

Town of Hantsport

Municipal Planning Strategy

Final September 2010

Amended to May 13, 2025

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This CONSOLIDATED EDITION is prepared for convenience only. For complete reference, please consult the original documents. This CONSOLIDATED EDITION has the following history:

- 1) Deleting the paragraph immediately before Policy CP-1 and adding the following: "However the existing residential lots in the Commercial designation will be protected. This will be done by placing them into a residential zone. Only when landowners make a decision to establish a commercial use on their property will a rezoning to the commercial zone be considered."; and adding new paragraph "Residential uses will also be permitted in the commercial zone. For residential uses located on the ground floor only 50% of the floor area of the building shall be devoted to the residential use. This restriction does not apply to residential uses above the ground floor" - as amended August 17, 2015
- 2) Inserting after Policy RP-4 the following: "In the past Hantsport has been home to agricultural uses. While no farms are active in the Town today there is an interest in keeping horses, not as a commercial operation but for the use and enjoyment of a resident as a hobby. Council sees no difficulty in allowing horses in the low density residential zones as long as there is sufficient space to keep them."; and adding: "Policy RP-4A, It shall be the policy of Council to permit the keeping of horses in the R-1 and R-2 Zone subject to an area requirement for each horse as contained in the Land Use By-law" - as amended August 17, 2015
- 3) Amendment to Policy 4.0 Residential Policies - striking out reference to "The survey asked if residents are opposed to home based businesses. Most respondents indicated that home based businesses are acceptable by a 47% to 32% margin." Amendment to 4.1 Residential Low Density, deleting entire paragraph and inserting new paragraph, and inserting new Policy RP-2A. - effective June 26, 2017.
- 4) Amend Part 5 Commercial policies by replacing Policy CP-2 and CP-3. - effective May 1, 2018.
- 5) Amend the Generalized Future Land Use Map to increase the Commercial Designation. - effective May 1, 2018.
- 6) Amendments to Section 1.1, Policy GP-3, and new Policy GP-4, creating a Commercial Development District where the By-law enacted in accordance with Bill 177, a phase in commercial tax program, will apply - effective November 20, 2018.
- 7) Amendment to Hantsport Generalized Future Land Use Map creating a Commercial Development District - effective November 20, 2018.
- 8) Amendment to Section 3.2 to add 3.2.5 Licensed Cannabis Uses - effective January 21, 2021.
- 9) Amendment to allow secondary suites within single and two-unit dwellings – effective September 14, 2021
- 10) File # 22-12 Amendments to Section 3.2.6 and the addition of Section 3.2.7 to allow detached secondary suites accessory to single and two-unit dwellings – effective January 10, 2023
- 11) File #20-31A Amendments to Section 2.2.2, Conservation, to provide intention to comply with the regulations of the Coastal Protection Act – effective March 14, 2023

- 12) File #22-31 Amendments to Part 11.2, *Review of Municipal Planning Strategy*, to clarify and add policy which reflects Council's intention to maintain a Public Participation Program Policy – effective May 1, 2023
- 13) File #23-44 Mapping changes to correct the boundary line on the mapping to reflect the former Hantsport Town boundary – Effective April 23, 2024
- 14) File #23-21 Amend the text of Part 3.2.6 and renumber subsequent policies in 3.2.7, amend Part 4, Part 4.1 and Part 4.2 to accommodate a wider range of “missing middle” housing forms, create affordable housing policy, and relax parking requirements – Effective May 13, 2025

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Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Municipal Planning Strategy

The Municipal Planning Strategy is the principal policy document for guiding the long term growth and development of the Town of Hantsport. Planning for growth in a responsible and thoughtful manner will greatly contribute to making the Town sustainable, not only economically but also environmentally, socially, and culturally.

Sustainability is increasingly becoming the focus of municipal efforts in Nova Scotia as well as throughout the rest of Canada. There is a growing realization that we must change our ways if we are to address the critical issues of climate change, energy use, and environmental stewardship. By formulating and implementing innovative and beneficial sustainability plans, municipal leadership will be making policy decisions to not only foster a prosperous and healthy community but will set an example for residents to embrace sustainability principles and actions.

Municipal sustainability efforts are aided by encouragement and incentives from the provincial and federal governments. The Canada-Nova Scotia Gas Tax Agreement of 2005 provides for the transfer of revenues from the federal excise tax on gasoline to municipalities. These funds are intended to be directed towards environmentally sustainable municipal infrastructure projects. To participate in this funding program the Town is required to prepare an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. This Plan is contained in Part 2 of the Strategy.

The legislative authority for the Town of Hantsport to adopt a Municipal Planning Strategy comes from the *Municipal Government Act*. The Act states that the purpose of a Municipal Planning Strategy is to provide statements of policy to guide the development and management of the Town and, to further this purpose to establish

- (a) policies which address problems and opportunities concerning the development of land and the effects of the development;
- (b) policies to provide a framework for the environmental, social, and economic development within a municipality;
- (c) policies that are reasonably consistent with the intent of statements of provincial interests;
- (d) specify programs and actions necessary for implementing the municipal planning strategy.

The Town first adopted a Municipal Planning Strategy in 1977. The provincial legislation calls for a periodic review of municipal planning strategies. This document is the result of a review initiated by Council in 2008.

A key component of the Municipal Planning Strategy is the Generalized Future Land Use Map, attached as Schedule “A”. The Generalized Future Land Use Map (GFLUM) shows the areas of the Town which are designated in the long term for residential, commercial, and industrial uses and areas for open space and recreation. The GFLUM also shows the Commercial Development District designation where the By-law enacted in accordance with Bill 177, a phase-in commercial tax program, will apply. (*Amendment 18-04 – effective November 20, 2018*)

The Municipal Planning Strategy is accompanied by a regulatory document called a Land Use By-law. Based on the policies in the Municipal Planning Strategy, the Land Use By-law specifies the location and conditions under which development will be permitted. The By-law divides the Town into a number of zones, i.e. residential, commercial, as shown on the Zoning Map and will specify the uses permitted in each zone. In some areas the zones will match the designations of the Generalized Future Land Use Map. In other areas zoning will not match the designations as it may be necessary to keep a different zone on some properties, at least in the short term.

The Strategy provides for amendments to the Land Use By-law. The most common type of amendment is a rezoning of a property from one zone to another. Amendments are usually triggered through a development request of a landowner but must not be approved by Council unless they are consistent with policies in the Strategy.

The Strategy also contains policies, primarily found in **Part 2: Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**, which may not be directly related to land use and development. These policies are designed to enhance Council's commitment to continue to make Hantsport a healthy and sustainable community, a community in which residents will take pride in being involved in shaping the Town for future generations.

1.2 Community Profile

1.2.1 Geography

The Town of Hantsport is situated in the northern portion of West Hants, Hants County, Nova Scotia. It lies on the border of Kings County, between Highway # 101 and the western shore of the Avon River. Highway #101 is the major highway that traverses the Annapolis Valley, one of the most scenic areas of the province. The Town is 85 kilometres northwest of Halifax and 88 kilometres from Halifax International Airport.

1.2.2 History

Hantsport was first settled in the 1700's by the French and later in the same century by the English. The first recorded deed in Hantsport was dated June 16, 1789.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century an important natural resource was timber of all kinds needed to build ships. The proximity of this timber led to the establishment of two major shipbuilding yards in Hantsport, the J. B. North Shipyards and E. Churchill and Sons Shipyards, operating from 1853 to 1904 and 1833 to 1882 respectively. At one time Hantsport ranked fifth as a shipbuilding center in the world. (Source: Hantsport on the Avon, Hattie Chittick, 1968.)

The rise and fall of 50 to 60 feet of the Avon River tides gave the Town one of the two natural dry docks or graving blocks in the world.

In 1895, George Yeaton established Yeaton's Candy Factory on Station Street. The Hantsport Fruit Basket Co. operated on the corner of Cottage Street and Foundry Road (formerly Railway Street) in a building formerly occupied by The Hantsport Foundry & Machine Co. Ltd They manufactured boxes and baskets for all fruit packing, for both domestic and export markets.

The Fundy Gypsum Company headquartered in Chicago mined gypsum at Wentworth near Windsor and transports it by rail to Hantsport where it is shipped to other parts of the world. This company has been in existence since prior to 1935 in Hants County and was established in Hantsport in 1947.

