad range of activities including future development, land use, public lands, transportation, municipal services, municipal development, coordination of public programs, and any other matters related to the physical, social or economic development of the town.

The Municipal Planning Strategy for the Town of Bridgewater is the policy framework by which Bridgewater Town Council will guide and control development, land use, and other matters of interest to the Council within the terms of the *Municipal Government Act*.

The Land Use By-law and the Subdivision By-law are the companion documents to this Municipal Planning Strategy and are the means by which Town Council will carry out the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy, as set out in the *Municipal Government Act*.

1.2 Structure & Interpretation of the Strategy

For the purposes of this Municipal Planning Strategy, the planning area of the Town of Bridgewater is defined as the entire Town of Bridgewater as incorporated on February 13, 1899. This Municipal Planning Strategy is only applicable within the boundaries of the town.

This Municipal Planning Strategy is a policy statement of Council. Council shall have regard to the policies contained within the Municipal Planning Strategy. No development can be permitted which is contrary to the policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy. The Strategy is divided into a number of different sections according to subject matter, several of which include detailed preamble, objectives, and policy statements of Council.

This Municipal Planning Strategy includes several resource and policy maps, including the following:

Map 1 - Existing Land Use:

The Existing Land Use Map graphically illustrates the existing use of all properties in Bridgewater. This map is not associated with any policies of Council, but rather, is intended to be used as a general information resource to keep track of how the Town of Bridgewater is developing. Regular updates to this map will occur without amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy. The map includes general land use categories, including commercial, residential, industrial, institutional, open space, utility and vacant.

Map 2 - Future Land Use:

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of this Municipal Planning Strategy identifies what Town Council wishes to see an area or property become in the future. This may be different than the zone on the property. For example, a portion of the Town may be currently comprised of a mixture of commercial, residential, and institutional uses. The Zoning Map in the Land Use By-law reflects these various zones. However, since the Town Council wishes to see this particular area develop commercially over time, the site is designated commercial on the FLUM in the Municipal Planning Strategy. In the aforementioned situation, if a Council wishes to see an area develop completely commercial and has designated this on the FLUM Map, it is likely policies would permit a rezoning to commercial. The FLUM should be read carefully in association with the various land use designations outlined throughout this Planning Strategy.

Map 3 - Sanitary Sewer & Water Services:

The Sanitary Sewer & Water Services Map graphically illustrates the location and sizing of existing sanitary sewer and water services within the town. This map is intended to be used as a general information resource. Regular updates to this map will occur without amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy.

Map 4 - Street Classification:

The Street Classification Map graphically illustrates Bridgewater's existing and planned road network. The map classifies all public roads according to the type of service each road is intended to provide. For Bridgewater, public roads are grouped into three major hierarchical categories:

- *Arterial streets:* intended to accommodate large volumes of traffic and links districts, with a high level of safety and efficiency;
- *Collector streets:* intended to accommodate moderate volumes of traffic, connecting local streets to arterials;
- *Local streets:* intended to accommodate low volumes of traffic and provides for vehicular access to the majority of building lots.

Policy statements associated with the Street Classification Map are primarily included in Section 14 of this Planning Strategy.

Map 5 - Active Transportation Network:

The Active Transportation Network Map graphically illustrates where Active Transportation related infrastructure improvements are intended within Bridgewater's existing road network. Active Transportation (AT) means using human-powered transportation to move around. It also describes the necessary infrastructure communities need to allow citizens to safely commute to and from work, school, businesses, playgrounds and green spaces. Specific AT infrastructure improvements include sidewalks, crosswalks, shared and dedicated bicycle lanes, landscaping, and more. Policy statements associated with the Active Transportation Map are primarily included in Section 14 of this Strategy.

Map 6 - Environmental Constraints:

The Environmental Constraints Map graphically illustrates environmental constraints which limit the development of land. Specifically, this map identifies major watercourses, water bodies, slopes, and areas susceptible to flooding

and erosion along the LaHave River, etc. Policy statements associated with this map are primarily included in Sections 7 and 12 of this Planning Strategy.

Map 7 - Open Space Network:

The Open Space Network Map identifies all lands that have been reserved by Council for open space purposes, including active and passive parkland, playgrounds, sports fields, recreational facilities, and land preserved for environmental purposes. This map is provided as a general information resource and should be read in accordance with Section 11 of this Strategy.

Map 8 – Architectural Control Areas:

The Architectural Control Areas Map identifies the two areas of Bridgewater where Council has established specific architectural control requirements that regulate public facades of all pre-1920 buildings, new buildings, and large accessory structures. The intent of these controls is to preserve the heritage value of specific areas by maintaining the exterior appearance of building, including their unique character defining elements. Policy statements associated with the Architectural Control Areas Map are included in Section 13 of this Strategy.

The metric system is used throughout this Municipal Planning Strategy to indicate required standards. Imperial measurements are also provided for convenience and are only approximations. Supporting documentation for this Municipal Planning Strategy is presented as minutes of Council and minutes of the Planning Review Advisory Committee (PRAC). This information is available from the office of the Town Clerk.

This Municipal Planning Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*.

1.3 Provincial Role in Planning

In accordance with Part VIII, Section 190, Page 133 of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Province outlines the purpose of the planning and development legislation as follows:

- a) To enable the Province to identify and protect its interests in the use and development of land;
- b) To enable municipalities to assume the primary authority for planning within their respective jurisdictions, consistent with their urban and rural character, through the adoption of municipal planning strategies and land use By-laws consistent with interests and regulations of the Province.
- c) To establish a consultative process to ensure the right of the public to have access to information and to participate in the formulation of planning strategies and By-laws, including the right to be notified and heard before decisions are made pursuant to this Part; and
- d) To provide for the fair, reasonable and efficient administration of this Part.

The five Statements of Provincial Interest are policy statements which were adopted by the provincial government on April 1, 1999, under the powers of the *Municipal Government Act*. In consideration of the Statements, the following table identifies and links all of Bridgewater’s relevant Municipal Planning Strategy policies to each Statement and associated goal, to help demonstrate reasonable alignment and consistency.



Statement 1: Drinking Water

Goal: To protect the quality of drinking water within municipal water supply watersheds

This Statement is not applicable to the Town of Bridgewater, as there are no municipal water supply watersheds within the Town's planning jurisdiction.

Applicable MPS policies: N/A



Statement 2: Flood Areas

Goal: To protect public safety and property and to reduce the requirement for flood control works and flood damage restoration in floodplains.

This Statement is not applicable to the Town of Bridgewater, as Bridgewater is not designated a flood risk area under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program.

Applicable MPS policies: N/A



Statement 3: Agricultural Land

Goal: To protect agricultural land for the development of a viable and sustainable agriculture and food industry.

As outlined in the Lunenburg County Profile of Agricultural Land Resources (NS Dept. of Agriculture), the Town of Bridgewater is an urban settlement area with minimal agricultural potential. The Town of Bridgewater will accommodate existing agricultural development, in accordance with the Map 1 - Existing Land Use (MPS) and the Zoning Map (LUB), and will support and promote various forms of small-scale urban food production. However, Town Council believes that centralizing and intensifying development in an established settlement area, where a wide range of existing urban infrastructure and services exist, is the most efficient and sustainable land use approach for Bridgewater.

Applicable MPS policies: AG-1; AG-2



Statement 4: Infrastructure

Goal: To make efficient use of municipal water supply and municipal wastewater disposal systems.

The Town of Bridgewater is responsible for a significant amount of municipal infrastructure, including 70 kilometres of public streets, 36 kilometres of sidewalks, 8 kilometres of formalized trails, 5 kilometres of shared bicycle lanes, extensive integrated water, sanitary and storm water systems, public buildings and facilities, and more. Maximizing the life and efficiency of these infrastructures is imperative to the health of the Town and the wellbeing of those that live, work and play in Bridgewater.

Applicable MPS policies: G-8 through G-12; G-14; G-16; G-19 through G-21; R-1; R-4 through R-7; R-9 through R-11; R-13 through R-39; RDA-1 through RDA-5; C-1 through C-4; C-6; C-9 through C-56; CDA-1 through CDA-9; LR-1 through LR-4; LRDA-1; M-1 through M-4; M-6 through M-13; MDA-1; I-1; I-2; I-4 through I-12; IDA-1; AG-1; AG-2; OS-1 through OS-16; EM-1; EM-2; EM-4 through EM-15; H-1 through H-7; T-1 through T-21; INF-1 through INF-14; SUB-1 through SUB-6; IM-6



Statement 5: Housing

Goal: To provide housing opportunities to meet the needs of all Nova Scotians.

Bridgewater is home to over 8,200 residents living in a wide range of housing. Based on the housing information and analysis and population projections outlined in Bridgewater's 'Community Inventory Report' (2010), the Municipal Planning Strategy has been strategically designed to accommodate continued residential growth and to enable the development of a full range of housing types so that people can live out their full life cycle in the community. In addition,

Town Council will support the development of new affordable housing through strategic bonus zoning provisions in the Municipal Planning Strategy to help incentivize its development.

Applicable MPS policies: *G-12; G-14; R-1 through R-39; RDA-1 through RDA-5; C-3; C-6; C-9 through C-21; C-23 through C-26; C-29; C-31; C-33; C-35; C-37; C-38; C-42 through C-46; C-48; C-49; C-51; C-54 through C-56; CDA-1; CDA-6 through CDA-9; LR-1 through LR-3; LRDA-1; I-1; I-2; I-4 through I-12; IDA-1; AG-1; AG-2; OS-3; OS-4; H-1 through H-8; SUB-1 through SUB-5; IM-6*

SECTION 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

2.1 Early History & Local Economy

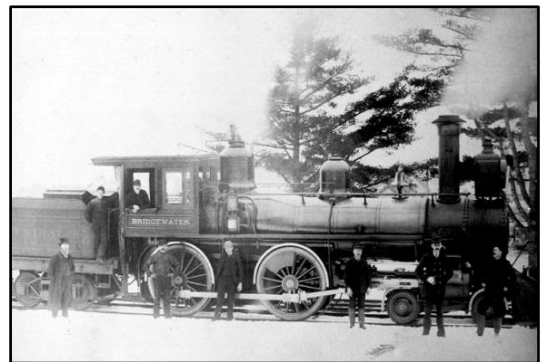
In 1753, the British began settling the South Shore to colonize land once occupied by First Nations groups and the French. Lunenburg was their first settlement, and while it was overseen by British military, its residents were foreign Protestants of German, French, and Swiss descent. Lunenburg quickly grew into strong community, and over time, many settlers moved to the surrounding areas.

By 1815, there were only five homes in what is now the Town of Bridgewater, but shortly after, development emerged along the LaHave River, and the first bridge was erected over it in 1825. Bridgewater quickly transformed into the fastest growing community in the County thanks to its wealth of natural resources, booming industries, and economic opportunities. By 1860 there was a bustling commercial district on King Street, and with the opening of a railway in 1889, Bridgewater officially became a regional centre.



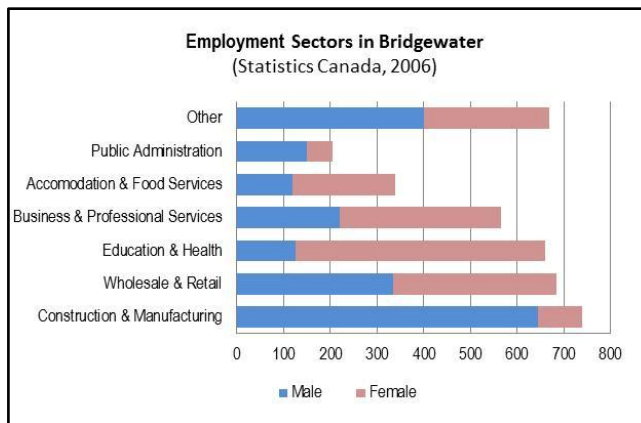
In Bridgewater's early days the strength of the local economy was linked to its natural resources. Lumber, in particular, was the town's primary industry and economic producer. The first of many lumber mills was built in 1765. Local lumber mills continued to prosper during the next century while the stock of other industries diversified. In 1872, Bridgewater's reputation grew when it was described as "enterprising village" by the Halifax Citizen. At this time Bridgewater had about 29 merchants in total, including shoemakers, shipbuilders, blacksmiths, foundaries, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. The presence of the LaHave River made Bridgewater an ideal distribution and shipping centre for the greater region (Sheppard, 2008).

Following the turn of the 20th century the Town's economic fortunes began to slow as fewer businesses relocated to the area, however, Bridgewater remained a key service centre due to the railway. During the war years (1916 to 1922) Bridgewater experienced a boom period as the number of new buildings and industries expanded. The town was hit hard by the depression but experienced resurgence during, and after, WWII (DesBrisay Museum Trustees, 1967). King Street continued to prosper as the major retail destination through the 1940s and 1950s with the addition of Canadian Tire and other department stores (Friends of the DesBrisay Museum, 1999).



Bridgewater's reliance on natural resources faded with time; instead the town became dependent on an emerging manufacturing industry when the Michelin Tire Plant came to town in 1970. Michelin's presence helped stimulate industrial development in town and the region. With the decline of the rail lines and new commercial stores opening outside of the downtown in the 1970s, King Street began to lose its prominence as the Town's sole commercial destination. Still, Bridgewater's retail sector continues to thrive due to a broad range of shopping choices.

Today, manufacturing & construction remains the largest employment sector in Bridgewater, mainly due to the Michelin Tire plant, which is the town's largest employer (approximately 1,500 employees). However, the recent closure of the Abitibi Bowater plant in Oak Hill, just east of Bridgewater, has resulted in a significant impact to the local forestry industry. Bridgewater is still the major service centre for the region, and so the retail sector comprises a large component of the town's employment base. Over the past three decades there has also been an increase in the presence of government services in the town, particularly in health and education.



The employment rate for Bridgewater residents over the age of 15 was 54.6% in 2005. While this represents a 0.8% increase over the town's employment rate in 2000, it was less than the provincial average (57.2%). Unemployment rates in Bridgewater remained constant at 12.2% between 1995 and 2000. In 2006, the unemployment rate actually decreased to 7.9%, which was less than the provincial unemployment rate (9.1%).

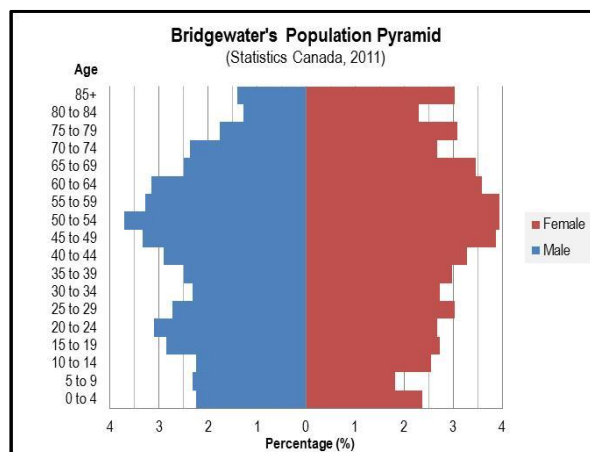
The median income per Bridgewater resident was \$20,386 in 2005, which was somewhat lower than the Nova Scotia median income of \$22,815. For males living in Bridgewater, the median income was \$28,679; for women living in Bridgewater, the median income was \$16,319. In 2005, the median private household income was \$40,123 per year in Bridgewater compared to the provincial median of \$46,605 (Statistics Canada, 2010). Interestingly, Bridgewater's household income is greater than similar towns in Nova Scotia.

Of Bridgewater residents living in private households, 10.0% have an after tax income that is below the Low Income Cut Off. This includes 8.3% of male Bridgewater residents and 11.5% of female Bridgewater residents. In Nova Scotia, 9.6% of residents in private households have after tax income that is below the Low Income Cut Off, which includes 8.9% of male Nova Scotians and 10.2% of female Nova Scotians. Therefore, the proportion of Bridgewater residents living in low income is similar to the proportion of Nova Scotia residents living in low income.

2.2 Population

According to the 2011 census, Bridgewater has 8,241 residents, which represents a 3.7% population increase since 2006. While the vast majority of rural communities in the province have decreasing populations, Bridgewater has been growing steadily over the past several decades. Bridgewater's population has grown by 12.1% since 1996, and more than 25% in the past 20 years. These figures make Bridgewater one of the fastest growing areas in the entire province.

Bridgewater's population distribution generally reflects that of the province as a whole, however, there are some



noticeable differences. Bridgewater has a small youth population compared to the provincial standard. There is a very small percentage of newborns and toddlers (ages 0 to 4), as well as teenagers (ages 10 to 19) in the community. Conversely, the town's senior population (ages 60+) is well above the provincial average (Statistics Canada, 2010).

In 2006, 45.9% of Bridgewater's population had moved within the past five years. Of the 3,455 town residents who had moved, 45.9% moved within the town, 38.5% moved to Bridgewater from other areas of the province, 12.4% moved to Bridgewater from other areas of Canada, and 3.2% came to Bridgewater from another country (Statistics Canada, 2010). Bridgewater attracts significantly more interprovincial movers (17.7%) than the Nova Scotia average (6.4%). These figures, coupled with growing senior cohorts, reinforces that Bridgewater has become a destination for older individuals.

2.3 Education

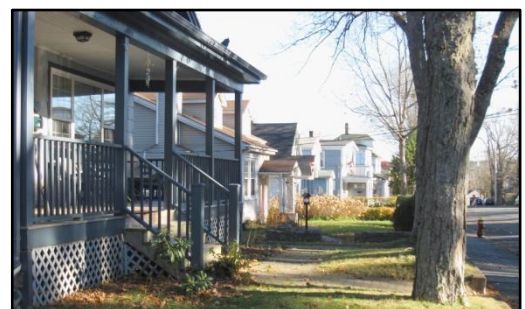
In 2011, 49% of Bridgewater residents over the age of 15 had a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. This compares to the 53.8% of Nova Scotians who have completed a post-secondary program. The comparison of education levels between Bridgewater and Nova Scotia are similar, however, the percentage of Bridgewater residents with a university degree or certificate are less than the provincial average (Community Counts, 2011).

2.4 Housing

In 2006, there were a total of 3,585 occupied private dwellings located inside Bridgewater's town boundaries. This represents a 16% increase in occupied private dwellings since 1996. Approximately half of the total housing stock comes in the form of traditional detached dwellings, while apartment dwellings comprise 26% (Community Counts, 2010).

The growth in housing stock between 1996 and 2006 is mainly due to the increase in single detached and movable/manufactured dwellings. In this period the number of single detached dwellings increased by 13.8% whereas the number of movable dwellings increased by a staggering 69.5%. The number of occupied semi-detached/townhouse dwellings has remained constant during this time, though they have increased in recent years.

The average market value of a dwelling in Bridgewater was \$137,556 in 2006. This represents a 47% increase in value since 1996. During the same time period, Nova Scotia has experienced an 82.5% increase to the average market value of a dwelling to \$158,000. Also in 2006, 67.6% of Bridgewater's population owned a private dwelling compared to 72% of Nova Scotia residents as a whole. Private dwelling owners in Bridgewater spend roughly \$738 a month in home payments compared to the \$595 spent by those who rent. On average Nova Scotia residents pay \$761 and \$671 respectively (Community Counts, 2010).



The majority of housing in Bridgewater is considered to be in good condition. According to Community Counts (2010), 66% of occupied dwellings require only regular maintenance, while 25% require minor repairs. 320 occupied dwellings, or 9% of the total housing stock, are in poor condition and require major repairs, compared to 10.2% in Lunenburg

County and 9.5% in the province as a whole. Notwithstanding this information, the interior quality of housing stock is not regularly evaluated and is therefore unknown.

The vacancy rate for apartment rentals in Bridgewater is 2.4%; vacancy rates under 3% tend to indicate an insufficient supply of rental housing and, consequently, increase housing costs. The cost of apartment rentals in Bridgewater is much lower than the cost of similar apartments in other, similarly sized Nova Scotia communities. This may be due to several factors such as income rates that are lower than the provincial average or low quality of rental units (Andrew, 2010). However, since Bridgewater’s newer, higher quality rental units are more expensive, the strong development market in Bridgewater could increase the average cost of rental units in the future.



Affordability is commonly measured by the number of households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. According to Statistics Canada, Bridgewater had 3,585 private households in 2006. Of these households, 960 households, or 26.8%, spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Approximately 1,300 of Bridgewater’s private households rented as of 2006, and 51% of renters are spending too much of their income on housing. The percentage of renter households spending more than 30% of their income on housing in Bridgewater is much higher than percentages in the province (45%) and Lunenburg County (43%) (Statistics Canada, 2010). These data suggest there is a need for more affordable housing in Bridgewater.

2.5 Infrastructure

The Town of Bridgewater constructs, owns and manages extensive municipal infrastructure and services that are required to meet our basic human needs. This includes infrastructure for water, water treatment processes, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and sanitary treatment processes, along with our road networks and trail systems. While we have a large supply of necessary infrastructure, much of it is 40+ years old and now it needs to be replaced. Bridgewater isn’t alone in this regard, as aging infrastructure combined with reduced revenues and necessary declines in municipal investment has created a drastic infrastructure deficit all throughout the country. The cost of fixing Canada’s infrastructure deficit rose from \$12 billion in 1985 to \$60 in 2003. Today, it has reached a staggering \$123 billion (Mirza, 2007).



2.6 Natural Environment

Bridgewater is nestled in the heart of the LaHave River valley which is characterized by rising elevations leading from the town’s core to its outermost boundaries, along with the presence of several steep areas. Bridgewater’s most distinguishable natural feature is the LaHave River, which bisects the downtown of the community and is the heart of the LaHave River watershed. The watershed covers 1,700km² and contains many brooks and streams, such as Wiles

and Hebb Brooks, which feed into the river and help support aquatic life. Many other environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands and healthy forested lands can also be found throughout Bridgewater.

2.7 Climate Change

The Government of Nova Scotia recognizes the current impact and potential threats that climate change will have on the province. Climate change is defined as a change in the average weather that a given region experiences. Average weather includes all the features we associate with the weather such as temperature, wind patterns and precipitation. When we speak of climate change on a global scale, we are referring to changes in the climate of the Earth as a whole (Natural Resources Canada, 2007).

In 2012, the Town undertook a flood and erosion risk assessment of the LaHave River. The results of the various flood risk simulations from this study indicate that the area upstream of the Veteran's Memorial Bridge is vulnerable to flooding from large discharge events of the LaHave River. However, the downtown waterfront does not appear to be as susceptible to flooding from significant discharge events. This is likely a result of the deeper river channel in this area. However, the modeling does suggest that the downtown area is especially vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surge flooding. Based on the



simulations, areas such as the Bridgewater Mall parking lot, the Port of Bridgewater lands, and sections of LaHave Street and Shipyards Landing park, become inundated under a 2.2 m storm surge generated at the mouth of the LaHave River. When the storm surge level is increased to 3.5 m, the flood extent expands to cover the parking lot of the Bridgewater Mall up to LaHave Street and inundates Old Bridge Street and Davison Drive. The flooding extends from overtopping the Port of Bridgewater wharf to inundating LaHave Street either side of the terminal. Flooding covers a larger section of LaHave Street upstream of the Veteran's Memorial Bridge including lower Elm Street. Flooding at Shipyards Landing park along the river expands to cross King Street and the lower section of School Street. The area surrounding the southwest side of Veteran's Memorial Bridge begins to flood under these storm surge or sea level rise conditions condition. The model also suggests that floodwater west of Old Bridge Street appears to get trapped and does not easily drain back into the river once the storm surge levels subside while the mall parking lot is able to drain back into the river quickly (Webster, 2013).

The risk of such events (2.2 and 3.5 m storm surge) occurring today are low, although a 4m storm surge was associated with Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey in 2012, and with increased sea level rise ranging from present conditions of 0.32 m/century to projections of 1.56 m/century by 2100, coupled with possible increased storm intensity, the risks will increase over time of such an event occurring.

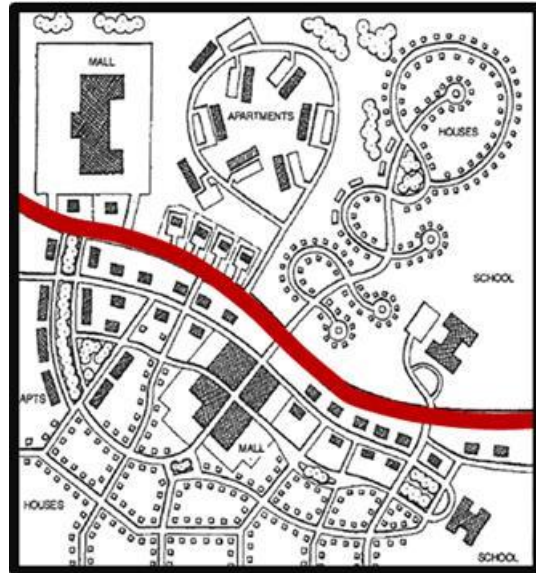
The impacts of climate change are not limited to the LaHave River. Municipal infrastructure, vulnerable populations and our local environmental are also susceptible to being impacted by a diverse range of climate change related hazards. As a result, the Town of Bridgewater shall continue to assess these threats and integrate adaptation and mitigation strategies into its land use and infrastructure planning.

SECTION 3: PLANNING PRINCIPLES, VISION & OBJECTIVES

3.1 Planning Principles

“Smart Growth” is a unified planning theory based in the understanding that community form is the fundamental determinant of so many things that matter. This theory promotes a collection of principles designed to reduce wasteful development, limit environmental disruption and create vibrant, compact communities.

Smart growth requires a multifaceted approach to development. There are a range of best practices associated with smart growth, including maximizing the use of existing municipal infrastructure, redeveloping underutilized sites, enhancing economic competitiveness, providing more transportation choices, promoting equitable and affordable housing, protecting ecologically sensitive lands, enhancing integrated planning and investment, and making the development process more transparent.



Smart growth development is often described as Traditional Neighborhood Development, which recognizes that smart growth and related concepts are not necessarily new, but are a response to the consequences of automobile dependent development and sprawl. Many favor the term New Urbanism, which invokes a new, but traditional way of looking at planning.

The Goals of Smart Growth are as follows:

- 1. To protect and conserve natural and cultural resources for present and future generations;**
- 2. To save money and conserve material, labour, energy and fiscal resources;**
- 3. To promote and provide opportunity for sustainable economic development and housing; and**
- 4. To ensure opportunity and the social equity of all citizens in decisions that affect their future.**

Bridgewater Town Council endorses this planning theory and has begun the process of applying the Principles of Smart Growth throughout this Municipal Planning Strategy.

3.2 Vision Statement

The following Vision Statement reflects the desired future reality for Bridgewater from a land use, development and community design perspective.

Vision Statement

Through sustainable land use planning and effective community design, the Town of Bridgewater fosters a vibrant and healthy community where people of all ages choose to enjoy their lives. Citizens and visitors enjoy the benefits of a thriving downtown, an abundance of regional services and employment opportunities, convenient and diverse neighbourhoods, a variety of housing and transportation options, attractive streetscapes and dynamic public spaces, rich built and natural heritage, and the efficient use of the town's shared infrastructure. Bridgewater's thoughtful planning builds community identity and pride, while ensuring the community meets the needs of current and future generations.

