




Sustainable Community Growth Development & Resiliency Plan

Town of Stewiacke



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	Sustainable Community Growth Development & Resiliency Plan – Final Report	Emanuel Nicolescu	11-Mar-2023	Emma MacEachern
	Sustainable Community Growth Development & Resiliency Plan – Preliminary Draft Report	Emanuel Nicolescu	4-Apr-2023	Emma MacEachern
Rev.	Issue	Reviewed By:	Date	Issued By:
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May 11, 2023

Dale Bogle
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Dear Mr. Bogle:

RE: Sustainable Community Growth Development & Resiliency Plan – FINAL REPORT

We are pleased to submit this Final Report for the Sustainable Community Growth Development & Resiliency Plan. The Report outlines our work laying out existing conditions and historical trends in Stewiacke, in terms of population growth, development options, servicing, and future actions. This document presents our findings, outlines a conceptual direction for future growth areas, and conceptualizes a realistic development phasing.

High level assessments of the Town's water and wastewater treatment and distribution/collection systems were undertaken, with an opinion of requirements and costs to ensure continued service and accommodation of anticipated growth.

We trust that you will find this report consistent with your expectations. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any issues or questions.

Yours very truly,

CBCL Limited



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Dale Bogle
May 11, 2023

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A: Community Survey Open Ended Comments

B: Conceptual Development Areas

A: Conceptual Downtown Layouts

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Overview

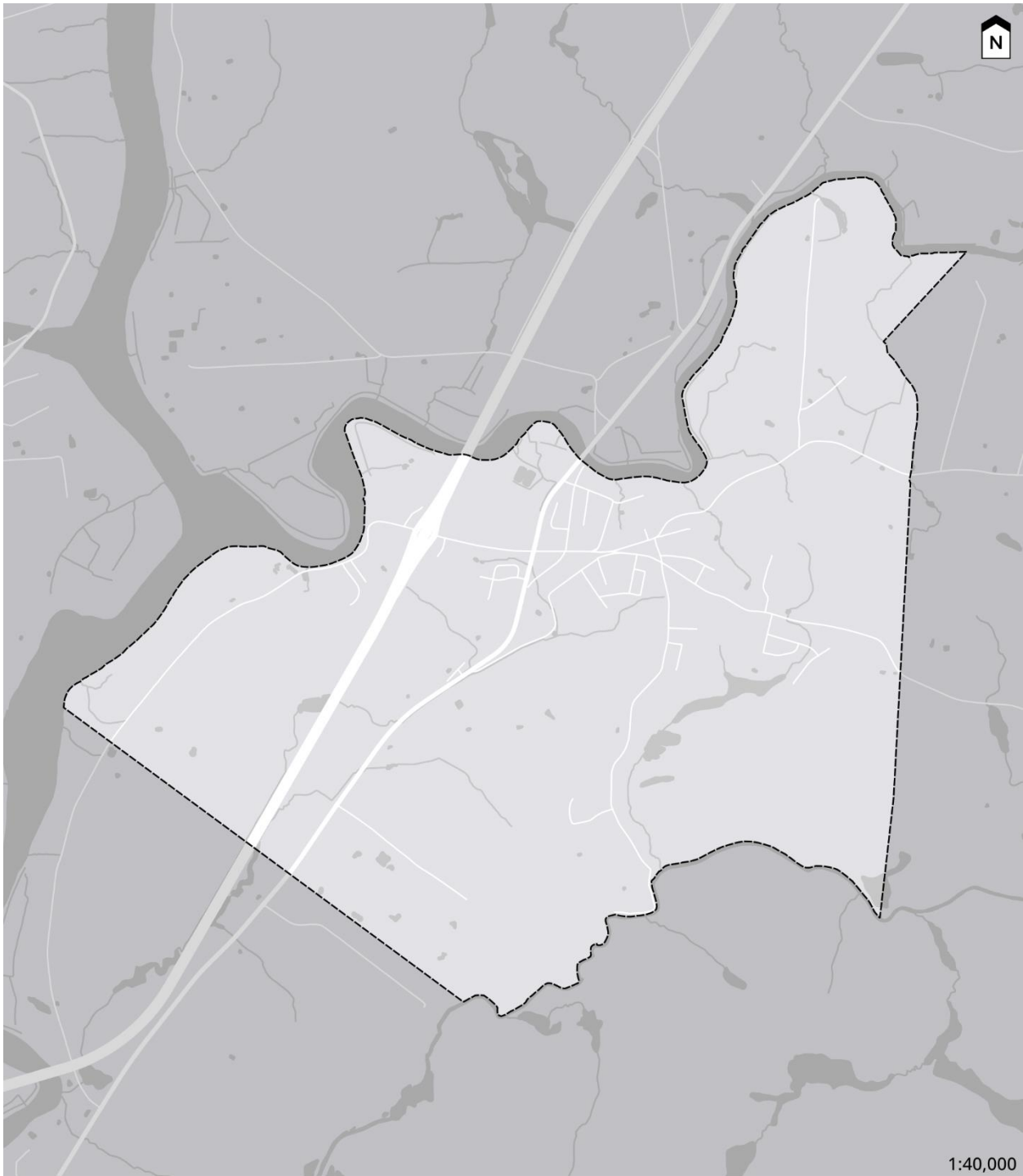
The Town of Stewiacke engaged CBCL to prepare an Engineering, Sustainable Community Growth Development and Resiliency Plan (the Plan) which reports on forecasted population growth and reviews the capacity within the Town's existing infrastructure to accommodate further population growth.

The outcome of this work is intended to form a framework for sustainable community growth, development and resiliency in the Town of Stewiacke.

1.2 Project Approach & Process

This work has been prepared to provide the Town with an in-depth understanding of its municipal systems and identify changes necessary to accommodate anticipated growth and build community resiliency. To support the Town in future decision-making, the general approach of this work was to:

- ▶ Review historical growth and identify future growth trends.
- ▶ Establish a Vision for growth.
- ▶ Assess water and wastewater infrastructure and capacity.
- ▶ Identify transportation issues and recommendations to improve network connectivity and mobility equity.
- ▶ Assess future development options and infrastructure and servicing needs.
- ▶ Conceptualize a revitalization plan for Downtown Stewiacke.



Study Area

 Town of Stewiacke Boundary

Figure 1-1: Town of Stewiacke – Project Study Area

2 BACKGROUND

The impetus for this Study was the observation of increased development interest in the Stewiacke, and the Town's expectation that population may double within the next 10 years. It was therefore considered important to better understand long-term impacts and plan accordingly, particularly when considering the Town's aging servicing infrastructure. This is even more important in the context of the Province announcing in 2021 the goal of doubling the province's overall population by 2060 to 2 million people, by attracting an average of 25,000 people per year.

The Town of Stewiacke is one of Nova Scotia's 25 Towns. Provincially, it ranks 19th in terms of population size, but 3rd in terms of total geographic area. As illustrated on Figure 2-1, with a population of just over 1,550 in 2021, covering an area of over 17 km², it has among the lowest densities in Nova Scotia – about 88 persons per square kilometres.

Stewiacke's location along the CN Rail main line and the Highway 102 corridor, its proximity to Halifax, Truro, and the Halifax Stanfield International Airport, and its current water and sewer servicing, make it attractive for ongoing development. This could lead to a need for expanded infrastructure and services in the Town to sustain the increase in population, including schools, healthcare facilities, and retail spaces. Moreover, this growth could lead to a range of economic opportunities for the Town and residents.

In parallel to the Town's growth planning, the Province's recently established Joint Regional Transportation Agency (JRTA) Crown Corporation has embarked upon the development of a long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Halifax and the surrounding region. The RTP will aim to provide a coordinated vision for a regional transportation system that is able to accommodate anticipated growth through an integrated transportation and land use planning approach. There may therefore be co-dependencies and overlaps between the two planning processes, requiring deeper coordination between the Town of Stewiacke and the JRTA.

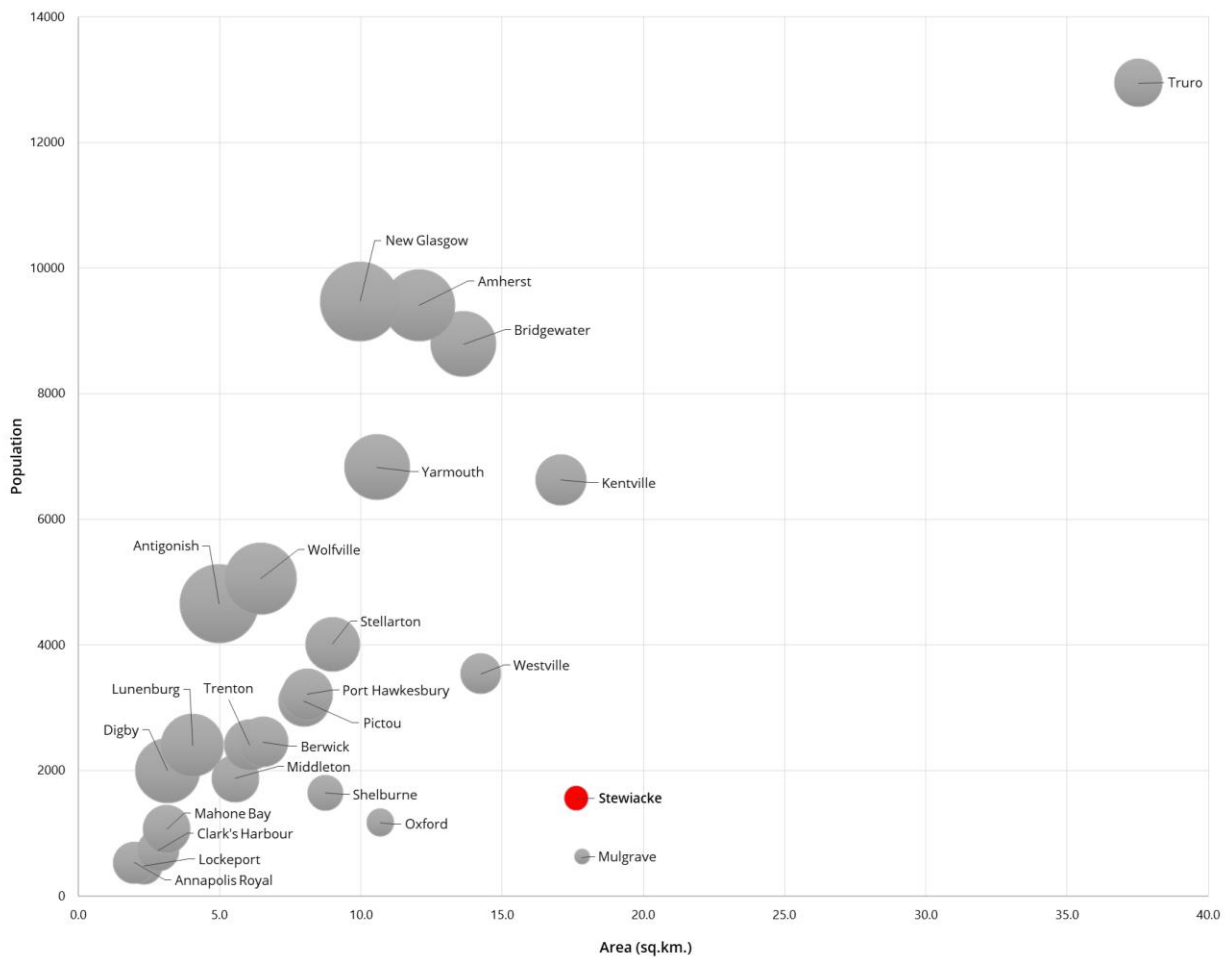


Figure 2-1: Town Population Densities

2.1 Population Profile

Between 2016 to 2021, the Town’s population grew by 13.4% (see Table 2-1); bringing the total population to 1,557. Contrasted by the -4.5% population growth between 2011 to 2016, giving rise to the lowest reported population since 1996, the significant growth resulted in a net population influx of 184 people. Like many jurisdictions across Canada, Stewiacke is facing an aging population. As summarized in Table 2-2, the Town’s 65+ age cohort grew between 2016 to 2021, however, the Town also experienced growth in the younger age 0-14 and age 25-34 cohorts; indicating the Town is attracting a younger population.