The Minas Basin Pulp and Power Company Limited was originally incorporated as the Minas Basin Pulp and Paper Mills Ltd. on March 9, 1927. The power plant and dams at St. Croix, 23 kilometres away, were built in 1934 and 1935.

In 1933 Canadian Keyes Fibre Company was incorporated as a wholly owned subsidiary of Minas Basin Pulp and Power Company Limited. for the purposes of manufacturing several types of paper products, including paper plates, egg cartons, and prepackaging meat trays. Now known as CKF Inc. it markets its product in Canada, Central America and the Caribbean. Annapolis Valley Cannery Ltd. established a juicing operation in Hantsport in 1947.

Hantsport was incorporated on April 25, 1895. The Town's commercial heyday was in the 1930's and 40's with several hotels, grocery stores, hardware stores, a theatre and numerous other small businesses. Since that time the industrial sector has provided steady employment for the Town and the area.

1.3 Public Participation

Early in the process the Planning Advisory Committee decided to conduct a community opinion survey to receive information about how residents feel about their Town and to identify critical areas of investigation. The survey also served as a way to inform residents that Council had initiated a review of the Town's planning documents.

There was an outstanding response to the survey. The results of the survey are attached as Schedule A. The information from the responses has been used extensively in the preparation of this Strategy.

Beginning in February of 2009, the PAC held monthly meetings to discuss and formulate ICSP policies as well as policies more directly related to land use regulation. These meetings were open to the public.

The PAC completed the preparation of draft documents and held a public information session on July 2, 2010. Comments heard at the meeting were discussed by PAC. Two changes were made to the documents which were then recommended to Council for approval. Council held a public hearing to hear further comments before adopting the documents.

Part 2 – Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

2.1 Background

Municipalities across Nova Scotia and Canada are increasingly taking a leadership role to address today's challenges ranging from the long term consequences of climate change to maintaining and enhancing the living and working environment of their residents. Although it is a small town, Hantsport is also concerned about these issues and is determined to do its part to make the world a better place for future generations.

In general terms Hantsport's goal is to enable the Town to increasingly become a more sustainable community. Sustainability planning examines how people, businesses and organizations can work together to improve health of both the individual and the community, and preserve the environment for future generations. By implication, the more comprehensive the sustainability plan, the more informed the management decisions and capital infrastructure investments made by the Town will be.

As PAC meetings progressed, a vision for the Town began to take form. This is known as a Community Vision Statement and is a fundamental piece of the ICSP.

Community Vision Statement:

Looking towards the coming decades Hantsport will become a place where:

- **residents are active and engage in a healthy lifestyle**
- **advances in technology are embraced**
- **recreational programs are available for ages**
- **there are housing opportunities for everyone**
- **the local economy is prosperous**
- **a strong social atmosphere prevails**

The PAC proceeded to develop the policies of the ICSP. The ICSP is organized into the four pillars of sustainability, Environmental, Economic, Social and Cultural (Social and Cultural have been combined for the purposes of this report). It is important to note that policies that fall under one pillar may also relate to one or more of the other pillars.

The following sections contain the goals for each pillar and the policies which address each of these goals. The actions required to meet policy objectives are contained in an implementation section.

2.2 Environmental

2.2.1 Goals

The environment continues to be a key area of sustainability. There is an increasing realization that a healthy environment is paramount to a high quality of life. Environmental initiatives will also help in the battle against climate change.

The Town's environmental goals are as follows:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Goal 1 | Protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the Town |
| Goal 2 | Provide effective treatment of wastewater by continuing the partnership with the Municipality of the County of Kings |

- Goal 3 Maintain and improve the water system
- Goal 4 Protect the source of the Town’s water supply The following goals also fall under the other pillars of sustainability.
- Goal 5 Provide housing opportunities to encourage new residents to the Town.
- Goal 6 More fully utilize Town services
- Goal 7 Participate in a public transportation system
- Goal 8 Reduce the energy consumption of the Town
- Goal 9 Explore partnerships with the major industries of the Town to conserve energy Goal which is both environmental and economic
- Goal 10 Construction of a truck route

2.2.2 Conservation

Goal: Protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the Town

Hantsport is bounded on the north by the Avon River and the east by the Halfway River. There is also a brook on the southern part of the Town which runs from Bog Road to Halfway River. These watercourses can be adversely affected if development is allowed to occur too close to them. Council will protect the watercourses by establishing a setback requirement in the Land Use By-law.

There are also areas adjacent to the rivers characterized by steep slopes. Allowing development in these areas may contribute to serious erosion problems. These steep slopes will also be protected by the setback requirement from the watercourses.

Other smaller brooks are located throughout the Town but are not of sufficient size to warrant a setback requirement. However the N.S. Department of Environment has policies and regulations in place to ensure development near them occurs without any negative impact.

The Department of Natural Resources has identified and mapped wetlands throughout the province. These wetlands will be protected in the Land Use By-law.

Policy ICSP-1

It shall be the policy of Council to protect wetlands, watercourses and areas of steep slopes adjacent to the watercourses by establishing regulations in the Land Use By-law.

Please see Section 5.20 of the Land Use By-law for the specific regulation regarding the setback requirement.

The Coastal Protection Act was passed in 2019 and will come into effect with the approval of accompanying regulations. When that happens, a new Coastal Protection Zone will extend along the coast of Nova Scotia and new requirements will apply to constructing houses and other structures in the zone. The regulations will outline the protections for sensitive coastal ecosystems and ensure that construction is at a safer height and distance from coastal shorelines. The purpose is to mitigate impacts from sea level rise, coastal flooding and coastal erosion.

Policy ICSP-1A

It shall be the policy of Council to designate a Coastal Protection Zone to comply with the regulations of Bill 106, the Coastal Protection Act. (Amendment effective March 14, 2023)

2.2.3 Wastewater Collection and Treatment

Goals: Provide effective treatment of wastewater by continuing the partnership with the Municipality of the County of Kings

The Town is has a central wastewater collection system which services all of the Town with the exception of two properties. The wastewater is treated at a treatment plant located in the adjacent community of Hants Border in the Municipality of the County of Kings (Kings County). The treatment plant is owned and operated by Kings County. A formal agreement between Kings County and the Town governs the use of the facility for both municipalities and includes a cost sharing formula. The agreement is now over twenty years old and Council believes it should be reviewed.

The collection system in many areas of the Town consists of combined sewers, which means the sewers are conducting storm water as well as wastewater to the treatment plant, which reduces the capacity of the plant to treat wastewater. Council has gradually been replacing the combined sewers with sanitary and storm sewers, usually in conjunction with the replacement of water lines. Council will continue with this practice as funding becomes available.

Policy ICSP-2

It shall be the policy of Council to review with Kings County the agreement respecting the operation of the wastewater facility in Hants Border.

Policy ICSP-3

As funding becomes available, it shall be the policy of Council to replace the combined sewers in the Town with sanitary and storm sewers.

2.2.4 Water System

**Goals: Maintain and improve the water system.
Protect the source of the Town's water.**

The Town has recently completed a three year \$4.2 million upgrade of its water treatment and transmission system. A key aspect of the upgrade was a partnership with Glooscap First Nations to supply water to their community at Horton, located to the southwest of the Town in the Municipality of the County of Kings. A new water treatment plant using innovative treatment technology was constructed.

The source of the water supply is Davidson Lake. Draft regulations made pursuant to the N.S. Environment Act have been prepared to protect the water quality of Davidson Lake. Council is hopeful the regulations will soon become effective. It is also important that the watershed be protected by planning documents that permits only those uses which pose no hazard to the water supply. Davidson Lake is located in the Municipality of the District of West Hants. By working with the Town, the Municipality has provided protection for the Davidson Lake watershed in its Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law.

Although the water transmission and treatment system is operating efficiently and has considerable excess capacity, the distribution system is old and in need of replacement. The Town is periodically replacing water distribution mains as funding permits. All areas of the Town are serviced by the public water system.

Policy ICSP-4

It shall be the policy to continue to work with the Municipality of West Hants and to adopt regulations pursuant to the Environment to protect the watershed of Davidson Lake.

Policy ICSP-5

It shall be the policy of Council to replace the water distribution system as funding becomes available.