3.3 Bridgewater's Planning Objectives

The following Objective Statements will assist Bridgewater in achieving its Vision over time, and thus, shall generally guide the policies of this Municipal Planning Strategy:

1. Encourage opportunities for development which **foster the town as a regional employment and service centre.**
2. Control land use and development in a manner that will **minimize conflicts between land uses** and in a manner that is compatible with the town's service infrastructure.
3. **Mix compatible land uses** to promote diverse and convenient neighbourhoods.
4. **Encourage compact development** to maximize the town's shared infrastructure and to promote healthy, close-knit neighbourhoods.
5. **Support a functional and sustainable transportation network** by improving street connectivity and supporting a range of transportation options.
6. **Enable the development of a full range of housing options** so that all people can live out their lives in Bridgewater.
7. **Improve the design and appearance of Bridgewater's built form** to foster community identity and a strong sense of place.
8. **Enhance and protect the historic downtown** to strengthen its appeal as a destination for residents and visitors.
9. **Celebrate and preserve Bridgewater's historic culture and built heritage** for current and future generations.
10. **Improve the pedestrian experience** by promoting safe, accessible and inviting streets and public spaces.
11. **Develop a comprehensive parks and open space network** that meets the leisure and recreational needs of the community.
12. **Improve public access to the LaHave River** to promote community identity, human interaction and the enjoyment of nature.
13. Control land use and development in a manner that will **preserve, enhance and protect the natural environment.**
14. Promote the use of **sustainable infrastructure and green building design** in new development.
15. Undertake adaptation and mitigation measures to **prepare the community for the impacts of climate change.**

SECTION 4: GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Non-Conforming Standards

Non-conforming standards address how to treat land use, structures and other features of development that was legal when established, but are no longer permitted under current Land Use By-law regulations. These standards allow for certain “grandfathering” of nonconformities, while prohibiting or strictly limiting the expansion, renovation or reconstruction of the development. In accordance with Sections 238-242 of the *Municipal Government Act*, Town Council will accommodate legal non-conforming development, while establishing criteria and limitations for changes to said development in an effort to protect the overall interests of the community.

Policy G-1: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate non-conforming structures or uses in accordance with Sections 238 – 241 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Policy G-2: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit the recommencement of a non-conforming development that has been discontinued for a period of one (1) year or more.

4.2 Variance

Section 235 of the *Municipal Government Act* allows the Development Officer to grant variances in circumstances where a proposed development may not be able to meet the requirements of the Town’s Land Use By-law or a development agreement. A variance is a relaxation of certain zoning requirements where such variance will not be contrary to the public interest and where, owing to conditions peculiar to the property and not the result of the actions of the applicant, a literal enforcement of the zoning requirement would result in unnecessary and undue hardship.

Policy G-3: It shall be a policy of Council to allow the Development Officer to grant variances in accordance with Sections 235-236 of the *Municipal Government Act* and the Land Use By-law.

4.3 Accessory Buildings & Structures

An accessory structure is a structure or building that is normally incidental, subordinate, secondary or ancillary to the main use, structure or building and is exclusively devoted to that main use, structure or building and located on the same property. Accessory structures may include but are not limited to storage buildings, warehouses, garages, pools, sheds, mechanical buildings, workshops, and gazebos. Town Council recognizes the demand and need for various accessory structures in town, but also recognizes the need to limit their impact on adjacent properties, particularly in residential



neighbourhoods. To address this, the permitted size of buildings accessory to residential development shall be correlated to the size of the lot. For example, the larger the lot the larger the accessory building may be.

In an effort to promote the use of affordable housing alternatives, and to promote the concept of “aging in place”, Town Council shall permit the use of accessory buildings as living units in residential neighbourhoods where the zoning so provides. Accessory structures may also be used for small-scale business uses permitted in all residential zones.

Policy G-4: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the use, size, number and location of accessory structures in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.4 Temporary Development

A variety of temporary uses and structures will be permitted in all zones when operated on a temporary basis. Examples range from model suites associated with development projects, large tents, markets, fairs, festivals and more. Also, Council shall relax permanent development standards temporarily at construction sites. Examples of this include structures and materials incidental to a construction project temporarily located at the site, or a second building being erected to replace the original before the original is demolished or removed. The types of temporary uses permitted shall vary according to zone type, to ensure that existing residential neighbourhoods are not adversely impacted.



Policy G-5: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the temporary uses and structures in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.5 Outdoor Storage & Display

Outdoor storage and display of goods, materials, and equipment associated with industrial and commercial zones could create a nuisance or may negatively affect the enjoyment of an incompatible abutting zone. As a result, the outdoor storage and display of goods shall be regulated through the abutting zone requirements of the Land Use by-law. Additionally, the open display of goods for sale, such as open markets, will not be permitted in residential zones except for display related to private garage or yard sales which happen on an occasional or infrequent basis.



Policy G-6: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the outdoor display and storage of goods and materials in all residential, commercial and all industrial areas, in accordance with the zoning provisions and the abutting zone requirements of the Land Use By-law.

4.6 Parking & Loading

4.6.1 Off-Street Parking Requirements

An effective transportation system in any urban area must be accompanied by sufficient capacity and variety of parking options for vehicle users. As a commercial service centre, Bridgewater businesses rely on effective and accessible parking infrastructure to accommodate the needs of clients and shoppers. Town Council recognizes the need to require minimum off-street parking requirements for all land use types to help ensure convenient access to businesses and shops, and to minimize parking and traffic impacts on adjacent properties and neighbourhoods.



Town Council wishes to diversify its transportation systems and infrastructure to support increased walking and cycling. One way to support bicycling behaviour is to provide bicycle racks, or bicycle parking, in more locations to better accommodate cyclists. To achieve this, minimum bicycle parking requirements shall be established for recreational, commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential development.



Policy G-7: It shall be a policy of Council to establish minimum off-street automobile parking requirements for all development permitted as-of-right, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-8: It shall be a policy of Council to establish minimum off-street bicycle parking requirements for recreational, commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential development permitted as-of-right, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-9: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that all developments permitted by site plan approval and development agreement include provisions for adequate automobile and bicycle parking to serve the development.

4.6.2 Cash In Lieu of Parking

Occasionally developers face site constraints that prevent them from providing all of the required off-street parking as part of a development proposal. Recognizing this, the *Municipal Government Act* provides municipalities with the authority to establish a process by which property owners can pay cash-in-lieu of parking required by the Land Use By-law. Cash-in-lieu of parking is the transfer of responsibility to provide parking from a property owner to the Town. Council shall use any money received from the developer to construct or maintain municipally owned parking or public transit facilities to serve the immediate area of the development for which the payment was made.

Policy G-10: It shall be a policy of Council to accept cash-in-lieu of required parking for all development, where the following requirements have been met and approved by Council, in accordance with the Land Use By-law:

- a) Monies collected through cash-in-lieu of parking shall reflect the true cost that would be incurred by the Town in providing public parking to serve the immediate area of the development;
- b) The applicant demonstrates that the provision of on-site parking is not physically possible; or that it would be more desirable to develop shared public parking facilities than to provide on-site parking; or that the approval will allow key planning objectives to be realized for the development and for the area as a whole; and
- c) The applicant demonstrates that the existing parking supply in the surrounding area can accommodate the on-site parking deficiency without undue adverse impacts on adjacent areas, in particular without significant spill-over of parking into residential areas.

4.6.3 Exemption from Off-Street Parking Requirements

The built form character in Bridgewater’s historic downtown is not conducive to providing separate off-street parking on individual lots. Instead, on-street parking and dedicated parking lots provide sufficient parking capacity for most merchants, visitors and residents in this location. In addition, minimum off-street parking requirements can increase development costs and make the resulting development (particularly housing) less affordable. In order to promote a more walkable downtown environment, and to help reduce development costs, many communities have begun reducing or eliminating off-street parking requirements, particularly in locations which are conducive to walking, suitable for affordable housing developments whose residents are less likely to own cars, and ideally, well served by public transit. Recognizing this, Town Council shall waive minimum parking requirements for new non-residential development in the historic downtown, and significantly reduce minimum parking requirements for new residential development.



Policy G-11: It shall be a policy of Council to waive all minimum off-street parking requirements for new non-residential development in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-12: It shall be a policy of Council to establish reduced off-street minimum parking requirements for residential development in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, of 0.5 parking spaces per residential unit, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.6.4 Loading Requirements

To ensure public safety, functionality and sound design, Council has established loading requirements for buildings which normally require dedicated receiving or loading. Accordingly, large multi-unit residential and most non-residential development involving the receipt or distribution of vehicles, materials, or merchandise, shall provide and maintain on the lot adequate space for loading and unloading in order to avoid undue interference with dedicated right-of-ways, driveways and aisles, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and off-street parking areas. Since the built form character in Bridgewater's historic downtown is not conducive to providing designated off-street loading areas, this requirement shall be waived in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone.



Policy G-13: It shall be a policy of Council to establish minimum off-street loading requirements for multi-unit residential, commercial, industrial and institutional development in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-14: It shall be a policy of Council to waive minimum off-street loading requirements for all new development located in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone.

4.6.5 Stacking & Queuing Requirements

As a regional service centre, Bridgewater is home to several drive-through services, most of which are restaurants. These facilities are aimed at automobile users and are designed for convenience. There is increasing awareness around some of the challenges presented to communities with drive-through facilities. Some of the challenges include:

- Impacts on surrounding uses, specifically on residential uses, resulting from noise, light, litter and odour concerns;
- Impacts on streetscapes, such as building separation from adjacent streets, which does not contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment;
- Impacts on the relationship between the stacking lane and site access points;



- Impacts on pedestrian safety resulting from potential traffic and circulation conflicts between the stacking lane, building entrance and parking areas;
- Increasing land area dedicated to impermeable, paved surfaces, which reduces opportunities for natural infiltration and increases “heat island” effect;
- Impacts on human health, obesity and chronic disease through the promotion of a fast food culture.

While Council recognizes the need to accommodate these types of facilities, Council wishes to regulate them in a manner that improves their functionality, design, and compatibility with adjacent land uses. By doing so, opportunities to maximize safety and efficiency of commercial land use and to improve the overall design and appearance of Bridgewater may be achieved.

Policy G-15: It shall be a policy of Council to establish design, setback, and screening requirements for stacking and queue lanes associated with all drive-through facilities in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, Group Commercial (C4) Zone, and the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.6.6 Design Standards for Parking Areas

Parking areas are intended to safely and efficiently accommodate vehicles. Council will achieve this by establishing minimum dimensions for vehicle parking stalls and spaces to ensure they are designed and sized effectively to accommodate the required number of vehicles. The design must include safe and efficient circulation routes and accommodate adequate access for fire rescue.

Parking areas also serve as public areas, and therefore, should be designed as such. Many commercial surface parking areas in Bridgewater are void of landscaping or greenery, which eliminates opportunities for natural infiltration and increases the need for costly stormwater infrastructure. Parking lots should be designed to have reduced paved areas, to minimize runoff problems, and to provide areas for trees and other vegetation. Well landscaped parking lots contribute positively toward the appearance and feel of a commercial area, as well as the environment.



Where possible, it is desirable to locate parking lots in rear yards or side yards away from public streets and hidden from view by a building. This helps to reserve valuable commercial street frontage for built form, while still maintaining parking capacity in the immediate vicinity. Council recognizes that this is not always feasible and in situations where parking abuts a street or another property, it is important that a landscaped buffer be provided to screen the parking area from the abutting use or street.

Policy G-16: It shall be a policy of Council to require all new parking lots consisting of four or more parking spaces to be constructed in accordance with minimum design and landscaping standards set out in the Land Use By-law, excluding those located in the Industrial (M1), Light Industrial (M2) and General Commercial (C5) Zones.

Policy G-17: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage developers to locate singular or ancillary parking lots, consisting of four or more parking spaces, in rear yards or side yards away from public streets in all commercial zones, except in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone, and Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone, where this shall be required.

4.7 Landscaping

The use of plant materials has become a common element in most land use regulations, particularly with respect to perimeter buffers and parking lots. The establishment of turf, grading, planting of vegetation, installation of surfacing materials or walkways and driveways, constitute the basic elements of landscaping. Sensitive landscaping can reduce the negative impact of new development on nearby properties and can improve the living environment.



Well established turf and ground covers such as shrubs can prevent serious erosion and control dust. Hedges can screen unattractive elements such as storage and parking areas, and pavement or gravel will control dust when applied to driveways and parking lots. Landscaping is particularly important when site conditions require major alterations to the topography. Landscaping can also be an effective way to create a sense of entry or arrival into a building and to define and enliven public spaces.

Policy G-18: It shall be a policy of Council to require landscaping in all development subject to site plan approval and development agreement, in order to enhance or preserve the character of the areas, to provide screening and buffers, or to reduce conflict with surrounding land uses.

Policy G-19: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the use of native plant species and plants selected for their water efficiency in all landscaping proposals.

Policy G-20: It shall be a policy of Council to limit the area of impermeable surfaces in all residential development permitted as-of-right in order to reduce heat-island effect and to promote the natural infiltration of stormwater, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-21: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the development of green roofs as part of all commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential development, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.8 Fencing

Council recognizes the need for fencing in town for a variety of purposes, including privacy, screening, security and aesthetics. However, Council also recognizes that fencing can produce negative impacts if left completely unregulated. As a result, Council has established basic controls regarding the permitted height and location of fences as well as the use of electrified fences, barbed wire and other hazardous materials throughout town. In addition, self-latching fences around swimming pools are required. All regulations with respect to fencing are outlined in the Land Use By-law.



Policy G-22: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the height and location of fencing in all zones, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-23: It shall be a policy of Council to require fencing for the screening of storage areas that contain unsightly materials, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-24: It shall be a policy of Council to require fencing in any development permitted by site plan approval and development agreement, where Council believes fencing will help preserve the character of the area, provide necessary screening, or help to reduce potential conflicts with surrounding land uses.

4.9 Outdoor Lighting

Outdoor lighting, although necessary for safety and security reasons, can create a nuisance if it is improperly directed. Excessive outdoor lighting can also contribute to light pollution and increased energy use. Where lighting is proposed in a development, consideration will be given to the type and location of lighting and its proper installation to avoid interference with nearby properties.



Policy G-25: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the type and location of outdoor lighting in all new developments in order to minimize the energy used by lighting fixtures and reduce the impact lighting creates on properties in the surrounding area.

4.10 Signage

Signs and public displays of advertising are a component of many types of development. Signs have the potential for creating public nuisance and hazards. Most conventional signs are safe and acceptable. Others are considered to be either dangerous or incompatible with the character of the town. Signs are also a subject of frequent debate because they raise concerns about appearance, maintenance standards and compatibility with nearby architecture and neighbourhood character.

This Municipal Planning Strategy prohibits those forms of advertising displays which are most likely to create hazards or nuisances. As a result, Town Council intends to regulate signage to help ensure traffic safety and to promote positive community aesthetics by establishing minimum height, design and location requirements to ensure Bridgewater projects a tidy and attractive appearance.



Policy G-26: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit signs that create hazards to traffic or pedestrians, constitute a public nuisance, or are incompatible with the character of Bridgewater, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-27: It shall be a policy of Council to regulate the height, maximum area, illumination and location of signs throughout the town in order to minimize hazards and nuisances, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-28: It shall be a policy of Council to control the impact of signs on the landscape, streetscape and skyline; and ensure that the nature, size and location of signs permitted in the various zones are appropriate and compatible with the character of the areas within those zones, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

4.11 Telecommunications Infrastructure

Industry Canada is the federal licensing authority for all forms of telecommunication facilities. Health Canada provides advice on safe levels of exposure to radio frequency fields to Industry Canada. Industry Canada requires that all radio stations/communications towers are operated within the guidelines established by Health Canada. The Federal Government does recognize that municipalities may have an interest in the location of antenna structures and has therefore instituted a policy to allow for community review and comment. The intent is that municipal concerns may be taken into consideration when determining whether to issue a license or any conditions that may be imposed.

In an effort to inform citizens and landowners of any such proposed infrastructure within town limits, upon notification of intent of the proponent to construct such utilities, the Town will notify all adjacent landowners and advise them of the proposal details, the proponent, and the Federal agency responsible for regulating the industry.

Policy G-29: It shall be a policy of Council to notify landowners within 305m (1,000ft) of the location of a proposed communications facility with the following information:

- a) The intent of the proponent; and
- b) The relevant details of the proposal; and
- c) The contact information for the Federal authorities responsible for regulating the proposed infrastructure; and
- d) The procedure involved in processing such applications; and
- e) Details on how the general public can influence the decision making process.

Policy G-30: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage co-location of various communications infrastructure on existing and new towers as an option rather than construction of additional single-antenna towers, and to reduce the number of such structures needed in the future.

Policy G-31: It shall be a policy of Council to discourage the development of new commercial telecommunication towers and associated infrastructure in residential zones and in Bridgewater’s downtown area.

4.12 Small-Scale Wind Turbines

As global energy demands change and costs increase, municipalities must strive to adapt and provide more opportunities for renewable energy generation. One common source of renewable energy in Nova Scotia is wind power generation. Communities in Nova Scotia with good wind resources are being approached more frequently by entities with plans to develop the resource. Although these opportunities can create new revenue in the form of construction jobs and land lease payments, they also create a new responsibility on the part of local governments to create regulations for the wind turbine installations that are consistent with the community’s interests.



While Bridgewater’s geographic location and wind characteristics are not currently regarded as being ideal for wind power generation, it is still possible that proponents will seek approval for small-scale wind turbine installations in the future, particularly as wind power generation technology evolves and the cost of fossil fuel based energy increases. Bridgewater recognizes both the economic and environmental benefits associated with wind energy generation, and has therefore established a regulatory approach through the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to regulate small-scale wind generation.

Town Council has developed policies to regulate mini (up to 1 kW) and small-scale (2-100 kW) wind turbines in town, subject to size, location, setback, noise and maintenance requirements, established to protect its citizens' safety and quality of life. Wind turbines in excess of 100 kW capacity shall not be permitted in Bridgewater given the increased potential for land use conflicts in a growing urban context.

Policy G-32: It shall be a policy of Council to permit "mini" wind turbines, with a maximum of capacity of 1 kilowatt per turbine, as-of-right in all zones, subject to the size, location, setback, noise, and maintenance requirements of the Land Use By-law.

Policy G-33: It shall be a policy of Council to permit "small-scale" wind turbines, with a maximum of capacity of 2 - 100 kilowatts per turbine, as-of-right in only the following zones, subject to the size, location, setback, noise, and maintenance requirements of the Land Use By-law:

- a) Industrial (M1) Zone;
- b) Light Industrial (M2) Zone;
- c) Agricultural (AG) Zone;
- d) Recreation (REC) Zone; and
- e) Institutional (I1) Zone; and
- f) Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone; and
- g) Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone

Policy G-34: It shall be a policy of Council to require the submission of the following documentation to the Town with any development permit application for a “small-scale” wind turbine, as defined in the Land Use By-law:

- a) A scaled plan clearly indicating the height and design configuration of proposed facility;
- b) The manufacturer’s information including type of turbine, rotor diameter, maximum rated output capacity, and Canadian Safety Association certification;
- c) Site plans showing the location of the proposed site and proposed tower and equipment, dimensions of the proposed site and setbacks from all property lines, topography, location and proximity of roadways and proposed access to the site, distance to residential areas and/or other structures, existing and proposed vegetation, fencing, and security measures;
- d) Written confirmation that the proposed wind turbine will not affect television, telephone, or other forms of electronic equipment in the surrounding area;
- e) Written confirmation that the proposed wind turbine has been reviewed by Transport Canada or that the proposed structure does not require approvals from Transport Canada;
- f) Graphic representation of the proposed wind turbine(s) indicating the potential visual impact of the wind turbine on surrounding properties and from various vantage points throughout the Town;
- g) Any other information deemed necessary by the Town to evaluate the application.

Policy G-35: It shall be a policy of Council to notify all landowners within 150 metres (492 feet) of the property for which a development permit has been issued for a “small-scale” wind turbine(s).

SECTION 5: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Background

Bridgewater has been a popular residential community for over a century due to the town's attractive location and role as a regional service centre. While many rural Nova Scotian communities have struggled with population and economic decline in recent years, Bridgewater has enjoyed steady growth since the 1970s. Some of this growth can be attributed to the addition of large employers, including Michelin and the South Shore Regional Hospital. In more recent years, Bridgewater has experienced significant population growth in the older age cohorts, in part due to the diverse housing choices, services and amenities available in the community. Bridgewater has also benefitted from its proximity to Halifax, which remains the largest urban centre in the region.

By the early 20th Century, the west side of Bridgewater emerged as the dominant residential area in town. The oldest residential neighbourhoods were primarily comprised of single detached dwellings, many of which remain to this day. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a notable shift in Bridgewater's residential development patterns. Most new residential development occurred on the east side of town, where new forms of housing – including manufactured housing and multi-unit apartment buildings – began to emerge. This shift resulted in a supply of new non-traditional housing types which catered to people with different housing needs. Today, Bridgewater enjoys a diverse composition of housing types and styles, which includes an ample supply of single-unit dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, townhouses, apartment buildings, condominium development, manufactured homes, and various forms of seniors housing.

Council is committed to supporting continued residential growth in Bridgewater where the housing needs of all people may be met. Council will support this by continuing to accommodate a range of housing options and densities which are supported by the town's service infrastructure. Council will also create policies that help improve the appearance, diversity, functionality and overall liveability of residential neighbourhoods to strengthen Bridgewater's reputation as a thriving residential centre.

5.2 Residential Development Objectives

5.2.1 Encourage Residential Growth

Population growth rates for Bridgewater have remained positive for several decades. In 1991, the population of Bridgewater was 7,245 people. By 2011, the population had grown by almost 14% to 8,241. Bridgewater's population pyramid generally resembles those of other rural communities that have a large percentage of seniors and a declining labour force and youth population. As the baby-boomers age, the percentage of seniors will increase, along with the demand for healthcare services and seniors housing. Barring unforeseen changes, continued in-migration and population growth in Bridgewater is anticipated until the 2030s. In consideration of this anticipated growth, Council recognizes the need for planned residential development where diverse housing options shall be accommodated to help meet the community's changing housing needs.

Policy R-1: It shall be a policy of Council to identify areas where residential development will be encouraged and accommodated, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law, to ensure that Bridgewater's growth occurs in a well-planned manner and is supported by the town's service infrastructure.

Policy R-2: It shall be a policy of Council to control land use and development in a manner that will minimize conflicts between land uses, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

5.2.2 Accommodate a Full Range of Housing Options

With steady population growth and changing demographics comes an increased demand for new and diverse housing. Despite Bridgewater's population growth over the last 10 years, the community has actually experienced a decline in the average number single unit dwelling starts constructed annually during that time. Between 2001-2004, Bridgewater saw an average of 51 single unit dwelling starts per year. Between 2008-2011, that number had dropped to an average of 23 single unit dwelling starts per year. However, in recent years, Bridgewater has experienced some notable growth in the development of semi-detached dwelling units and apartment units. Assumed factors in this shift in development is the growing need for affordable, convenient and specialized housing for an aging market. While the demand for development of single unit dwellings is expected to remain steady, the market for other compact housing options is expected to grow. As a result, Council recognizes the need to plan for a broad range of housing styles and options, through both strategic and flexible land use planning policies.



Council recognizes that Bridgewater is in need of more affordable housing options. According to Statistics Canada (2006), the average income of Bridgewater's households was 16% lower than the average Nova Scotia household. Statistics Canada also reports on housing affordability, which is measured by the number of households spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs. In 2006, approximately 26.8% of Bridgewater households were spending more than this threshold on housing costs. When looking specifically at renters, this figure jumps to an alarming 51%, which is greater than similarly sized municipalities in the province. While the Town does not have the resources to develop affordable housing itself, Council has established planning policies to help support the diversification of housing options and therefore housing affordability, and will also incentivize the development of subsidized affordable housing units through bonus zoning.

Policy R-3: It shall be a policy of Council to support a full range of housing options and styles in order to meet the diverse residential needs and preferences of all residents, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-4: It shall be a policy of Council to permit an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density provisions in the following zones, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town’s definition of affordable housing:

- a) Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone;
- b) Downtown Residential (R4) Zone;
- c) Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone;
- d) High Density Residential (R6) Zone;
- e) LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone;
- f) Urban Commercial (C3) Zone; and
- g) Group Commercial (C4) Zone.

5.2.3 Promote Community Health

Today, decision makers are more aware that significant health issues, including obesity, heart disease, mental health, social isolation, bad nutrition and poor air quality, have worsened as a result of poor community planning decisions. Studies show that engaging in regular physical activities, such as walking and cycling, can yield a range of benefits for people of all ages and capabilities, from improved physical and mental well-being to reductions in health-related costs. Building on existing health and social-related strategies, municipal planning, design and development policies and programs can guide the development of our built environments, including buildings, transportation networks, green spaces, public realms, natural systems and all the other spaces that make up a community, towards results that: a) increase participation in physical and social activities; b) reduce the social risks and costs of preventable diseases, injuries and fatalities; c) decrease soaring direct and indirect public and private health-care spending; and d) shift health-related savings to other community priorities.

Council is committed to supporting the development of healthy neighbourhoods, which promote opportunities for walking and cycling. This will be achieved through the promotion of efficient development patterns and the development of a range of active transportation infrastructure on existing and future streets. These policies help demonstrate the Town’s commitment to improving community health through sound planning and community design.

Policy R-5: It shall be a policy of Council to require the integration of sidewalks, pedestrian connections and bicycle parking in all multi-unit residential development projects permitted by site plan approval and development agreement, to support increased walking and bicycling behaviour.

Policy R-6: It shall be a policy of Council to limit the size of future residential street blocks, in accordance with the Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications, to promote efficient development patterns and a walkable, permeating transportation network.

Policy R-7: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit the development of new cul-de-sacs and dead-ends to improve traffic flow and neighbourhood walkability, except where geographical or environmental constraints require them, in accordance with the Land Use By-law, Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications.

Policy R-8: It shall be a policy of Council to establish minimum on-site amenity space requirements in the Land Use By-law for all multi-unit residential development consisting of five or more units.

5.2.4 Increase Residential Density

Research shows that compact development helps to diversify the housing supply, maximize the use of expensive municipal service infrastructure and facilitate active transportation behavior. High density residential development offers several economic benefits as well, as this type of housing is normally less expensive to construct per unit, and is therefore sold or rented at lower price points. Also, increasing compact housing options near commercial areas has also been shown to boost economic prosperity, as it helps to limit the distance that people have to travel to access goods and services. Recognizing this, Council will encourage compact housing options and increased residential densities in close proximity to the downtown core, and in other strategic areas of Bridgewater where the existing context and service infrastructure can support higher density development.



Policy R-9: It shall be a policy of Council to promote residential densification in strategic areas of Bridgewater, in accordance with the Zoning Map and the Land Use By-law.

5.2.5 Encourage Infill Development

Residential infill development involves the construction of a residential project on a lot that is vacant or underutilized, and which usually has direct access to existing municipal services. The Town wishes to support residential infill development where it is compatible within its existing context. Infill development not only promotes the efficient use of land, road infrastructure, and services, but it can only help to revitalize underperforming areas of town and improve the appearance of public streetscapes and the quality of built form.



Policy R-10: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage context sensitive residential infill development which is compatible with surrounding land uses, maximizes existing municipal infrastructure and helps enhance the appearance of the public streetscape.