Table 2-1: Population Growth (Statistics Canada)

Year	Population	Growth
1981	1201	2.3%
1986	1265	5.3%
1991	1306	3.2%

1996	1405	7.6%
2001	1388	-1.2%
2006	1421	2.4%
2011	1438	1.2%
2016	1373	-4.5%
2021	1557	13.4%

Total Population 1981 - 2021

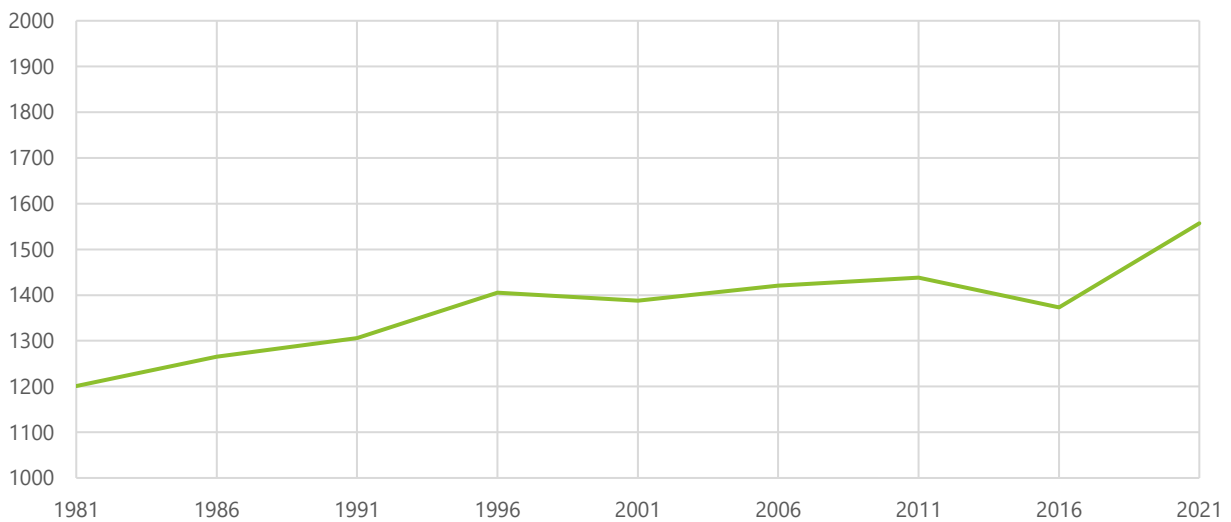
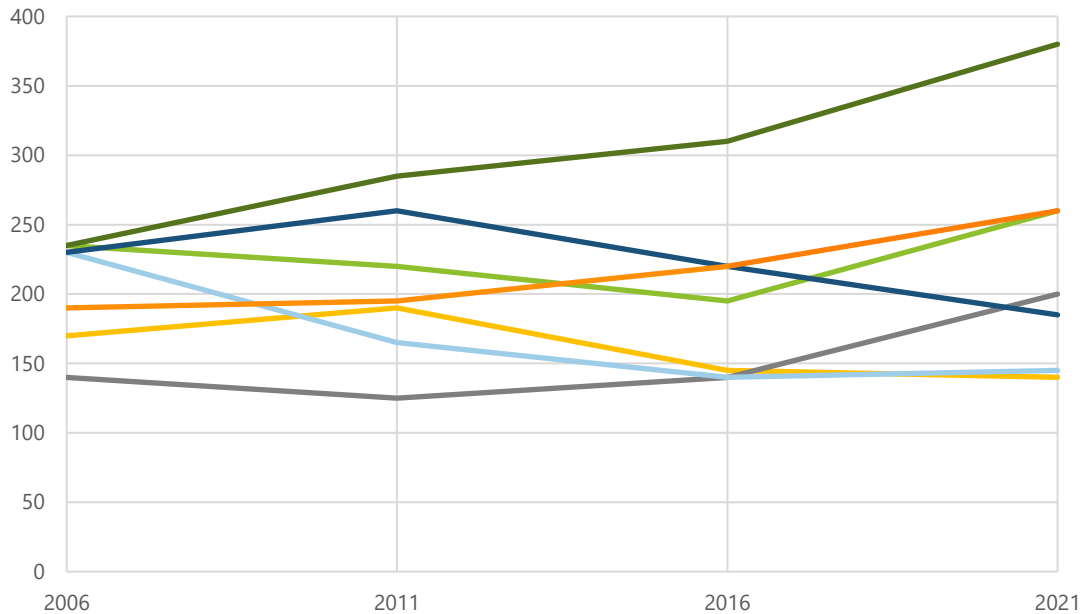


Figure 2-2: Stewiacke Population 1981-2021 (Statistics Canada)

Table 2-2: Population Age Characteristics 2006-2021 (Statistics Canada)

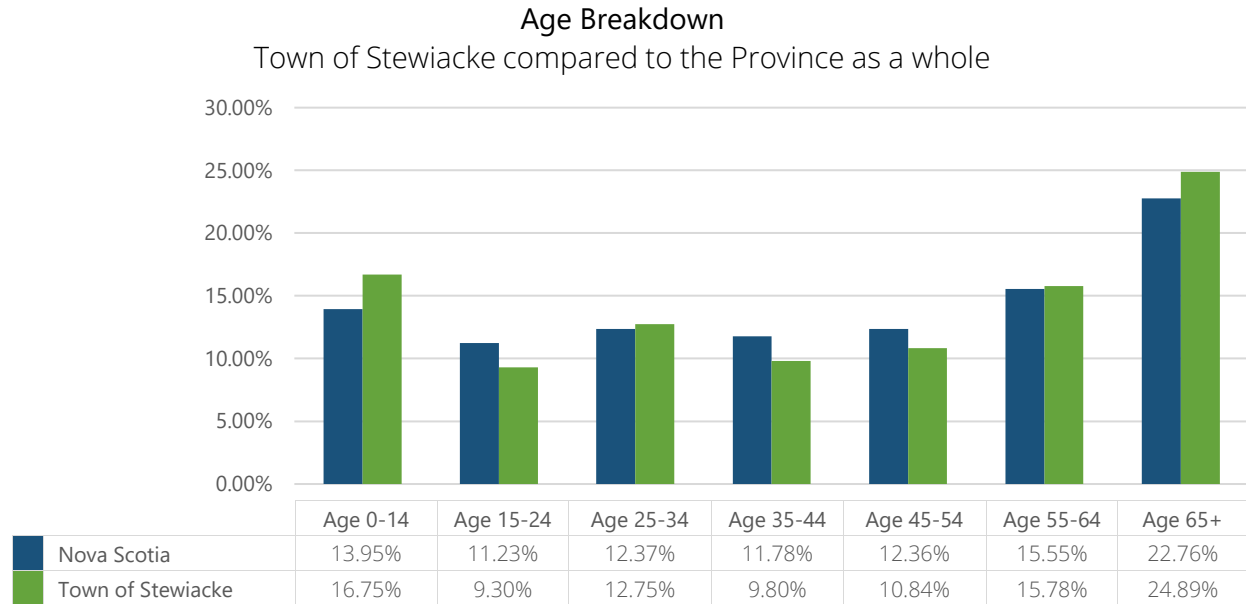
Population Growth by Age Cohort
2006 - 2021



	2006	2011	2016	2021
Age 0-14	235	220	195	260
Age 15-24	170	190	145	140
Age 25-34	140	125	140	200
Age 35-44	230	165	140	145
Age 45-54	230	260	220	185
Age 55-64	190	195	220	260
Age 65+	235	285	310	380

While the population is aging, there are also many young families. As shown in Table 2-3, Stewiacke has a high proportion of kids under 14 and adults under 35, as well as a high proportion of those over 65, when compared to the Provincial breakdown.

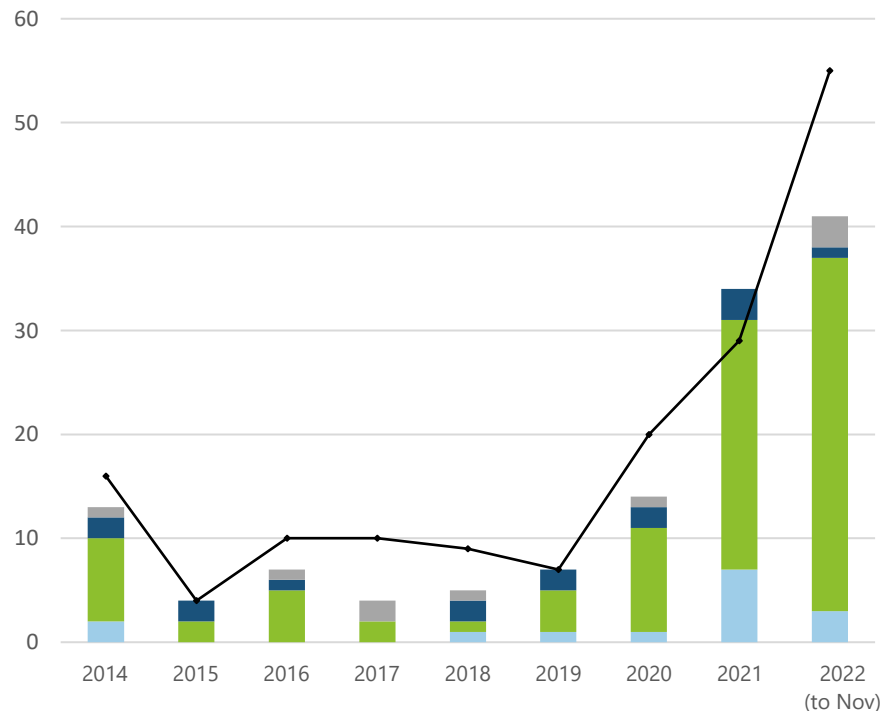
Table 2-3: Age Breakdown of the Town of Stewiacke compared to the Province.



2.2 Development Activity

Building Permit records provide evidence of growth patterns that are noticed by residents. As indicated in the census, the population has grown significantly in the last 5 years and new development has likewise accelerated in 2020/2021, especially including an increasing number of multi-unit dwelling. Table 2-4 provides an overview of new builds.

Table 2-4: Number of New Builds and New Residential Units in Stewiacke (Source: Town Building Records)



— New Multi-Unit Dwelling Builds	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	3
— New Mini/Mobile Homes	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	3	1
— New Detached House/Duplex Builds	8	2	5	2	1	4	10	24	34
— New Commercial Builds	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	7	3
— Total New Residential Units	16	4	10	10	9	7	20	29	55

The growth in development has matched market needs for lifestyle and affordability of a small-town living, with Stewiacke primely located near jobs at the airport, in HRM and in other nearby communities. Stewiacke also offers a good quality of life that is supported by access to recreation spaces and programming, as well as access nature. Much of the new development has occurred as townhouses and small apartment buildings, such as on Kel Ry Drive and in the heart of the historic downtown. Additional single family and duplex development has also occurred at various locations near the Downtown area.