2.2.5 Growth Strategy

**Goals: Provide housing opportunities to encourage new residents to the Town.
More fully utilize Town services.**

The vast majority of residential development in Hantsport consists of single detached dwellings. These dwellings have been placed in a Residential Single Unit (R-1) Zone and this zone comprises most of the residential area of the Town.

Although most of the respondents to the survey indicated that a higher density of residential development was needed in Hantsport, there was little support to allow conversions of single unit dwellings into two or more units, even if the exterior appearance of the building was not changed.

A higher density of single unit residential development is possible by reducing the minimum lot size. Some years ago the minimum lot size in Hantsport was 7500 sq. ft. in area with a minimum frontage of 70 feet. However Council amended the Land Use By-law a number of years ago to reduce this size to 5000 sq. ft. in area with a minimum lot frontage of 50 feet. Council has therefore already taken one important step to encourage a higher density of residential development.

A smaller minimum lot size not only provides for more housing in new subdivisions but increases the opportunity for infilling in many areas of the Town. Infilling is the development of land within existing residential areas, i.e. allowing a new house to be built between two existing houses. The Opportunities Map shows the areas of the Town where infilling is possible.

Council is also interested in pursuing another initiative to increase housing opportunities in the Town. The Municipal Government Act in Section 218 gives municipalities the authority to take more direct action to spur development, as follows:

“Acquisition of land for development

- 218 (1) A municipality may
 - (a) acquire and assemble land for the purpose of carrying out a development consistent with the municipal planning strategy, whether the development is to be undertaken by the municipality or not; or

(b) by agreement with the owners of the land, acquire the right to impose easements or other development restrictions on the lands as if it had acquired the title.

(2) The municipality may subdivide, rearrange and deal with lands described in clause (1)(a) as if it were a private owner and may sell the lands subject to any building restrictions or easements that the council requires to ensure the development is consistent with the municipal planning strategy.”

A number of areas within the Town held in private ownership hold the potential for housing projects. These areas are identified as “Future Development Opportunities” on the Opportunities Map.

In particular, the area between Evangeline Drive and Chestnut Avenue and an adjacent area to the north show great promise. Using the power of Section 218 the Town could “acquire and assemble” this land for the purpose of providing affordable housing. This approach has one great advantage. By consolidating a number of properties into one, the area can be more effectively and comprehensively planned in terms of street layout and the provision of water and wastewater services. And the Town will then be in a better position to encourage a mix of housing for the area, from single unit residential to semi-detached to apartment buildings.

Another area which is also promising is located on the southeastern side of Holmes Hill Road. This property has been investigated by a group of private individuals as a site for two and three unit residential development on a new town street. The group has had informal discussions with the Town to consider the possibility of the Town constructing the street and services.

The Town may be able to accommodate this approach by acquiring the land pursuant to Section 218. After the street and services are constructed, the land could be transferred back to the group. The group would then be responsible for constructing the housing and for marketing. This arrangement should only proceed through a formal agreement.

In either of these scenarios, the importance of comprehensive planning for the subdivision and subsequent development of the entire area cannot be overstated. A crucial element of this planning is the acquisition of key parcels of land to provide for future connections of new streets to existing streets. Acquiring vacant parcels on existing streets before they become developed is very important to the success of comprehensive planning.

Once a comprehensive plan is prepared, the Town may proceed with the construction of the streets and services in phases.

It must be made clear from the outset that the Town will use the “willing buyer, willing seller” approach in acquiring land. It may be that the Town will not be successful in its offer to buy all or part of the area needed for the commencement of a successful housing project. If so, the Town will not pursue this initiative.

The Town does not plan to construct the housing. Council sees its role as providing the streets and services to the area and to subdivide the land. The Town will then sell lots to families wishing to settle in Hantsport. Lots will be for a mixture of low density and medium density residential uses. Provision will also be considered for a small portion of the area to be high density, such as housing for seniors.

Council will proceed very cautiously in this endeavour. It will be important to prepare a comprehensive overall plan for the area but actual street construction will be carried out in phases. Only when the first phase proves successful will a subsequent phase be started.

Again, the purpose of this initiative is to encourage new housing opportunities in the Town, not to make a profit from selling lots. Council is hopeful that a “break-even” status is achievable.

Policy ICSP-6

It shall be the policy of Council to encourage infilling and provide for more housing by maintaining a small but adequate minimum lot size.

Policy ICSP-7

It shall be the policy of Council to consider the acquisition of land in two areas for the purpose of constructing streets and subdividing land to encourage a variety of housing. These areas are

- (1) an area southeast of Holmes Hill Road, and**
- (2) the area between Evangeline Drive and Chestnut Avenue and an adjacent area to the north.**

2.2.6 Public Transportation

Goal: Participate in a public transportation system.

Hantsport is a participant in the Kings Transit Bus Service which operates through Annapolis Valley from Hants County to Digby County. The Town along with West Hants, Windsor, and Kings County is funding a route from Brooklyn to Wolfville. Hantsport share of the cost is \$24,000 per year.

The service provides an important transportation choice for Hantsport residents. The Town would like to encourage more people to take the bus and so will investigate ways of promoting the service.

Policy ICSP-8

It shall be the policy of Council to continue its participation in Kings Transit.

Policy ICSP-9

It shall be the policy of Council to consider ways of increasing ridership.

2.2.7 Energy Conservation

Goals: Reduce the energy consumption of the Town.

Explore partnerships with the major industries of the Town to conserve energy.

2.2.7.1 Town’s Energy Use

Council would like to reduce the Town’s energy consumption. A first step is to take advantage of a municipal program “**Ecotrust for Clean Air and Climate Change**” which began on November 7th, 2007, when the Province announced the Municipal Clean Air and Climate Change Program. The Program is designed to assist municipalities in building capacity around energy and emissions management, and to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions. It will also help municipalities reduce their energy costs. There is \$7.5 million available over 3 years for municipalities.

Municipalities may apply for funding for individual projects. Project grant amounts will be limited by the ability of the Municipal Program to maximize the number of recipients and the environmental benefits. The program is structured into two pots of money – funding for corporate projects (those that focus on reducing greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions from municipal operations only) and/or community projects (those that aim to reduce emissions from the community as a whole).

Municipalities that have not undertaken an emissions/energy inventory and a basic energy audit of any of their facilities (either by a consultant or by internal staff) must complete these two components before accessing additional funds –most municipalities will need to apply for these funds first. Units will be eligible to receive 80% of funding up to a total of \$10,000 towards completing the inventory and an energy audit.

Policy ICSP-10

It shall be the policy of Council to apply for funding to complete an inventory and energy audit as a first step toward reducing the Town’s energy consumption.

2.2.7.2 Partnerships

A partnership between the Town and one or all of the three major industries in the Town to conserve or make better use of energy should be explored. For example capturing excess heat from industrial processes may be possible.

Policy ICSP-11

It shall be the policy of Council to enter into discussion with the major industries in the Town to explore partnerships relating to energy use.

2.2.8 Truck Route

Goal: Construction of a truck route

For over 30 years truck traffic traveling through the streets of Hantsport to reach the industrial uses has been an issue for the Town. A plant expansion in 1997 increased the amount of the truck traffic and resulted in further cries from residents and businesses to Council to resolve this problem. The proposed construction of a biomass burning facility in the area will again mean additional trucks traveling the local streets.

Council has taken a number of steps. The construction of a truck route to by-pass the local streets was determined to be the best possible solution to resolve the issue. A possible route was investigated some years ago. Because of the location of the proposed route, stakeholders included the Department of Transportation, the Department of Environment, and the Railway. The agencies were contacted for comments and none raised objections to the route. Council then undertook a preliminary study two years ago to confirm the location of the route and provide a cost estimate. The cost estimate came in at approximately \$1,000,000.

A truck route fulfils two important purposes for the Town. First it will divert the increasingly unacceptable level of heavy truck traffic from residential and commercial areas. Second the route is very important to the ongoing operation and possible expansion the industries located in the Town. These industries have played and continue to play a crucial role in the long term economic viability of the

Town. The truck route will provide for a much more efficient transportation of goods and will contribute to the success of the industries.

The industries are partnering with the Town to construct the route. Council feels such partnerships have the potential of being a major contributing factor as the Town looks forward in meeting its goal of becoming a more sustainable community.