5.2.6 Mix Compatible Land Uses

Mixed-use development includes two or more uses within a project, such as neighbourhood commercial uses in portions of a residential project. Mixed-use development also helps improve people’s access to basic services (e.g., food stores, drug stores, personal service shops, etc.), increases design options, and creates opportunities for pedestrian-oriented design. Recognizing these benefits, Council shall support limited mixed-use development certain commercial zones, including the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, as discussed in Section 6 of this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Town Council will also continue to permit home based business uses in all of Bridgewater’s residential zones. The changing needs of our work force coupled with technological advancements have resulted in increased demand to work from home. To foster home based business growth in Bridgewater, and to support greater diversity and walkability within neighbourhoods, Town Council will continue to accommodate certain home based businesses in all residential neighbourhoods where the use is secondary to the primary residential use. The types of uses, and their size and intensity, will be limited to minimize impacts to the surrounding residential areas.



Policy R-11: It shall be a policy of Council to permit compatible home based business uses in all residential neighbourhoods where they are secondary to the existing primary residential use, in an effort to diversify the local economy, improve people’s access to goods and services, and to reduce people’s reliance on the automobile.

5.3 Low Density Residential Designation

The Low Density Residential Designation identifies all lands on Map 2 - Future Land Use which are reserved for single unit and semi-detached residential development. Low density residential areas are desirable for a large segment of the population because they tend to elicit a strong sense of community which is derived from its “neighbourhood feel”, or the traditional view of what a neighbourhood should be. Low density housing is, by nature, more sensitive to surrounding land uses and future development, particularly larger-scale development and loud and busy land uses. This designation provides protection against new land use development that is inconsistent with low density development, to ensure that the established sense of community is maintained for years to come. While Council



encourages the development of a diverse range of housing options throughout Bridgewater the low density residential designation will be reserved for single-unit dwellings and semi-detached dwellings permitted in the Single Unit Residential (R1) and Two Unit Residential (R2) Zones respectively. There will also be limited opportunities for non-residential development on collector and arterials streets by development agreement.

Policy R-12: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Low Density Residential the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

5.3.1 Single Unit Residential (R1) Zone

Single unit dwellings have been Bridgewater’s preferred housing choice since the town’s earliest development, continuing through to post World War II residential subdivisions and into the present day. While housing preferences have diversified significantly in recent years, many local residents still choose to live in traditional neighbourhoods that are predominately occupied by single unit dwellings. To accommodate this, Council has established the Single Unit Residential (R1) Zone and associated zone standards to preserve the general character and function of this type of development.

Policy R-13: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Single Unit Residential (R1) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

The conversion of dwellings built prior to August 27, 1975, to two units will be allowed. This is the date of the first land use controls introduced in Bridgewater, and Council feels that dwellings constructed before this date should enjoy a degree of latitude not extended to those constructed after the introduction of such controls. In addition, permitting these conversions will help to diversify the use of the older building stock, and may serve to promote the concept of “aging in place” for Bridgewater’s aging population base.

Policy R-14: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Single Unit Residential (R1) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings; and
- b) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of two dwelling units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-15: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Single Unit Residential (R1) Zone:

- a) Proposals for inns in buildings constructed and located on the lot before August 27, 1975, in accordance with policy RDA-1.
- b) Proposals for offices in accordance with policy RDA-2;
- c) Proposals for institutional uses in accordance with policy RDA-3; and
- d) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4.

5.3.2 Two Unit Residential (R2) Zone

The Two Unit Residential (R2) Zone is established to set aside land which may accommodate semi-detached dwellings, single unit dwellings and the conversion of buildings established before August 27, 1975, to three units. The provision of two unit dwellings helps to provide alternatives to single unit dwellings at different price points to help meet different housing needs. Two unit dwellings are typically more efficient than single unit dwellings in terms of land use, material consumption and the use of municipal infrastructure. At the same time, these dwellings are compatible in several traditional residential neighbourhoods in Bridgewater given their similar function and general appearance. This zone is applied to most existing two unit dwellings in town in addition to several vacant serviced lots in existing residential neighbourhoods where Council deems two-unit development to be appropriate.

Policy R-16: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Two Unit Residential (R2) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-17: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Two Unit Residential (R2) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings; and
- c) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of three units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-18: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Two Unit Residential (R2) Zone:

- a) Proposals for inns in buildings constructed and located on the lot before August 27, 1975, in accordance with policy RDA-1;
- b) Proposals for offices in accordance with policy RDA-2;
- c) Proposals for institutional uses in accordance with policy RDA-3; and
- d) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4.

5.4 Comprehensive Residential Designation

The Comprehensive Residential Designation on Map 2 - Future Land Use Map identifies mostly vacant land that is intended for a range of residential housing types and densities. Council has established this “flexible” residential zone to accommodate Bridgewater’s evolving housing market, while also recognizing that successful contemporary neighbourhoods are often characterized by a mix of housing options and limited non-residential uses. Development in this zone will be permitted as-of-right, by site plan approval or by development agreement depending on the size and character of the development.



Policy R-19: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Comprehensive Residential the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

5.4.1 Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone

In consideration of Bridgewater’s role as a residential growth centre, Council has established the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone to ensure that most of the town’s undeveloped land outside of the downtown core will support future residential development. Since housing needs and preferences are constantly evolving, and because much of this land won’t be developed for quite some time, this zone has been established to accommodate a fairly broad range of residential uses. Single unit dwellings and semi-detached dwellings shall be permitted in this zone as-of-right, while higher density residential development shall be permitted through the site plan approval process to ensure thoughtful site design, or by development agreement to ensure the project minimizes negative impacts on nearby residents and land owners. In addition, the conversion of existing dwellings built prior to August 27, 1975, to two units will be allowed in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone.

While the dominant land use in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone shall remain residential, Council will consider modest commercial and institutional uses by development agreement where the applicant demonstrates the project will not adversely impact the surrounding neighbourhood. In the early 20th century, land uses were more integrated than today, enabling many people to walk to a corner store, school, or work. Where once walking to school as a child was the standard practice, today land uses and other changes in development patterns combine to make walking or bicycling the mode of transportation for less than 15% percent of all trips made by Bridgewater citizens. Council shall therefore support a complementary mix of land uses in this zone to help support the development of vibrant, diverse and healthy neighbourhoods.

Policy R-20: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-21: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments as-of-right in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings; and
- c) Residential conversion of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of two dwelling units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-22: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by site plan approval in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone:

- a) Proposals for multi-unit dwellings to a maximum of four units, which front on arterial and collector roads, in accordance with Map 4 - Street Classification and the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-23: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by development agreement in the Comprehensive Residential (R3) Zone:

- a) Proposals for single unit development as a collective development, two unit development as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development as a collective development, up to a maximum of 62 units per hectare (25 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- b) Proposals for multi-unit residential development consisting of more than four units, up to a maximum of 62 units per hectare (25 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- c) Proposals for multi-unit residential development in accordance with policy R-23 (a) and (b) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing;
- d) Proposals for office uses in accordance with policy RDA-2;
- e) Proposals for institutional uses in accordance with policy RDA-3;
- f) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4; and
- g) Proposals for restaurants within neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-5.

5.5 Medium Density Residential Designation

The Medium Density Residential Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all lands that support residential development of medium densities. Most of these lands are found adjacent to the historic downtown, including portions of Pleasant Street, Queen Street, and York Street. Several other parcels of land intended for this purpose are distributed throughout the west side of town. The intent of the Medium Density Residential Designation is to accommodate compact and more affordable housing options to meet the diverse housing needs of citizens. This designation allows a maximum of four units as-of-right, which provides housing choices that are unavailable as-of-right throughout the Low Density Residential Designation. The designation also allows Council to consider higher density residential development by development agreement where the design and performance of larger projects can be controlled to ensure negative land use impacts on surrounding areas are minimized.



Policy R-24: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Medium Density Residential the areas shown on Map 2, the Future Land Use Map.

This designation includes two distinct zones. The Downtown Residential (R4) Zone includes residential lands which abuts the downtown core on the west side of the LaHave River. This area is comprised of some of Bridgewater's oldest properties. In this area of town, Council has and will continue to allow homes to be converted into medium density development, in recognition that increased residential density near the downtown will help to promote walkability and improved accessibility to nearby shops, offices and amenities. Newer medium density residential development, including contemporary townhouse development, will be accommodated in Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone in strategic locations throughout Bridgewater.

5.5.1 Downtown Residential (R4) Zone

The Downtown Residential Zone is comprised of neighbourhoods adjacent to the historic downtown commercial district on King Street. The zone encompasses properties fronting on Queen Street and portions of Pleasant Street, York Street and King Street. This central residential area is regarded as one of Bridgewater's oldest and most distinguishable neighbourhoods. In the early 1900s, this neighbourhood consisted mostly of large single-unit residential dwellings occupied by single families, however, over the last several decades many older homes in this neighbourhood have converted to multiple units in response to the diversifying housing needs of the community. Council will continue to accommodate residential conversions of older homes in this area to a maximum of four units as-of-right to assist in meeting the community's housing needs, while also respecting the character of the existing built form.

The Downtown Residential Zone contains some of Bridgewater's most historically significant homes. Council believes the varied architectural styles and character defining elements of these buildings contribute significantly to Bridgewater's culture and identity. As a result, Council intends to preserve the exterior appearance of all pre-1920s

buildings in this zone through the administration of architectural controls in accordance with Section 13 of this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Policy R-25: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Downtown Residential (R4) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-26: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Downtown Residential (R4) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings; and
- c) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of four units, subject to specific requirements regarding location and parking established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-27: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments **by development agreement** in the Downtown Residential (R4) Zone:

- a) Proposals for inns in buildings constructed and located on the lot before August 27, 1975, in accordance with policy RDA-1;
- b) Single unit development as a collective development, two unit development as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development as a collective development, up to a maximum of 37 units per hectare (15 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- c) Proposals for multi-unit residential development up to a maximum of 37 units per hectare (15 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- d) Proposals for residential development in accordance with policy R-27 (b) and (c) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing;
- e) Proposals for offices in accordance with policy RDA-2;
- f) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4; and
- g) Proposals for restaurants within neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-5.

5.5.2 Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone

The medium density residential zone will be used by Council to help transition between lower and higher residential density development. This zone will also be applied to some vacant serviced land where Council wishes to promote residential infill development, and it will permit low density residential uses, such as one and two unit dwellings, in

addition to three and four unit dwellings as-of-right. Denser housing options, or multi-unit development exceeding four units to a maximum of 15 units per acre, may only be considered in this zone by development agreement where the applicant demonstrates the proposal will not adversely impact the surrounding area.

Policy R-28: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-29: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings;
- c) Multi-unit dwellings to a maximum of four units;
- d) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of five dwelling units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-30: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments **by development agreement** in the Medium Density Residential (R5) Zone:

- a) Inns in buildings established before August 27, 1975, in accordance with policy RDA-1;
- b) Single unit development as a collective development, two unit development as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development as a collective development, up to a maximum of 37 units per hectare (15 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- c) Proposals for multi-unit residential development up to a maximum of 37 units per hectare (15 units per acre) in accordance with policy IM-6;
- d) Proposals for residential development in accordance with policy R-30 (b) and (c) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing;
- e) Proposals for offices in accordance with policy RDA-2;
- f) Proposals for institutional uses in accordance with policy RDA-3;
- g) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4; and
- a) Proposals for restaurants within neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-5.

5.6 High Density Residential Designation

The High Density Residential Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all lands which are intended for Bridgewater's densest form of residential development. This designation applies to many different properties in town, including select lands along the periphery of the downtown where higher densities are encouraged, in transitional areas between commercial and residential land uses, and in other residential areas where a mix of residential densities is expected to contribute positively to the character and functionality of the neighbourhood.



Policy R-31: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as High Density Residential the areas shown on Map 2, the Future Land Use Map.

5.6.1 High Density Residential (R6) Zone

The High Density Residential Zone identifies lands that are intended for the most intensive multiple unit residential development permitted in town. The use and application of this zone has grown significantly since the Town's 1997 Planning Review, as residents continue to demand more convenient and affordable housing options. Town Council believes that it's necessary to encourage greater residential densities in strategic areas, particularly near the downtown, to meet changing housing needs and to bring residents closer to key commercial districts.

In the High Density Residential Zone, developers will be permitted to construct multi-unit residential dwellings as-of-right up to a maximum of 25 units per hectare (10 units per acre). Should developers wish to build high-density projects between 28 - 50 units per hectare (11 - 20 units per acre), they will be required to obtain site plan approval from the Development Officer. The site plan approval process will require the applicant to meet specific design criteria, including requirements for the location of structures on a lot, location of off-street parking, landscaping, pedestrian infrastructure, signage and more. The densest form of residential development, including development consisting of 53 - 75 units per hectare (21 - 30 units per acre), will be considered by Council by development agreement. This process ensures the highest level of development review and land use control for some of the densest housing projects in Bridgewater. Town Council believes these different processes are necessary to ensure that the benefits of compact development are fully realized and any potential negative impacts are minimized.

Policy R-32: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a High Density Residential (R6) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-33: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the High Density Residential (R6) Zone:

- a) Dwellings containing a maximum of 25 units per hectare (10 units per acre);
- b) Proposals for residential development in accordance with policy R-33 (a) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing; and
- c) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of five units, subject to specific requirements regarding location and parking established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-34: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **by site plan approval** in the High Density Residential (R6) Zone:

- a) Dwellings containing between 26 – 50 units per hectare (11 – 20 units per acre), in accordance with the site plan criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Proposals for residential development in accordance with policy R-34 (a) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing.

Policy R-35: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments **by development agreement** in the High Density Residential (R6) Zone:

- a) Dwellings containing between 51 - 75 units per hectare (21 - 30 units per acre), in accordance with policy IM-6;
- b) Single unit development as a collective development, two unit development as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development up to a maximum of 26 - 75 units per hectare (11 - 30 units per acre), in accordance with policy IM-6; and
- c) Proposals for residential development in accordance with policy R-35 (a) and (b) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing.

5.7 Manufactured Residential Home Designation

The Manufactured Residential Home Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all areas that are suitable for manufactured residential dwellings. Factory-built housing describes any structure designed as a residential dwelling that is built primarily off-site. Factory-built housing consists of three main types: manufactured homes, modular homes and mobile homes. Affordability is a key factor in the growth of manufactured housing, as it typically costs from 10-35% less than traditional site-built housing.

A “land leased community” is described as land under single ownership on which homes are leased to individual home owners who retain customary leasehold rights. Bridgewater is home to four such land leased communities: Eisnor’s Trailer Park on St. Phillips Street, Eisenhower Place located on the east side of North Street, and the newest land leased communities, LaHave Heights I & II, located on west side of North Street. This designation also includes significant undeveloped land on the east side of North Street, which is expected to be developed as new land leased communities in the coming years.

Policy R-36: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Manufactured Residential Home the areas shown on Map 2, the Future Land Use Map.

5.7.1 Manufactured Residential Home (R7) Zone

Over the last several decades there has been a steady demand for “mini homes” in Bridgewater - a form of manufactured housing - which is attributed to a demand for convenient and affordable housing. Most of Bridgewater’s manufactured housing is located in two land-leased communities, LaHave Heights and Eisenhower Place, located on the west and east sides of North Street respectively. Manufactured homes are an important source of affordable housing, and overtime, they’ve become a viable housing alternative for a large segment of the population, including seniors and young families. Nationally, manufactured housing accounts for approximately 3% of all housing starts.



While manufactured homes provide benefits, many residents believe they have a negative impact on established neighbourhoods due to their physical appearance and the perception that they negatively impact nearby property values. Recognizing the benefits of this form of housing, Council intends to permit manufactured homes within designated land leased communities, or in areas where manufactured homes are the prevalent form of housing. This type of housing shall not be permitted in other residential zones to eliminate the potential for land use conflicts. For all matters concerning land leased communities, reference must also be made to the Land Leased Community By-law.

Policy R-37: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Manufactured Residential Home (R7) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy R-38: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Manufactured Residential (R7) Zone:

- a) Land leased communities;
- b) Single unit dwellings, including “mini homes” without a permanent foundation and with a footprint width of 6m (20ft) or less; and
- c) Two unit dwellings, including “mini homes” without a permanent foundation and with a footprint width of 6m (20ft) or less per unit.

Policy R-39: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Manufactured Residential (R7) Zone:

- a) Proposals for inns in buildings constructed and located on the lot before August 27, 1975, in accordance with policy RDA-1;
- b) Proposals for offices in accordance with policy RDA-2; and
- c) Proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores in accordance with policy RDA-4.

5.8 Residential Development Agreement Policies

Policy RDA-1: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for inns by development agreement:

- a) The proposed use fronts on an arterial or collector street as designated on Map 4 - Street Classification Map;
- b) The use is located in a building constructed before August 27, 1975;
- c) The maximum number of rental rooms in the building is ten;
- d) Any associated dining room is not open to the public unless there are a minimum of six rental rooms within the building; and
- e) Development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

Policy RDA-2: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for offices by development agreement:

- a) The use is in an area influenced by a substantial, well-defined, and long established non-residential land use component;
- b) The maximum floor area within the building, used for office space does not exceed 400m² (4,306ft²); and
- c) Development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

Policy RDA-3: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for institutional developments by development agreement:

- a) The proposed use is located on an arterial or collector street as designated on Map 4 - Street Classification; and
- b) Development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

- Policy RDA-4:** It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores by development agreement:
- a) The proposed use is located on an arterial or collector street as designated on Map 4 - Street Classification, excluding all dead-ends and cul-de-sacs;
 - b) The proposed use is located on a corner lot;
 - c) The maximum commercial floor area within the building used for display and sales does not exceed 93m² (1,001ft²);
 - d) Parking areas and driveways are hard surfaced or otherwise surfaced with stable material that will not generate dust;
 - e) Signs are modest in size and do not include any flashing or pulsating lighted elements or any movable parts;
 - f) The primary service area for the use is the immediate residential area in which the neighbourhood commercial use is located;
 - g) The proposed use will not have a negative effect on nearby properties as a result of noise or the generation of litter; and
 - h) Development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

- Policy RDA-5:** It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for restaurants within neighbourhood grocery and convenience stores by development agreement:
- a) All access and egress for the business is from an arterial or collector street as designated on Map 4 - Street Classification;
 - b) The maximum floor area used for the restaurant including kitchen facilities does not exceed 40% of the commercial floor area of the neighbourhood grocery or convenience store;
 - c) The restaurant may include a maximum of six seats for in-restaurant service. The area of the seating shall be included within the 40% designated under (b) above; and
 - d) Development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

SECTION 6: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Background

Thanks to the community's unique location and proximity to vast natural resources, Bridgewater has been a regional trade and service hub in the South Shore of Nova Scotia for the last 150 years. While local commerce was originally modest, Bridgewater's reputation as a bustling commercial and industrial centre grew during the late 1800s and early 1900s, and soon after, the Town received the moniker, the "Main Street of the South Shore". While much has changed over the years, the town's commercial presence hasn't diminished. Today, Bridgewater offers a diverse complement of local and regional commercial services, including wholesale and retail, business and professional services, and accommodation and food services.

As a regional service hub, commercial uses are present throughout town, but the central and most identifiable commercial area of Bridgewater is the downtown. The historic downtown, which was established in the late 1800s along King Street, houses a number of historic buildings which accommodate a mix of small to medium sized businesses. Consistent with many historic main streets on the East Coast, King Street includes buildings ranging from 2-3 storeys in height, compact lot areas, and minimal building setbacks. Another identifiable part of the downtown is the LaHave Street commercial district, which is characterized by larger format commercial uses, including the Bridgewater Mall, the East Side Plaza, Empire Theatres and the Atlantic Superstore.

Recognizing the need to lead and support revitalization efforts in the downtown, in April 2013, Town Council approved in principle Bridgewater's Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (Ekistics Planning & Design). This comprehensive Master Plan outlines diverse strategies for improving municipal infrastructure, public spaces, programming and municipal planning policy to guide development in Bridgewater's core for decades. Through the Master Plan process, Town Council and the community expressed a strong desire to support and maintain a healthy, vibrant downtown in order to attract and sustain commercial and residential development and investment, and a range of year-round activities for residents and visitors. As a result of the master planning process, several of the recommendations from the Master Plan study are integrated into this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Other important commercial areas in Bridgewater include: a) the Bridgewater Plaza area, which includes several larger format commercial buildings, comparable to the existing plaza development on the east side of the LaHave River; b) the North Street / Aberdeen Road corridor, which is comprised of range of general commercial uses, including car dealerships, storage facilities, offices, and whole sale retailers; and c) Dufferin Street, which consists mainly of older dwellings that have been converted into professional offices.

6.2 Commercial Development Objectives

6.2.1 Enhance Role as a Regional Employment & Service Centre

Bridgewater is the primary employment and service centre in the South Shore. The town's role as a central service hub is a defining characteristic for the community, and the continued health of the commercial sector is paramount to the community's well-being and economic prosperity. Recognizing this, Council remains committed to enhancing Bridgewater's role as a service centre by fostering new business growth and investment, which provide job opportunities and helps to diversify commercial services for citizens.

Policy C-1: It shall be the policy of Council to establish future land use designations in the Municipal Planning Strategy and land use zones in the Land Use By-law to accommodate a range of commercial uses and community services in strategic locations of Bridgewater.

Policy C-2: It shall be the policy of Council to support organizations whose strategic economic development efforts encourage commercial investment and growth in Bridgewater, where said efforts are consistent with and complementary to the Town's long-term planning goals.

6.2.2 Mix Compatible Land Uses

Council has expressed their desire to support compatible mixed-use development in strategic commercial areas of Bridgewater. Accommodating a variety of mixed residential-commercial development in and near the downtown will give residents the option to live close to retail services where they shop, offices where they work, public open spaces where they spend their leisure time, and other public services and institutions that they visit regularly. Mixing compatible land uses can also help to create walkable neighbourhoods, thereby maximizing existing infrastructure and reducing automobile dependency. Council will encourage



responsible mixed-use development in several commercial zones, where conditions are deemed compatible for residential habitation. Stand-alone residential development will be permitted in select commercial zones where the prominence and functionality of the commercial area is not compromised, and where there is minimal potential for land use conflicts.

Policy C-3: It shall be a policy of Council to permit mixed commercial/residential development in all commercial areas, excluding the General Commercial (C5) Zone, the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone, and the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

6.2.3 Minimize Negative Impacts

While mixed-use development is an option in certain locations of Bridgewater, Council recognizes that it's not appropriate for all situations. For example, negative impacts may result when large-scale commercial development is introduced into established low-density residential neighbourhoods, including changes to traffic patterns and volumes and noise levels. To minimize these and other potential land use conflicts, Council will limit the development of significant commercial development within neighbourhoods where the predominant character is residential, in accordance with the Land Use By-law. Some exceptions to this shall be considered in accordance with the Limited Commercial Designation policies of this Strategy, and the small-scale business provisions outlined in the Land Use By-law. In addition, Council will require buffering (e.g., building setbacks, vegetative buffers, fencing, etc.) where new commercial development borders with existing residential neighbourhoods, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-4: It shall be the policy of Council to control land use and development in a manner that will minimize conflicts between land uses and in a manner that is compatible with the Town’s service infrastructure.

Policy C-5: It shall be the policy of Council to establish minimum abutting yard setbacks and buffer requirements to minimize potential land use conflicts where new commercial development abuts existing residential areas and parks, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

6.2.4 Promote Compact Commercial Development

Council wishes to encourage efficient compact development in commercial areas to capitalize on the economic, social and environmental benefits it provides. Increased density in commercial areas results in more shops, offices and services within a given land area, helping bolster the local economy. Compact form supports walkable and vibrant environments, and helps to reduce inefficient land development and sprawl. Some commercial areas of Bridgewater, including the historic downtown, include vacant or underutilized buildings and land which could be better used for commercial or community service uses. The development of these sites would help improve the appearance of the downtown and increase commercial activity. One of the greatest benefits of compact development is that it helps to maximize the use of existing and future infrastructure, thereby reducing the cost burden for the municipality and taxpayers.



Policy C-6: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the development of compact urban form, adaptive reuse and infill development in the downtown, and other strategic commercial areas of Bridgewater, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

6.2.5 Foster Attractive Commercial Development

Council wishes to foster attractive commercial development because it enhances the vibrancy of commercial streets and the business located on them. While this is encouraged for all development in Bridgewater, Council has established specific urban design requirements to be addressed in all development proposals that abut King Street in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone. These design controls will help to ensure that the key physical attributes of the built form – including street walls, building heights and the location of main entrances on King Street – are consistent and contribute positively to the public streetscape. Council has also established several basic urban design requirements in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone to ensure that new development contributes positively to the public streetscape.

Policy C-7: It shall be the policy of Council to encourage attractive commercial development which contributes positively to the appearance of streetscapes and vistas throughout Bridgewater.

Policy C-8: It shall be the policy of Council to regulate the design and appearance of all new commercial development permitted through the development agreement process and site plan approval process, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-9: It shall be the policy of Council to adopt urban design requirements for the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone, and the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone to enhance the arrangement, appearance and functionality of the area.

6.2.6 Comprehensive Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan (2013)

In the summer of 2012, the Town hired Ekistics Planning & Design to undertake the development of a Comprehensive Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan (2013) to identify strategic improvements in Bridgewater's downtown core. The Master Plan provides a vision for downtown Bridgewater's future, which was shaped by the community and local stakeholders. The comprehensive Master Plan includes several components, such as recommended policy changes, infrastructure improvements, programming and a community branding strategy, all of which are intended to guide the downtown's transformation in the years to come. Both Council and the community support the implementation of this Master Plan to ensure that the downtown reaches its full potential.



On April 15, 2013, Town Council approved the Master Plan in principle and approved the establishment of an advisory committee, comprised of strategic partners, staff and members of Council, which is responsible for exploring opportunities to implement the Master Plan. In the years ahead, Town Council and the Planning Department will be committed to engaging this committee to ensure their input is carefully considered with respect to any strategic policy changes, infrastructure improvements and programming initiatives in the downtown.

Policy C-10: It shall be the policy of Council to consider input from the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee on any significant strategic policy changes, infrastructure improvements and programming initiatives contemplated for the downtown, to ensure consistency with the principles and objectives of the Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (2013).

6.3 Downtown Commercial Designation

The Downtown Commercial Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all lands which are intended for commercial development in Bridgewater’s central business district in the future. This downtown area includes both the historic King Street area, the Bridgewater Mall, the East Side Plaza and other commercial areas located in the heart of Bridgewater, all in close proximity to the LaHave River.

Policy C-11: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Downtown Commercial the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

Within the downtown are both the historic King Street commercial area on the west side of the LaHave River, and various larger-scale commercial uses located off of LaHave Street on the east side of the LaHave River. Though both areas make up Bridgewater’s downtown, they are distinctly different in their commercial scale and character. In recognition of the distinct differences between these two areas in Bridgewater’s downtown, Town Council has established the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, as follows:

6.3.1 Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone

Historic King Street is the traditional commercial centre of Bridgewater, dating back to the early days of the town's settlement. This central commercial district offers a range of retail, professional, and service related businesses, as well as complementary residential development. Over the years this commercial core area has maintained much of its historic river-side charm while new development has added to its unique character.