Figure 2-3: Photos of recent development in Stewiacke (December 2022): (left to right) Kel Ry Drive, Main Street E, and Stewiacke River Crossing (Perry Crescent/Ridge Avenue)

Stewiacke River Crossing (Perry Lake Developments) is a development that began in 2007, but which has recently accelerated in its initial phases of construction. The proposal (see Figure 2-4) encompasses 120 acres of phased development. Initial phases have included several houses, commercial space (Robin’s Donuts/NSLC) and industrial spaces.

While the number of destinations has increased at Stewiacke River Crossing, the historic core of the Downtown experienced a reduction in the number of key destinations. Construction of a new Foodland grocery store is underway at Stewiacke River Crossing, with the planned move of the Foodland from Downtown Stewiacke to the new site is in December 2023. This was preceded in the mid-2010s with the replacement of the convenience store and restaurant on the North side of Main Street East by multi-unit dwellings.



Figure 2-4: Stewiacke River Crossing Development Plan (Source: Stewiacke River Crossing Website by Perry Lake Developments; Accessed January 2023)

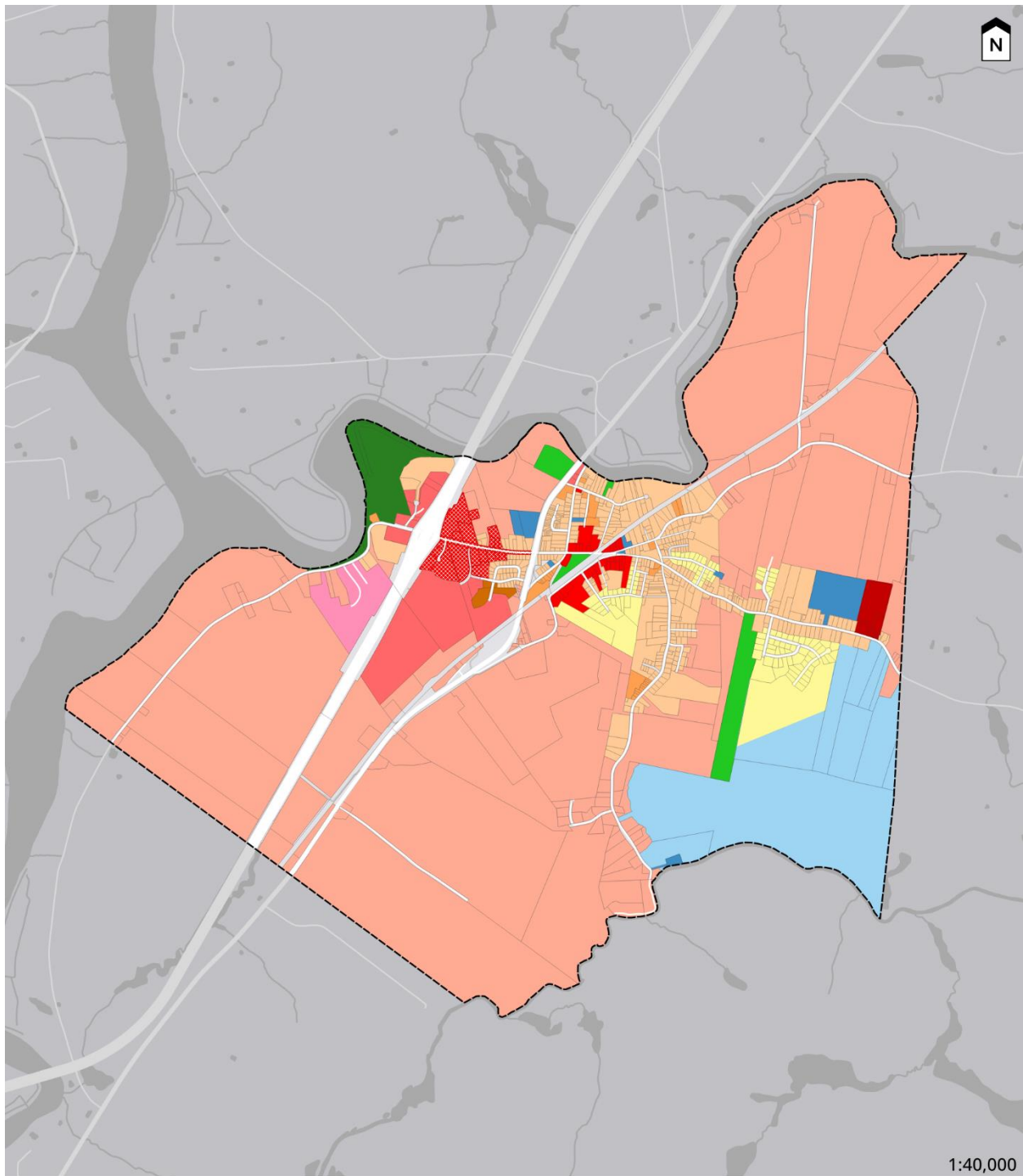
2.3 Existing Land Use

A large portion of Stewiacke is rural, with the built-up area covering no more than 20% of the Town's total area. Existing development is concentrated along Main Street and Kitchener Street, extending south along St. Andrews Street. Residential lots are generally large, with several large farming properties once dedicated to dairy operations. Over half of the undeveloped area is wooded.

As illustrated in Figure 2-5, the dominating land use is residential, with residential neighbourhoods spread throughout northern portion of Town. These neighbourhoods are composed primarily of single-unit dwellings with a mix of two-unit and three-unit residential development. While several mini homes are dispersed throughout the Town, mini/mobile home development is currently restricted to the area west of Highway 102. Existing mini homes east of Highway 102 are permitted as non-conforming use until such time the lot is redeveloped. Commercial areas are mainly located along Highway 102 at Mastodon Ridge and within the historic downtown area at the junction of Main Street East and the CN Rail line. Parks and institutional uses such as the school and Town Hall are dispersed throughout the Town.

Most of the Town's dairy and farming operations have closed, leaving very large parcels of land with a rural residential zoning, or highway commercial zoning. These clear open areas are of interest for future residential development.

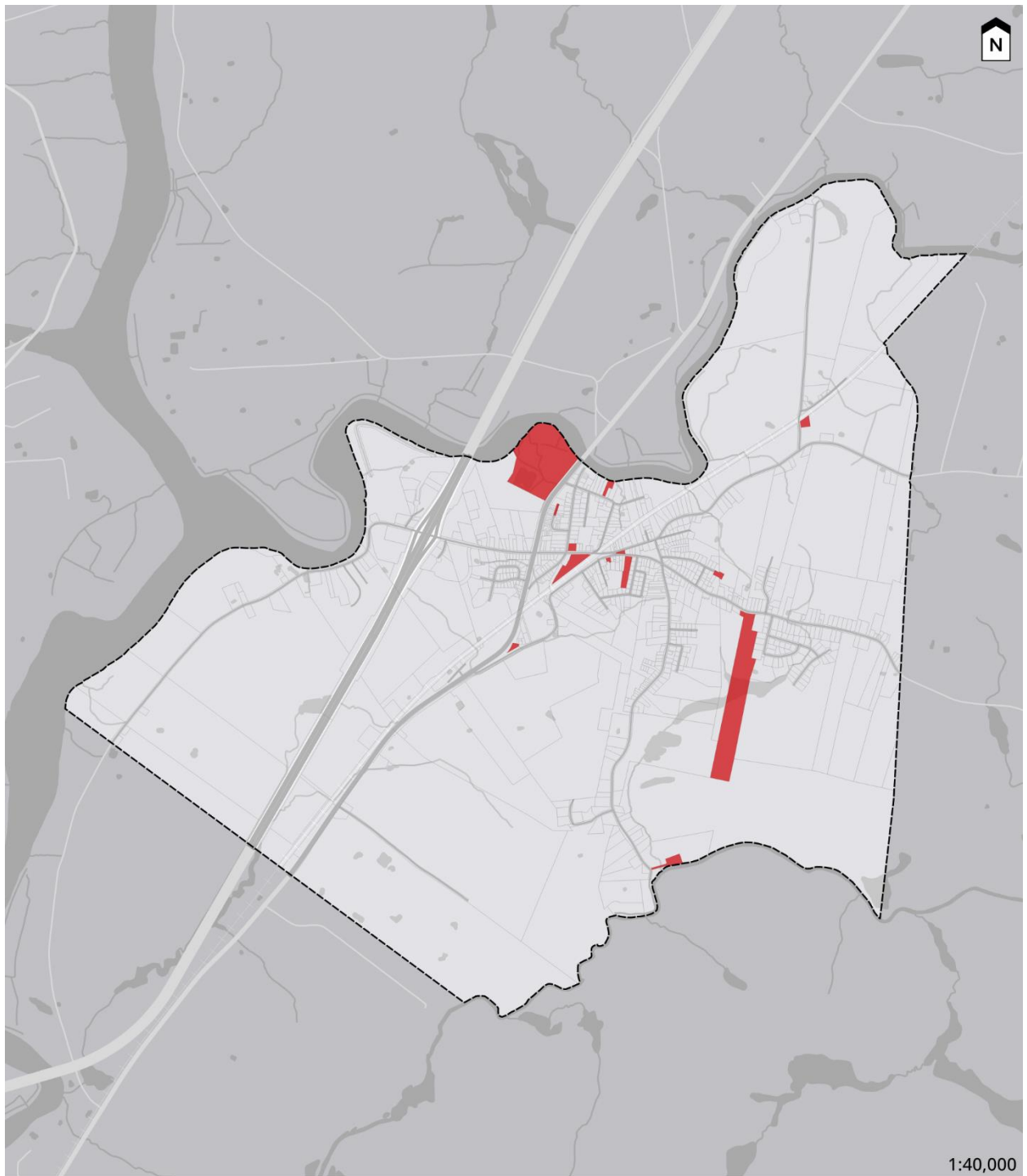
A review of property ownership revealed several public-sector holdings held by the Town (see Figure 2-6). Scattered throughout the Town, most of these properties are occupied by institutional uses, parks, and municipal water and wastewater services. The remaining properties are zoned for commercial or residential use.



Land Use Zoning

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Single Unit Residential |  Downtown Commercial |  Institutional |
|  General Residential |  Highway Commercial |  Park |
|  Multiple Residential Medium |  Special Commercial |  Conservation |
|  Multiple Residential High |  Highway Commercial Architectural Control |  Protective Water Supply |
|  Rural Residential | | |
|  Mini Home Park | | |

Figure 2-5: Current Land Use Zoning



Town Owned Land

 Town Owned Lot

Figure 2-6: Town-Owned Properties

2.4 Planning Framework

Municipal Planning Strategy (2009)

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) contains a vision statement for the municipality, policies around growth and development, and an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. The MPS anticipated growth to occur in Stewiacke, including incorporation of the Stewiacke River Crossing development. It included a 20-year vision, in which Stewiacke will become a community where:

- ▶ Businesses are successful and growth is strategically located;
- ▶ Economic and other development is encouraged to support a sustainable tax rate;
- ▶ The local growing and selling of food is encouraged;
- ▶ The downtown is a pedestrian oriented commercial environment;
- ▶ The rural areas are valued and supported;
- ▶ Visitors are welcome;
- ▶ The environment is healthy for everyone;
- ▶ Energy conservation is commonly practiced;
- ▶ Active transportation is encouraged;
- ▶ Social activities are encouraged;
- ▶ Public transportation is available;
- ▶ Recreational opportunities are available to all age groups;
- ▶ A variety of housing choices is available; and
- ▶ Residents take pride and participate in their community.

The Vision Statement remains relevant today, however additional community engagement should be pursued in the near future to update the MPS. Principles and proposals contained in this document may inform the future MPS review.