Funding is now in place under the Build Canada Stimulus Package for the truck route. The project is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2010 and must be completed by March 31, 2011.

Policy ICSP-12

It shall be the policy of Council to proceed with the construction of a truck route to divert traffic from the non-industrial areas of the Town.

2.3 Economic

A strong local economy not only enhances the living conditions of residents but greatly contributes to the viability and sustainability of the Town. The goals for the economic pillar are as follows:

- Goal 1 Encourage home based businesses
- Goal 2 Provide wireless services throughout the Town
- Goal 3 The Town is supportive of the major industries in the Town
- Goal 4 Continue to be an active member of the Hants Regional Development Authority
- Goal 5 Explore partnerships with other municipalities in the region to improve economic conditions

2.3.1 Home Based Businesses

Goal: Encourage home based businesses

The survey asked if residents are opposed to home based businesses. Most respondents indicated that home based businesses are acceptable by a 47% to 32% margin.

This age of technology and communications holds great promise for the growth of home based businesses. Hantsport is particularly poised to welcome these businesses given its efforts to have the entire Town become wireless. (This project is discussed in the next section.) Home based businesses may also access resources through the Hants Regional Development Authority.

Council would like to encourage home based businesses but will impose restrictions to protect adjacent residential uses.

Policy ICSP-13

It shall be the policy of Council to provide for home based businesses in the Town with safeguards designed to minimize impacts on adjacent residential uses.

Please see Section 8.1.1 of the Land Use By-law for the specific regulations regarding home based businesses.

2.3.2 Wireless Internet

Goal: Provide wireless services throughout the Town

The Town has undertaken a pilot project to have 40% of the Town wireless. If this project proves to be successful Council will consider making an additional investment to extend the fibre network to cover the entire Town. Hantsport would then be the first municipality in the province to be completely wireless.

The wireless is up and operational in the downtown core. A radio located in the Fundy Gypsum Building has recently become operational and provides access to the new soccer field and a portion of the surrounding streets. Wireless is tentatively scheduled to be deployed to the remainder of the Town over the next 3 years.

Policy ICSP-14

It shall be the policy of Council to proceed with the project to have the Town wireless within the next three years.

2.3.3 Economic Partnerships

Goals: Continue to be an active member of Hants Regional Development Authority

Explore partnerships with other municipalities in the region to improve economic conditions

Hantsport is a member of the Hants Regional Development Authority. The following is taken from the Authority's website

"The Hants Regional Development Authority is a forward-looking organization established to support and advance community economic development in Hants County. From its offices in Windsor and Elmsdale, the Hants RDA works with businesses, community groups and all three levels of government to champion the interests of Hants County locally, regionally and internationally.

The Hants RDA is one of 13 Regional Development Authorities in Nova Scotia. It was incorporated in 1997 under the Regional Community Development Act at the request of the four municipal governments in Hants County. Governed by a volunteer board of directors, we receive funding from the municipalities of East Hants and West Hants; the Towns of Windsor and Hantsport; the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; and the provincial departments of Economic & Rural Development and Community Services.

Our key task is to develop and implement a regional strategy. The current strategy, "Connected. 2008-2011.", was developed in 2008 through extensive public and stakeholder consultation. It focuses the Hants RDA on "making the connections that help Hants County achieve sustainable prosperity." To this end, we connect new tourists, residents and entrepreneurs to Hants County through Regional Promotion. We connect our clients to new skills and resources through Community Development and Business Development. And we connect Hants County to outside decision makers through Advocacy."

The RDA is embarking on an Investment Readiness Project for Hants West. This project is looking at attracting business through partnerships and is exploring the possibility of a joint industrial park. Hantsport is an active participant in the project.

The Town is also a member of the King's Partnership. The other members are the Municipality of the County of Kings and the Towns of Berwick, Kentville, and Wolfville. One of the key goals of the partnership is to increase individual municipal capacity through collective learning and shared initiatives. Although the focus of the partnership is not necessarily economic, its work will help pave the way for sustainable development.

Policy ICSP-15

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to be an active partner in the Hants Regional Development Authority.

Policy ICSP-16

It shall be the policy of Council to continue its participation in the King's Partnership.

2.4 Social/Cultural

2.4.1 Goals

The Town's social/cultural goals are as follows:

- Goal 1 Construct a major trail system in the Town
- Goal 2 Provide parks and recreational opportunities
- Goal 3 Support groups which promote the cultural and historical aspects of the Town
- Goal 4 Continue to provide services to promote a safe and healthy community

2.4.2 Trail System

Goal Construct a trail system in the Town

Several years ago the Town engaged a consultant to recommend a trail system through the Town. The Town has just completed the construction of Phase 1. The Trail begins at the Tourist Bureau and goes to Halfway River. (A branch of the trail also goes to the cemetery). It then links up with Porter's Avenue and continues along the railway to Smith Crescent. In order to show the Trail as a loop back to the Tourist Bureau, the existing sidewalks on Smith Crescent, Tannery Road and Main Street may be shown as part of the Trail.

Not only will having a trail system in the Town promote a healthy lifestyle, it will encourage social interaction and may lead to less use of the automobile. Phase II of the Radcliffe report shows a proposed trail in the southern portion of the Town. The construction of this Trail will be a more challenging because of its location on private land.

Policy ICSP-17

It shall be the policy of Council to proceed with Phase II of the Radcliffe Report.

2.4.3 Recreational Services

Goal Provide parks and recreational opportunities

The Town owns and maintains a number of parks, including Fundy Centennial Park, Chittick Park, Riverview/Rand Park, McDade Park, William Hall Memorial Cairn. The Town also operates the ball field

by the school. A recent initiative by the Town, with the cooperation of Minas Basin Pulp and Power Company Limited who owns the land, is the construction of a recreational area, primarily a soccer field, off of Cottage Street. The construction of a building has been completed and is being for recreational purposes and by the Fire Department for its water rescue unit.

The Town has an agreement with the Hantsport Memorial Community Centre, a non-profit organization which owns 16 acres of land near the entrance to the Town. The Community Centre offers the following facilities: playground, tennis courts, swimming pool, basketball court, and plenty of green space. These facilities are managed by the Town pursuant to the agreement. The Town's Visitor Information Centre is located in this area.

Policy ICSP-18

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to maintain the parks within the Town and to provide recreational services for all residents.

2.4.4 Services

Goal Provide services to promote a safe and healthy community
Encourage active transportation

The Town provides and maintains a water and wastewater system, both of which are described in **Section 2.3 Environmental**. The Town also provides other services which contribute to the safety and social fabric of the Town.

2.4.4.1 Sidewalks

The subject of sidewalks also relates to the environmental and economic pillars of sustainability. Council has been constructing sidewalks in conjunction with the replacement of water and wastewater lines and will continue with this practice.

Policy ICSP-19

It shall be a policy of Council to continue with a program of concrete sidewalk construction as funding becomes available.

2.4.4.2 Emergency Services

The Town has joined with The Town of Windsor and the District of West Hants to form an REMO organization for this region. The Town Hall in Hantsport is headquarters for many of the EMO operations.

The Regional Emergency Measures Advisory Committee has the responsibility for the safety, health and welfare of its citizens should a threat arise from any emergency or disaster. Any effective emergency response requires a regional plan to fully integrate the use of all available resources and capabilities; public and private, and provides for the proper coordination of these elements.

The aim of the Regional Emergency Measures Plan is to establish arrangements and procedures necessary for the earliest possible coordinated response in order that the following be assured:

1. minimizing the effects of an emergency or disaster on the region and its citizens.
2. the safety and preservation of health, private property and the environment; and

3. the restoration of essential services.

Policy ICSP-20

It shall be a policy of Council to continue to be an active member in the regional EMO in order to provide for an effective response to emergencies.

2.4.4.3 Police Services

The RCMP detachment in Hantsport serves the Town and provides a high level of service, with no outstanding issues to be addressed.

As an aid to police services, Council will place security cameras at various locations throughout the Town, at a cost of approximately \$100,000. Council believes this initiative will contribute to Hantsport continuing to be a very safe place to live and work. This project may well provide leadership for other municipalities to use this technology for a safe environment.

Policy ICSP-21

It shall be a policy of Council to continue to provide a high level of police protection in the Town.