As articulated in the Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (2013), prepared by Ekistics Planning & Design, Council would like to see King Street develop and grow as the cultural centre of town, complete with a walkable urban character, boutique-style shops featuring providers of niche goods and services, a range of leisure and recreation activities for people of all ages, and easy access to the LaHave River. The area should include features that allow people the opportunity to work, live, and partake in recreational activities in the downtown core. To achieve this, Council has established the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and related policies, designed to encourage commercial investment and intensification, to accommodate complementary residential development, and to promote sound urban design.

Policy C-12: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-13: It shall be a policy of Council to establish urban design requirements for all new development in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone to enhance and protect King Street's unique built form, pedestrian-friendly character and aesthetically pleasing streetscape, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-14: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, **up to a maximum of 185m² (1,991ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- c) Multi-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes; and
- d) Single-unit and two-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes.

Policy C-15: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone:

- a) Residential conversions of dwellings abutting all streets, excluding King Street, that were established before August 27, 1975, up to a maximum of five dwelling units, subject to specific requirements regarding location and parking established in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) New two and three unit dwellings on all streets, excluding King Street.

Policy C-16: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, **between 186m² (2,002ft²) and 465m² (5,005ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- c) Multi-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- d) Single-unit and two-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-17: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in excess of 465m² (5,005ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in excess of 465m² (5,005ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- c) Multi-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with Policy CDA-8;
- d) Multi-unit residential development exceeding three units, on all streets excluding King Street, in accordance with Policy CDA-6;
- da) Single-unit and two-unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in excess of 465m² (5,005ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with Policy CDA-10;
- e) Lounges and beverage rooms, additions to or extensions of established lounges, and beverage rooms and outdoor facilities associated with these developments in accordance with Policy CDA-2.

Policy C-18: It shall be a policy of Council to permit in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, the creation of lots without frontage which are served by a deeded right-of-way.

6.3.2 LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone

LaHave Street in Bridgewater's downtown is characterized by larger format, shopping-centre or commercial plaza style development, catering to both regional and local needs. Bridgewater's largest commercial destination is the Bridgewater Mall. The Mall was originally constructed in 1974, but a major expansion in 1988 shaped the mall into its present form. Accompanying the Mall on LaHave Street is the East Side Plaza, Empire Theatres, the Atlantic Superstore, and several other commercial services. This area of town is responsible for much of Bridgewater's commercial activity and economic success.



The eastern portion of the downtown is also capable of supporting higher density mixed-use development due to its proximity to a range of public services, abundance of surface parking, and connection to the LaHave River. Recognizing

this, Council has established the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone and related policies, designed to accommodate a wide range of larger format commercial development and intensification, and mixed-use development with active ground floor uses that relate to nearby public streetscapes.

Policy C-19: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-20: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, **up to a maximum of 1,400m² (15,069ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- c) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-21: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, **between 1,401m² (15,080ft²) and 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- c) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-22: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone:

- a) New drive-through facilities, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-23: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in excess of 4645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in excess of 4645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- c) Multi-unit residential development in excess of 4645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, with a maximum permitted density of up to 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre) where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law., in accordance with Policy CDA-7;
- d) Proposals for multi-unit residential development in accordance with C-23(c) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing; and
- e) Lounges and beverage rooms, additions to or extensions of established lounges and beverage rooms and outdoor facilities associated with these developments, in accordance with Policy CDA-2

Policy C-24: It shall be a policy of Council to permit in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone the creation of lots without frontage which are served by a deeded right-of-way.

6.4 General Commercial Designation

The General Commercial Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all lands which are intended for a broad range of commercial development along or close to major arterial streets in Bridgewater, outside the downtown core. Specifically, these areas include North Street, the western portion of Aberdeen Road, the Bridgewater Plaza area, the area around the northern exit at Exit 12A leading into the Bridgewater Business Park Expansion and portions of Victoria Road and Dufferin Street near Bridgewater's western municipal boundary.

Policy C-25: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as General Commercial the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

This designation includes North Street, which has become a major commercial artery in Bridgewater, where significant regional traffic volumes are experienced between Cookeville and Bridgewater's downtown area. Commercial development, and associated traffic, is expected to intensify on North Street in conjunction with anticipated residential, commercial, and institutional development on the east side of the river, and the continued growth of the entire community.

The lower or western portion of Aberdeen Road has also assumed a predominant commercial character. This area has transitioned into a commercial district primarily through the conversion of residential buildings. Consequently, this area has retained some of its original residential appearance. However, the broad mix of land uses, varied building setbacks and inconsistent lot depths in this area have resulted in disjointed development and an overall lack of identity. Like North Street, Aberdeen Road has also experienced a significant increase in traffic volume which can be attributed to the construction of the new bridge, which created a direct link between two major traffic arteries, Aberdeen Road and Victoria Road.

In 1959, the development of the first commercial area outside of Bridgewater’s downtown began near the top of Dufferin hill, on the site of the old Bridgewater race track. This development, now known as the Bridgewater Plaza, started with the construction of the town's first supermarket. This commercial area is characterized by larger-scale plaza-style development and extensive surface parking to accommodate local and regional traffic.

The new interchange at Exit 12A connects the existing Bridgewater Business Park with 125 acres of developable land. The intention is for the lands nearest the northern exit, along Highway 103, to develop to include a mixture of highway-oriented retail that caters to the travelling public. Light industrial and residential development is expected to intensify further inland once lands near Exit 12A are built out.

In recognition of the distinct commercial characters described above, Town Council has established the Urban Commercial (C3), the Group Commercial (C4), and the General Commercial (C5) Zones, and the Highway Commercial (C9) Zone, as follows:

6.4.1 Urban Commercial (C3) Zone

Several arterial streets leading into Bridgewater are defined by a range of large-scale, automobile-dependant land uses and development, as permitted in the General Commercial (C5) Zone. Specifically, the northern portion of North Street is currently defined by uses such as automobile and truck dealerships, service stations, and equipment rental and repair facilities. Some of these uses are more commonly associated with a “highway commercial” land use character. However, there is no legible transition of land use and built form between this larger-scale commercial area on the town’s periphery and the downtown core.



The creation of the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone is intended to promote a more compact and consistent commercial transition between the town’s edge and centre, by permitting a range of commercial and service uses that can be easily accessed by pedestrians and vehicles. This area, which generally includes land fronting on North Street (south of Haven Drive), lands which front on a portion of Aberdeen Road (west of North Street), and Port of Bridgewater lands on south LaHave Street, is intended to accommodate commercial development, mixed-use development, and multi-unit residential development which contributes to a more compact, urban character. Single, two-unit and townhouse residential development will not be permitted in this zone.

Policy C-26: It shall be the policy of Council to establish an Urban Commercial (C3) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-27: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, **up to a maximum of 930m² (10,010ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-27: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, **up to a maximum of 930m² (10,010ft²) in gross floor area:**

- c) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- d) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-28: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, **between 931m² (10,021ft²) and 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-29: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, **between 697m² (7,502ft²) and 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), where more than 30% of the ground floor is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-30: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone:

- a) New drive-through facilities, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.
- b) Nursing homes, up to 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area;
- c) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes, up to 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area;
- d) Rehabilitation and treatment centres, up to 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area;
- e) Emergency shelters, up to 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area; and
- f) Community living arrangements for persons with legal, emotional or mental problems, up to 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area.

Policy C-31: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in excess of 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in excess of 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- c) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), in accordance with Policy CDA-8; and
- d) Proposals for multi-unit residential development in accordance with C-31(c) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing.

Policy C-32: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone:

- a) Lounges and beverage rooms, additions to or extensions of established lounges and beverage rooms and outdoor facilities associated with these developments, in accordance with Policy CDA-2.
- b) Nursing homes, exceeding 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- c) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes, exceeding 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- d) Rehabilitation and treatment centres, exceeding 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- e) Emergency shelters, exceeding 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1; and
- f) Community living arrangements, exceeding 3,250m² (34,983ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1.

6.4.2 Group Commercial (C4) Zone

In 1959, the development of the first commercial area outside of the central commercial district began near the top of Dufferin Street, on the site of the old Bridgewater race track. This development, now known as the Bridgewater Plaza, started with the construction of the town's first supermarket. Today, the Bridgewater Plaza offers a range of larger-format commercial uses, including a grocery store, restaurants, retail goods and office space.

In 1973, the South Shore Mall was developed off of North Street, providing a mid-sized shopping centre on the east side of the LaHave River. While the South Shore Mall has since closed down, the location is currently being considered for large format office and retail development, and possibly mixed-use or multi-unit residential as well.

The Group Commercial (C4) Zone is intended to accommodate both larger format shopping and mixed-use development in strategic locations outside of the downtown core. Large-scale commercial development will continue to be encouraged in this zone, and new mixed-use and residential development will be accommodated under certain conditions. Large development projects in this zone must adhere to site plan or development agreement criteria, where emphasis will be placed on aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian-friendly urban design. Single, two-unit and townhouse residential development will not be permitted in this zone.



Policy C-33: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Group Commercial (C4) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-34: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Group Commercial (C4) Zone, **up to a maximum of 1,400m² (15,069ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-35: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **by site plan approval** in the Group Commercial (C4) Zone, **between 1,401m² (15,080ft²) and 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and

- c) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre), where more than 30% of the ground floor is used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-36: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **by site plan approval** in the Group Commercial (C4) Zone:

- a) New drive-through facilities, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.
- b) Self-storage facilities at PID 60031697, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.
- c) Nursing homes, up to 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area;
- d) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes, up to 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area;
- e) Rehabilitation and treatment centres, up to 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area;
- f) Emergency shelters, up to 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area; and
- g) Community living arrangements for persons with legal, emotional or mental problems, up to 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area.

Policy C-37: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Group Commercial (C4) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in excess of 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in excess of 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- c) Multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre), in accordance with Policy CDA-8;
- d) Proposals for multi-unit residential development in accordance with C-37(c) above, plus up to an additional 20% increase to the maximum permitted residential density, where 100% of those additional units meet the Town's definition of affordable housing; and
- e) Lounges and beverage rooms, additions to or extensions of established lounges and beverage rooms and outdoor facilities associated with these developments, in accordance with Policy CDA-2.
- f) Nursing homes, exceeding 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- g) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes, exceeding 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1;
- h) Rehabilitation and treatment centres, exceeding 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area;
- i) Emergency shelters, exceeding 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1; and
- j) Community living arrangements for persons with legal, emotional or mental problems, exceeding 5500m² (60,008ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1.

Policy C-38: It shall be a policy of Council to permit in the Group Commercial (C4) Zone the creation of lots without frontage which are served by a deeded right-of-way.

6.4.3 General Commercial (C5) Zone

Several commercial land uses rely on the visibility and ease of access enjoyed at high-volume traffic areas leading into Bridgewater. In particular, entryways into town on North Street and Dufferin Street, and to a lesser degree, Victoria Street, are currently characterized by uses such as automobile dealerships, automobile repairs, gas stations, equipment rental services, drive-through restaurants, and other similar uses. These areas will continue to support these types of developments, and therefore, Council shall accommodate them in the General Commercial (C5) Zone. However, given the high-traffic commercial character of these areas, the quality of the environment is not conducive for residential development and living. As a result, residential development in any form will not be permitted in this zone.

Policy C-39: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a General Commercial (C5) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-40: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the General Commercial (C5) Zone, **up to a maximum of 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-41: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the General Commercial (C5) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, in excess of 4645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1; and
- b) Institutional developments or additions to established institutional developments, in excess of 4645m² (49,998ft²) gross floor area, in accordance with Policy CDA-1.

6.5 Limited Commercial Designation

The Limited Commercial Designation on the Future Land Use Map identifies all lands which are intended for modest commercial operations in or near areas largely characterized by residential land use. Town Council believes neighbourhoods can become more diverse, walkable and therefore vibrant when some accommodation is made for small and complementary commercial development in close proximity to established residential areas, as identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy C-42: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Limited Commercial the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

6.5.1 Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone

Dufferin Street has evolved as a small but distinct commercial area in Bridgewater. This area is characterized by several small office and professional service related uses, most of which are located within former residential dwellings that have been converted for commercial purposes. Council has carefully accommodated this transition by establishing specific controls which limit the type of commercial uses permitted, the architectural changes permitted, and the size of building additions. Together, these controls have helped limit the scale and intensity of the development to ensure that the street complements the established character of the abutting residential neighbourhoods. Council anticipates a similar transition on Pleasant Street, between Dufferin Street and Dominion Street, given its proximity to the downtown. CIBC Wood Gundy, located at 37 Pleasant Street, is good example of how this can be achieved.



High Street has experienced an inconsistent mix of commercial, institutional and residential development over the years. While the street remained largely undeveloped through to the early part of the 20th century, since the Bridgewater Plaza was constructed in 1959, High Street has experienced an influx of new development, including fast food restaurants, a hotel, a small recycling depot, commercial plaza development, the Nova Scotia Community College, and the Bridgewater Justice Centre. The northern portion of High Street has maintained some of its residential character, where a mix of single unit dwellings and small multi-unit development remain. To ensure High Street develops in a consistent and attractive manner, and remains compatible with adjacent residential neighbourhoods, Council will permit the sensitive conversion of residential dwellings to restricted commercial development over time by designating the area as Limited Commercial on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy C-43: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, as shown on the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-44: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings;
- c) Three unit dwellings; and
- d) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of four dwelling units, subject to specific off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-45: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone:

- a) Additions to all buildings exceeding 15% of the existing gross floor area; and
- b) The following commercial and service-related developments are permitted in buildings that were constructed **prior** to August 27, 1975, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law:
 - (i) Bed & breakfasts;
 - (ii) Catering establishments;
 - (iii) Clinics;
 - (iv) Clubs and fraternal organizations;
 - (v) Craft workshops;
 - (vi) Daycares & nursery schools;
 - (vii) Funeral homes;
 - (viii) Galleries;
 - (ix) Inns;
 - (x) Office uses;
 - (xi) Personal service shops;
 - (xii) Restaurants, with the exception of drive-in, drive-through or take-out restaurants;
 - (xiii) Retail sales to a maximum of 140m² (1,507ft²) in gross floor area;
 - (xiv) Studios.

Policy C-46: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone:

- a) The following commercial and service-related developments are permitted in buildings that were constructed **after** August 27, 1975, in accordance with the criteria outlined in MPS Policy CDA-4 and the Land Use By-law:
 - (i) Bed & breakfasts;
 - (ii) Catering establishments;
 - (iii) Clinics;
 - (iv) Clubs and fraternal organizations;
 - (v) Craft workshops;
 - (vi) Daycares & nursery schools;
 - (vii) Funeral homes;
 - (viii) Galleries
 - (ix) Inns;
 - (x) Office uses;
 - (xi) Personal service shops;
 - (xii) Restaurants, with the exception of drive-in, drive-through or take-out restaurants;
 - (xiii) Retail sales to a maximum of 140m² (1,507ft²) in gross floor area;
 - (xiv) Studios.
- b) Multi-unit residential dwellings up to a maximum of 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), in accordance with MPS Policy CDA-4; and
- c) Single-unit development as a collective development, two-unit development as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development as a collective development, up to a maximum of 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre), in accordance with Policy CDA-4 and CDA-9.

Policy C-47: It shall be the policy of Council to establish architectural controls for buildings on properties that front onto Pleasant Street and Dufferin Street within the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone, in accordance with Map 8 - Architectural Control Areas and the requirements set out in the Land Use By-law.

6.5.2 Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone

The purpose of this zone is to provide for limited commercial uses, located individually or collectively on a site, and designed primarily to serve the day to day convenience needs of residents living within short walking or bicycling distance. Large commercial stores, offices and restaurants will not be permitted in this zone. In addition, Council has established location and site plan controls for this zone to ensure development is pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the scale of surrounding residential areas. The size of parking areas is restricted, since their appearance is generally out of character with the surrounding residential development and the desired orientation of the uses.



Policy C-48: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-49: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone:

- a) New single-unit dwellings;
- b) New two-unit dwellings; and
- c) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of three dwelling units.

Policy C-50: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone, **up to a maximum of 200m² (2,153ft²) in gross floor area:**

- a) Retail, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Neighbourhood grocery stores, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- c) Personal service shops, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- d) Change of use to any of the following uses:
 - i. Clinics
 - ii. Craft workshops
 - iii. Dog grooming
 - iv. Dressmaking and tailoring
 - v. Galleries
 - vi. Studios
- e) Cafés with no outdoor commercial space, drive through facility, or drive-in facility, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-51: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone:

- a) Multi-unit residential development up to a maximum of four units where more than 70% of the ground floor is used for commercial purposes (not exceeding 200m², or 2,153ft² in gross floor area), in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-53A: The existing vacant properties at 229 York Street (PID 60592342) and 126 Victoria Road (PID 60532359) are a suitable location for either mixed use residential/neighbourhood commercial development or residential and commercial in single use individual developments. It shall be the policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** on the site formed by PIDs Nos. 60592342 and 60592359, as of March 6, 2019, in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C7) Zone:

- a) Multi-unit residential to a maximum of 16 dwelling units, and neighbourhood commercial development to a maximum of 1,400m² (15,069 ft²), in accordance with Policy CDA-3.

6.5.3 Special Commercial (C8) Zone

Bridgewater was settled during the 1800s, however, land use controls were not instituted until the 1970s. As a result, a number of commercial uses were once established in areas which are now predominately residential, and therefore

designated and zoned residential. Council is aware of some present and potential conflicts between these existing commercial uses and their residential neighbours. As a result, these uses, specifically identified in the Land Use By-law, shall be allowed to remain in the existing buildings, and on the sites they have occupied over the years. However, specific controls have been established to limit the expansion of the use and buildings in order to reduce future conflict in residential areas. Should these commercial land uses be discontinued, Council shall consider rezoning them in accordance with the Future Land Use Map of this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Policy C-54: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Special Commercial (C8) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-55: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Special Commercial (C8) Zone:

- a) Single unit dwellings;
- b) Two unit dwellings;
- c) Residential conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1975, to a maximum of three dwelling units, in accordance with the Land Use By-law; and
- d) Developments listed in Table T of the Special Commercial (C8) Zone of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-56: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Special Commercial (C8) Zone:

- a) Expansion of an existing building or use, or the replacement of a building, listed in Section 5.9.1.b of the Special Commercial (C8) Zone of the Land Use By-law, in accordance with Policy CDA-5;
- b) Inns in buildings constructed and located on the lot before August 27, 1975, in accordance with Policy IM-6;
- c) Multi-unit residential development up to a maximum of 10 units per hectare (4 units per acre), in accordance with Policy IM-6;
- d) Single-unit development as a collective development, two-unit development on both individual lots or as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development, with a maximum permitted density of up to 10 units per hectare (4 units per acre), in accordance with Policy IM-6; and
- e) Change of use to any of the following uses, or the addition of any of the following uses, in the existing buildings at the date of this by-law, in accordance with Policy IM-6.
 - i. Craft Workshops
 - ii. Dog Grooming
 - iii. Dressmaking & Tailoring
 - iv. Galleries
 - v. Household Repair Services
 - vi. Offices
 - vii. Personal Service Shops
 - viii. Retail Sales up to 93m² (1,000ft²) on corner lots of arterial or collector streets, with the immediate residential area in which the use is located as the primary service area for the use
 - ix. Studios

6.6 Highway Commercial Designation

The Highway Commercial Designation applies to lands located in proximity to the Exit 12A interchange of Highway 103 and within the Bridgewater Business Park. This designation is intended to support commercial development that capitalizes on high visibility, excellent vehicular access via Highway 103. It plays a vital role in accommodating growth, enhancing Bridgewater's role as a regional service and employment hub, and creating a visually attractive and economically productive gateway into the Town.

The area encompasses lands located immediately adjacent to Exit 12A and Logan Road, as well as lands located further into the Business Park, typically with less direct exposure to Highway 103. This designation recognizes the varying commercial development potential across the area, due to differences in sightlines, access, and land conditions.

In recognition of the strategic commercial development described above, Town Council has established the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone and the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone, as follows:

6.6.1 Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone

The Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone is strategically located adjacent to Exit 12A and the entrance to the Bridgewater Business Park, offering optimal visibility and direct access to Highway 103. This area is well suited for high-turnover, service-oriented commercial uses that cater to the travelling public.

The purpose of this zone is to support development that leverages the unique locational advantages of high visibility and highway connectivity. It is intended to facilitate efficient vehicular access, support tourism and local commerce, and provide essential services to both residents and visitors.

Site Plan Approval is used as the sole development process within the zone to encourage thoughtful site design. Urban design within this zone should reflect the prominence of its gateway location, contributing to an attractive and functional entry point into Bridgewater's commercial and industrial lands.

Policy C-57: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Highway Commercial the areas shown on Map 2 – Future Land Use.

Policy C-58: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-59: It shall be the policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone, up to a maximum of 930m² (10,010ft²):

- a) Developments listed in Section 5.10.1 of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-60: It shall be the policy of Council to permit the following developments by site plan approval in the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law;

Policy C-61: It shall be the policy of Council to establish urban design requirements for all new development in the Highway Service Commercial (C9) Zone to promote consistency in the built form and enhanced architectural detailing within the gateway of the Bridgewater Industrial Park, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

6.6.2 Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone

The Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone applies to lands further from the Exit 12A interchange, situated deeper within the Bridgewater Business Park along Enterprise Drive. While still visible from key

travel routes, these areas offer reduced sightline prominence compared to the adjacent Highway Service Commercial zone. As such, they are better suited for display-based commercial activities and lower-intensity service uses.

This zone supports uses that benefit from visibility but do not rely on immediate highway access. Some lands within this zone also contain environmental constraints, such as contaminated soils, which make them less suitable for intensive retail or residential development. The purpose of the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone is to accommodate these specific commercial uses in a way that complements nearby service and industrial development, while encouraging remediation and productive reuse of underutilized land.

Site Plan Approval is used as the sole development process within the zone to encourage thoughtful site design. Urban design within this zone should reflect the area's importance as a key commercial node and the primary trading area within the Business Park.

Policy C-62: It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone and associated zone standards in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law

Policy C-63: It shall be the policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone, up to a maximum of 930m² (10,010ft²):

- a) Developments listed in Section 5.11.1 of the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-64: It shall be the policy of Council to permit the following developments by site plan approval in the Highway Commercial (C10) Zone:

- a) Commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy C-65: It shall be a policy of Council to establish urban design requirements for all new development in the Highway Display Commercial (C10) Zone to promote consistency in the built form and architectural detailing within proximity of the gateway of the Bridgewater Industrial Park, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

6.7 Commercial Development Agreement Policies

Policy CDA-1: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for new commercial or institutional buildings, or additions to commercial or institutional buildings by development agreement:

- a) New developments shall be no less than two storeys in height in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone;
- b) In the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, all new developments shall give strong consideration to the urban design and architectural control requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- c) In the LaHave Downtown Commercial (C2) Zone, all new developments shall adhere to the urban design requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- d) In the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, new developments may be up to a maximum of four storeys in height, except on corner lots, where the height may be up to a maximum of six storeys. Buildings of three-to-six storeys in height should have an architecturally distinct base of one-to-two storeys, a distinct middle, and distinct top;
- e) In the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone, buildings on a corner lot shall incorporate design elements and forms that emphasize the importance of the corner;
- f) The development is functionally integrated with other buildings and developments to provide for safe and efficient access, servicing, fire protection, receiving and shipping;
- g) All signage shall be reasonably consistent with the requirements of the Land Use By-Law; and
- h) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-2: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for premises licensed under the *Liquor Control Act* as either lounges or beverage rooms and outdoor cafes associated with these facilities or any additions or expansions of such new or established developments by development agreement:

- a) The proposed use shall not be within 60m (197ft) of a residential zone;
- b) Where Council determines that appropriate measures have been taken to reduce potential conflicts and nuisances the minimum setback for the development may be reduced accordingly;
- c) The proposal shall include provision for sound insulation, location requirements for doors, windows, fire exits and any other architectural feature that will reduce the emission of noise or lessen the effect of any other nuisances, provided that these features are not inconsistent with the requirements of the *Building Code Act* or the *Fire Prevention Act*;
- d) The proposed use shall not result in any undue traffic hazard nor increase traffic flow on residential streets to the extent that local traffic, local on-street residential parking, and on-street pedestrian movement is unduly disrupted or displaced;
- e) The proposed use shall not have an unreasonable adverse effect on any adjacent properties, especially residential;
- f) The proposed use shall not have a negative effect on nearby residential uses due to the hours of operation;
- g) Parking lots and driveways for the use of patrons shall not be located in any minimum required yard that abuts a residential zone;
- h) Screening and buffering in the form of vegetation, berming or fencing, shall be provided, where necessary, to screen or buffer structures, storage areas, parking lots, driveways or any other feature of the development that may have a negative impact on nearby uses;
- i) In the Historic Downtown (C1) Zone, all new lounges and beverage rooms in new buildings shall give strong consideration to the urban design and architectural control requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- j) In the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone, all new lounges and beverage rooms shall adhere to the urban design and architectural control requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- k) All signage shall be reasonably consistent with the requirements of the Land Use By-Law; and
- l) Development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-3: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for neighbourhood commercial development by development agreement:

- a) For the site formed by PID Nos. 60592342 and 60592359, the development consists of mixed-use buildings, or single use buildings with a maximum of 4 dwelling units and a maximum of 350m² for commercial purpose in any individual building; and
- b) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-4: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for development in the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone by development agreement:

- a) The proposed use will not have an adverse effect on any abutting residential properties due to noise, lighting, odours, and litter that may be generated on the site; and the development favours active transportation access over vehicles, with a focus on pedestrian walkways, sitting areas and bicycle parking;
- b) Existing trees, which impart a distinctive character and charm to the streetscape, shall be retained and incorporated into the development except where it is necessary to remove trees to gain access and to provide for safe vehicular movement into and out of the site;
- c) Development shall adhere to the architectural control requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- d) All signage shall be reasonably consistent with the requirements of the Land Use By-Law; and
- e) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-5: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for expansion, replacement or change of use in the Special Commercial (C8) Zone by development agreement:

- a) Any new building, or any expansion in the volume of a building in which an established commercial or industrial use is located shall not result in the creation of new non-residential floor area that is in excess of 40% of the gross floor area of the building prior to expansion;
- b) The area of outdoor storage or open display uses that are located on the lot shall not increase;
- c) Any nuisances that are associated with the use will be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level as a result of the change, including noise, odour, dust, unsightly material, and unsanitary conditions, or no new nuisances will be created as a result of the proposed change;
- d) Any new buildings and any alterations, or additions made to established buildings with respect to the development shall be compatible in terms of architectural features, height and bulk, with other buildings in the neighbourhood;
- e) All signage shall be reasonably consistent with the requirements of the Land Use By-Law; and
- f) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-6: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for multi-unit residential development fronting on all streets, excluding King Street, in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone:

- a) New developments shall be no less than two storeys in height;
- b) New developments may be up to a maximum of five storeys in height;
- c) Buildings on corner lots should incorporate articulation and forms that emphasize the importance of the corner;
- d) New developments shall give strong consideration to the urban design requirements outlined in the Land Use By-Law;
- e) New developments shall adhere to the minimum amenity space requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- f) All signage shall be reasonably consistent with the requirements of the Land Use By-Law; and
- g) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-7: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for multi-unit residential development in the LaHave Commercial (C2) Zone:

- a) New developments shall front onto an arterial or collector street;
- b) New developments shall be no less than two storeys in height;
- c) New developments may be up to a maximum of six storeys in height on corner lots only;
- d) Buildings of three-to-six storeys in height should have an architecturally distinct base of one-to-two storeys, a distinct middle, and distinct top;
- e) Buildings over three storeys should incorporate a two-metre minimum step-back from the front facade facing the arterial or collector street to minimize the building's mass to pedestrians on the street;
- f) New development shall adhere to the urban design requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- h) New developments shall adhere to the minimum amenity space requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- g) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-8: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for multi-unit residential development in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1), Urban Commercial (C3) and Group Commercial (C4) Zones:

- a) New developments shall front onto an arterial or collector street;
- b) In the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) and Urban Commercial (C3) zones, new developments shall be no less than two storeys in height;
- c) In the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, all development shall give strong consideration to the urban design requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- d) In the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone and the Group Commercial (C4) Zone, buildings greater than two storeys shall have an architecturally distinct base of one-to-two storeys and a distinct top;
- e) In the Urban Commercial (C3) Zone and the Group Commercial (C4) Zone, buildings on corner lots should incorporate articulation and forms that emphasize the importance of the corner;
- f) New developments shall adhere to the minimum amenity space requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- g) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-9: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals single-unit development as a collective development, two-unit development on both individual lots or as a collective development, and multi-unit residential development in the Restricted Commercial (C6) Zone:

- a) The maximum residential density shall not exceed a maximum of 75 units per hectare (30 units per acre);
- b) The proposal provides sufficient on-site open space, recreation space and facilities to adequately serve the residents of the proposed multi-unit residential developments;
- c) New development shall adhere to the minimum amenity space requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- d) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

Policy CDA-10: It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for single unit and two unit residential development where the ground floor building frontage is occupied by a commercial use and more than 50% of the ground floor area is used for commercial purposes in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone:

- a) New developments shall be no less than two storeys in height;
- b) All development shall give strong consideration to the urban design requirements and architectural control requirements outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- c) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

SECTION 7: LAHAVE RIVER DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Background

Development in close proximity to the LaHave River has the potential to significantly alter the character of the river, and thus the character of the town. The river and its banks and shoreline are highly visible from several public streets and both public and private land. As a result, any development on or adjacent to the river will have a very high profile and it could dominate the established riverscape and streetscape of the immediate neighbourhood. In addition, compatibility between new development and the major architectural features of existing buildings must be a consideration in all future



development in this area due to its potential impact on the town's defining natural feature. Development along the LaHave River can also have a profound effect on the use and enjoyment of the river by residents and visitors of the town. It's important that opportunities for people to access the shoreline factor in the development process.