Accessibility Action Plan: For the Towns of Stewiacke and Truro, Colchester County, and Villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche (2022)

The Accessibility Plan contains a number of recommendations pertinent to the growth of Stewiacke based on observation and community feedback. It notes the following observations in Stewiacke:

- ▶ In the Downtown, sidewalks are in some cases in poor condition and snow removal could be improved;
- ▶ There are locations where there is no curb or shoulder to the road, which can be a hazard for some;
- ▶ There is a lack of clear marking for parking areas along the street, and this means that vehicles park in areas causing safety issues (e.g. blocking visibility of crosswalks);
- ▶ There is an opportunity to improve lighting for pedestrian pathways sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails, with many dark, unsafe areas observed in Stewiacke.
- ▶ Crosswalks and sidewalks do not connect essential areas to the town (for example there is no sidewalk to Stewiacke Recreation Centre and Park.)
- ▶ There is no sidewalk to Stewiacke Rec Centre and Rec Area.

- ▶ Some upgrades are suggested for the Stewiacke Community Centre, including automatic door openers, anti-slip treatments to the deck, signage improvements.

The report included positive notes for Stewiacke, praising the access to a number of free and paid recreation programs. The Town of Stewiacke is also noted for great wayfinding for their numerous trails and for important town amenities and destinations with town maps available. Signage provides essential information like route length and quality, as well as accessibility features.

Walk and Wheel: Pedestrian Infrastructure Analysis Report for Town of Stewiacke (PEACH Research Unit, 2022)

In November 2021, Dalhousie University's Planning for Equity, Accessibility, and Community Health (PEACH) Research Unit undertook a walkability audit to assess the quality of pedestrian infrastructure along Main Street. The study area of the audit, shown in Figure 1-1, stretches from Mastodon Ridge in the west through the downtown core to Winding River Consolidated School in the east. The walkability audit culminated in the Walk and Wheel Pedestrian Infrastructure Analysis Report which provides recommendations for interventions to improve walkability, accessibility, and pedestrian safety along Main Street.

The report included recommendations specific to individual street segments as well as a set of broad recommendations covering the entirety of the study area. Key recommendations to improve walkability along Main Street include:

- ▶ Establish a snow clearance by-law;
- ▶ Establish speed limits no greater than 30km/h in heavily pedestrianized areas, and no more than 50km/h elsewhere;
- ▶ Install speed limit and slow down signage and driver feedback signals at key locations;
- ▶ Establish a sidewalk management system;
- ▶ Initiate a traffic study to investigate the need for intervention at Asquith Street/Main Street East and Main Street East/Kitchener Street/George Street;
- ▶ Initiate a study to investigate future land use, implications on pedestrian movement, and infrastructure requirements;
- ▶ Regular maintenance of vegetation to avoid obstruction of sidewalks; and
- ▶ Establish a standard minimum width of 3m for shared pathways/multi-use paths.

3 VISION

To validate and expand upon the goals and Vision of current planning documents, the Study included a community engagement program, undertaken between December 2022 and February 2023 (Table 3-1). Throughout the engagement period, the team shared information on the project with the public, explored residents' hopes and concerns for growth, and sought feedback on emerging directions for accommodating growth.

Infrastructure capacity and planning for Downtown were reoccurring topics of interest in these discussions.

Table 3-1: Summary of Engagement Activities

Event	Date	Interactions
Breakfast with Santa	Dec 3, 2022	80
Town Council and Planning Advisory Workshop	Dec 8, 2022	12
Community Survey	Jan 16 - Feb 6, 2023	110
Open House	Feb 2, 2023	28
Stakeholder Interviews	Dec 2022 - Jan 2023	3
TOTAL		233

3.1 Breakfast with Santa

On December 3, 2022, the consultant team with Staff conducted a pop-up session at the Legion's Breakfast with Santa event. Approximately 80 residents participated; the team introduced them to the Study and asked the following questions:

- ▶ Where do you live? What are your 3 favourite places?
- ▶ What makes Stewiacke a great place to live?
- ▶ What would improve mobility in Stewiacke?
- ▶ What kinds of housing choices would you like to see in the future?
- ▶ What is your key hope or goal when it comes to population growth?
- ▶ What is your key fear or issue when it comes to population growth?

Table 3-2 contains a summary of what we heard.

Table 3-2: Summary of Ideas from Breakfast with Santa

What makes Stewiacke a great place to live?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Small town feel ▶ Recreation ▶ Quiet but still close to the city ▶ Greenery and upkeep
What are your hopes when it comes to growth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased or improved recreation options and facilities ▶ Youth activities ▶ More retail choices and professional services in Town
What are your fears when it comes to growth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Growing too fast (losing small-town feel, increased traffic) ▶ Infrastructure and school capacity ▶ Services moving away from Downtown ▶ Nature and habitat loss
What housing choices would you like to see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Single family homes ▶ Accessible (barrier-free) units and seniors housing ▶ Affordable housing
What would improve mobility (getting around) in Stewiacke?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Improve accessibility & walkability - especially at the Downtown Centre, to the Rec Centre, and at the Hwy 2/Main St intersection ▶ Parking and traffic concerns ▶ Carpooling, taxi and future transit would help

The Breakfast with Santa event is illustrated on Figure 3-1.



Figure 3-1: Photos from Breakfast with Santa Engagement Event

Figure 3-2 illustrates participants' favourite destinations (red dots) and place of residence (green dots). Several clusters are evident around Town Hall, Dennis Park, the Community Centre, Recreation Grounds, and Mastodon Ridge.

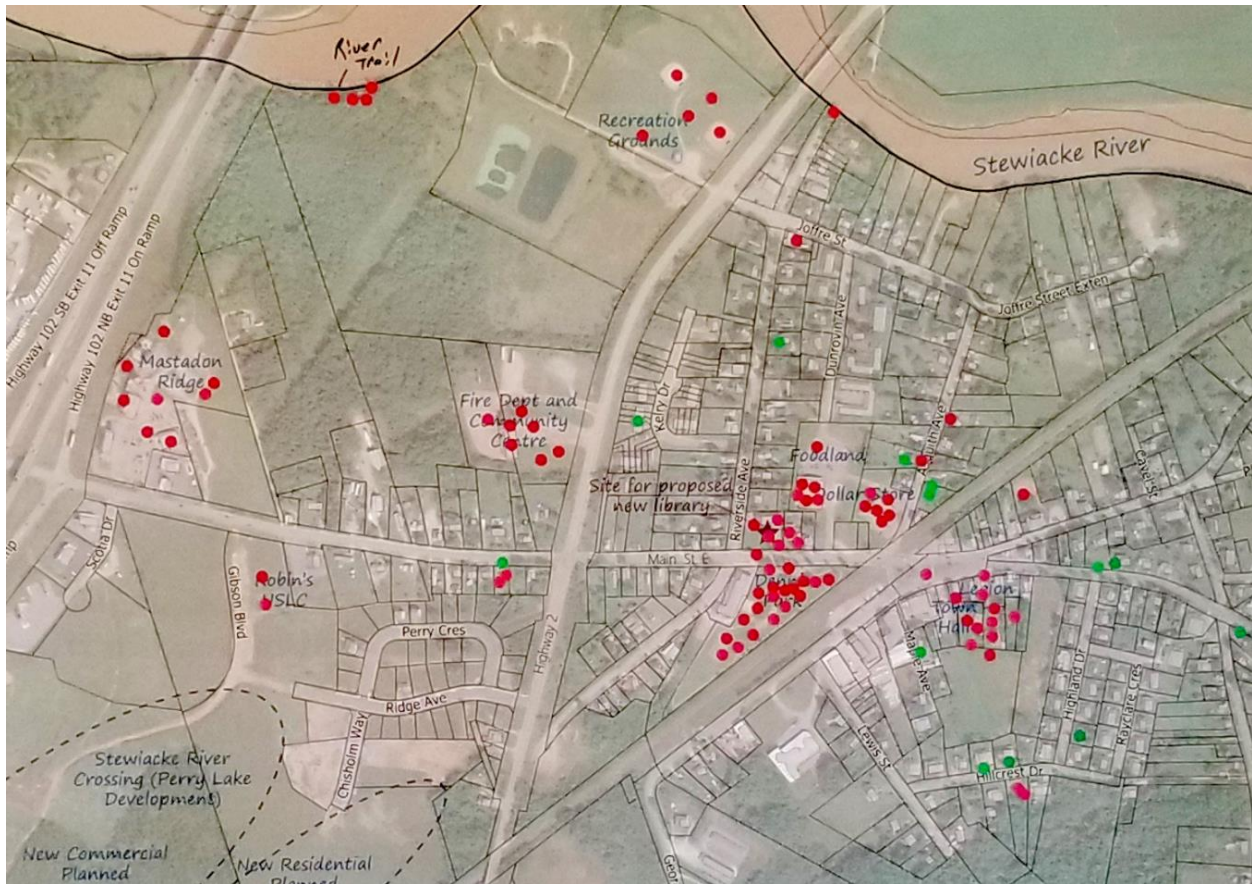


Figure 3-2: Key Destinations in the Town of Stewiacke

3.2 Community Survey

A Community Survey was also distributed, between January 16 and February 6, 2023. The survey was available in print and online and was advertised on the Town’s website, newsletter, Facebook and at the February 2 Open House.

This survey focused on “Emerging Directions” for improving Stewiacke’s Downtown and quality of life as it grows. The purpose of the survey was to collect feedback from residents on whether the project was moving in the right direction and if there is anything that we missed. The Emerging Directions presented in the survey articulated many of the ideas collected through the engagement and shown in the initial mapping exercise:

Topic 1: Population growth and shifting demographics.

- ▶ Continue to engage community members on recreation needs, ensuring a strong sense of community as the Town grows and changes. Ensure recreation facilities and programming grows to serve the changing community.
- ▶ Work with the province, non-profits, and the development community to support a range of housing options, including affordable housing and accessible units.

Topic 2: Walking, accessibility, and cycling.

- ▶ Pursue the findings and recommendations of the Accessibility Action Plan and Walk and Wheel Pedestrian Analysis. (These plans contain in-depth suggestions and analyses for walking and accessibility improvements.)
- ▶ Work with the Province to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety at the Highway 2 and Main Street intersection, and develop a walking/cycling trail along Highway 2.
- ▶ Consider a redesign for roadways at the Historic Downtown that simplifies vehicle and pedestrian movements, provides more usable green space and incorporates building accessibility improvements and murals/placemaking.

Topic 3: A Changing Downtown, Main Street, and “Uptown”.

- ▶ When updating the Municipal Planning Strategy, consider ways to promote residential densification in locations that are close to services in the Downtown and Uptown cores so that more people can walk to destinations, and so there is less traffic impact.
- ▶ Consider ways to promote commercial uses (including professional services) in new development near the historic Downtown and on Main Street. In the review of planning documents, there is the option to consider Development Agreements as a method to allow for mixed-use buildings that contain both commercial uses and residential dwellings.
- ▶ Engage community members on a vision for Main Street, which may include permitting commercial uses between Uptown and Downtown.

3.2.1 Survey Results

A total of 110 surveys were completed with 60% of respondents reporting that they lived in Stewiacke. An additional 36% respondents reported to live within a 10-minute drive of Stewiacke. The majority of respondents were long-time Stewiacke residents (51% had lived in the Stewiacke area for over 16 years) though there was strong representation from relatively new residents (24% of respondents had lived in the Stewiacke area for less than 5 years). The survey was largely completed by respondents in the 30-44 and 45-60 age cohorts (34% and 40%, respectively), with the 15-29 and 65+ age cohorts each accounting for 13% of respondents.

We asked respondents on a scale of 1 to 10 whether they agreed that we had correctly identified the issues and emerging directions. The responses are shown on Figure 3-3. Respondents tended to agree, especially under the *Topic 2: Walking, Accessibility and Cycling*. A large proportion of people were neutral on the topics of *Population growth and shifting demographics* and *A changing Downtown, Main Street and Uptown*.