2.4.4.4 Solid Waste

Hantsport is a member of Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority is a body corporate formed under an Inter-Municipal Services Agreement encompassing the Municipality of Annapolis County, the Municipality of the County of Kings, and the Towns of Berwick, Bridgetown, Hantsport, Kentville, Middleton and Wolfville.

The Authority is a legally formed body comprised of representatives from each of the eight participating municipal units and meets on a monthly basis to discuss issues and provide a basis on which staff manages the business of the authority.

The Authority is committed to encouraging residents to reuse, recycle and compost, which will reduce the amount of waste that must be transported away for disposal. Waste reduction is the most economical solution to the management of waste, not to mention the environmental advantages.

Policy ICSP-22

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to provide solid waste services through participation in the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority.

2.4.4.5 Streets

The Town has 14.7 kilometers of streets, all of which are paved. In the survey a slightly higher percentage of respondents thought the streets were not in acceptable condition. A much higher percentage, almost 65%, felt that the level of truck traffic on local streets was not acceptable. This is directly related to the truck route issue and is addressed in Section 2.3.8.

The Strategy adopted in 1977 cited two problem traffic areas; one at the corner of Prince, School, and Main and the other at the corner of Riverview, School, and Willow. These areas still experience problems with traffic.

With respect to parking, almost 60% of the survey respondents felt that there is sufficient public parking in the downtown while 33% did not.

There are approximately 10 kilometers of sidewalks in the town. In the survey 52% felt that the condition of the sidewalks was acceptable while 40% did not.

Policy ICSP-23

It shall be the policy of Council to improve the condition of the streets and sidewalks in conjunction with the upgrading of the water and wastewater services.

2.3.5.6 School

In addition to providing educational services to children, the school in Hantsport is also used as a community facility, providing a place for recreational and social opportunities.

In April, 2008 the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board (AVRSB) completed a study entitled “Eastern Kings Schools Review”. Concern that this review may lead to the closing of the Hantsport School led Council to engage the services of a consultant to explore the value of the school not only in educating its youth, but also in its value to the wider community.

The “Hantsport School Study” was completed in September of 2008 and makes a strong case that the Hantsport School is vital to the community and should continue to play its critical role in the lives of both adults and children in the Hantsport area.

The Study provides many excellent arguments in support of the school. One aspect in particular directly relates to sustainability goals encouraged by the Province for inclusion in their Integrated Community Sustainability Plans. That is to reduce the reliance on the use of motor vehicles and to encourage residents to engage in a more active lifestyle. The Study states early on that “Considered an essential community asset and a central benefit of in-town living, taxpayers residing in the Town of Hantsport hold dear the fact that their children can walk to school in the morning, return home for lunch and walk home again at the end of the school day.” Not only does having the school in Town promote a more active lifestyle for children but also for adults who are able to walk to the school for any of the many extra curricular activities that take place there.

Recent decisions of the school board show a commitment to keeping the school in Hantsport and the Town is committed in its continuing support for the school.

Policy ICSP-24

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to support the school and to encourage its use as a community facility.

2.4.5.7 Library

The library for Hantsport is located in the school and is used by both students and residents of all ages. It is run by the Annapolis Valley Regional Library Board Council is appreciative of recent efforts to increase awareness of the library and will continue to support these efforts.

Policy ICSP-25

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to support the library.

2.5 Implementation – ISCP Projects

The Town’s ICSP contains many policies to help the Town become more sustainable in the decades to come. Some policies call for substantial funding in order to be implemented. The federal government is providing the revenue from the gas tax to help municipalities fund sustainability projects. The Town has been receiving gas tax revenues since 2005; this revenue has been used to fund infrastructure upgrades.

As is to be expected, the cost of financing all the projects which flow from the Town’s sustainability polices will be much greater than the amount of revenue the Town will receive from the gas tax. It is therefore necessary to indicate which projects receive priority over other projects.

1. Installation of Security Cameras

Goal: Provide services to promote a safe and healthy community

Responsibility: Town and RCMP

Timing: Immediate to Short Term

Providing a safe and healthy environment for residents and visitors is a keystone in achieving meaningful sustainability. Council believes the placement of security cameras throughout the Town will be an important aid to the RCMP to meet this goal.

2. Improve Infrastructure of the Town

Goals: Maintain and improve water systems
Continue to provide services to promote a safe and healthy community

Responsibility: Town, with possible cost-sharing from senior levels of government

Timing: On-going

The Town has been embarking on projects to replace water and wastewater lines and in some cases provide new sidewalks. It is much more efficient to do all of the work as one project, on a street by street basis, including the repaving of the streets.

3. Implement Growth Strategy

Goals: Provide housing opportunities to encourage new residents to the Town.
More fully utilize Town services.

Responsibility: Town

Timing: Immediate to Short Term

Section 2.2.5 outlines a process whereby the Town will pursue the acquisition of land to facilitate the development of the land for housing. The Town will service the land and subdivide lots for a mix of housing uses.

It is important to note that although funding will be necessary to implement this project, Council will recoup the expenditures from the sale of the lots.

4. Expansion of the Trail System

Goal: Construct a major trail system in the Town

Responsibility: Town

Timing: Immediate to Short Term

The Town will implement Phase II of the Radcliffe Report which calls for an expansion of the trail system into the eastern part of the Town.

5. Review Wastewater Treatment Agreement

Goal: Provide effective treatment of wastewater by continuing the partnership with the Municipality of the County of Kings

Responsibility: Town and the Municipality of the County of Kings

Timing: Immediate to Short Term

The Town has approached the Municipality of the County of Kings to review the wastewater agreement relating the treatment plant.

6. Construction of the Truck Route

Goal: Protect non-industrial areas of the Town from adverse effects of industrial development

Responsibility: The project is being cost shared by three levels of government but the Town has the responsibility for implementation.

Timing: Project to begin in the spring of 2010 and completed by March 31, 2011.

The construction of the truck route is the most immediate, pressing project facing the Town and one it has been working on for many years. The expected expansion of an industrial use will bring the amount of truck traffic through the non-industrial areas of the Town to a very unacceptable level.

A truck route is also important for the continued success of the industries which play such a critical role in the economic viability of the Town.

Although funding from the senior levels of government has been approved, the Town will be challenged to provide its share in this project.

Part 3 – General Land Use Policies

3.1 Overall Development

The Integrated Community Sustainability Plan in Part 2 provides a vision of what the Town could be as Council looks ahead to the decades to come. Guiding the growth of the Town will play a major role in fulfilling of this objective. Council and the citizens of Hantsport must be committed to a shared vision of the physical form of the Town and the preparation and implementation of policies to establish clear rules for future development.

The following parts of the Strategy build on many of the goals and policies of sustainability to offer a framework for the future development and redevelopment of the Town. This Part contains policies which pertain to the high level development goals of the Town and will be followed by more detailed policies on the Open Space, Residential, Commercial and other sectors.

The Generalized Future Land Use Map shows land use designations that in the long term are the most appropriate locations for the residential, commercial, open space and other land uses in the Town.

Hantsport has a water and wastewater system which services virtually all of the Town's population. There is a significant amount of vacant land located adjacent to the systems and considerable excess capacities in the systems. One of Council's goals is to encourage the development of the vacant land, either through infilling of through the construction of new public streets.

It makes sense economically, environmentally, and socially to have most development occur in the serviced areas of the province.

- Economically – the Town will benefit by having more development using the existing services of the Town. Such additional development will increase the tax revenue of the Town without necessarily leading to a corresponding increase in expenditures to provide services. This development will be economically beneficial to existing taxpayers because it will help to limit increases to both the residential and commercial tax rates and may possibly lower them.
- Environmentally – encouraging development to locate in a compact manner close or relatively close to the Town Centre should result in a greater number of people walking or bicycling. This not only has obvious health benefits but will reduce the number of people using cars for work, shopping, and entertainment.
- Socially – people living and working in close proximity to one another will lead to more interaction and promote a greater sense of community.

Policy GP-1

It shall be the intention of Council to provide for the overall development of the Town in accordance with the Generalized Future Land Use Map attached as Schedule A of this document.

Policy GP-2

It shall be the intention of Council to allow a range of compatible uses in each designation, subject to the policies of this document.