In 2024, the Town of Bridgewater retained the services of Dr. Tim Webster to review the existing flood scenarios in the Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG) flood risk study (2013) and recommend a flood scenario to use in policy. Council shall consider the results and recommendations of this study when considering development proposals in close proximity to the river. Where warranted, the developer may be responsible for providing further study of specific issues identified in the development review process, and/or implementing mitigation measures to address anticipated flooding and erosion threats.

It is Council's goal to balance growth and development with the protection of the LaHave River when considering changes to land uses adjacent to the river. Due to the importance of the LaHave River and associated development, and the unique vulnerabilities that exist along a dynamic shoreline, Town Council has established the LaHave River Development Agreement Area (LRDAA) (see the Zoning Map of the Land use By-law). The boundary of the LRDAA is the average of the 1:20 and 1:100 flood elevations in the year 2100, with reference to the Canadian Geodetic Vertical Datum of 2013 (CGVD2013). This special area adds an additional level of regulation to ensure that the river, the character of development, and public and private interests are carefully considered during the planning process.

7.2 LaHave River Development Policies

Policy LR-1: It shall be the policy of Council to designate the areas shown as the LaHave River Development Agreement Area in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy LR-1a: It shall be the policy of Council to designate the average of the 1:20 and 1:100 flood elevations in the year 2100, with reference to CGVD2013, as both the LaHave River Development Agreement Area and the Safe Building Elevation, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy LR-2: It shall be the policy of Council to consider only by development agreement, in areas designated as the LaHave River Development Agreement Area on the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law, proposals for any development other than parks, change of use and associated signage, building additions of less than 50m² (538ft²) in gross floor area, or accessory buildings and structures of less than 50m² (538ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy LRDA-1.

Policy LR-3: It shall be a policy of Council to refer to the Assessment and Recommendation of a Minimum Building Elevation to Avoid Flooding for the Town of Bridgewater (2024), prepared by Tim Webster, PhD, and where appropriate, incorporate this into municipal planning policy and regulations.

Policy LR-4: It shall be the policy of Council to consider the acquisition of property abutting the LaHave River for public purposes, in accordance with the Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (2013) and the Open Space Master Plan (2021).

Policy LR-5: It shall be the policy of Council to protect environmental quality of the LaHave River by prohibiting any land use activity that poses a heightened potential of contaminating the river during a flood event, such as but not limited to, the warehousing or production of hazardous materials, on properties abutting the LaHave River.

Policy LR-6: It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that all yards abutting the LaHave River are free of parking areas, loading areas, open storage, and facilities for the storage of solid waste, except those within the Industrial Designation, in accordance with Map 2 – Future Land Use.

Policy LR-7: It shall be the policy of Council to require that the landscaping, site planning, building design, and building orientation promote physical and visual access to the river for properties abutting the LaHave River, except those within the Industrial Designation, in accordance with Map 2 – Future Land Use.

7.3 LaHave River Development Agreement Policies

Policy LRDA-1: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for new development within the LaHave River Development Agreement Area by development agreement:

- a) The proposal shall be generally consistent with recommendations of the Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (2013) and the Open Space Master Plan (2021);
- b) Repealed
- c) Repealed
- d) Institutional land uses of a residential nature, such as hospitals, nursing homes, residential care facilities, homes for special care, group homes or small option homes for 6 or more individuals, and other activities that have prevailing safety considerations along areas of the LaHave River that are susceptible to flooding, are prohibited;
- e) Measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance healthy soils, vegetation, and natural drainage patterns to protect and preserve the riverbanks while maintaining floodplain functions which serve a riparian function along the riverbank;
- f) The siting of the development shall, to the extent that site conditions warrant, be functionally integrated with abutting properties and developments with regard to: vehicular access to the site, pedestrian movement, parking, servicing, maintenance of buildings and structures, and accessibility for equipment and personnel in the event of an emergency in the area;
- g) Where the site abuts a Conservation (CON) Zone, buffers and/or screening shall be provided to protect and preserve the conservation area, where possible;
- h) The landscaping, site planning, building design, and building orientation shall be integrated with and contribute positively to the existing streetscape and riverscape. The orientation of buildings and particular features of buildings such as doors, windows, balconies, and patios shall be toward the river as well as toward public streets;
- i) Where the development is located in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1) Zone, the development shall be in accordance with applicable urban design requirements and the King Street Architectural Control Area requirements listed in the Land Use By-law, except where significant geographical constraints make the requirements impracticable;
- j) Measures shall be taken in the landscaping, site planning, building design, and building orientation to promote physical and visual access to the river;
- k) Any excavation or infilling of the river or of land along the banks of the river that is associated with any development, shall not increase the risk of ice jamming or otherwise affect the flow of water in the river to the extent that any flooding problem would be made worse or any new flooding problems created as determined by a qualified person;
- l) Developments on any filled land and those involving structures affixed to the river bed or the shore, beyond the ordinary high water line, shall have a functional dependence on water, otherwise such developments shall be permitted only where Council is satisfied that the development would significantly increase opportunities for access and enjoyment of the river by residents of the town;
- m) The proposal shall include a comprehensive landscaping plan that includes lawns, trees, shrubs and other landscaping elements appropriate for functional and aesthetic purposes, and for prevention of erosion;

- n) Where the zone in which the development is located permits specific developments by development agreement, no development shall be permitted that is inconsistent with any policy which provides for such developments;
- o) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.
- p) For all new buildings, habitable space, including that of hostels, hotels, and motels, shall be above the Safe Building Elevation;
- q) For all new buildings, flood-resistant materials such as concrete, ceramic tile, pressure-treated and marine-treated plywood, pressure-treated lumber, latex or bituminous, bricks, and metals shall be used below the Safe Building Elevation; an on-site emergency power supply capable of operating critical building systems shall be provided; and ground levels shall incorporate measures to prevent water intrusion;
- r) A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that structural systems have been evaluated for strength and suitability for dry flood-proofing and their ability to handle anticipated flood loads, in the full range of loading conditions, including dead or live loads, wind loads, or rain or ice loads, separately and, as appropriate, in combination; and
- s) Unless otherwise protected from flooding to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer, all mechanical and electrical equipment shall be located above the Safe Building Elevation.

SECTION 8: INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Background

In the early 20th century, Bridgewater's proximity to abundant natural resources and access to the once bustling railway helped the town establish itself as a prosperous industrial centre. Local industries once straddled the LaHave River in order to facilitate the transportation of lumber and other goods throughout the province; however, over time Bridgewater's reliance on natural resources diminished, and so too did the presence of industries near the downtown and along the river. Today, only one operational commercial port remains on the east side of the LaHave River, while the majority of Bridgewater's industrial uses are now clustered in the north end of town adjacent to Highway 103.



During the late 1960s, consultants encouraged the Town to dedicate and service dedicated industrial land in an effort to attract new industries to Bridgewater and to stimulate economic growth. This recommendation led to the formation of the Bridgewater Business Park in 1968, which was the first dedicated location for large-scale manufacturing industries in town. In the following year, the Business Park attracted its first tenant, Michelin Tire Limited, which remains the town's largest manufacturer and employer. Landing a prominent anchor tenant stimulated subsequent growth and development, and by the mid 1980's the Business Park supported 16 manufacturing firms.

Today, the vast majority of Bridgewater's industries are found in the approximately 220 acre Business Park. While there are approximately thirty existing developments within the Park, only a third of these are industrial in character; most can be characterized as commercial uses and community services. The recent addition of the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre in the Business Park has further diversified this area with the introduction of new recreational and library services. While the Business Park will continue to accommodate a range of commercial and recreational uses, it is Council's primary intention to attract new industrial and manufacturing development to this location of Bridgewater.

8.2 Industrial Objectives

8.2.1 Centralize Industrial Development in the Business Park

Over time, the amount of space dedicated for industrial purposes in Bridgewater has decreased as the town's reputation as a regional shopping and service centre has grown. Today, the Business Park is the primary location for new industrial uses in Bridgewater. Because industrial and manufacturing businesses are key employers and economic contributors, the town wishes to encourage new industrial growth in a responsible manner. As such, Council will strive to concentrate all new industrial development in the Business Park opposed to other areas of town where land use conflicts are more likely to occur.

Policy M-1: It shall be the policy of Council to concentrate industrial development within the Bridgewater Business Park to minimize the potential for land use conflicts in other areas of the community.

Policy M-2: It shall be the policy of Council to encourage new industrial development in Bridgewater by supporting efforts to market and sell land in the Bridgewater Business Park for development purposes.

8.2.2 Business Park Expansion

In 1988, an undeveloped tract of land north of Highway 103 was re-designated and rezoned to industrial to serve as a reserve for the long-term expansion of the Business Park. Following the development of the Exit 12A interchange, the undeveloped tract of land was partially redesignated and rezoned to Highway Commercial adjacent to the interchange, while the remainder of land was rezoned as Light Industrial (M2) Zone. The rezoning to Light Industrial will avoid the creation of non-conformities in the existing Business Park while enabling a wide range of uses through as-of-right and site plan development processes.

Policy M-3: It shall be the policy of Council to reserve a portion of vacant land north of Highway 103 for the expansion of the Bridgewater Business Park in accordance with Map 2 – Future Land Use.

While there was intention to complete a Future Streets Master Plan, the Town Infrastructure Master Plan (2021) was created to avoid a piecemeal and fragmented approach to development, which leads to connectivity issues and inefficient use of infrastructure and land. Council shall require the development of a “Future Streets Master Plan” to ensure that future collector and arterial streets are integrated with Bridgewater’s existing street network in a well-planned manner. Council shall require the completion of this Master Plan prior to the development of new streets on industrial designated or zoned land north of Highway 103

Policy M-4: Prior to permitting the construction of new streets on vacant industrial designated and zoned land north of Highway 103, it shall be the policy of Council to require the completion of a Future Streets Master Plan/Master Infrastructure Plan, in collaboration with the Town’s Engineering and Planning Departments.

8.2.3 Abutting Yard Setbacks & Buffering

One benefit of clustering industrial uses in the Business Park is that it helps to mitigate conflicts with incompatible land uses in other parts of town. Still, there are several non-industrial uses and lots abutting the Business Park which may be adversely affected by noise, dust, irregular working hours, and other by-products of existing and future industrial operations. This is especially true where existing residential development along St. Phillips Street abuts industrial zoned land in the Business Park. Council will take measures to ensure that the presence of industrial uses in this area will not adversely impact surrounding properties by establishing minimum abutting yard setbacks between industrial land uses and residential, institutional, and open space development. Furthermore, Council will also require landscaping buffers between conflicting land use zones to assist with these efforts.

Policy M-5: It shall be the policy of Council to adopt minimum abutting yard setbacks and buffer requirements where any industrial zone abuts any residential zone, institutional zone, park zone and conservation zone, to minimize potential land use conflicts, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

8.3 Industrial Designation

The Future Land Use Map includes the Industrial designation, which identifies all land that is intended to support industrial and manufacturing land uses, as well as a range of commercial uses and community services that are compatible with industrial development. Most of Bridgewater's industrial designated land is found in the Bridgewater Business Park, which straddles Highway 103 in the north end of town, while a smaller portion of industrial designated land remains located in the south end of town on the LaHave River where several lighter industrial uses continue to operate, including Nova Scotia Power and GCR Tire Centre.

Town Council acknowledges that manufacturing and related industries are one the town's largest employment sectors and a key component of the region's economic viability. As such, the primary intent of the Industrial designation is to provide continued opportunities for a range of manufacturing and industrial land uses within Bridgewater. Council is also aware that there has been modest industrial development pressure over the last 20 years, however during that same time, the demand for commercial and office space within the Business Park has grown more notably. Moving forward, Council will continue to encourage industrial growth within this designation, but they will also offer limited opportunities for compatible commercial uses that are desired in this location.

Policy M-6: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Industrial the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

Town Council has established two land use zones for industrial development in Bridgewater – the Industrial (M1) Zone and the Light Industrial (M2) Zone. The Industrial (M1) Zone accounts for the majority of industrial land in Bridgewater, and permits the widest range of uses, including heavy manufacturing and processing plants, transport and trucking developments and crematoria uses. In addition, Council may consider permitting select hazardous uses in this zone by development agreement only. The Light Industrial (M2) Zone, on the other hand, permits a range of commercial uses and limited industrial uses, including warehouses, repair shops and wholesale developments.

8.3.1 Industrial (M1) Zone

The Industrial (M1) Zone supports a wide range of industrial development and activities, including materials processing, materials assembly, product manufacturing and storage of finished products. Common uses can include manufacturing facilities, warehouse distribution centres and truck terminals. Certain general commercial uses will also be permitted in this zone. Most development in the Bridgewater Business Park will be permitted as-of-right, while certain potentially disruptive, noxious or hazardous industrial uses may only be considered by Council through development agreement, in order to mitigate potential conflicts with neighbouring properties and the community.

Policy M-7: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments as-of-right in the Industrial Zone (M1) **up to a maximum of 4,645m² (49,998ft²)** in gross floor area:

- a) New industrial developments and additions to existing industrial developments, including but not limited to:
 - (i) Animal hospitals & veterinaries;
 - (ii) Crematoria;
 - (iii) Distribution centres;
 - (iv) Emergency services;
 - (v) Industrial repair shops;
 - (vi) Manufacturing, processing & assembly;
 - (vii) Open storage and display of goods, excluding scrap materials;
 - (viii) Public works depots;
 - (ix) Transport and trucking facilities;
 - (x) Vehicle sales & rental;
 - (xi) Warehouses, depots & storage facilities; and
 - (xii) Wholesale establishments; and
- b) Compatible commercial developments or additions to established commercial developments, as outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy M-8: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Industrial (M1) Zone:

- a) Industrial developments greater than **4,645m² (49,998ft²)** in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy MDA-1;
- b) Compatible commercial developments greater than **4,645m² (49,998ft²)** in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy MDA-1; and
- c) Additions in excess of **2323m² (25,005ft²)** to existing industrial and commercial developments, in accordance with Policy MDA-1.

Policy M-9: It shall be a policy of Council to consider proposals for any industrial or commercial development not specifically permitted as-of-right in this zone, and for any new industrial developments and expansion of existing developments, which are considered to be hazardous or have the potential for creating land use conflicts by **development agreement**, in accordance with Policy MDA-1. These developments shall include but are not limited to:

- a) Breweries;
- b) Butchers and slaughterhouses
- c) Concrete production;
- d) Fish meal production;
- e) Indoor shooting ranges;
- f) Metal corrosion treatment facilities;
- g) Open storage of scrap materials
- h) Penal institutions;
- i) Petroleum bulk storage plants;
- j) Pulp and paper mills;
- k) Race tracks;
- l) Refineries;
- m) Tanneries;
- n) Warehousing and wholesale distribution of hazardous substances;
- o) Wood debarking and chipping, except for activities at, or in close proximity to harvesting operations; and
- p) Wood preservation facilities.

8.3.2 Light Industrial (M2) Zone

The Light Industrial Zone (M2) Zone is intended to accommodate a range of larger-scale commercial, employment and limited industrial uses. Council created this zone with the intention of creating capacity for additional industrial development within Bridgewater's town limits, however with specific restrictions. Since most land zoned Light Industrial (M2) abuts existing and/or future residential land, or requires access through residential areas, Council has restricted development in this zone which is considered to be potentially noxious or hazardous.

Policy M-10: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments as-of-right in the Light Industrial (M2) Zone **up to a maximum of 4,645m² (49,998ft²)** in gross floor area:

- a) New industrial developments and additions to existing industrial developments, including those listed in the Land Use By-law Section 7.3.1:

Policy M-11: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by site plan approval in the Light Industrial (M2) Zone:

- a) New development and additions to existing development permitted as-of-right in the Light Industrial (M2) Zone in excess of 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Section 7.1.2.

Policy M-12: It shall be a policy of Council to consider only by development agreement in areas zoned Light Industrial (M2) proposals for:

- a) Open storage of scrap materials including, but not limited to, auto bodies and auto parts, in accordance with Policy MDA-1
- b) Any industrial or commercial use identified as being considered to be hazardous or having the potential for creating land use conflict, in accordance with Policy MDA-1. Such uses include but are not limited to those uses found in Section 7.3.3.c of the Land Use By-law.

Policy M-13: It shall be a policy of Council to consider only by **development agreement** in areas zoned Light Industrial (M2), proposals for wood debarking and chipping operations in accordance with Policy MDA-1.

8.4 Industrial Development Agreement Policies

Policy MDA-1: It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for open storage of scrap materials, wood debarking and chipping operations, any commercial or industrial use not specifically allowed as-of-right in an industrial zone, and any industrial use identified as being considered to be hazardous or having the potential for creating land use conflict, by development agreement:

- a) Where any development site abuts a non-industrial zone boundary, the development shall be located on the site in a manner that achieves the maximum separation of the development from the abutting boundary. Subject to the physical characteristics of the site and the characteristics of the use or uses on the site, screening in the form of fencing, vegetation, or a berm, as appropriate, shall be constructed on the site in order to minimize impact on properties in the abutting zone;
- b) There shall be no emission generated from the development such as noise, dust, radiation, light or other emission to either the air, water, or ground that could have any undue negative effect on properties either within, or in the vicinity of, the designation and zone. Emissions shall not exceed applicable standards or guidelines set by any department or agency of the Federal or Provincial government;
- c) No development shall be permitted that could create a health hazard or that would have a negative effect on the quality of life or living environment of the town;
- d) Where Council determines, on the advice of a qualified person, that there is a significant risk of environmental damage from any proposed commercial or industrial development, an environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the developer for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of any impact and no agreement shall be approved until Council is satisfied that the proposed development will not create or result in undue environmental damage;
- e) The location and siting of any development within the Bridgewater Business Park shall be in accordance with any infrastructure and land use master plan that has been prepared or approved by the Town of Bridgewater; and
- f) The development is in accordance with policy IM-6.

SECTION 9: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

9.1 Background

Bridgewater is home to a number of regional community services and institutional uses which provide a range of services and amenities to the residents of Lunenburg and Queens Counties. These uses, broadly identified in this Municipal Planning Strategy as “institutional”, include Bridgewater’s numerous churches, educational facilities, arts and cultural facilities, emergency services, health care facilities, and public services. Many of Bridgewater’s institutional uses are centrally located within the community. Examples include the Bridgewater Elementary School, Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School, the Bridgewater Fire Department, and the Bridgewater Town Hall. Close proximity to the downtown and to well-populated neighbourhoods help these institutional uses to be more readily accessible to residents. Older churches are located along some of Bridgewater’s original streets near the downtown area, where many remain prominent historical landmarks in their respective neighbourhoods.



As the town continues to grow, it is to be expected that there will be a need for additional community and institutional services and facilities to serve new residents. Council does not intend to designate or zone undeveloped land specifically for institutional developments, but will allow institutional developments as-of-right in several commercial zones. Institutional development may also be considered by development agreement on arterial and collector streets in residential zones or through context sensitive rezoning in accordance with this Municipal Planning Strategy. However, many new institutional developments – particularly schools and large government buildings – are developed and owned by the provincial or federal government, and thus, are not regulated by municipalities.

9.2 Institutional Objectives

9.2.1 Support New Institutional Development

Institutional uses have a major impact on Bridgewater’s reputation as a regional employment and service centre, and as the population base continues to grow, the town will need new community services to meet the needs of its residents. Institutional uses not only boost the town’s supply of local services, but they’re also important contributors to the economic base and they help attract and retain community members. As such, Council will continue to support existing institutions and encourage the development of new ones to help meet the needs of the general community.

Policy I-1: It shall be the policy of Council to support the continuation, growth and development of institutional uses to help enhance Bridgewater’s role as a regional employment and service centre.

9.2.2 Context Sensitive Institutional Development

There are a wide range of land uses that qualify as institutional in this Municipal Planning Strategy. Traditional institutional uses include schools, hospitals and major government buildings, which are normally large in scale and generate a significant amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Other uses are more specialized, including places of worship, residential care facilities, homes for special care, and a range of specialized educational uses, which may not be as large or as impactful on adjacent neighbourhoods. While Council acknowledges that many public buildings and institutional uses benefit from being situated near populated areas in order to better serve the community, Council believes the scale and design of these uses should be limited in areas where land use conflicts are most likely to result. As such, Council shall consider permitting new institutional development on arterial and collector roads in residential zones only by development agreement, to ensure that they're compatible with and sensitive to existing development.



Policy I-2: It shall be the policy of Council to consider permitting institutional development on arterial and collector roads in strategic residential areas by development agreement only, in accordance with Policy IM-6.

9.2.3 Liaise with Provincial & Federal Governments

Many new institutional developments within the Town of Bridgewater are initiated by the provincial and federal governments, who are not subject to the Town's municipal planning policies and regulations and are not required to hold public meetings with the community. This can result in land use conflicts, alter the character of neighbourhoods, place undue strain on town services and infrastructure, and create inconsistencies with long-range municipal planning objectives. Therefore, Council will attempt to consult with provincial and federal government bodies, where possible, to ensure that land use concerns are appropriately addressed before new government-led institutional projects are undertaken within Bridgewater's town limits.

Policy I-3: Where possible, it shall be the policy of Council to engage and liaise with the Provincial and Federal governments on any proposed, government-led institutional development in Bridgewater in an effort to minimize the potential for land use conflicts.

In more recent years, a trend has emerged in many Nova Scotian communities where major institutional uses, such as schools, have de-centralized away from heavily populated areas to the periphery of our community where large tracts of land are readily available. While this may be necessary in certain cases, Council believes that most frequently used public buildings benefit from locating in and near heavily populated areas where their services are closer to the people that need them. Centralizing these uses can also help to maximize existing infrastructure and to create synergies that can result in community vibrancy and increased economic development.

Policy I-4: Where possible, it shall be the policy of Council to engage and liaise with the Provincial and Federal governments to promote the development of major public buildings in compatible, serviced and accessible locations of Bridgewater, to better meet the needs of residents.

9.3 Institutional Designation

The Institutional Designation of Map 2 - Future Land Use Map identifies all lands that are expected to continue supporting institutional uses in the future. Most of the town's oldest institutional uses are integrated into the downtown or in nearby residential areas on the west side of the River, while institutional uses built over the last 30 years have largely been situated outside of Bridgewater's downtown core on larger parcels of land. It's not a common practice for Council to pre-designate or pre-zone undeveloped land 'Institutional', as new institutional development is reasonably infrequent, and can be extremely varied in terms of scale, intensity and therefore impact on surrounding areas. Instead, Council typically considers individual requests for re-designations and re-zonings to Institutional (I) on a case by case basis, and will also liaise with other levels of government on large public projects where possible.

Policy I-5: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Institutional the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

9.3.1 Institutional (I1) Zone

Bridgewater is home to a variety of institutional uses, which provide residents and visitors with a wealth of community services. Many of these uses are cornerstones of the community, including a regional hospital, schools, a library and several large government buildings. In Bridgewater, there are several other institutional uses which hold great local significance and intrinsic value in the community, including the Brookside Cemetery, numerous old churches, and the South Shore Exhibition Grounds. Most of these existing institutional uses fall under the Institutional (I1) Zone, which establish performance standards for this type of development.



In addition to the Institutional (I) Zone, Council will continue to permit institutional development as-of-right in many of Bridgewater's commercial areas. Furthermore, Council will consider permitting new institutional development on arterial and collector streets in all areas zoned residential by development agreement. Council may also consider individual applications for re-designating and rezoning of land to Institutional. Proposed development agreements and amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law will be subject to thorough planning analyses and statutory public processes.

Policy I-6: It shall be a policy of Council to establish an Institutional (I1) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-7: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Institutional (I1) Zone:

- a) Cemeteries;
- b) Clinics;
- c) Clubs and fraternal organizations;
- d) Community centres;
- da) Community living arrangements for persons with legal, emotional or mental problems
- e) Cultural facilities;
- f) Daycares & nursery schools;
- g) Educational uses;
- h) Emergency services;
- i) Emergency shelter;
- j) Fire halls & stations;
- k) Food banks;
- l) Hospitals;
- m) Repealed
- n) Libraries;
- o) Markets;
- p) Nursing homes;
- q) Places of worship and associated rectories, manses and staff residences;
- qa) Rehabilitation and treatment centre; and
- r) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes.

Policy I-8: It shall be a policy of Council to permit institutional developments in areas zoned Historic Downtown Commercial (C1), LaHave Commercial (C2), Urban Commercial (C3), Group Commercial (C4), General Commercial (C5), and Restricted Commercial (C6), in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-9: It shall be a policy of Council to permit by site plan approval in the Institutional (I1) zone:

- Sustainable energy system facilities that provide direct heat and/or power to a permitted Institutional Use, following consideration of its environmental impacts pursuant to the performance standards of Section 8.2.4 of the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-10: It shall be a policy of Council to consider proposals for institutional developments on arterial and collector streets in areas zoned residential by **development agreement** only, in accordance with Policy IM-6.