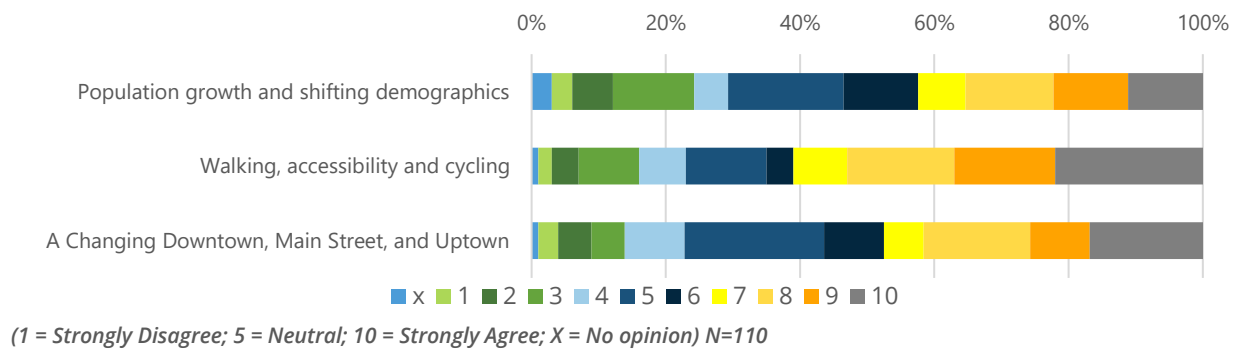


Figure 3-3: Feedback on Emerging Directions – Did we get it right?

In presenting the Emerging Directions, we also asked respondents if there was anything we should explore more deeply. Table 3-3 summarizes common themes in the feedback. Most comments reinforced and expanded upon the Emerging Directions.

Notably, respondents stressed the need to consider Stewiacke’s infrastructure capacity (including water, wastewater, fire station and school).

Respondents were interested in the prospect of a new library. Twelve comments expressed excitement, with comments on what services or elements the library could include such as a café, farmers market, meeting rooms, transit, and tool lending. One neutral comment was received relating to the potential library, noting the need for more analysis on the demand for a new library before going ahead. Another comment considered the library a good idea, but thought that it should be more modest in size than the current proposal.

Table 3-3: Common themes from open ended feedback on Emerging Directions

Theme 1	Feedback
Population growth and shifting demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There is a sense that many people in Stewiacke are lower income and housing should be affordable for them. Affordability should be defined. ▶ Allow smaller dwelling types (e.g. modular and mini-homes, apartments, and one level living) to support affordability for a range of incomes, abilities and ages. Enable seniors to age-in-place and newcomers to purchase homes. ▶ Continue informing and engaging the community in planning and development topics. ▶ Interest in development controls (e.g. infrastructure, landscaping, connection to existing infrastructure) to protect and reinforce Stewiacke’s existing built form, and ensure quality development and maintenance. ▶ Need to consider Stewiacke’s infrastructure capacity when planning for growth. Prominent perception that the current infrastructure cannot accommodate growth.

- ▶ Need for childcare options and additional medical services in Town.

Theme 2

Walking,
accessibility, and
cycling

- ▶ Existing sidewalks and crosswalks feel unsafe and are poorly maintained. Improve visibility/lighting and clearly define existing sidewalks (especially in the historic Downtown) to accessible standards before expanding the network. Have lighting at all crosswalks and prioritize pedestrian safety when crossing the Main St and Hwy 2 intersection. Work with the province to improve the intersection.
- ▶ Need for accessible transit connecting residential and commercial areas in Town and connecting the Town to Halifax and Truro.
- ▶ Plan to accommodate potential future commuter rail.
- ▶ Slow vehicles down coming into Town while maintaining predictable traffic flow.
- ▶ Consider the impact of allowing additional commercial access points along Main St.
- ▶ Have varied recreation opportunities for all ages (including middle-aged adults). Bring residents new and old together to build community.
- ▶ Expand trail network and consider bike trails.

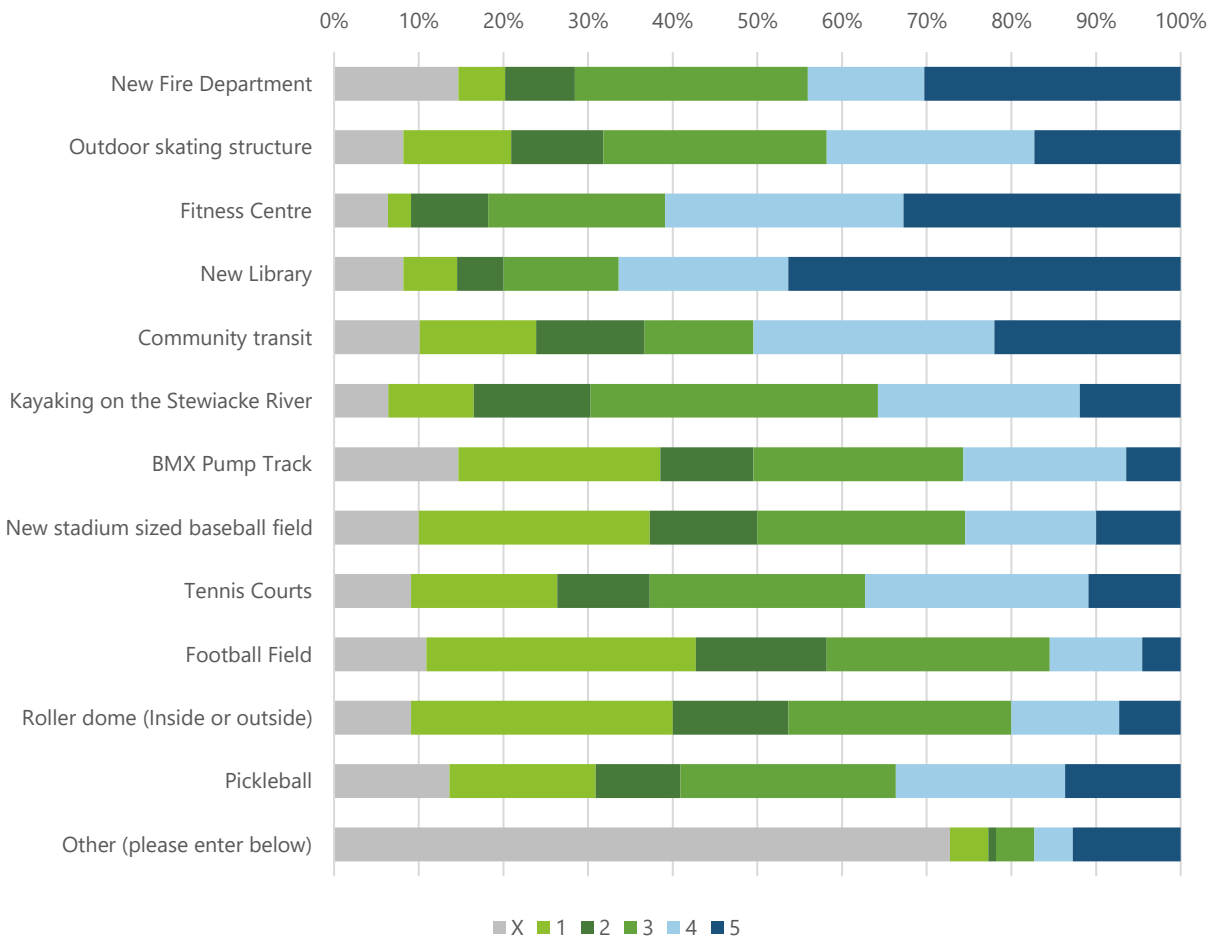
Theme 3

A Changing Downtown, Main Street, and "Uptown"

- ▶ Desire for historic downtown to become a local draw for residents and visitors with local food, gathering spaces and local presence. Downtown should be positioned differently than Uptown with daily goods and services for nearby residents.
- ▶ Enable residents to live, work and play Downtown. Support having mixed-use development Downtown with commercial on the ground floor and residential above. Development should reflect small town feel of Stewiacke.
- ▶ Loss of the bank/ATM and Foodland from Downtown has a negative impact on residents who used to be able to walk to these services.
- ▶ Downtown centre is difficult to navigate as a pedestrian or vehicle user. The status quo is not working well. Define and protect spaces for pedestrians and vehicles.
- ▶ Reinforce the greenspace at Stewiacke's core, but consider parking options too.
- ▶ Define parking spaces and consider how larger vehicles navigate and park Downtown.
- ▶ Consider the needs of businesses (e.g., delivery of goods) when redesigning Downtown.
- ▶ Excitement for a new library and what it could contain, but some concerns about its cost and the ability for the Town to pay for it.

Additionally, we asked survey respondents what amenities they believed were most important for Stewiacke to consider when planning for future community growth (Figure 3-4). Top ranking investments (totalling scoring of 4s and 5s) included the new library (66%), a new fitness centre (61%), investment in community transit (50%), a new fire department (43%).

When asked what other facilities should be considered, suggestions included arts spaces, sports facilities, walking track, activities for teens, and access to nature.



(1 = Not Very Important; 3 = Neutral; 5 = Very Important; X = No opinion) N=110

Figure 3-4: Feedback on Recreation Amenities - When thinking about future community growth, which amenities do you think are the most important for Stewiacke to consider?

3.3 Stakeholder Engagement

The consultant team held interviews with active local developers to better understand their market-driven design goals and aspirations for working with the Town. These discussions related to the permitting process, the future opportunities for supporting mixed-use development (through Development Agreement processes as an option), affordable housing, the future of Main Street, and taxation levels.

3.4 Written Submissions

A submission was received from the Rising Tides Arts Society advocating for an arts and culture hub and lens on recreation, rather than one that is wholly sport or fitness related. The submission notes that arts, performance and cultural spaces are needed for interaction of all ages and demographics, including teens, kids and seniors. Arts programming can also contribute an economic benefit and promote visitor attraction.

3.5 Downtown Vision

The comments and input pertaining to the historic Stewiacke Centre area were summarized in a programme for a formalized Downtown (Figure 3-5), thematically linked to the newer “Uptown” development around Mastodon Ridge.