Policy GP-3

It shall be the intention of Council to encourage development in the vacant areas of the Town. The commercial areas in Hantsport are facing economic pressure similar to other rural commercial areas in Nova Scotia. During the 1900's, the former Town of Hantsport was known as "the Town of Industries". However, in the last few decades several of these industries have declined or closed, leaving large vacant buildings in the community. To incentivize development for businesses, it is the intention of Council that the commercial and industrial areas in the community of Hantsport be the focus of a Commercial Development District where the By-law enacted in accordance with Bill 177, a phase-in commercial tax program, will apply. (Amendment 18-04– effective November 20, 2018)

Policy GP-4

It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Commercial Development District (CDD) designation which will include the properties within the Commercial and Industrial designations identified on the Generalized Future Land Use Map as amended May 1, 2018. (Amendment 18-04 – effective November 20, 2018)

3.2 General

3.2 General Provisions

3.2.1 Quality Control

In addition to providing for compatible development in a number of land use designations, Council feels it is important to regulate other aspects of development in order to facilitate an aesthetic and functional physical environment.

Policy GP-4

It shall be the policy of Council to include in the Land Use Bylaw a full range of provisions to ensure a high quality urban and rural environment in all land use designations. Such provisions shall include, but not be limited to regulations concerning signage, landscaping and buffering, accessory buildings, separation distances, and obnoxious uses.

3.2.2 Parking

Provision of space for vehicular parking is necessary for the efficient use of land and safe movement of traffic. The number of parking spaces provided should be proportional to the type of land use that is being served. Additionally, commercial uses require parking space not only for customers and staff, but also for the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles.

Policy GP-5

It shall be a policy of Council to establish parking and loading requirements in the Land Use By-law.

3.2.3 Variance

In order to provide a degree of flexibility in the regulation of development, the Municipal Government Act enables the Development Officer to grant a variance from the requirements of the Land Use By-law, as follows:

- (a) percentage of land that may be built upon;
- (b) size or other requirements relating to yards;

- (c) lot frontage or lot area, or both, if
 - (i) the lot existed on the effective date of the by-law, or
 - (ii) a variance was granted for the lot at the time of subdivision approval.

The granting or refusal of a variance by the Development may be appealed to Council.

Council may also authorize the Development Officer to grant a variance to other requirements as listed in the Municipal Government Act. Council is in favour of these additional powers which will bring a higher degree of flexibility to the regulation of development.

Policy GP-6

It shall be a policy of Council, in accordance with Section 235 of the Municipal Government Act, to enable the Development Officer to grant a variance in one or more of the requirements of the land use bylaw:

- (a) the number of parking spaces and loading spaces;**
- (b) ground area and height of a structure;**
- (c) floor area occupied by a home based business;**
- (d) height and area of a sign.**

3.2.4 Setback from a Watercourse

If development is permitted close to a watercourse, the activity associated with the development, from construction to pesticides on lawns, may have a negative impact on the water quality. Council believes it is important to establish a suitable setback from the rivers.

GP-7

It shall be a policy of Council to establish in the Land Use By-law a setback from a watercourse.

3.2.5 Licensed Cannabis Uses

(Amendment 20-02 – effective January 21, 2021)

On October 17, 2018 the Federal government legalized the use of recreational cannabis in Canada. As of that date, in addition to the ability to produce cannabis for personal use, property owners can apply to Health Canada to obtain licenses to cultivate, produce and perform testing on cannabis for commercial and academic purposes. Currently there are seven (7) licenses available through Health Canada:

- Standard Cultivation license
- Standard Processing license
- Micro-Cultivation license
- Micro-Processing license
- Nursery license
- Analytical Testing license

- Research license

For the purposes of the Hantsport Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, these licenses will be discussed as “licensed cannabis land uses”.

Council wishes to encourage legal cannabis cultivation and processing in Hantsport. Council considers Standard Cultivation and Processing to be industrial in nature due to the size of facilities, the amount of power necessary for production and the security requirements established by Health Canada. Council considers Micro-Cultivation, Micro-Processing and Cannabis Nurseries to be compatible with industrial and agricultural uses. However, as there is no agricultural designation in Hantsport these licenses will only be permitted in industrial areas.

As a result, it shall be the policy of Council to:

Policy GP-8

Permit Analytical Testing and Research of cannabis in all zones as a use accessory to any licensed cannabis land use.

Policy GP-9

Permit Analytical Testing and Research of cannabis in the Institutional (I) Zone.

Policy GP-10

Consider Standard Cultivation and Processing of cannabis, Micro-Cultivation, Micro-Processing and Cannabis Nurseries as industrial land uses.

3.2.6 Housing

(Amendment File # 20-30 effective September 2021) (Amendment File # 22-12 effective January 10, 2023) (Amendment File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)

Council acknowledges that it is important to encourage the provision of housing that includes all residents in Hantsport regardless of socio-economic status, age or physical or mental disability. Demographic changes, such as an aging population, smaller household size and a growing number of single-parent families, mean that a community needs to provide diverse housing types to satisfy the housing needs of its population. To achieve the foregoing, the Municipality will continue to plan for a range of housing types, including low density, medium density, and high density housing in appropriate locations, with the intent to provide a range and mix of housing types, sizes, costs and tenure. Housing must be available for seniors and individuals in the community with special needs. Housing choices and the affordability of those choices can be increased by providing flexible development standards allowing for smaller lots and setbacks, narrower streets, clustered developments and opportunities for multiple-unit development in appropriate locations. Secondary suites can provide a solution for those wishing to keep elderly or dependent family members nearby and can increase affordable housing options for the greater community. By regulating the size and appearance of these suites, Council can ensure they have minimal effect on the overall built form and are compatible with the neighbourhood.

Policy

As a result, it shall be the policy of Council to:

- GP-11** encourage the provision of housing adequate to meet the needs of all residents of Hantsport. Council will encourage affordable housing, special-needs housing and rental accommodation to develop in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of those being served and the entire community.
- GP-12** provide for the development of a range of housing types in Hantsport.
- GP-13** include flexible development standards which encourage innovative housing development in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law.
- GP-14** permit secondary suites within and accessory to single and two-unit dwellings in all zones, with regulation regarding the size, location and appearance of secondary suites to ensure the use remains small-scale and compatible with the neighborhood. *(as amended by file #22-12 effective January 10, 2023)*

Affordable Housing

(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)

Council acknowledges that affordable housing is needed to ensure a high quality of life for all residents. In order to address housing affordability challenges, the Municipality will encourage the provision of affordable housing units through creating affordable housing policies and develop partnerships with local housing providers, agencies, and other levels of government to meet the varying financial needs of current and future residents.

- GP-15** It shall be the policy of Council to incentivise affordable housing through the use of bonus zoning, where additional units will be permitted if the development provides a certain number of dwelling units which meet the definition of Affordable Housing Unit in the Land Use By-law, in the following zones:
- (a) Medium Density Residential (R-2); and**
 - (b) High Density Residential (R-3).**
- GP-16** It shall be the policy of Council to identify surplus Municipal-owned properties that may be suitable for affordable housing development.
- GP-17** It shall be the policy of Council to consider the disposal of identified surplus Municipal-owned properties to housing providers at a price less than market value for the purpose of affordable housing development, where Council determines that it is in the best interest of the Municipality to do so.

3.2.7 Accessory Uses and Buildings

(Created by File # 22-12 effective January 10, 2023)

Accessory uses and buildings will be regulated to reduce the impact they may have on surrounding properties due to their size, number, location and when a building may be constructed, or a use initiated.

Council will permit construction of an accessory building before the main building since experience has shown that this is sometimes needed.

Policy

As a result, it shall be the policy of Council to:

GP-18 regulate accessory uses and buildings by:

- (a) regulating the number, size, location and height of accessory buildings; and
- (b) regulating the types, location, and size of accessory uses.

GP-19 permit accessory uses to be located on a lot held in the same ownership and:

- (a) within the same zone as the main building or use it is intended to serve or within an abutting zone in which the main use or building is permitted; and
- (b) on a lot which directly abuts or is directly across a public street or highway or private road from the lot containing the main building or use it is intended to serve.

GP-20 permit an accessory building to be constructed prior to construction of a main building only if development and building permits have been issued for the main building.