9.3.2 Residential Institutional (I2) Zone

In addition to traditional institutional uses which are permitted in the industrial (I1) Zone, there is a growing demand for residential care facilities and related uses with an institutional component. These types of developments include assisted living and long term health care services for residents throughout the town and surrounding area. In the Residential Institutional (I2) Zone, Council will limit the types of permitted institutional uses to those which include a residential component, and will not permit stand-alone residential development without an institutional component included as part of a large development. To ensure that all development within this zone is compatible with the surrounding areas, all new development will be permitted by site plan approval, and considered by development agreement.

Policy I-11: It shall be a policy of Council to establish a Residential Institutional (I2) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-12: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Residential Institutional (I2) Zone:

- a) Residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- b) Nursing homes, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law;
- c) Multi-unit residential dwellings, up to a maximum of 62 units per hectare (26 units per acre), associated with developments consisting of residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes and/or nursing homes of no less than 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law; and
- d) Clinics associated with developments consisting of residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes and/or nursing homes of no less than 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-13: It shall be a policy of Council to consider the following developments by **development agreement** in the Residential Institutional (I2) Zone:

- a) Multi-unit residential dwellings, up to a maximum of 62 units per hectare (25 units per acre), associated with developments consisting of residential care facilities, homes for special care, halfway houses, transition homes, shelters and group homes and/or nursing homes less than 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area, in accordance with Policy IDA-1.

9.4 Institutional Development Agreement Policies

Policy IDA-1:

It shall be a policy of Council to ensure that the following criteria are met when Council is considering proposals for multi-unit residential dwellings associated with developments consisting of residential care facilities, homes for special care, and group homes and/or nursing homes less than 4,645m² (49,998ft²) in gross floor area in the Residential Institutional (I2) Zone:

- a) The maximum residential density shall not exceed 62 units per hectare (25 units per acre);
- b) The proposal provides sufficient on-site open space, recreation space and facilities to adequately serve the residents of the proposed multi-unit residential developments; and
- c) The development is in accordance with Policy IM-6.

SECTION 10: AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Background

The Town of Bridgewater is an urban community with a distinct urban settlement pattern. Town Council believes that most forms of large-scale agricultural development in the region should be sited outside of the town limits in rural areas throughout Lunenburg County, where conditions are more suited for farming related activities. Council believes centralizing and intensifying residential, commercial and industrial development in the urban settlement area of Bridgewater, where existing urban infrastructure and services exist or are located nearby, is a sustainable land use planning approach. However, in order to support residents' easy access to healthy, affordable, local food, all neighbourhoods should be able to offer opportunities for growing food. Town Council will support this by encouraging the following, in accordance with the Land Use By-law:



- Yard gardens and container gardens, including window boxes and balcony and roof gardens, to help reduce dependence on shipped produce;
- Up to two chickens on all residential lots to help families satisfy their own food needs; and
- Community gardens located throughout Bridgewater's expansive parklands.

There are three active agricultural operations in Bridgewater: the first is located off of LaHave Street near the Town's northern municipal boundary; the second is situated off of Aberdeen Road near the Town's eastern municipal boundary; and the third is located off of Pearl Street, straddling the Town's western municipal boundary. These three properties shall be zoned Agricultural (AG) to permit their continued agricultural operations in Bridgewater. The specific types of uses permitted in this zone are limited in order to avoid future land use conflicts with neighbouring residential development. In recognition that Bridgewater is a growing urban centre, with increasing demands for new housing and urban uses, these properties shall be designated for future residential development on the Future Land Use Map of this Municipal Planning Strategy. No property in Bridgewater shall be designated agricultural on the Future Land Use Map.

10.2 Agricultural (AG) Zone

Policy AG-1: It shall be a policy of Council to establish an Agricultural (AG) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy AG-2: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Agricultural (AG) Zone:

- a) Agricultural uses;
- b) Forestry uses;
- c) Single unit dwellings; and
- d) Residential Conversions of dwellings established before August 27, 1997, to a maximum of two units, subject to the off-street parking requirements established in the Land Use By-law.

SECTION 11: OPEN SPACE

11.1 Background

Contemporary parks and open space planning focuses on creating systems that respond to local values, needs and circumstances. In Bridgewater, residents are fortunate to have direct access to more than 198 acres (80 hectares) of Town-owned or managed land dedicated to open space purposes. This equates to more than 24 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. In addition to lands set aside specifically as open space, Bridgewater's open space network includes public streets and bodies of water, including the LaHave River.



These spaces perform numerous functions and provide many benefits for citizens and visitors, including:

- **Health:** Open space supports healthy communities by creating environments that promote physical activity and emotional and social well-being.
- **Safety:** Open space provide numerous health and safety benefits including flood control and separation from hazards.
- **Community Design:** Open space helps to positively shape communities. It can function as boundaries between incompatible uses and helps to create necessary breaks from continuous development. Open space can also shape land use patterns to promote more compact, efficient development.
- **Environmental protection:** Open space can function as protection areas for sensitive areas and natural systems (such as wetlands and riparian areas) and for wildlife diversity and habitat.
- **Economic development:** Open space enhances real estate values and increases return visits to the community. Open space can help to attract businesses and retirees.
- **Cultural:** Open space also provides historic preservation opportunities that help create a strong sense of identity and pride in the community. This can be achieved through facilities, including cultural and historical sites, community centers that contribute educational and cultural benefits, signage and public art. Protecting and celebrating natural features and spaces that are also important to defining community image and distinctive character.

Bridgewater's open space network is diverse, as it consists of several passive parks, like Woodland Gardens and Glen Allan Park, that are naturalized and suitable for informal activities. Several others, such as Shipyards Landing and King Street Court, have evolved into focal points for a range of community events. There are several active parks, like Kinsmen Field and Generations Active Park, which are intended to support programmed play and sport. The network is also complemented by the eight-kilometre Centennial Trail which extends throughout the town and which connects several public open spaces. Public streets and bodies of water provide significant opportunities for connection between other kinds of open spaces, and also provide space for social gathering, physical activity and recreation.

While residents enjoy Bridgewater's open space network, many citizens have suggested that it has not met its full potential. The true benefits of open spaces are maximized when they're accessible and well-used, however, there is evidence to suggest that some of Bridgewater's open spaces lack ideal connectivity and amenities that could improve their functionality and use. To address this, Council will create new policies that encourage a comprehensive and well-

planned approach to open space development and investment to ensure that the community's leisure and recreational needs are met.

11.2 Parks & Open Space Objectives

11.2.1 Effective Open Space Management

Local residents and frequent visitors enjoy Bridgewater's ample supply of parks, playgrounds, greenspaces, bluespaces, public streets and recreation facilities, and as a result, they take great pride in the town's open space network. In order to maintain the benefits provided by Bridgewater's open space, Council will continue to maintain and where possible enhance the current level of recreation and leisure services for the community. In addition, Council will strive to provide different types of open spaces and park amenities to better meet the full needs and desires of the entire community.

Policy OS-1: It shall be a policy of Council to maintain and update Map 7 - Open Space Network which identifies all existing open space and trails.

Policy OS-2: It shall be a policy of Council to maintain, and where possible enhance, Bridgewater's existing open space network and associated amenities to provide residents and visitors with a variety of high-quality recreational and leisure opportunities.

11.2.2 Open Space for New Development

To ensure that Bridgewater's open space network is extended into newly developed areas, Council shall require the developer who is subdividing land to dedicate a portion of that land to the Town as open space. The Development Officer shall ensure that the dedicated land meets the Town's minimum requirements for useable open space, including specifications for public access, minimum land area, location, and other key physical characteristics. If the available land doesn't satisfy these minimum requirements, the Town shall require cash-in-lieu of parkland of equivalent value, or an acceptable combination of cash and dedicated open space.

Policy OS-3: It shall be the policy of Council to require the subdivider, except where two or fewer lots are being created, where lots are being consolidated, or where the subdivision changes lot boundaries without creating new lots, to convey to the Town for park, playground or similar public use one of the following, in accordance with the Town's Subdivision By-law:

- a) Require the subdivider to transfer to the Town land for public open space, which fulfills the "useable land" definition in the Town's Subdivision By-law, and which equals 5% of the area subdivided in the final plan of subdivision, excluding streets, roads and residual land owned by the subdivider;
- b) Require the subdivider to contribute cash-in-lieu of parkland of equivalent value; or

- c) Require the subdivider to contribute a combination of land which fulfills the “useable land” definition in the Town’s Subdivision By-law and cash-in-lieu of land of equivalent value.

Council acknowledges that residents living in compact forms of housing, in more heavily populated areas of town, also require access to open space, recreational or leisure-based amenities. The open space dedication process is an effective way of integrating parkland into newly developed subdivisions, however, most multi-unit residential developments do not proceed through the subdivision approval process. In these instances, Council will require developers of multi-unit residential projects permitted by development agreement to provide open space, recreational, or leisure-based amenities on-site to provide for the needs of those residents.

Policy OS-4: It shall be the policy of Council to require developers to provide greenspace, recreational or leisure-based amenities on-site for all new multi-unit residential development containing five or more dwelling units, and all new multi-unit residential development permitted by development agreement in accordance with Policy IM-6.

In 2011, the Town of Bridgewater initiated a comprehensive planning and design process for the 18-acre Generations Active Park site. This process was the first step in the realization of a community-wide, regionally significant park development. The intent of the plan is to provide specific program elements, site composition, design and costing for the park and to facilitate a long range implementation strategy, which is reflective of the residents’ needs and wants for outdoor recreation space. The master plan, which includes a leash-free dog park, multi-use courts, natural play areas and playground, a splash-pad and more, was approved by Council in December 2011.

Policy OS-5: It shall be a policy of Council to work toward the implementation of the Generations Active Park Master Plan (2011) in an effort to maximize the use of the 18-acre community park, and to help stimulate residential development in the Glen Allan Drive neighbourhood.

11.2.3 Open Space Planning

While the town’s open space network is expansive, Council recognizes that improvements are needed to increase the use of the existing open space network and to better meet the community’s recreational and leisure needs. Council acknowledges that the development of an Open Space Master Plan will help to establish a long-term “big picture” planning and management strategy for Bridgewater’s open space network. The following are a few issues to be addressed in the master plan:

- *Quality of Existing Open Spaces:* Citizens have indicated that several existing parks in Bridgewater require revitalization and/or further development in order to realize their full potential as vibrant community destinations. The Master Plan would help establish a long-term program for achieving improvements which reflect the community’s needs. This might include planned trail development, diverse park uses and amenities, a landscaping strategy, partnerships strategy, and more.
- *Planned Growth:* Increasingly, the supply of adequate open space and recreational amenities is a determinant for where people, and some businesses, are likely to locate. The Town does not have a plan identifying

locations for future open space. The Master Plan can provide guidance on where future open space should be established to ensure existing and future residents have sufficient access to desirable public open space and amenities within the town.

- *Integration & Connectivity:* Research suggests that the benefits of open spaces are maximized when they are located within a well-connected open space system with extensive trails and greenways. The Town owns several parks which are relatively isolated or even hidden, which undermines their purpose and discourages their use. A Master Plan can help ensure that parkland is properly sited and better integrated into neighbourhoods and/or connected the existing open space network.



- *Planning for Climate Change / Ecological Health:* The severity of impacts resulting from climate change is rising and is anticipated to increase in the coming years. In Bridgewater, significant development and public infrastructure is located in close proximity to the LaHave River and several major brooks, resulting in a number of vulnerabilities. A Master Plan will not only assist in identifying lands that could serve as traditional public open spaces, but also strategic open spaces that may help protect and buffer development, infrastructure and people from climate change related impacts, particularly flooding.

Policy OS-6: It shall be the policy of Council to develop an Open Space Master Plan that includes objectives and recommendations for maximizing the public's use of both existing and future open space throughout Bridgewater.

11.2.4 Acquisition of Land Along the LaHave River

The LaHave River is Bridgewater's most prominent natural asset, and it is responsible for much of the town's rich history and culture. Over the years the built environment has increasingly encroached on the river, which compromises the community's ability to access and enjoy it. Citizens have requested that greater efforts be taken to change this. As a result, Council will support park and open space development that improves the public's access and enjoyment of the LaHave River, particularly in the downtown core.

Policy OS-7: It shall be the policy of Council to consider acquiring all lands available for purchase which abut the LaHave River and to reserve them for public purposes, in accordance with the Comprehensive Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan Final Report (2013).

11.2.5 Community Partnerships

The Town relies on a number of partnerships with community groups and organizations to generate human and financial resources for projects which benefit the citizens of Bridgewater. Some of these projects involve the use of Town facilities, infrastructure and parkland. Aberdeen Green, which is a Town-owned park located at the corner of Elm Street and Aberdeen Road, is one example of how the Town and a community group can collaborate to increase the use and enjoyment of public open space. In 2010, the Bridgewater Community Garden Network launched Bridgewater’s first community garden in Aberdeen Green. Council recognizes that the Bridgewater Community Garden Network, and other community groups, can help leverage interest and resources to realize their goals, while also increasing the use and enhancement of the Town’s public spaces. Recognizing this, Town Council will try to support collaborative partnerships with groups and organizations which help to implement or complement open space related goals and objectives of the Town, as articulated in the following plans:



- Municipal Planning Strategy (2013);
- Comprehensive Downtown & Waterfront Master Plan (2013);
- Generations Active Park Master Plan (2011);
- Council’s Community Plan (2009);
- Active Transportation Plan (2020);
- Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (2010); and
- Park Signage Guidelines (2010); and
- Future planning initiatives of the Town’s Parks, Recreation & Culture Department (e.g., Open Space Master Plan).

Policy OS-8: It shall be the policy of Council to support community partnerships and help initiate projects which both: a) increase the use and enjoyment of public open space in Bridgewater; and b) help to implement or complement relevant Town planning policies, initiatives and guidelines.

11.3 Open Space Designation

The Future Land Use Map includes the Open Space Designation, which identifies all lands that have been reserved by Council for open space purposes, including active and passive parkland, playgrounds, sports fields, recreational facilities, and land preserved for environmental purposes. Because of their dual function as transportation corridors, public streets and bodies of water are not included in the Open Space Designation. While all of these uses are elements of vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods, many function differently and therefore require some distinction.



Traditional neighbourhood park spaces are used by people for different purposes, and normally maintain a focus on informal recreation and social interaction. Due to their informal program, traditional parks help to complement and diversify neighbourhoods. Lands set aside for recreational facilities and related uses have a more formal function, as

they are used for very specific activities and purposes. Certain facilities may generate a higher concentration of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, which may result in greater impacts on adjacent properties. Other open spaces serve as conservation or protection areas for environmental purposes including wildlife protection and stormwater management. Most forms of development are restricted in these areas to ensure that they are adequately protected over time.

In recognition of these different types of open spaces, Council has established three zones, the Park (P) Zone, the Recreation (REC) Zone, and the Conservation (C) Zone. Council recognizes that all three zones are required to accommodate and regulate a broad range open space uses for citizens and visitors of the town.

Policy OS-9: It shall be the policy of Council to designate as Open Space the areas shown on Map 2 - Future Land Use.

11.3.1 Park (P) Zone

The Town owns and manages several park areas in the Park (P) Zone which are categorized under four general classifications:

- *Nature Parks:* Mostly defined by undisturbed forest cover and accommodates passive activities such as walking, nature appreciation, and picnicking.
- *Leisure Parks:* Small parks which typically include benches used by citizens for temporary respite purposes.
- *Specialty Parks:* Parks which have been developed for a specific social purpose, including memorials, activities, performance space, promoting access to the LaHave River, etc.
- *Playgrounds:* Small park areas including playground equipment and amenities for young children.

The following is a list of all parks located within the Park (P) Zone:

Park Name	Classification	Park Name	Classification
Aberdeen Green	Specialty	North King Green Area	Nature
Baker Street Park	Leisure	Riverside Park	Leisure
Bridgehead Landing	Leisure	Riverview Park	Nature
Dufferin/King Mini Park	Leisure	Senior Citizens Park	Leisure
Glen Allan Park	Nature	Shipyards Landing	Specialty
Glen Allan Playground	Playground	St. Phillips Street Playground	Playground
King Street Court	Specialty	Veteran’s Memorial Park	Specialty
Kinsmen Tiny Tot Playground	Playground	Waterfront Park	Leisure
Mariner’s Landing	Leisure	Winburn Avenue Park	Nature
Mayfair Drive Park	Nature	Woodland Gardens	Nature

Council has established the Park (P) Zone to maintain an adequate supply of parkland for citizens in Bridgewater with a focus on providing public open space for informal recreation and social interaction.

Policy OS-10: It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Park (P) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy OS-11: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Park (P) Zone:

- a) Parks;
- b) Community gardens;
- c) Interpretive centres;
- d) Markets & fairs;
- e) Visitor information centres; and
- f) Water related recreational uses.

11.3.2 Recreation (REC) Zone

Bridgewater is home to several recreational facilities and sports fields which are located in the Recreation (REC) Zone. Council has established this zone to accommodate a range of opportunities for organized sport and recreation within the town and to establish a distinction between them and traditional park space and conservation land.

Bridgewater has emerged as a recreational hub in Nova Scotia. The Kinsmen Athletic Field is used regularly for track and field, soccer, softball, baseball and football. Additionally, several softball and baseball diamonds are provided at the LaHave Street Ballfields. Both the Bridgewater Memorial Arena and the Bridgewater Curling Club provide winter sports opportunities in the west end of town. Generations Active Park is an 18-acre site which, when completed, will host a wide range of recreational uses, including an off-leash dog park, splash pad and multi-purpose courts. Today, Generations



Active Park accommodates the HB Studios Centre, which provides indoor soccer and track and field amenities. Finally, the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre (LCLC) is a \$33 million facility located in the Bridgewater Business Park designed to promote community and individual health and wellness through programming and sport. The LCLC has been realized as a result of major funding commitments from the federal government, the provincial government, the Town of Bridgewater, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and private donations. The LCLC includes an NHL size arena, an aquatic centre, a public library, and active living and cultural space.

The following is a list of all active parks and facilities located within the Recreation (REC) Zone:

Name of Recreational Land / Facility	Classification
Curling Club	Facility
Generations Active Park	Active Park & Facility
Kinsmen Athletic Field	Active Park
LaHave Street Sportsfields	Active Park
Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre	Facility
Memorial Arena	Facility

Town Council intends to permit a wide range of recreational uses within the Recreation (REC) Zone as-of-right. However, Council will also carefully consider traffic, noise and other potential land use impacts on adjacent lands prior to rezoning other lands Recreation (REC) in the future. Development that is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the Recreation (REC) Zone will be prohibited in this zone.

Policy OS-12: It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Recreation (REC) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy OS-13: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Recreation (REC) Zone:

- a) Recreation facilities and uses;
- b) Community centres;
- c) Community gardens;
- d) Cultural facilities;
- e) Interpretive centres;
- f) Leash free dog parks;
- g) Libraries;
- h) Marinas;
- i) Markets, exhibitions, trade shows, & fairs;
- j) Outdoor recreational uses;
- k) Parks; and
- l) Visitor information centres.

Policy OS-13 A: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments by **site plan approval** in the Recreation (REC) Zone:

- a) Parks facility
- b) Transit facility

11.3.3 Conservation (CON) Zone

Planning for conservation areas requires an approach to ecosystem protection and management that integrates sustainable land use and human needs in a manner that ensures the needs and aspirations of future generations are not compromised by those of the present. Bridgewater’s local environment provides countless benefits to residents, including scenic beauty, recreational options, and important ecosystems that sustain life and essential elements for people. Because the environment is such an integral component of the town’s natural history and identity, and plays a vital role in maintaining the health of all living things, it is important to limit the negative impact that can result from development and land use. In particular, vegetated areas, streams and wetlands are home to a number of wildlife and important plant species. Limiting deforestation and limiting development of the most ecologically rich and sensitive lands in Bridgewater will help reduce the likelihood of local ecosystem disruption.

Town Council intends to apply the Conservation (CON) Zone to lands in Bridgewater which demonstrate an important ecological function to the town. This may include select forested areas, streams, wetlands, floodplain areas, steep slopes, hydrological soils, riparian areas, key species habitats, watershed floodplains, and various plant communities. Although Bridgewater is comprised of several candidate properties or areas for this zone, there has been little or no study or evaluation of these lands to confirm their ecological significance and sensitivity. As a result, Council will establish evaluative criteria to help determine the appropriateness of rezoning lands to Conservation (CON) in the future.



In 2010, one acre of land located off of Pine Street was donated to the Town for conservation purposes, primarily due to the presence of Hebb Brook which bisects the property, in addition to the abundance of Jack Pines and Lady Slipper orchids situated within riparian areas on either side of the brook. Council accepted the land donation and named the site Sperry Ninos Park in recognition of the donators. Council will continue to protect this land through the Conservation (CON) Zone requirements in accordance with the wishes of the donators, and also to ensure the continued health and function of the Hebb Brook which remains one of the most important watercourses in Bridgewater. Like Sperry Ninos Park, Pinecrest Park serves as a riparian buffer on both sides of Hebb Brook in the southwestern part of Town. Pinecrest Park is a four-acre linear open space, lush with extensive vegetation, diverse wildlife habitat and informal pedestrian trails. Council recognizes the importance of maintaining the riparian function of this open space to help minimize the runoff of sediment and pollutants into Hebb Brook, and ultimately, the LaHave River.

The following is a list of all lands located within the Conservation (CON) Zone:

Name of Conservation Land	Classification
Pinecrest Park	Conservation
Sperry Ninos Park	Conservation

Town Council will permit non-intrusive uses in the Conservation (CON) Zone as-of-right to ensure the lands are maintained in their natural state as much as possible. Most forms of development will be prohibited on these lands.

Policy OS-14: It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Conservation (CON) Zone in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with the Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law.

Policy OS-15: It shall be a policy of Council to permit the following developments **as-of-right** in the Conservation (CON) Zone:

- a) Conservation uses and improvements;
- b) Passive recreational uses;
- c) Playgrounds established prior to the approval of this Municipal Planning Strategy;
and
- d) Public works projects.

To identify and evaluate lands for future conservation parks, the Town shall consider acquiring land which demonstrates ecological significance and benefit to the town. In addition to natural lands, industrial lands, derelict lands, and brownfields may also be regarded as good candidates for conservation parks for their capacity to contribute to the elimination of sources of disturbance and pollution.

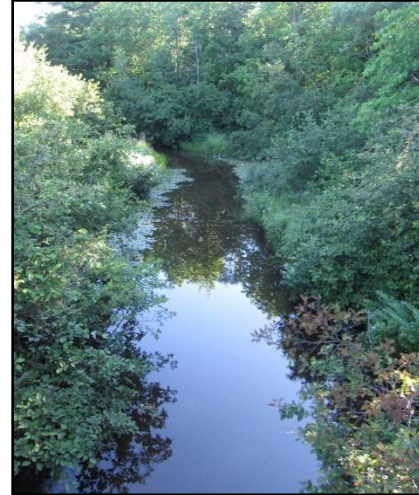
Policy OS-16: It shall be a policy of Council to consider zoning land Conservation (CON) where one or more of the following criteria is/are demonstrated:

- a) The land or area protects undeveloped properties with significant natural value to the town or region;
- b) The land or area conserves properties that may serve to join existing conserved properties together;
- c) The land or area protects land in or alongside riparian corridors or which may help develop and maintain a contiguous riparian corridor;
- d) The land helps to preclude development in floodplains;
- e) The land or area helps to provide increased capacity for desirable passive recreation and trail links; and/or
- f) The land or area includes underutilized or abandoned properties suited for conservation parkland purposes.

SECTION 12: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

12.1 Background

Bridgewater's natural environment provides countless benefits to the community, including scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, clean air, and ecosystems that sustain various plant and animal species. Because the environment is such an integral component of the town's natural history and identity, and plays a vital role in maintaining the health of all living things, it is important to limit the negative impacts that can result from development, land use, and human activity.



Bridgewater's most notable natural feature is the LaHave River which bisects the town. The river, along with its sizable watershed, is an essential component of our stormwater management system, natural habitat, and rich quality of life. The LaHave River receives water input from several notable brooks and streams; Wiles and Hebb Brook, which are the largest, are located on the west side of the LaHave, while others like Miller and Silver's Brook are located on the east side. Interspersed amongst these significant watercourses are numerous swamps, bogs, wetlands and ponds, and ample vegetation, all of which support numerous ecological functions that are essential for a healthy environment.

Council recognizes the diverse contributions that the natural environment makes to the well-being of all species and the long-term sustainability of our community, and as a result, Council wishes to preserve our natural environment for the enjoyment of current and future generations. When land is developed, efforts will be made to protect sensitive areas that demonstrate significant ecological value, including lands abutting major watercourses, wetlands and other known habitat areas. Environmental preservation efforts will be balanced with the need to support new development and a growing population so that we can have a livable and vibrant community which is both environmentally and economically prosperous.

12.2 Environmental Protection Objectives

Bridgewater was originally settled due to the presence of its diverse natural resources, and now, the environment enhances our quality of life and helps attract visitors. In 2010, Council approved its Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) to help make Bridgewater a sustainable community. Because environmental protection is a major component of achieving long-term sustainability, Council has established environmental policies to ensure that current and future generations have the opportunity to experience the vibrant natural environment that exists today. Several of these policies also strive to ensure public safety and to protect public and private investment from environmental constraints and climate change related impacts.



12.2.1 Limit Environmental Disruption During Development

Bridgewater aspires to be a sustainable community, where the citizens are able to meet their basic human needs while living within the earth's means. To be sustainable requires a careful balance between the Bridgewater's ongoing development and environmental protection and stewardship. Understanding environmentally sensitive or critical areas is useful in preventing harmful actions. Environmentally sensitive areas can be defined as places that are vulnerable to negative environmental impacts, such as areas with unstable soils, steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and vulnerable habitat. Known sensitive areas are identified on Map 6 - Environmental Constraints Map, to help illustrate where most forms of development shall be discouraged. New development has the potential to disrupt our natural environment by creating or contributing to air and water pollution, soil contamination, erosion and other forms of environmental degradation. As a result, Council has established policies in this Planning Strategy which discourage any development that is likely to cause significant harm to the natural environment.

Policy EM-1: It shall be a policy of Council to identify known environmentally sensitive areas on Map 6 - Environmental Constraints, including but not limited to, steep slopes, flood areas, and watercourses, where development activity will be restricted or prohibited.

Policy EM-2: It shall be a policy of Council to establish performance standards in the Land Use By-law for development on or adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas, as identified Map 6 - Environmental Constraints, to minimize negative impacts.

Policy EM-3: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the retention of existing trees and vegetation in new multi-unit residential development, and all new development projects that are permitted through site plan approval or by development agreement, in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy EM-4: It shall be a policy of Council to manage Town owned land in an ecologically sustainable manner.

12.2.2 Protection Through Conservation Zoning

In Section 11 of this document, Council establishes an intention to conserve select lands, such as forested areas, wetlands, and key habitats, which demonstrate important ecological functions to the town. To help accomplish this goal, Council has created the Conservation (CON) Zone which protects sensitive areas from the potentially detrimental impacts of new development by permitting only non-intrusive uses in this zone, including passive open spaces and conservation uses. In most cases, the environmental significance of land shall be evaluated by qualified experts prior to its inclusion in the Conservation (CON) Zone. Please refer to Section 11 of this Planning Strategy for more details.