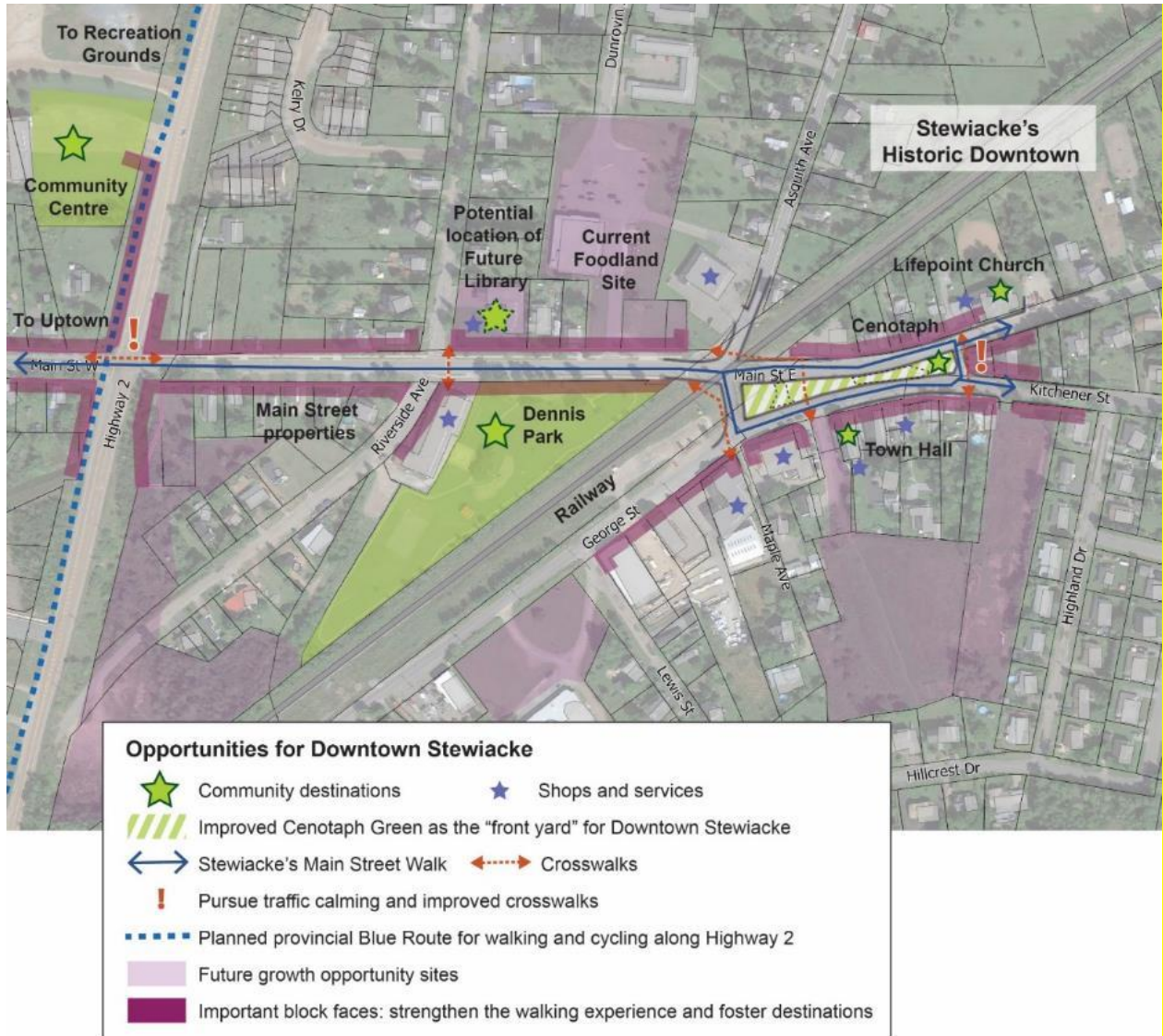


Figure 3-5: Destination, Issues, and Opportunities in the Historic Downtown

4 GROWTH TRENDS

Overall, between 2006 and 2021, the population of Stewiacke has grown by an average rate of 0.65% per year. Reflecting historical growth trends and the increased rate of growth reported in 2021, three growth scenarios, as summarized in Table 4-1, were prepared for this assessment. The population projection created for Stewiacke in Figure 4-1, is based on the total population reported during the 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021 census periods.

Table 4-1: Population Projection Growth Scenarios

Growth Scenario	Growth Rate	Projected Population 2031	Projected Population 2041
Status Quo Growth	0.65%	1,663	1,757
Historical High Growth	2.61%	1,980	2,390
Anticipated High Growth	10%	3,140	4,710

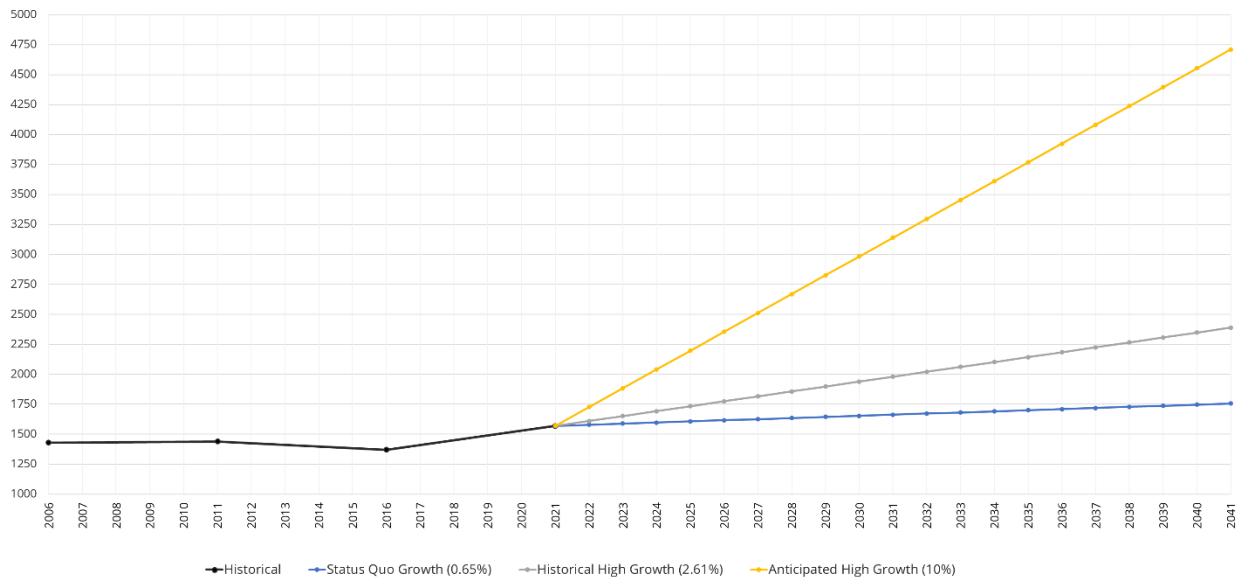


Figure 4-1: Population Growth Projection

The status quo scenario was forecasted with a growth rate of 0.65% per annum, the Town’s average annual growth rate from 2006 to 2021. This scenario estimates that by 2031 the Town’s population could grow to 1,663 residents, and by 2041 to 1,757 residents.

The historical high growth scenario is based on the higher population growth the Town experienced in the 2016 to 2021 period. Considering a growth rate of 2.61% per annum, the population could thus reach close to 1,980 residents by 2031 and 2,390 residents by 2041.

Considering the accelerated uptake in development permits, the Town anticipates the possibility of a still higher growth rate, on the order of 10% per annum. This would result in a doubling of the population to 3,140 residents by 2031. Extending the same growth rate to 2041 would result in a population of 4,710 residents.

Compared to the other Towns of Nova Scotia, this higher growth would place Stewiacke closer to Port Hawkesbury or Pictou in population size, yet just below Shelburne in terms of population density. Even when reducing the Town’s extensive forest coverage and considering only the cleared and built-up areas, densities would still be lower than Stellarton. Considering the geographic size of Stewiacke and its location advantage, the Town would still have the potential to grow closer to Kentville’s size and overall density.

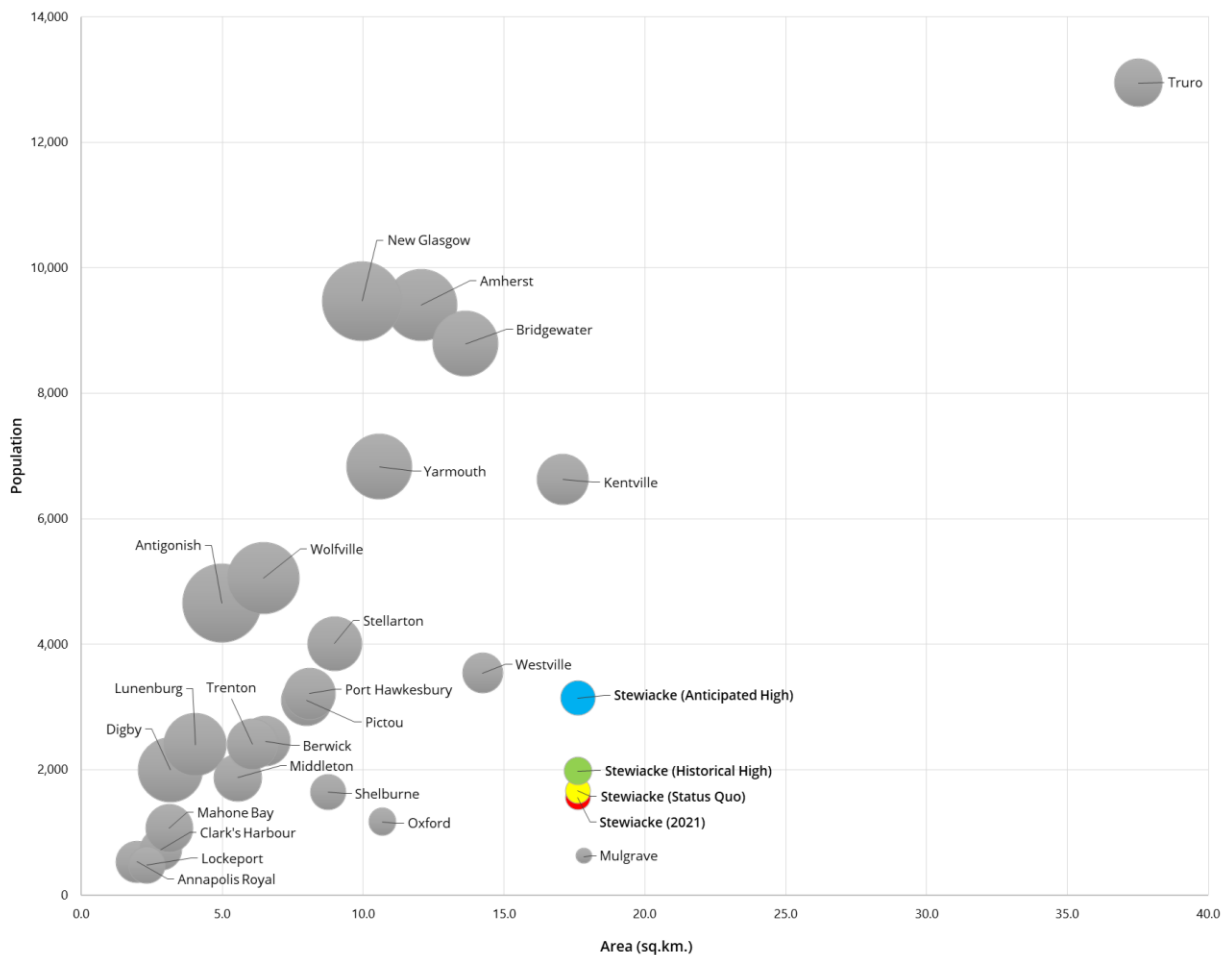


Figure 4-2: 2031 Population Density Comparison – 2021 Nova Scotia Municipalities

5 INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

A key concern about accelerated growth is its impacts on existing servicing, and the ability of the current water and wastewater infrastructure to accommodate higher demands. This study therefore included a review of the water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure to understand the condition of treatment plants, their capacities, and the requirements that would be imposed by continued growth.

5.1 Water Servicing

A high-level assessment is presented of the Town's existing drinking water supply, treatment and distribution system. Under separate cover, CBCL has also recently completed a System Assessment Report, conforming with the requirements of the Town's Approval to Operate for the water treatment plant (WTP), issued by Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change (NSECC).

The current source water supply is the St. Andrews River. An infiltration gallery with a perforated pipe runs across the width of the river at the WTP location, drawing water from the riverbed into the facility. The water quality and flow in the river are highly variable, and susceptible to weather and climatic factors resulting in difficulties with operating the treatment plant to acceptable standards and/or providing adequate hydraulic capacity during these times. These issues can be triggered by drought conditions and intense storm events, but especially by a combination of both – factors which may generally become more prevalent or exacerbated in the future due to effects of climate change.