Part 4 – Residential Policies

Hantsport has a total of 532 dwelling units most of which are single unit residential and owner occupied. There is a small number of two unit residential buildings and fewer still multiple unit residential buildings. The largest multi-unit buildings are for senior citizens, Jubilee Lodge on Jubilee Avenue and Jubilee Court on Chittick Street. These two buildings are owned by the Nova Scotia Housing Authority.

The housing stock is in very good condition and is located for the most part on large lots which are serviced by the Town’s water and wastewater system. Statistics Canada reports that the average value of a dwelling is \$147,983 compared to the provincial average of \$158,000.

The residential areas of the Town are more or less distinct from the commercial and industrial areas of the Town. Some homes contain a business use and there are a few commercial buildings located within the residential areas.

Many municipalities are looking at increasing residential density as a way to increase sustainability both environmentally and economically. Having more housing units in an area to which the municipality already provides services such as recreational, library, and educational services means more people will be able to walk or bike to these services. In addition more people living near a commercial area will lead to a reduction in the use of the automobile to access goods and services.

Economically, a greater density will improve a municipality’s fiscal position as municipal services (water, wastewater, solid waste collection, recreational programs, etc.) will be more efficiently provided. Such additional development will increase the tax revenue of the Town without leading to a corresponding increase in expenditures to provide services if there is sufficient capacity in these systems, as is the case in Hantsport.

Policy RP-1

(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)

It shall be a policy of Council to designate an area as “Residential” as shown of the Generalized Future Land Use Map. Council shall establish three residential zones in the Land Use By-law which shall apply to this designation, the Low Density Residential (R-1) Zone, the Medium Density Residential (R-2) Zone and the High Density Residential (R-3) Zone.

4.1 Residential Low Density and Medium Density

(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)

While a majority of the residential area of the Town consists of detached single unit development, Council is in favour of increasing residential density in order to provide housing opportunities to encourage new residents, as well as to more fully utilize central water and sewer services. In the adjacent vacant areas shown as “Future Development Areas” on the Opportunities Map Council will establish a Medium Density residential zone. Council may consider rezoning additional land to R-2 as demand requires. *(Amendment HMPS 16-01 – effective June 26, 2017) (as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

RP-2

It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Low Density Residential zone (R-1) and apply the zone to areas where zoned Single Unit Residential (R-1) under the previous Hantsport Land Use By-law.

Permitted uses in the zone shall include single unit, two-unit and multiple-unit dwelling, residential daycare facilities (accommodates more than three but less than 9 children) and home-based businesses. *(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

Policy RP-2A

It shall be a policy of Council to consider rezoning land within the Residential Designation to R-2 subject to the following:

- (a) the area to be rezoned is serviced, or capable of being serviced, with municipal water and sewer.**
- (b) the proposed use will not conflict with adjacent existing uses;**
- (c) any other matter which may be addressed in a Land Use By-law;**
- (d) Policy IM-3.** *(Amendment HMPS 16-01 – effective June 26, 2017)*

RP-3

It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Medium Density Residential (R-2) Zone and to apply this zone to the areas where zoned Two Unit Residential (R-2) under the previous Hantsport Land Use By-law. Uses permitted in the R-1 Zone shall be permitted in the R-2 Zone. *(amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

RP-4

It shall be the policy of Council to establish conditions on home based businesses to reduce negative impacts on adjacent residential development.

In the past Hantsport has been home to agricultural uses. While no farms are active in the Town today there is an interest in keeping horses, not as a commercial operation but for the use and enjoyment of a resident as a hobby. Council sees no difficulty in allowing horses in the low density residential zones as long as there is sufficient space to keep them. *(As amended August 17, 2015)*

RP-4A

It shall be the policy of Council to permit the keeping of horses in the R-1 and R-2 Zone subject to an area requirement for each horse as contained in the Land Use By-law. *(As amended August 17, 2015)*

4.2 Residential High Density

(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)

There are few residential buildings in Hantsport containing three or more units. The largest multi-unit buildings are for senior citizens, Jubilee Lodge on Jubilee Avenue and Jubilee Court on Chittick Street. These two buildings are owned by the Nova Scotia Housing Authority.

Council would like to see more multiple unit residential development occur in the Town, provided it is compatible with lower density residential uses. Therefore new high density development shall only be permitted through rezoning subject to criteria, including criteria to protect adjacent existing low density

residential development. A new multiple unit development is proposed on a site on the southeastern side of Holmes Hill Road. Unless Council receives information that the project is no longer active, Council will also zone this site R-3. *(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

Policy RP-5

It shall be the policy of Council to establish the High Density Residential (R-3) Zone and in areas where zoned Multiple Unit Residential (R-3) Zone under the previous Land Use By-law. *(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

Policy RP-6

Permitted uses in the R-3 Zone are residential uses of up to twelve units. Converted dwellings of four or more units are also permitted. *(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

Policy RP-7

It shall be the policy of Council to allow new high density residential uses within the Residential Designation by rezoning to the R-3 zone provided proposed rezoning will not have a negative impact on adjacent residential uses and subject to the criteria contained in Section 11.3.1 *(as amended by File #23-21 effective May 13, 2025)*

4.3 Mini Homes

A Mini Home dwelling is defined in the Land Use By-law as “a dwelling unit built to a CSA standard which meets or exceeds a length to width ratio of 3:1.”

There are no mini homes in the Town. Because of the long narrow nature of these dwellings, Council believes they are not compatible with the more traditional housing form which characterizes the Town’s residential development on individual lots. However Council will provide for mini homes within the Town through the establishment of mini home parks.

Policy RP-8

It shall be the policy of Council to establish the Mini Home Park (R-4) Zone which permits mini home parks and home based businesses. New mini home parks shall be permitted by rezoning to the R-4 Zone subject to criteria contained in Policy IM-3.

Part 5 – Commercial Policies

Most of the commercial development in Hantsport is located along Main Street between Prince Street and William Street. Commercial uses are also located on the southeastern side of Chittick Avenue and several may be found along William Street. In addition to the commercial uses, residential uses including multiple unit development are prevalent in these areas.

The commercial uses in Hantsport serve the residents of Town and the immediate surrounding area. A wider range of businesses are available in nearby towns and in the Village of New Minas.

However the existing residential lots in the Commercial designation will be protected. This will be done by placing them into a residential zone. Only when landowners make a decision to establish a commercial use on their property will a rezoning to the commercial zone be considered. *(As amended August 17, 2015)*

Residential uses will also be permitted in the commercial zone. For residential uses located on the ground floor only 50% of the floor area of the building shall be devoted to the residential uses. This restriction does not apply to residential uses above the ground floor. *(As amended August 17, 2015)*

Policy CP-1

It shall be a policy of Council to designate the area shown on the Generalized Land Use map as Commercial.

Policy CP-2

It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Commercial (C-1) Zone which will allow for an increase in residential density in existing residential dwellings while maintaining the street presence of commercial and office establishments. *(Amendment HMPS LUB 17-01 – effective May 1, 2018)*

Policy CP-3

It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Mixed Commercial/ Residential (C-2) Zone which will permit a wide variety of commercial and residential uses. *(Amendment HMPS LUB 17-01 – effective May 1, 2018)*

Part 6 – Industrial Policies

Three industrial companies, Fundy Gypsum, Canadian Keyes Fibre (CKF) Inc, and Minas Basin Pulp and Power Company Limited comprise almost all of the industrial development in Hantsport. The companies have been good corporate citizens over many years, and have expanded and are still expanding their operations.

Minas Basin Pulp and Power Company Limited have recently announced the construction of a 10,000 square foot biodiesel plastics processing plant that will recycle up to seven types of plastic into a marketable fuel source. The plant will process as much as 4000 tonnes of plastic waste diverted from provincial landfills. The plant may be located outside of Town but there are plans to construct a 30,000 square foot biomass burning facility in the Town.

Policy I-1

It shall be a policy of Council to designate the existing industrial operations and adjacent land owned by the industries as Industrial on the Generalized Future Land Use Map.

Policy I-2

It shall be a policy of Council to establish the Industrial (M) Zone and to place the areas designated as Industrial into this zone.

Part 7 – Open Space Policies

Section 2.3.2 and Section 2.5 address the importance of protecting both the sensitive areas of the Town and the publicly owned land used for recreation.