12.2.3 Protection of the LaHave River and Major Watercourses

The LaHave River is an important estuary that has provided innumerable environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits to Bridgewater for generations. To ensure the River remains a healthy and celebrated resource for future generations, Council has adopted special controls for new development adjacent to the River through the establishment of the LaHave River Development Agreement Area. This Area outlines special development agreement criteria which most new development must take into consideration through the development agreement process. For more information on the LaHave River Development Agreement Area, please refer to Section 7 of this Planning Strategy.



Policy EM-5: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage the preservation and protection of land abutting major watercourses in Bridgewater, as identified on Map 6 - Environmental Constraints, which provide a significant riparian function.

Policy EM-6: It shall be a policy of Council to consider permitting development in the LaHave River Development Agreement Area by development agreement, in accordance with Policy LRDA-1, to minimize negative environmental impacts on the River.

The Town of Bridgewater serves as part of the catchment area for the LaHave River watershed. While the LaHave River is the town's most beloved watercourse, several other significant watercourses also run through the community, including but not limited to Grouse Brook, Wiles Brook, Stuart Brook, Town Pond Brook, Hebb Brook, Miller Brook, Glen Allan Brook, and Silver's Brook. The community depends on all of these watercourses to carry stormwater runoff to the LaHave River. In urbanizing areas like Bridgewater, sediment and pollutants in the runoff can impact water quality resulting in negative impacts on aquatic and terrestrial habitats. In addition, the disruption of riparian areas along these watercourses can result in the loss of important vegetation which helps filter the sediment and pollutants, and can increase run-off flows resulting in downstream flooding and erosion problems. To help avoid these issues, Council shall establish minimum building setback distances from all major watercourses in Bridgewater.

Policy EM-7: It shall be a policy of Council to establish minimum development setbacks from all significant watercourses in the Land Use By-law, in accordance with Map 6 - Environmental Constraints, to help minimize flooding, pollution, sedimentation and erosion.

12.2.4 Storm Water Management

Stormwater management involves the efficient conveyance of water from one point to another and the control of increased peak rates of runoff associated with land use alteration. The two most common approaches to stormwater management in urbanized areas are: a) built systems, including curbs, gutter, catch basins and underground sewer pipes; and b) natural systems, including natural drainage watercourses, ponds and wetlands which can be maintained or upgraded to deal with increased flows.

Underground storm sewer systems are becoming more costly to build and maintain, and are difficult to design for increasingly unpredictable peak flows, resulting from changes in our environment (e.g., climate change). Sustainable communities must proactively plan to protect their natural drainage systems to ensure the functionality and resiliency of the entire stormwater system.

Natural systems are used to mimic the natural conditions of infiltration and rainfall and to slow the distribution of flows throughout the entire stormwater network. They also provide buffers and corridors within which flooding can naturally occur. Other benefits include enhancing groundwater recharge, reducing pollution, and minimizing channel erosion. Watercourses, when left intact and not overburdened, can manage stormwater in the most cost effective way. However, the natural system is dynamic, especially when integrated within urban settings. The careful maintenance of these natural areas is therefore essential.

Policy EM-8: It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that all post-development peak flows for all development permitted by site plan approval and development agreement are equal to or less than pre-development peak flows, to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer.

Policy EM-9: It shall be a policy of Council to commission a comprehensive stormwater management plan for the entire geography of the Town of Bridgewater, which incorporates:

- a) Development regulations intended to alleviate the adverse effects of flooding on existing and future development;
- b) Engineered solutions to resolve existing problems; and
- c) Development regulations intended to alleviate the adverse effects of future development on the LaHave River watershed.

12.2.5 Flood Hazards along the LaHave River

Flooding is the overflowing of water upon land not usually submerged. In order to predict the probability and severity of a flood, and therefore to plan for future flood events, the factors that contribute to a flood must be understood; such as normal high water level for rivers and streams, and the odds that the water may rise by several meters under certain conditions. Terrain is also an important factor because riverbanks can be high and steep, or there can be flat areas where the water easily spills out. In 2024, the Town of Bridgewater retained the services of Dr. Tim Webster to review the existing flood scenarios in the Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG) flood risk study (2013) and recommend a flood scenario to use in policy. The study suggests that significant lands along the LaHave River will be impacted in the future, specifically the South Shore Centre, Shipyards Landing, and the Port of Bridgewater Lands.

Recognizing the findings of the study, Council will discourage certain land uses and development in areas at risk of flooding. Locating hospitals, senior citizen housing, homes for special care and similar types of uses in flood risk areas could threaten the safety of individuals occupying such institutions if evacuation is necessary. Other uses such as the warehousing or production of hazardous materials may increase the risks of environmental contamination during a period of flooding. For these reasons, the Land Use By-law will only permit these types of land uses in areas not at risk of flooding. For all other development proposed in areas susceptible to flooding, the proponent will be required to demonstrate that sufficient flood proofing measures have been incorporated in the development agreement process to minimize adverse impacts to the subject property, surrounding area and the LaHave River.



Policy EM-10: It shall be a policy of Council to identify flood risk areas identified on Map 6 - Environmental Constraints, to minimize negative land use impacts.

Policy EM-11: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit certain institutional land uses of a residential nature, such as hospitals, nursing homes, residential care facilities, homes for special care, group homes or small option homes for 6 or more individuals, and other activities that have prevailing safety considerations along areas of the LaHave River that are susceptible to flooding, in the LaHave River Development Agreement Area.

Policy EM-12: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit any development that poses a contamination threat to the LaHave River as a result of anticipated flooding and erosion, such as, but not limited to, the warehousing or production of hazardous materials, on properties abutting the LaHave River.

Policy EM-13: It shall be a policy of Council to consider participating in flood monitoring initiatives, with other levels of government and expert or likeminded organizations, designed to record and evaluate flood event characteristics, frequency and risk along the LaHave River.

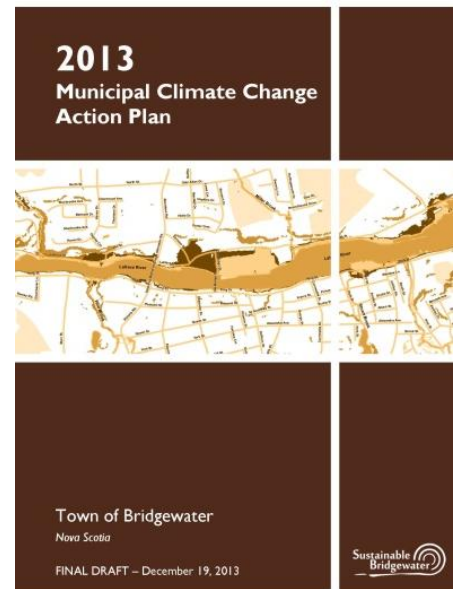
12.2.6 Environmental Conservation & Restoration Through Partnerships

The well-being of all citizens and countless plant and animal species depends on the health of our natural environment. Not only does our environment serve as a habitat for local wildlife and provide us with water-based recreational opportunities, it serves many other benefits which are commonly overlooked, such as maintaining air quality and natural hydrological cycles. Council recognizes that effective environmental conservation and restoration is a significant task, best accomplished in partnership with the assistance of provincial and federal regulators and likeminded organizations. As such, Council will strive to collaborate with different levels of government and partner organizations to undertake efforts to conserve and restore local environmental assets and ecosystems to ensure that they are not diminished over time.

Policy EM-14: It shall be a policy of Council to collaborate with other groups, organizations, and other levels of government to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant areas.

12.2.7 Climate Change

Climate change is defined as, *“a change in the average weather that a given region experiences. Average weather includes all the features we associate with the weather such as temperature, wind patterns and precipitation”*. There is countless evidence that shows that rates of climate change are growing and that the warming of our atmosphere is the primary cause. Climate change is producing a number of troublesome causal impacts, such as sea level rise. Global sea levels have risen noticeably during the past century, and they will continue to do so at mounting rates, which is concerning for local residents because Nova Scotia is labeled as a “high risk zone”. Nova Scotia’s sea level rose by 30cm in the last century, and we expect another increase of 70-140cm before 2100. Sea level rise isn’t the only climate change threat confronting Bridgewater; evidence suggests that all coastal areas will be exposed to an increasing frequency and severity of storm events, storm surge, and eroding shorelines. Council acknowledges that climate change is an increasing threat to citizens, property, infrastructure in Bridgewater, and thus are committed to taking steps to plan for climate change adaptation and mitigation.



Policy EM-15: It shall be a policy of Council to work towards the recommendations of the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP).

SECTION 13: BUILT HERITAGE

13.1 Background

Bridgewater boasts a rich collection of built heritage thanks in part to the community's original merchants, entrepreneurs, and professionals who were responsible for much of the town's physical development. Our community's built heritage reflects diverse architectural styles, along with their character defining elements, which help create attractive streetscapes and connect us to Bridgewater's past. The town's prevalent styles include: Maritime Vernacular, which is modest in



nature, and includes distinctive features like rectangular floor plans, small dormers, and plain exteriors; the Greek Revival style, which is very common and is identified by gently sloped gable roofs and decorative classical elements; Gothic Revival, which includes trademark features such as arched windows and dormers; the Queen Anne style, defined by its asymmetrical design, front facing gables, and elaborate details; and Craftsmen, which are commonly 1.5 storeys in height with full width verandas, broad gables, and columns.

Bridgewater is fortunate to have a collection of historic buildings that date back to the 1800s and early 1900s, along with several architecturally significant residential areas and King Street's historic commercial streetscape, which remain largely intact. These assets are of great importance because, over time, most of the town's built heritage has been lost due to the aging process or to make way for new development. Recognizing this, Town Council intends to minimize the loss of more built heritage, where possible, to capitalize on the many benefits of heritage conservation:

- **Economic:** World-wide research shows that heritage conservation can have multiple economic benefits for a community, including job growth in skilled trades, increased property values, revitalized neighbourhoods and a wide array of tourism opportunities.
- **Cultural:** At its core, heritage conservation is a cultural activity. Not only does it remind us of our past and traditions, it acts as a point of pride and reference that can help foster awareness and confident cultural growth that respects traditions and stories of the area.
- **Environmental:** Heritage conservation helps to reduce reliance on new materials, environmentally unfriendly building materials and energy intensive production of new building materials. Heritage conservation encourages the re-use of existing building materials by extending the life of a building and its components, or rehabilitating damaged building materials.

Town Council acknowledges the many benefits of conserving Bridgewater's built heritage, and as a result, they have established several policies in this Municipal Planning Strategy to protect it so that built heritage can be enjoyed by current and future generations.

13.2 Heritage Objectives

13.2.1 Preserve Local Heritage

Bridgewater has a significant amount of built heritage which has been shaped by the community's distinct past, notable figures, and prolonged growth and development. If you look closely, much of Bridgewater's history can be seen in our built heritage; you can learn of our past traditions, popular architectural styles, the community's values and needs, and by following the progression of the town's development, you can anticipate how these elements may evolve over time. Council is intent on conserving Bridgewater's unique built heritage and history, and they recognize that this may require collaboration with like-minded partners. Council will work with groups, such as the DesBrisay Museum and the Heritage Advisory Committee, to preserve and celebrate our unique heritage resources.

Policy H-1: It shall be a policy of Council to work with local heritage groups and organizations, including the DesBrisay Museum, to preserve and celebrate Bridgewater's unique built heritage.

Policy H-2: It shall be a policy of Council to support the Heritage Advisory Committee's (HAC) role as a built heritage advocate, which includes compiling an inventory of historically significant properties, raising awareness on the benefits of heritage preservation, and advising the Town on heritage-related matters.

13.2.2 Register Municipal Heritage Properties

Nova Scotia's *Heritage Property Act* helps identify, protect and restore heritage properties throughout the province. The Act outlines a number of procedures to preserve heritage, but more specifically, it allows a municipality to establish a municipal registry of heritage properties that deliver significant heritage value (i.e., aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, or historical importance) to their community. Once a municipal heritage property is registered, Town Council gains a degree of control over the property to help protect its character defining elements (i.e., the materials, characteristics, forms, and spatial configurations that help make a property meaningful). If a property owner wishes to make substantial alterations to a registered property, they must follow the procedure outlined in the Town's Heritage Property By-law.

Council recognizes that the registration process is the most efficient way to preserve individual heritage properties, and therefore, they will continue to register new municipal heritage properties, with the guidance of the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC), when interested property owners come forward. To date, the Town has retained four municipal heritage properties:

- **Brookside Cemetery:** The cemetery opened in 1879. It is the burial place of most of Bridgewater's most notable early residents and it contains their original headstones.
- **Holy Trinity Anglican Church:** The church has been a spiritual and community landmark since it opened in 1858, and it contains many original Gothic Revival architectural features.

- **Wile Carding Mill:** The Mill, which opened in 1960, was built by one of Bridgewater’s founding families. It is an excellent example of a pre-1920 industrial building, and is the last remaining sign of Bridgewater’s 19th century industrial park.
- **106 St. Phillip’s Street:** The property was one of Bridgewater’s original working farms. The home was constructed in 1866, and is a prime example of Maritime Vernacular architecture.

Policy H-3: It shall be a policy of Council to protect notable properties that provide significant heritage value to the community by adding them to Bridgewater’s municipal registry of heritage properties.

Policy H-4: It shall be a policy of Council to regard the Heritage Property By-law in consideration of alterations to designated heritage buildings, streetscapes, and areas.

13.2.3 Protect Architecturally Significant Areas

Town Council has established two architectural control areas to protect Bridgewater’s most architecturally significant districts. The intent of these controls is to preserve the heritage value of a specified area by maintaining the exterior appearance of buildings, including their unique character defining architectural elements.

Council has determined that architectural controls should be applied to Bridgewater’s original developed core on the west side of the LaHave River to maintain the appearance of strategic buildings and structures. This core is divided into two distinct architectural control areas which are defined by their traditional land uses and built heritage (see Map 8 - Architectural Control Areas), and are subject to a unique collection of control measures to protect public façades. These areas are as follows:

- **Residential Architectural Control Area:** West of King Street is Bridgewater’s oldest and most architecturally significant neighbourhood, which encompasses Queen Street and portions of Pleasant Street and York Street. The area was originally comprised of single unit dwellings, but many have since been converted to multi-unit dwellings while simultaneously preserving their original façades and distinct architectural styles. Also included within this control area is Dufferin Street, which was developed between the mid-1800s and early 1900s as a residential area. Over time, Dufferin has evolved into a small-scale commercial district, while still respecting the area’s original residential built heritage and architecture.
- **King Street Architectural Control Area:** King Street emerged as a bustling commercial node in the 19th century, but on January 12th, 1899, most buildings and storefronts were lost during the “Great Fire”. The street was redeveloped from 1900-1905, and the majority of these post-fire buildings still front onto the street.

Policy H-5: It shall be a policy of Council to establish two architectural control areas, the **Residential Architectural Control Area** and the **King Street Architectural Control Area**, in accordance with Map 8 - Architectural Control Areas, to preserve the public façades and character defining architectural features within Bridgewater’s most architecturally significant areas.



Policy H-6: It shall be a policy of Council to establish architectural control requirements for the **Residential Architectural Control Area** in the Land Use By-law, to regulate the public façades of all:

- a) Buildings built prior to 1920, including any additions or alterations thereto;
- b) Buildings built after August 12, 1997, including any additions or alterations thereto; and
- c) Accessory structures greater than 50m² (538ft²) in total area, built prior to 1920 or after August 12, 1997.

Policy H-7: It shall be a policy of Council to establish architectural control requirements for the King Street Architectural Control Area in the Land Use By-law, to regulate the public façades of all:

- a) Buildings built prior to 1920, including any additions or alterations thereto; and
- b) Accessory structures greater than 50m² (538ft²) in total area, built after August 12, 1997.

Policy H-8: In an effort to realize the built heritage objectives of the Town, it shall be a policy of Council to require the Town’s Planning Department to contact all property owners within the designated architectural control areas, on an annual basis, to inform them of the applicable architectural control requirements.

SECTION 14: TRANSPORTATION

14.1 Background

The configuration of the town's transportation network has been shaped by several different eras of economic growth and development, resulting in different development patterns and evolving transportation needs. Today, Bridgewater's transportation system consists of nearly 70 kilometres of public streets, 36 kilometres of sidewalks, 8 kilometres of formalized trails and 5 kilometres of shared bicycle lanes.



In recent decades, a number of parcels of land have been developed in a relatively unplanned fashion, resulting in an inconsistent and fragmented road system. Where the traditional street grid was once the norm, newer development has been characterized by a less structured road system and an increased number of terminating cul-de-sacs. Sprawling and disconnected road patterns became prevalent with post World War II residential development, where the expansion of car ownership provided residents with the opportunity to live farther away from their place of employment, in quieter and more private areas. This trend has resulted in some unintended consequences for a number of communities, including Bridgewater. Poor east-west street connectivity on the east side of the River, fragmented and isolated neighbourhoods, and increased dependency on the automobile are a few of the challenges Bridgewater has been facing as a result.

Today, there is an increasing awareness and understanding that transportation systems and community design directly influence the social, environmental and economic health of communities. In an effort to establish a healthier, well-planned transportation system in Bridgewater, Town Council intends to create new policies that support street connectivity and the diversification of transportation options and infrastructure to help meet the needs of all citizens.

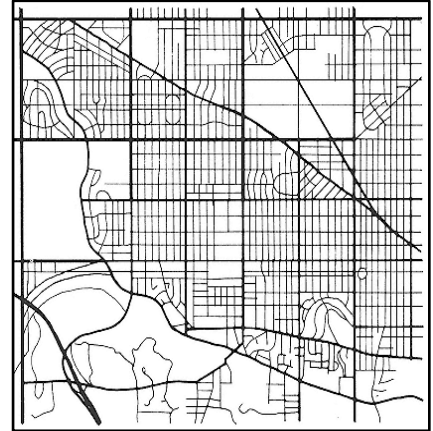
14.2 Street Network Objectives

Bridgewater's street network includes all Town owned and maintained streets and bridges, private roads, and associated sidewalk and crosswalk infrastructure. Bridgewater relies on its street network and associated transportation infrastructure to support high rates of through and local traffic on a daily basis. It is estimated that Bridgewater's population doubles on week days, resulting in significant increases in traffic volumes on arterial and collector streets. To manage these transportation demands, Town Council has established policies to help ensure the street network will continue to meet the community's service needs, and that comprehensive planning for the expansion of the street network will be completed to maximize the efficiency and benefits of the infrastructure.

14.2.1 Efficient Street Design

Each road within Bridgewater's street network serves a different purpose in facilitating the flow of regional and local traffic in the community. From a transportation planning perspective, it's important that the Town continues to utilize

a formal classification system to ensure that an efficient level of service is provided to the community. Bridgewater’s Town-owned streets are categorized in three different ways: arterial, collector, or local streets. *Arterial streets* refer to major streets which are primarily used to support regional traffic through the community. These streets typically support 75% through-traffic and 25% local access. No streets in Bridgewater have been designed to the Town’s arterial road design standards, however, King Street, LaHave Street, Dufferin Street, Victoria Road and Aberdeen Road all function as arterial streets. *Collector streets* accommodate traffic from local streets in residential areas and link to major arterial routes to facilitate longer distance travel. These streets typically support 50% through-traffic and 50% local access. Finally, *local streets* are used to support localized traffic, and to connect neighbourhoods to collector streets. Local streets are used to access other collector or arterial streets at least 75% of the time.



The Town will update and maintain Map 4 - Street Classification Map to provide a comprehensive overview of Bridgewater’s existing and planned streets. Existing streets include the three classifications of Town-owned streets, along with all privately owned streets. In addition, some future collector streets have been identified on Map 4 as a result of previous detailed design processes. Planned local roads are provided on Map 4 for reference purposes only.

Policy T-1: It shall be a policy of Council to update and maintain Map 4 - Street Classification to identify the function and level of service required for all town streets.

Policy T-2: It shall be a policy of Council to update and maintain Map 4 - Street Classification to identify planned future collector and arterial streets. Further, Council shall require that all future street extensions are constructed in a manner that is consistent with the Map 4 - Street Classification, the Subdivision By-Law and the Municipal Specifications.

Because each type of street within Bridgewater’s transportation network serves a different purpose, it’s important that the Town maintain standards for the construction of new streets and street extensions, and the upgrading of existing ones. In order to ensure that our streets are meeting their desired level of service and safety, all streets must adhere to the Municipal Specifications referred to in the Town’s Subdivision By-law.

Policy T-3: It shall be the policy of Council to maintain and upgrade sidewalks and pedestrian walkways within the town, as necessary, to provide for safe and convenient pedestrian movement.

Policy T-4: It shall be the policy of Council to require developers to construct new sidewalks and walkways, as set out in the Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications, in order to provide pedestrians with continuous, integrated sidewalks and walkways for access to public facilities, shopping areas and residential neighbourhoods throughout the town.

Policy T-5: It shall be the policy of Council to require all new streets and extensions to existing streets to be constructed to standards referred to in the Town’s Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications.

14.2.2 Street Connectivity

In order to develop a fully functional and sustainable transportation system, and to achieve the objectives of Smart Growth, street connectivity must be improved in Bridgewater. Street connectivity can be defined as the quantity and quality of connections in the street network. In Bridgewater, there are several local examples where streets end in cul-de-sacs or dead-ends, and where there are deficiencies with east-west traffic routes, particularly on the east side of the LaHave River. As a growing regional service centre, Bridgewater must maintain an efficient street network to manage transportation demands. The Town will improve street connectivity by discouraging the use of cul-de-sacs, limiting the length of blocks, and encouraging the development of an interconnected rectilinear street system in new development to capitalize on the widespread benefits it provides.

Policy T-6: It shall be a policy of Council to require developers to construct streets within new subdivisions in accordance with the street connectivity standards referred to in the Subdivision By-law, to promote convenient, efficient and safe traffic patterns.

Policy T-7: It shall be a policy of Council to prohibit the development of new cul-de-sacs and dead-ends, except where geographical or environmental constraints require them, to improve traffic flow and walkability.

Policy T-8: It shall be a policy of Council to limit the size of future residential street blocks, in accordance with the Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications, to promote efficient development patterns and a walkable, permeating transportation network.

Policy T-9: It shall be the policy of Council to encourage right-of-ways to be reserved for arterial and collector streets, in accordance with Map 4 – Street Classification, when land is being subdivided within the town pursuant to Section 271 of the *Municipal Government Act*. The location shall be determined by the Town Engineer, in consultation with the Planning Department, at the time of subdivision.

Policy T-10: It shall be a policy of Council to improve the street connectivity of the existing street network, where possible, as part of future capital projects involving major road works, in accordance with Map 4 – Street Classification.

There are many areas of town, particularly in the north end, that are characterized by large plots of undeveloped land. As a growing community, this land is expected to be developed in time. To avoid a piecemeal and fragmented approach to street design, which often leads to connectivity issues, inefficient use of infrastructure and poorly planned neighbourhoods, Council shall require the development of a “Future Streets Master Plan” to ensure that future collector and arterial streets are integrated with Bridgewater’s existing street network in a well-planned manner. Once

a Future Streets Master Plan has been produced, Council shall update Map 4 - Street Classification Map to reflect all required future collector and arterial streets and extensions.

Policy T-11: It shall be a policy of Council to develop a Future Streets Master Plan, which identifies the location of future collector and arterial roads in underserved areas of Bridgewater, to ensure the Town’s street network and transportation system is developed in an efficient and well-planned manner.

14.3 Active Transportation Objectives

The street network forms the backbone of a transportation system because it supports automobile use as well as active transportation. Active transportation (AT) refers to all human powered modes of transportation, including walking, cycling, skate boarding, rollerblading, skiing, and more. Active modes of transportation provide people with improved mobility, and help strengthen the overall livability of a community due to the wealth of environmental, health, social, and economic benefits that they provide. Town Council has identified AT as a priority for Bridgewater, and a result, Council has established policies to ensure that active transportation is integrated with new development and that efforts to maximize the use of AT infrastructure are supported.



14.3.1 Active Transportation Advisory Committee

The Bridgewater Active Transportation Advisory Committee (BATC) was formally established by Council in 2007 and consists of a range of representatives of likeminded stakeholder organizations, residents, a Town Councillor and staff. The BATC is responsible for championing numerous AT public education, policy and infrastructure initiatives. Council recognizes the value of the BATC’s contributions and will support their continued efforts to help create a safe AT network and to raise awareness on the benefits of AT.

Policy T-12: It shall be a policy of Council to support active transportation related educational and awareness efforts provided by the Bridgewater Active Transportation Advisory Committee.

Policy T-13: It shall be a policy of Council to consult with the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, as necessary, to seek advice on matters affecting active transportation in Bridgewater.

14.3.2 Active Transportation Infrastructure

The Town of Bridgewater is committed to implementing its Active Transportation (AT) Plan, prepared by Zzap Architecture and Planning in 2020. The Plan, aims to improve safety for AT users, create more connections, continue to build a culture of active transportation, prioritize active transportation in the Town’s capital and operations budget, and utilize active transportation to enhance quality of life and the quality of the natural environment. The plan includes an AT Network for existing streets and a series of strategies and actions to effectively support active transportation in Bridgewater. Town Council approved the Plan in 2020 and remains committed to working towards its implementation.

Policy T-14: It shall be the policy of Council to work towards the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan (2020) to support the ongoing development of a healthy, safe and AT-supportive transportation network for residents and visitors.

Bridgewater’s Active Transportation Network illustrates where all AT-supportive routes shall be located in Bridgewater. Each route section is classified on a block-by-block basis depending on its environmental constraints and opportunities. The network plan outlines routes with (1) Protected Bike Lanes & Sidewalks or Multi-use Paths, (2) Buffered Bike Lanes & Sidewalks, (3) Neighbourhood Bikeways & Sidewalks, (4) Enhanced Separated Sidewalks, (5) Separated Sidewalks, (6) Enhanced Trails, (7) Trails, and (8) the location of future connections. The routes are all assigned short-, medium-, and long-term prioritization. Council intends to include the Active Transportation Network Map in the Municipal Planning Strategy to illustrate where AT infrastructure investments should be concentrated when existing streets are improved or retrofitted.

Policy T-15: It shall be a policy of Council to update and maintain Map 5 - Active Transportation Network, which designates all AT routes in Town and identifies where AT infrastructure improvements are needed on existing streets.

Policy T-16: It shall be the policy of Council to retrofit and maintain existing streets, where possible, with new or improved AT infrastructure, including sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, and dedicated or shared bicycle lanes, in accordance with the Town’s Active Transportation Plan (2020).

Policy T-17: It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that all new streets and street extensions identified in the Map 4 - Street Classification Map include required active transportation infrastructure in accordance with the design requirements referred to in the Subdivision By-law.

Map 5 – Active Transportation Network shows two primary trails that provide pedestrian linkages to the Town’s AT Network: the Centennial Trail, which extends more than eight kilometres throughout town, and the Woodland Gardens/Kinsmen Field trail. These trails function as both transportation and recreational infrastructure for residents and visitors. Council recognizes that trail systems contribute significantly to a successful AT Network, and thus, continued trail expansion and improvements will be encouraged in all areas of town.