The current water treatment system has served the Town since 1996, when it was installed as a demonstration/pilot plant in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment – Environmental Industries Technology Division (currently Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change). This system replaced an existing raw water pump station, and has been in operation substantially unchanged since this time with the exception of a modern supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system which enables the Town to closely track the hydraulic and water quality performance of the system. The core treatment process consists of coagulation, dissolved air flotation, rapid gravity filtration and chlorination. The system is illustrated on Figure 5-1 and Figure 5-2.



Figure 5-1: Current Water Treatment Plant on St. Andrews Street.

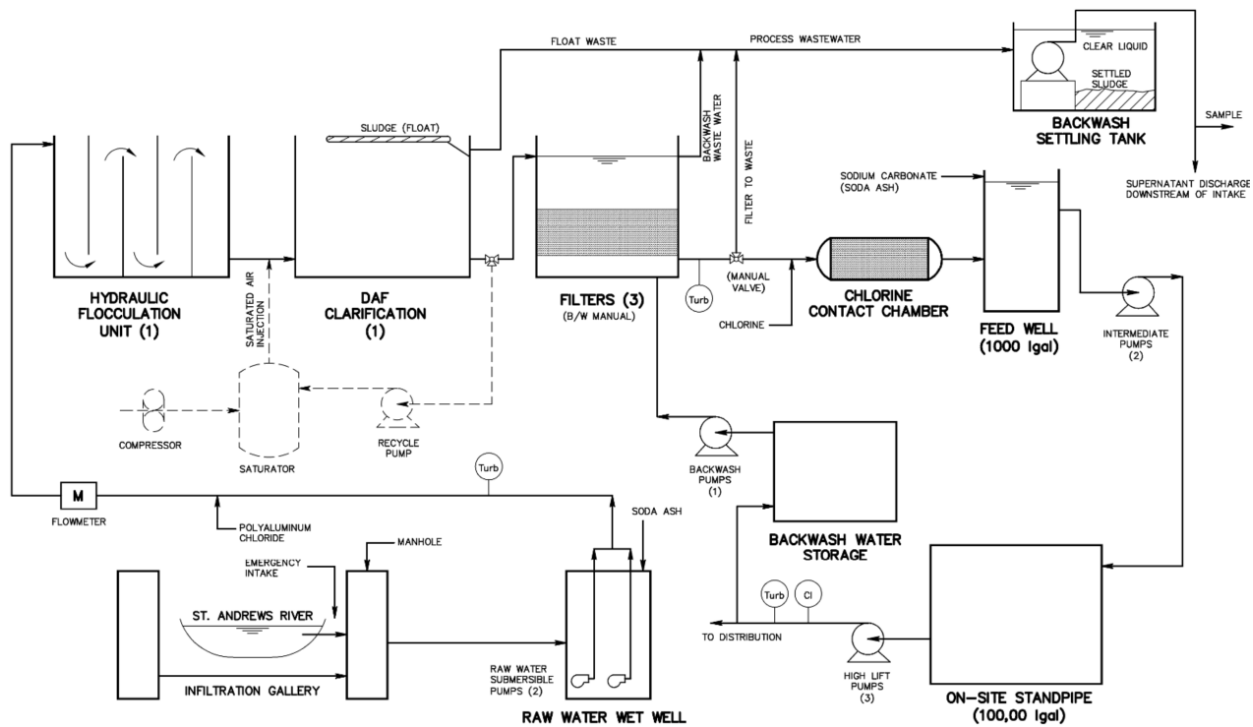


Figure 5-2: Stewiacke Water Treatment Plant Process Flow Diagram

5.1.1 Treatment and Storage Capacity

The St. Andrews River is without significant headwater impoundment and is fed from many small tributaries. This type of water is highly variable in terms of flow and quality. Low flow events occur regularly, causing outstanding regulatory issues for water withdrawal in the context of Ecological Maintenance Flow (EMF) requirements. A more drastic drought condition could potentially reduce the river flow to a point where demand from the Town exceeds the full flow in the river. Currently, when the river flow is below 0.245 m³/s, water conservation and contingency measures required by NSECC are triggered. The actual river flow vs. EMF requirement for the past 5 years is illustrated below in Figure 5-3,

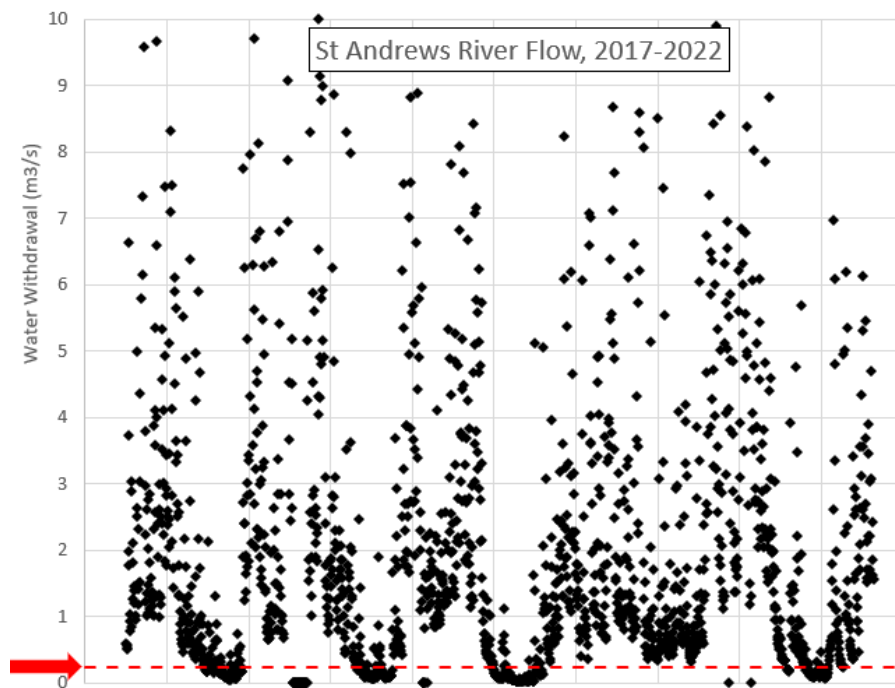


Figure 5-3: Low Flow Events Triggering Ecological Maintenance Flow Requirements

At the opposite extreme, capacity issues may be caused by higher than typical flows in the river, particularly if occurring suddenly due to extreme rainfall events. The nameplate capacity of the treatment system is close to 2,000,000 L/d, which is approximately 4 times higher than the current average demand. However, the actual capacity at any given time is based on the combined individual filter capacity at the facility. The filter capacity is subject to water quality factors; a disruption of source water quality and/or poor performance of upstream pre-filtration processes (e.g. coagulation, flocculation and clarification) can effectively reduce this nameplate filtration capacity drastically. Based on feedback from operations staff, this scenario has not resulted in a water shortage in the Town to date, but it has caused staff to shut down the facility for several days to allow source water quality to recover to the point where adequate treatment could be achieved. As demand in the system increases from population growth, and the frequency and severity of water quality events increases due to climate factors, a water shortage scenario appears increasingly

likely to occur at some point. A “typical” upset sequence caused by extreme rainfall and sudden high river flows is illustrated below in Figure 5-4, corresponding to the period between September 22 to Oct 1, 2020.

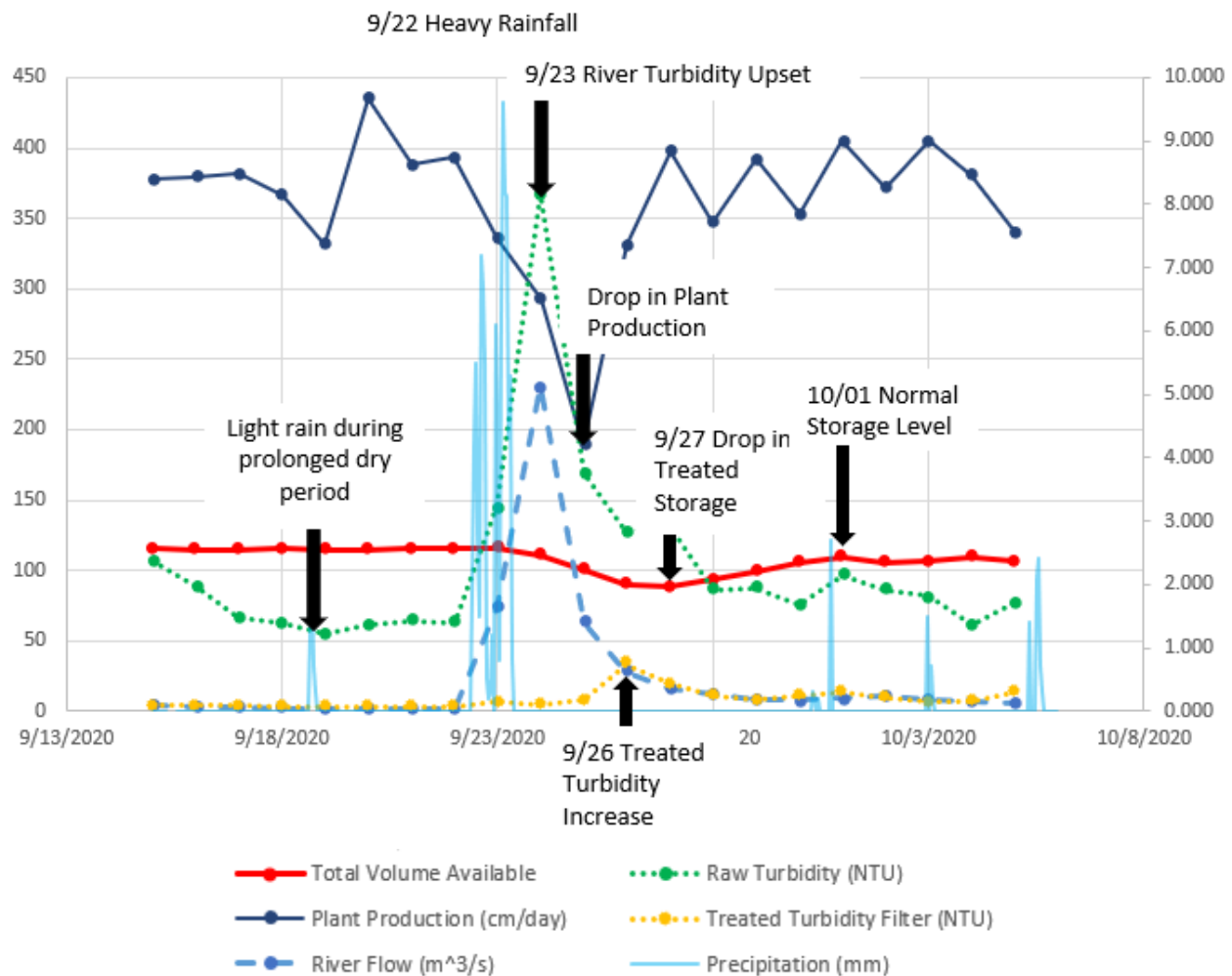


Figure 5-4: Water Quality Upset Event Sequence

During significant upsets, the Town relies on stored water to meet demand. The Town has a water storage capacity equivalent to approximately five days at normal demand, assuming the storage facility is at full capacity at the outset of the event.

5.1.2 Distribution System

The Town's water distribution system extends along the road network to cover much of the built-up area, as illustrated on Figure 5-5.