Policy OS-1

It shall be a policy of Council to designate the existing recreational open space and the environmentally sensitive areas as “Open Space” on the Generalized Future Land Use Map.

Policy OS-2

It shall be the policy of Council to establish a “Recreational Open Space (ROS) Zone” and to place all of the publicly owned recreational areas into this zone.

Policy OS-3

It shall be a policy of Council to establish a “Conservation Open Space (COS) Zone” and to place the environmentally sensitive areas in this zone.

Part 8 – Institutional Policies

Institutional uses are those developments which are operated for the general benefit of society. These include public operations such as schools and government offices, and also developments that are under private operations that include community groups, religious organizations, and so on. In Hantsport examples of institutional use would include the Town Hall, the school, and the various churches in the community.

Institutional uses are generally perceived as being compatible or non-disruptive with other uses. However, given the diversity of activities included under this general heading, some guidelines are warranted where the proposal involves the erection of structures and the parking of vehicles.

Policy IP-1

It is the policy of Council to establish an Institutional (I-1) Zone and to zone such existing use to that zone.

Policy IP-2

It is the policy of Council to permit new institutional uses by rezoning to the I-1 Zone in any area subject to Policy IM-3.

Part 9 – Implementation

11.1 Statements of Provincial Interest

The *Municipal Government Act* requires that a Municipal Planning Strategy be reasonably consistent with Statements of Provincial Interest which have been adopted by the Province. At the time of the preparation of this Strategy the Province had adopted 5 separate statements respecting the following: the quality of water within municipal water supply watersheds; protection of public safety and property in designated and recognized floodplains; the protection of agricultural lands; the efficient use of municipal water and wastewater infrastructure; and the provision of housing opportunities which meet the needs of communities.

There are no designated floodplains in Hantsport. Council has identified wetland and dykeland and has taken steps to protect these areas.

Because Hantsport is a town with water and wastewater services, the protection of agricultural land does not carry the same impact as agricultural land in rural municipalities which has little or no likelihood of receiving services. However Council recognized the importance of agricultural uses in its unserved areas and has provided for them in the Land Use By-law.

The other three statements of provincial interest relate directly to Hantsport and Council's policies and regulations are consistent with them.

11.2 Review of Municipal Planning Strategy

The *Municipal Government Act* states that a Strategy shall include policies on how Council intends to review the Strategy and Land Use By-law. We live in a world in which conditions relating to development may change rapidly. When Council determines that these types of changes warrant a review of the planning documents it shall conduct a review, and seek public input throughout the process.

The same holds true with the ICSP part of the Strategy. Council may review ICSP policies independently of the entire Strategy when circumstances such as direction from the senior levels of government with respect to sustainability change. Council also believes that a review should occur no later than seven years from the effective date of the Strategy and Land Use By-law.

The Municipal Government Act requires Council to adopt, by policy, a public participation program policy (PPPP) and to have policy within the MPS which establishes Council's intent to have a PPPP.

A PPPP has been in place and utilized in the area regulated by the Hantsport planning documents since before 2010, and planning in Hantsport has been subject to the West Hants Regional Municipality Public Participation Program Policy since April 28, 2020, following the establishment of the Regional government. In order to ensure the requirements of the Municipal Government Act are met, Council is establishing a policy which will link the MPS and PPPP. (*Amendment #22-32 effective May 1, 2023*)

Policy IM-1

It shall be a policy of Council to review the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law as deemed necessary by Council due to changing conditions but not later than every seven years.

Policy IM-2

It shall be a policy of Council to review the ICSP part of the Strategy independently from the rest of the Strategy as deemed necessary by Council or in response to direction from the senior levels of government.

Policy IM-2A (*Amendment #22-31 effective May 1, 2023*)

It shall be the policy of Council to establish and maintain a Public Participation Program Policy.

11.3 Amendments of the Land Use By-law

11.3.1 Criteria

The Strategy is accompanied by a regulatory document known as a Land Use Bylaw. It is intended that the Land Use By-law be amended from time to time usually through a formal application process made to the Town. An application may be received to amend a clause(s) or section(s) of the Bylaw or to amend the Zoning Map (these latter amendments are also known as rezonings).

Council may only approve amendments to the Land Use By-law if they are consistent with the policies of this Strategy. In addition to policies or statements contained throughout the Strategy the following is a list of general criteria to be followed by Council in its consideration of an amendment.

Policy IM-3

In considering amendments to the Town of Hantsport Land Use By-law, in addition to the criteria set out in various policies of this Strategy, Council shall consider:

- (a) whether the proposal is considered appropriate in terms of:**
 - (i) the adequacy of sewer and water services;**
 - (ii) the adequacy of school facilities;**
 - (iii) the adequacy of fire protection;**
 - (iv) the impact on adjacent uses;**
 - (v) the adequacy of road networks adjacent to, or leading to the development; and**
 - (vi) the financial capacity of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the development.**
- (b) the suitability with any aspect relative to the movement of auto, rail and pedestrian traffic;**
- (c) the adequacy of the dimensions and shape of the lot for the intended use;**
- (d) the pattern of development which the proposal might create;**
- (e) the suitability of the area in terms of steepness of grade, soil and geological conditions, location of water courses, marshes or bogs and susceptibility of flooding;**

- (f) whether the proposal meets the requirements of the appropriate provincial or federal agencies as well as whether it conforms to all other relevant municipal by-laws and regulations;
- (g) the impact of not only the use being proposed but all uses permitted in the zone;
- (h) the site meets all of the zone requirements for the zone sought; and
- (i) any other matter required by relevant policies of this Strategy.

11.3.2 Amendment not Requiring a MPS Amendment

When a rezoning to a zone is in an area not consistent with the Generalized Future Land Use Map, the rezoning should not be approved unless the Map is amended. However, since the designations on the GFLUM are meant to be general, a rezoning in an area adjacent to a required land use designation may be considered without amending the GFLUM.

Policy IM-4

It shall be a policy of Council to consider a Land Use By-law amendment to zone any area immediately adjacent to a given land use designation on the Generalized Future Land Use Map (Map 1) to a zone permitted in the adjacent designation without requiring a Strategy amendment, provided that all policies of the Strategy are satisfied.

11.4 Subdivision

Subdivision includes the creation of one or more new lots, consolidation of two or more existing lots or boundary adjustments on existing lots. All subdivision in the Town of Hantsport is controlled by the standards set out the Subdivision By-law.

Policy IM-5

It shall be the intention of Council to adopt a Subdivision By-law which reflects the intent and policies of this Strategy. The By-law shall include:

- (a) road construction standards;
- (b) water and sewer installation standards; and
- (c) other requirements as permitted through the Municipal Government Act.

Policy IM-6

It shall be the policy of Council to prohibit subdivision of land on private roads.

Policy IM-7

It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Subdivision By-law provisions for the subdivision of lots that do not meet the applicable minimum lot area and frontage requirements of the Land Use By-law. The conditions under which such lots may be approved are as follows:

- (a) where two or more main buildings are located on a lot, subdivision is permitted to create the same number or fewer lots as there are main buildings;

- (b) where two lot owners wish to alter their common boundary, provided that no additional lots are created and each lot meets the Land Use By-law frontage and area requirements or does not have its frontage or area reduced;
- (c) where new lots are being created, two lots may be approved in accordance with Section 279 of the Municipal Government Act which allows for the creation of not more than two undersized lots where the lot dimensions and area are not less than 90 percent of the required minimum; and
- (d) where two lots have a common boundary, they may alter their common boundary where a development component of a permanent nature such as a structure, driveway, well or septic tank is encroaching in or upon an immediately adjacent area of land.

11.5 Recovery of Expenses

The Municipal Government Act allows municipalities to establish fees to cover the costs of amendments to the Land Use By-law and variances.

Policy IM-8

It shall be the policy of Council to levy fees from the applicant for following:

- (a) cost of notifying adjacent land owners;
- (b) cost of advertising in the newspaper; if the advertising costs are more than the established fee, then the applicant will be billed for the difference, or if it is less, the difference shall be refunded; and
- (c) administrative processing costs.

11.6 Repeal of Strategy

The Town of Hantsport Municipal Planning Strategy as adopted by Town Council January 1, 1977 and all amendments thereto, are hereby repealed.