Policy T-18: It shall be a policy of Council to maintain the former Canadian National Railway right-of-way, now known as the Centennial Trail, as a dedicated active transportation corridor.

Policy T-19: It shall be a policy of Council to establish active transportation connections, where possible, that link the Centennial Trail to adjacent public spaces and public facilities, in an effort to increase active transportation behavior and to maximize the use of existing Town infrastructure.

Policy T-20: It shall be a policy of Council to require developers to establish active transportation connections that links the Centennial Trail to new development on adjacent private land, in an effort to increase active transportation behavior and to maximize the use of existing Town infrastructure.

14.4 Public Transportation Objectives

A sustainable transportation system must also include public transportation services. In consideration of this, in 2009, the Province of Nova Scotia funded a public transit feasibility study for the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and the Towns of Bridgewater, Lunenburg and Mahone Bay. The study concluded that a successful all-day two-way transit service could be established, subject to the completion of a detailed implementation plan. While the Town of Bridgewater is unable to financially support a public transportation service by itself, Town Council has agreed to continue exploring the possibility of initiating a public transportation system with the support of the Province and the other participating municipal units. In the meantime, Council will aim to create a land use environment and street network that will help support a future public transportation system, as well as active modes of transportation and automobiles. This shall be achieved by encouraging compact community form, strategic mixed-use development, and by creating a safe pedestrian environment.



14.4.1 Partnerships

Town Council shall continue discussions with the Province, other municipal units and local groups and organizations to explore the possibility initiating a regional public transportation system in the South Shore. Specific matters to be explored with partners may include the development of a detailed implementation plan and an inter-municipal service agreement to help manage a future public transportation service.

Policy T-21: It shall be a policy of Council to partner with different levels of government and stakeholders, where possible, to explore opportunities to help initiate a regional public transportation service in Lunenburg County.

SECTION 15: MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

15.1 Water Treatment & Distribution

The Town of Bridgewater Water Utility is operated by the Bridgewater Public Service Commission (BPSC), a corporate body created under the authority of the Water Act. The Utility supplies customers in the town, and portions of the Villages of Hebbville, Cookville and the community of Wileville, with a daily average of 7.2 million litres (1.6 million gallons) of water. The water is conventionally treated using chemically assisted sedimentation and filtration processes.



A chain of lakes within the Petite Riviere Watershed area comprises the principal storage reservoir within the water supply area. A portion of the watershed lands has been designated as a Protected Water Area under the Water Act. Regulations pertaining to activities on the lakes and on the land have been prescribed for this designated area to ensure that water quality is not affected. The designated area encompasses a land and water surface area of approximately 116 sq. kilometres (45 sq. miles), of which 23 sq. kilometres are water. The water volume or storage capacity of the three (3) lakes in the designated area is approximately 1.2 billion litres and the projected safe yield of the watershed is 13.5 million litres per day based on a one (1) in fifty (50) year failure recurrence.

The Town's water supply is pumped from the "lowlift" pump house located at Hebb Lake via dual transmission mains approximately 2 kilometres to the Water Treatment Plant, located at 50 Century Drive in Hebbville. Potable water produced at the Water Treatment Plant is pumped through transmission water mains to 4.5 million litre storage reservoirs located on the east and west sides of town. Water is delivered from the reservoirs through a 96 kilometre distribution system providing both fire protection and potable water to consumers.

Maintenance and upgrading of the water distribution system by the Public Service Commission to meet required standards for water supply and fire-fighting is an ongoing activity that is supported by Council, and Council will continue to support such ventures to the extent of its jurisdiction over such matters. Council will encourage the Public Service Commission to identify developed areas of the town that are unserved or that have inadequate water service as priority areas for water supply improvements.

Council will also encourage future development in areas where development can be serviced by the existing water distribution pressure zones to avoid further requirements to boost water pressure for domestic and fire flow water distribution. In new subdivisions, the developer will be responsible for the cost of installing water lines as provided for in the Subdivision By-law. Map 3 - Sewer and Water Utilities Map, shows details of the water distribution network.

15.2 Water Treatment & Distribution Policies

Policy INF-1: It shall be the policy of Council to require a developer to design and install water mains within a development and negotiate the costs of providing water mains outside the development sufficient to connect to the Town's water supply system.

Policy INF-2: It shall be the policy of Council to require all water lines to be designed and constructed to meet the standards set out in the Subdivision By-law.

Policy INF-3: It shall be the policy of Council to encourage the Bridgewater Public Service Commission to consider inadequately serviced or unserved developed areas of the town as priority areas for improvement or extension to the water distribution network.

Policy INF-4: It shall be the policy of Council to support the efforts of the Bridgewater Public Service Commission to improve water quality.

Policy INF-5: It shall be the policy of Council to co-operate with the Bridgewater Public Service Commission to protect the waters and watershed land of Hebb Lake, Milipsigate Lake, and Minamkeak Lake as a public water supply.

Policy INF-6: It shall be the policy of Council to recognize the role of the Source Watershed Protection Committee in assisting in the management and protection of the Protected Water Area.

15.3 Sanitary & Storm Sewers

The Public Works Department of the Town is responsible for maintenance and repair of sewer lines and sewage treatment facilities. Council is committed to providing an ongoing, efficient, high quality, and responsive sewage management program for the town, including the treatment of sanitary sewage before it is discharged into the LaHave River. At present, approximately ninety nine percent (99%) of all sanitary sewage generated within the town passes through the treatment plant where it receives secondary treatment. A secondary waste water treatment facility was constructed in 1990. The treatment process involves reduction of suspended solids, reduction of biological oxygen demand, UV disinfection of the effluent and anaerobic digestion and dewatering of sludge before it is discharged into the LaHave River.



The Town is experiencing physical infrastructure capacity constraints, especially in certain areas of Bridgewater. As of 2021, staff began to require a downstream wastewater capacity assessment for those developments permitted by development agreement or rezoning or requiring a policy amendment. It has not been required for as-of-right uses.

The goal of the downstream wastewater capacity assessment is to confirm that the sanitary sewer collection system has the capacity to handle the increased discharge within the pipes from the development to the treatment plant prior to any discretionary planning approval.

Implementation Policy IM-6 requires consideration of the adequacy of sanitary services when Council is considering any proposed development agreements or amendments to the Land Use By-law.

Since 2021, an increasing number of the downstream wastewater capacity assessments have identified parts of the sewer collection system in which the pipes are not large enough to handle any increase in sewer flow. Based on this increasing body of knowledge, the Town will now be requiring the downstream wastewater capacity assessments for all development, regardless of type and zone, where a new or larger service connection is necessary to accommodate the proposed development or permitted use. Existing lots with appropriately sized services stubbed at the property line and ready for connection would be excluded from undertaking such an assessment. Should there be no immediate remedy for any deficiencies discovered through a downstream wastewater capacity assessment, the Town Engineer has authority and discretion to refuse a new or upsized sanitary sewer connection.

Council recognizes that it is necessary to provide separated sanitary and storm sewer systems due to the capacity of sanitary sewers and the sewage treatment plant. It is, therefore, Council's intention where new sewers are needed and where it is feasible during replacement of existing sewers, that separate storm and sanitary sewers lines be installed.

The practice of utilizing natural watercourses to convey storm water run-off from developed areas has been adopted throughout the town. It is recognized that for watercourses to function as storm sewers, it is necessary that development within the watershed of these watercourses must be planned in such a way that storm water flows will not result in downstream flooding or potentially hazardous conditions. Council will ensure that appropriate hydrological design and engineering techniques are employed where water courses in the town are utilized for the conveyance of storm water discharge from the storm sewer network.

The existing sewage network and treatment facilities are identified on Map 3 - Sewer and Water Utilities Map.

15.4 Sanitary & Storm Sewer Policies

Policy INF-7: It shall be the policy of Council to provide efficient and responsive sanitary collection and treatment and storm drainage collection programs for the town.

Policy INF-8: It shall be the policy of Council to require a developer to install sanitary sewers, and storm sewers or open channels, within a development and negotiate the costs of providing sanitary sewers, and storm sewers or open channels, outside the development sufficient to connect to the town's sanitary sewer system.

Policy INF-9: It shall be the policy of Council to require all of the sanitary sewer and storm sewer system to be designed and constructed to meet the standards set out in the Subdivision By-law.

Policy INF-10: It shall be the policy of Council to encourage the separation of roof, subsoil and storm water drainage, particularly street storm water drainage, from the sanitary sewer system.

Policy INF-11: It shall be the policy of Council to consider capital expenditures for installation of trunk sewer lines for inadequately serviced developed areas or vacant land where there is a need for sewer line extension. Financial participation by abutting property owners or developers may be required.

Policy INF-12: It shall be the policy of Council to continue to provide sewage treatment according to Provincial standards for all sewage that is generated within the town.

Policy INF-13: It shall be the policy of Council to continue to work toward the development of a storm water management policy for the major watercourses within town.

Policy INF-14: It shall be the policy of Council utilize natural water courses for conveyance of storm water run-off from serviced areas, subject to statutory provisions for utilization and alteration of watercourses. In so doing, Council will ensure that appropriate planning, design, and engineering techniques are employed to minimize any impact that alteration of the natural water flow may have.

Policy INF-15 It shall be the policy of Council to require a downstream sanitary sewer capacity assessment for any development that includes a new or upsized sanitary sewer connection where:

- a) Such assessment is the responsibility of the developer where necessary information is not available.
- b) The Town Engineer shall have discretion and authority to approve new or upsized service connections and such decision shall be made in consideration of available sanitary sewer collection system capacity at the time of application.
- c) Unless further prescribed by agreement, a downstream sanitary sewer assessment, and any approval thereof, shall be valid for 6 months from development permit issuance.

Policy INF-16 It shall be the policy of Council to maintain a sanitary sewer system model, along with database and map showing undersized sanitary sewer mains, as amended from time to time, based on current engineering studies.

SECTION 16: SUBDIVISION OF LAND & LOT ACCESS

16.1 Background

The subdivision of land is closely related to the provision of streets and services as well as the orderly progression of land development. The town has had some form of subdivision regulation in place since 1955 and intends to continue such control. The Municipal Government Act sets out the matters which Council can address in any Subdivision By-law. The Municipal Government Act and the Provincial Subdivision Regulations set out the basic requirements for information that must be shown on plans of subdivision as well as the essential procedures which must be followed in reviewing and in approving plans of subdivision. Within this framework, the Subdivision By-law deals with matters such as lot size, access to lots, the extension of sewer and water lines to any new lots, and the provision of recreation space. The Subdivision By-law must be closely linked to the Land Use By-law, especially in the matter of lot size and access to lots.

16.2 Subdivision of Land & Lot Access Policies

Policy SUB-1: It shall be the policy of Council to specify in the Land Use By-law minimum lot areas and frontages required for new lots within the various zones established by the Land Use By-law.

Policy SUB-2: It shall be the policy of Council to provide that all new lots created by subdivision under the authority of the *Municipal Government Act* shall satisfy the requirements for lot area and lot frontage contained in the Land Use By-law, with the following exceptions:

- a) lots created by the consolidation of two (2) or more lots;
- b) lots which, having been expanded or made larger, are nonetheless below the minimum requirements;
- c) lots created around a main building, where the main building was built or placed on the land prior to April 16, 1987, the date of validation of real property transactions under the *Municipal Government Act*, and where the lot is serviced with central sewer and has a minimum lot frontage of 6 metres (20ft) on a public street; or
- d) lots in the Historic Downtown Commercial (C1), LaHave Commercial (C2) and Group Commercial (C4) Zones which have access by means of a right-of-way in accordance with Policies C-18, C-24 and C-37.

Policy SUB-3: It shall be the policy of Council to specify in the Land Use By-law the uses of land and the location of structures permitted upon lots in the various zones and enable those uses and structures on lots which do not meet the minimum requirements for lot area or lot frontage or both, provided:

- a) such undersized lots were created prior to 16 April, 1987, the date of validation of real property transactions under the *Municipal Government Act*; or

b) such undersized lots were created after 16 April, 1987, the date of validation of real property transactions under the *Municipal Government Act*, by any instrument to which the *Municipal Government Act* does not apply.

Policy SUB-4: Prior to approval of a Final Plan of Subdivision, it shall be the policy of Council to require the subdivider to fulfill the open space dedication requirements in accordance with Policy OS-3.

Policy SUB-5: It shall be the policy of Council to include in the Subdivision By-law and Municipal Specifications, requirements for the construction of sanitary sewers, storm water drainage, and potable water supply systems to service new lots created by the subdivision of land.

Policy SUB-6: It shall be the policy of Council to include in the Subdivision By-law provisions for the establishment of infrastructure charges, pursuant to Section 274 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

SECTION 17: IMPLEMENTATION

17.1 Municipal Government Act (MGA)

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) is the Provincial legislation that sets out the regulations that govern municipal planning and development in Nova Scotia. The MGA describes the various methods of development control available to Nova Scotian municipalities for regulating development and land use decisions within their jurisdiction.



The *Municipal Government Act* also sets out the process for adopting Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws, and the process for amending these documents or for the different types of development control such as development agreements, variances, or site plan approval. The process requirements include minimum public participation and advertising requirements. All of the Town of Bridgewater's planning procedures comply with the minimum process requirements set out in the MGA, although the Town does augment the process by adding additional public participation requirements.

Most types of planning applications are subject to appeal to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). The exceptions are variance requests and site plan approval applications which are appealable to Town Council and Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments which are not subject to appeal. The *Municipal Government Act* sets out the appeal procedures associated with the different types of applications.

The *Municipal Government Act* identifies the various types of development control options available to municipalities to regulate and plan for development within their jurisdictions. These include rezonings, development agreements, and site plan approval. The Town of Bridgewater uses all three of these methods for the implementation of its planning policies.

17.2 Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

This Municipal Planning Strategy is the main document through which the future growth and development of the town shall be encouraged, controlled and co-ordinated. The policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy will be implemented through the powers provided to Council in the *Municipal Government Act* and other relevant statutes.

This Municipal Planning Strategy, and any subsequent amendments, shall be reviewed pursuant to Subsection 214(2) of the *Municipal Government Act* when deemed necessary by the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations or by Town Council. A regular review of the Municipal Planning Strategy will be required to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs of the community and goals and objectives of Town Council.

The Municipal Planning Strategy approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on August 12, 1997 and subsequent amendments thereto is repealed upon the date of coming into force and effect of this Municipal Planning Strategy.

17.2.1 Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) Amendments

Consistent with the goal of maintaining long-term responsiveness and flexibility where appropriate, Council's intent is to outline where amendments to this Municipal Planning Strategy may be appropriate and procedures to be followed regarding same.

Policy IM-1: It shall be the policy of Council to require an amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy where:

- a) Any policy intent is to be altered;
- b) A text or map amendment in the Land Use By-law would conflict with the text or maps of the Municipal Planning Strategy;
- c) An amendment to the Subdivision By-law would conflict with the text of the Municipal Planning Strategy;
- d) Where the boundaries of the planning area are altered; or
- e) Housekeeping amendments

17.3 Land Use By-law (LUB)

The Land Use By-law shall be the principal means for implementing the policy statements included within this Municipal Planning Strategy, pursuant to Sections 219 and 220 of the *Municipal Government Act*. The Land Use By-law sets out zones, permitted uses, general provisions, and development standards that reflect the policies of this Strategy, as provided for by the MGA. The Zoning Map of the Land Use By-law shows graphically and specifically the area to which the provisions of individual zones shall apply.

17.3.1 Land Use By-law (LUB) Amendments

Proposals for rezonings, text amendments to the Land Use By-law and development agreements may be required to ensure community needs and desires are being met. Specific policy criteria are outlined in this section to ensure a standard and uniform approach is taken by Council in responding to these requests.

Policy IM-2: It shall be the policy of Council to consider amendments to the Land Use By-law provided the amendment is consistent with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

Policy IM-3: It shall be the policy of Council to consider an application for amendment to the Land Use By-law only if the application has identified a proposed use for the property. Council shall give consideration to both the proposed use and to the impact of other uses permitted in the requested zone.

Policy IM-4: It shall be the policy of Council to consider an application for amendment to the Land Use By-law only if the site meets all of the lot size and zone standards for the zone sought.

17.3.2 Development Agreements

Development agreements are primarily intended to be used for developments proposed beyond the limits of the applicable Land Use By-law requirements, particularly in instances where Council believes land use conflicts are more likely to occur. For example, these may be developments of large scales, alternative design, a comprehensive nature, or uses of a particularly sensitive or potentially high-impact nature. Development agreements are also useful in providing Council with the ability to negotiate terms and conditions of a project, while retaining the approval authority. This is important in ensuring large scale and sensitive developments are carried out in a manner that keeps the overall benefit of the community and the Town in mind.

Policy IM-5: It shall be the policy of Council to enter into a development agreement pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act* on the terms and conditions set forth in this Municipal Planning Strategy and a development agreement shall:

- a) specify the development, expansion, alteration, or change permitted; and
- b) specify the conditions under which the development may occur; and
- c) set forth the terms by which Town Council may terminate the agreement.

The provisions of the Land Use By-law shall prevail after discharge of any agreement.

17.3.3 Criteria for LUB Amendments & Development Agreements

Policy IM-6: When considering any proposed Policy amendment, development agreements or amendments to development agreements or the Land Use By-law, it shall be a policy of Council to have regard for the following matters, in addition to all other criteria set out in various policies of this Plan:

Compatibility of the Development:

- a) Compatibility of the proposed land use with adjacent land uses; and
- b) Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of height, scale, lot coverage, density, bulk, and architectural style; and
- c) Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of lighting, signage, outdoor display, outdoor storage, traffic impacts, and noise; and
- d) Integration of the development into the surrounding area by means of appropriate landscaping, with screening provided by existing and new vegetation and fencing as required; and

Servicing Considerations:

- e) The adequacy of sanitary services, in accordance with Policy INF-15; and
- f) The adequacy of water services, in accordance with Policy INF-2; and
- g) The adequacy of storm water management, in accordance with Policy EM-8; and
- h) Contribution of the proposal towards an orderly and compact development pattern that makes efficient use of existing and new municipal infrastructure and services; and

Transportation Considerations

- i) The adequacy of the road network in, and adjacent to, or leading to the development, regarding connectivity, congestion and traffic hazards; and
- j) The adequacy of site access as determined by the Traffic Authority; and
- k) The ability of emergency services to respond to an emergency at the location of the proposed development; and
- l) The adequacy of active transportation infrastructure to support walking and cycling to and from the proposed development; and
- m) The provision of off-street vehicle and bicycle parking to prevent significant congestion, nuisance and inconvenience in the area; and

Environmental Considerations

- n) Consideration of any previous uses of the site which may have caused soil or groundwater contamination; and
- o) Suitability of the site in terms of slope and flood and erosion risk in accordance with Map 6 – Environmental Constraints; and
- p) Consideration of any anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the development, such as air and water pollution, soil contamination, and potential for the contamination or sedimentation of watercourses. Where Council determines, on the advice of a qualified person, that there is a significant risk of environmental damage from any proposed development, an environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the developer for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of any impact and no agreement shall be approved until Council is satisfied that the proposed development will not create or result in undue environmental damage; and
- q) The application of sustainable design principles and energy efficient technology, including but not limited to renewable energy infrastructure, environmentally friendly paving alternatives, provision of alternative transportation parking, integration of landscaping into the design of parking lots, green roofs, etc.; and

General Considerations

- r) The financial ability of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the proposal; and

- s) The proposal's conformance with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy and to all other applicable Town By-laws and regulations, except where the application is for a development agreement and the requirements of the Land Use By-law are regarded as guidelines.

17.4 Application Processes & Fees

Every application for a development permit, subdivision, variance, site plan approval, Municipal Planning Strategy and/or Land Use By-law amendment(s), and development agreement shall be subject to the fees as established by Council, and in accordance with Town Policy 69 – Planning Application Fees.

17.5 Public Participation Processes

Development applications, whether rezoning or development agreement proposals, usually involve changing or expanding the use of a property or structure. In evaluating such development applications, it is essential that the public be involved in the decision making process. Council's goal is to ensure optimum consultation, participation, and education and awareness with the public and particularly those viewed as stakeholders, in relation to any development application.

In accordance with Section 204A of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) Council has created a participation program for engaging with the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, as the adjacent municipality.

Policy IM-7: It shall be the policy of Council to require the following minimum notification standards when considering amendments to the Land Use By-law and/or development agreements:

- a) Provide written notification(s) of the Public Participation Meeting (PPM) as follows: a minimum of one week prior to the holding a PPM regarding a development application, a letter shall be sent to any property owner within a minimum of 100 feet of the subject property for which an amendment to the Land Use By-law and/or development agreement is being sought. The letter shall include the purpose of the application, details in relation to the proposal, the name of the proponent, date/time of the PPM, and Town staff contact information; and
- b) Provide newspaper notification(s) of the Public Participation Meeting (PPM) as follows: A minimum of one week prior to the holding a PPM regarding a proposed amendment to the Land Use By-law and/or development agreement, a notice of said meeting shall be published in the local newspaper. The notice shall include the purpose of the application, a map identifying the location of the subject property if applicable, details in relation to the proposal, the name of the proponent, date/time of the PPM, and Town staff contact information; and
- c) Provide written notification(s) of future meetings, including the Public Hearing, upon request of any interested community member or stakeholder; and
- d) Carry out all Public Hearing notification procedures in accordance with Section 206 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Notwithstanding MPS Policy IM-7 (a)-(d), the public consultation component associated with a comprehensive planning review of the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law may consist of various public consultation events, online outreach and engagement tools, public surveys, etc., as determined to be satisfactory by the Town.

Policy IM-8: It shall be the policy of Council to require the following notification standards when consulting with abutting municipalities as required by the Municipal Government Act:

- a) Notification shall occur under the following circumstances directed by Council:
 - i. The creation or review of a Municipal Planning Strategy; or
 - ii. The creation or review of a Land Use By-law; or
 - iii. The creation or review of a Subdivision By-law; or
 - iv. The preparation of a draft Development Agreement, where the property is located within 500m of the Town Boundary; or
 - v. The preparation of amendments to a Municipal Planning Strategy or Land Use By-law, where the amendment is for a property located within 500m of the Town boundary, or where the amendment has potential to impact a property located within 500m of the Town boundary; or
 - vi. The preparation of amendments to a Municipal Planning Strategy or Land Use By-Law, where the amendment is associated with the Statements of Provincial Interest.
- b) Notification shall be sent by regular mail or electronic mail to the Clerk to the adjacent municipality. The notice shall provide a general summary of the

proposed work and provide an opportunity for the abutting municipality to submit comments on the proposal.

- c) Comments received from the abutting municipality shall be considered at a Council meeting prior to Council giving first reading.
- d) The notification and opportunity to submit comments prior to the date of the first reading shall be deemed as having solicited comments, regardless of whether a written response is received.

17.6 Transition to Amended Policies of this Plan

During the preparation of any policy amendments, development continues in the Town according to the existing Plan policies and Land Use By-law requirements. Per Section 246 of the *Municipal Government Act*, once Council provides notice of its intention to adopt or amend the Land Use By-law, no permits may be issued that are inconsistent with the proposed amendments until they are adopted.

Council recognizes that several projects with completed applications are in varying stages of the application process. Therefore, it is reasonable that provision be made to allow such applications to be considered under the policies in effect at the time the completed application was received by the Town. However, it is not appropriate that a proposed development not in conformity with this Plan be afforded longstanding development rights without limitation. Developments that are not constructed and completed within a reasonable time after Plan adoption or amendment will be required to comply with the requirements of this Plan and the Land Use By-law.

Policy IM-9: Complete applications for any development process or subdivision process on file with the Town, which were received on or before [effective date of this amendment], shall continue to be considered under the policies in effect immediately prior to that date. Where any such application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or refused by Council, any new development applications or subdivision applications shall be subject to all applicable requirements of this Plan and the Land Use By-law. Applications that have not proceeded to public hearing or construction permit within 24 months of [effective date of this amendment] shall be subject to all applicable requirements of this Plan and the Land Use By-law.

SECTION 18: FUTURE MUNICIPAL PROJECTS & STUDIES

Responsible decision making requires that information be obtained and analyzed as efficiently as possible in order to inform sound planning. Noted in this section are several major projects and studies to be considered over the next five year cycle of the Town of Bridgewater's Municipal Planning Strategy, in an effort to facilitate and encourage planning for the social, economic, and environmental development and growth of Bridgewater.

18.1 Future Streets Master Plan

In order to develop a fully functional and sustainable transportation system, and to achieve the objectives of Smart Growth, street connectivity must be improved in Bridgewater. As a growing regional service centre, Bridgewater must maintain an efficient street network to manage transportation demands. There are many areas of town, particularly in the north end, that are characterized by large plots of undeveloped land. As a growing community, this land is expected to be developed in time. To avoid a piecemeal and fragmented approach to street design, which often leads to connectivity issues, inefficient use of infrastructure and poorly planned neighbourhoods, Council shall require the development of a "Future Streets Master Plan" to ensure that future collector and arterial streets are integrated with Bridgewater's existing street network in a well-planned manner. Once a Future Streets Master Plan has been produced, Council shall update Map 4 - Street Classification Map to reflect all required future collector and arterial streets and extensions.

18.2 Stormwater Management Master Plan

The main goal of the Stormwater Management Master Plan is to develop a long-term plan for the safe and effective management of stormwater runoff from urban development in Bridgewater, both existing and contemplated, while improving the ecosystem health and ecological sustainability of the LaHave River and their tributaries within Bridgewater. The SWM Master Plan would integrate aspects of flood control, groundwater and surface water quality, natural environment and system drainage issues into a cohesive Town-wide strategy.

18.3 Open Space Master Plan

While the town's open space network is expansive, Council recognizes that improvements are needed to increase the use of existing parkland and to better meet the community's recreational and leisure needs. Council acknowledges that the development of an Open Space Master Plan will help to establish a long-term "big picture" planning and management strategy for Bridgewater's open spaces network. The following are a few issues to be addressed in the master plan:

- *Quality of Existing Open Spaces:* Citizens have indicated that several existing parks in Bridgewater require revitalization and/or further development in order to realize their full potential as vibrant community destinations. The Master Plan would help establish a long-term program for achieving improvements which reflect the community's needs. This might include planned trail development, diverse park uses and amenities, a landscaping strategy, partnerships strategy, and more.

- *Planned Growth*: Increasingly, the supply of adequate open space and recreational amenities is a determinant for where people, and some businesses, are likely to locate. The Town does not have a plan identifying locations for future open space. The Master Plan can provide guidance on where future open space should be established to ensure existing and future residents have sufficient access to desirable public open space and amenities within the town.
- *Integration & Connectivity*: Research suggests that the benefits of open spaces are maximized when they are located within a well-connected open space system with extensive trails and greenways. The Town owns several parks which are relatively isolated or even hidden, which undermines their purpose and discourages their use. A Master Plan can help ensure that parkland is properly sited and better integrated into neighbourhoods and/or connected the existing open space network.
- *Planning for Climate Change / Ecological Health*: The severity of impacts resulting from climate change is rising and is anticipated to increase in the coming years. In Bridgewater, significant development and public infrastructure is located in close proximity to the LaHave River and several major brooks, resulting in a number of vulnerabilities. A Master Plan will not only assist in identifying lands that could serve as traditional public open spaces, but also strategic open spaces that may help protect and buffer development, infrastructure and people from climate change related impacts, particularly flooding.