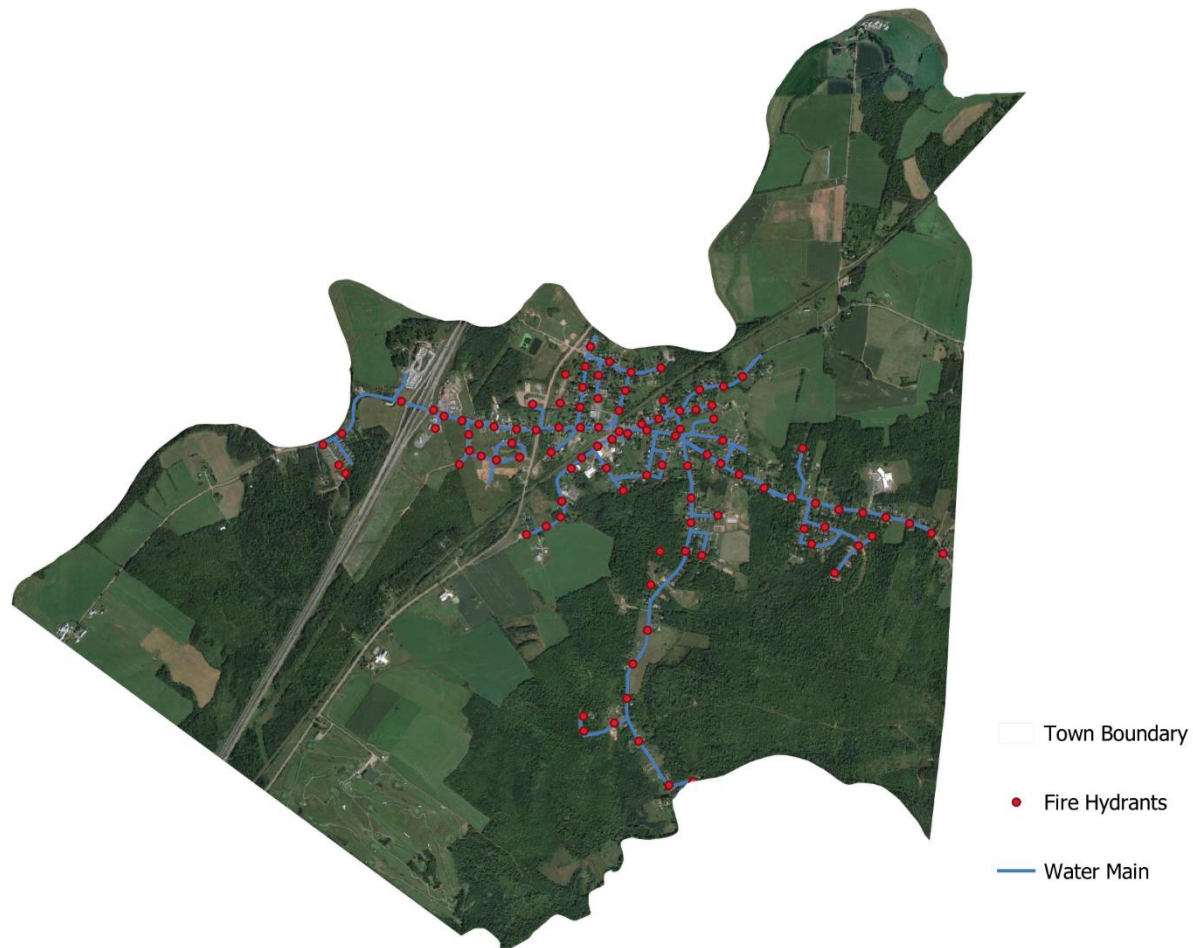


Figure 5-5: Water Distribution System

Review of the Town's asset management reports indicates that most of the distribution water mains have a condition rating of 3, based on their age and material; the majority date to around 1969, and most are PVC. This suggests generally few leaks that might affect the overall stored water volume and pressure in the system.

The condition reports indicate that close to half of the water distribution pipe valves in the system carry a condition rating 5 based on their age, and some cracks on the valve boxes. While a third of the inventory dates from around 1969, they may be in good condition. The rest have been added or replaced in more recent periods, as the system has been extended, and have only minor or moderate deficiencies.

Lastly, over half of the Town's fire hydrants are more than 30 years old, may exhibit damaged paint and rust, and have some more or less significant deficiencies.

5.2 Wastewater Servicing

5.2.1 Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Town's current wastewater treatment plant is located adjacent the Dennis Park Ballfield on Highway 2, across Joffre Street (see Figure 5-6).

It was constructed in 1996. Similar to the water treatment plant, the wastewater treatment plant has been operational for approximately 27 years. The plant's mechanical and electrical equipment has a useful life of 25 to 30 years.

The facility includes a two-cell aerated clay-lined lagoon, with Ultra-Violet disinfection. The treated effluent is discharged to the Stewiacke River. The plant has a nominal capacity of 818 m³/day, equivalent to 216,172 US gallons per day (USgpd).

A capacity assessment was conducted to determine the capacity of the system relative to the Atlantic Canada Wastewater Guidelines Manual. Analysis compared estimated effluent BOD concentration (reaction rate coefficient for winter conditions) against Approval to Operate effluent criteria (20 mg/L).

The lagoon cells (illustrated on Figure 5-7 and Figure 5-8) cover a surface area of approx. 5,066 m² each, at normal liquid level. They have a depth of approximately 3.68 metres, with 4:1 side slope.



Figure 5-6: Stewiacke Wastewater Treatment Plant

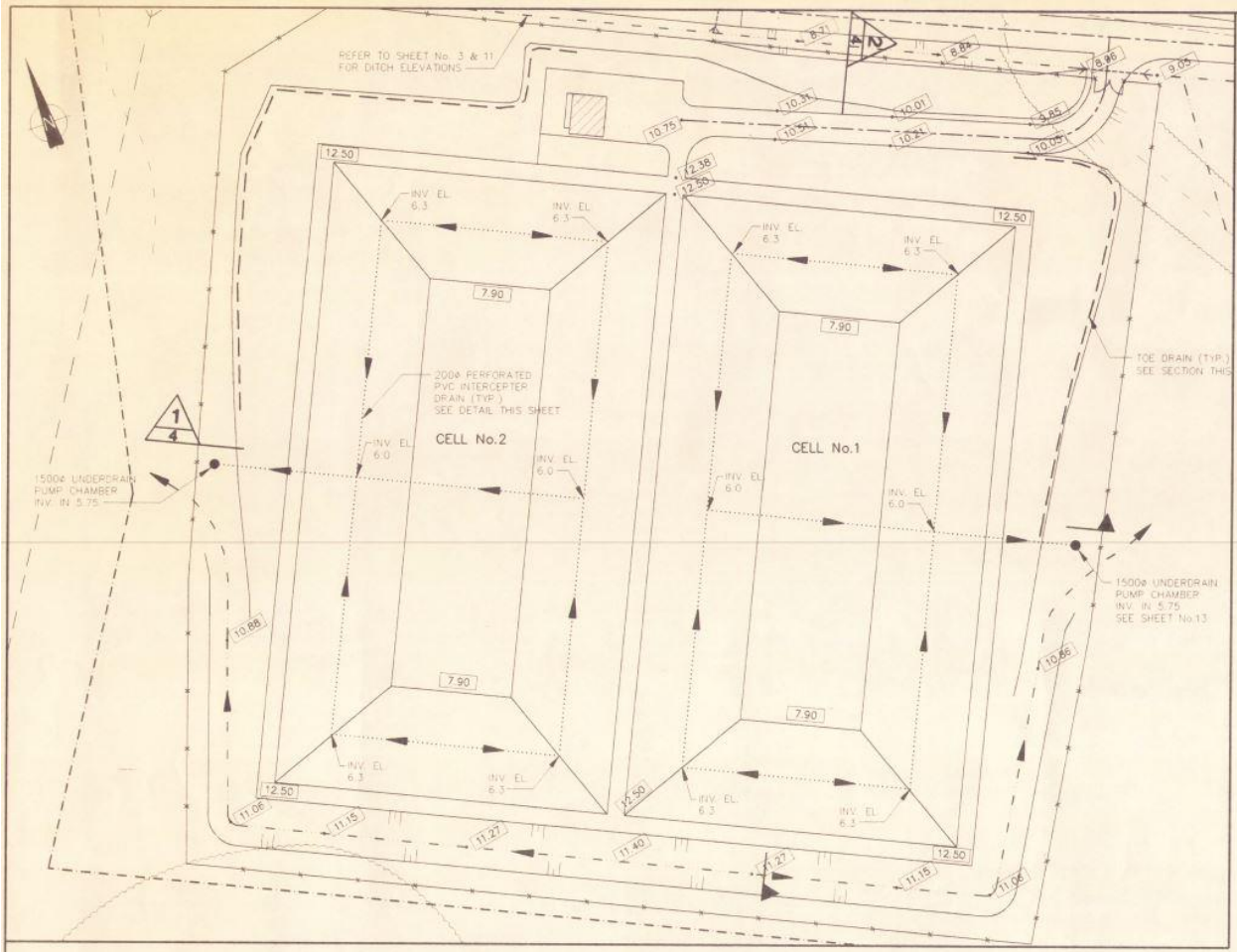


Figure 5-7 Lagoon Plan

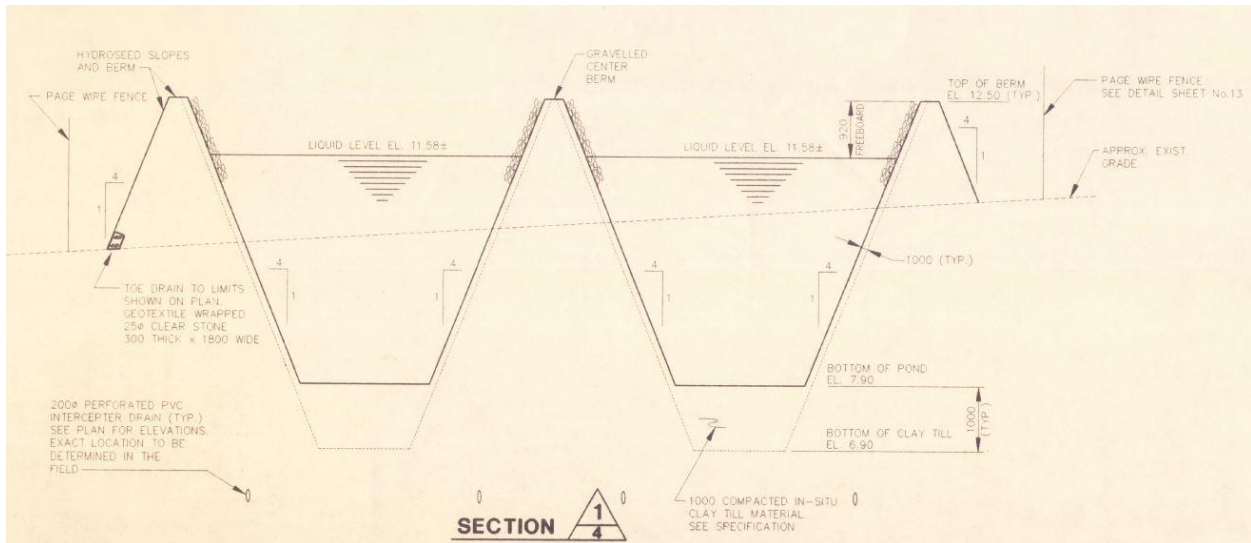


Figure 5-8: Lagoon Section

The two cells have a resulting volume of approximately 11,400 m³ each. This suggests a Hydraulic Retention Time (HRT) of approximately 35 days at average 2022 flows, compared to a nominal design capacity HRT of 28 days.

CBCL examined daily flow data for period from 2020 to 2022. The calculated Average Daily Flow (ADF) was of 605 m³/d (159,746 USgpd); with an assumed service population of 1,500 people, this is equivalent to 0.403m³ of 403L per capita, consistent with typical usage. While this has followed an upward trend over that period, the 88th percentile flows are below the nominal capacity of 818 m³/day (as illustrated on Figure 5-9).

Figure - Daily Flow Rate 2020-2022

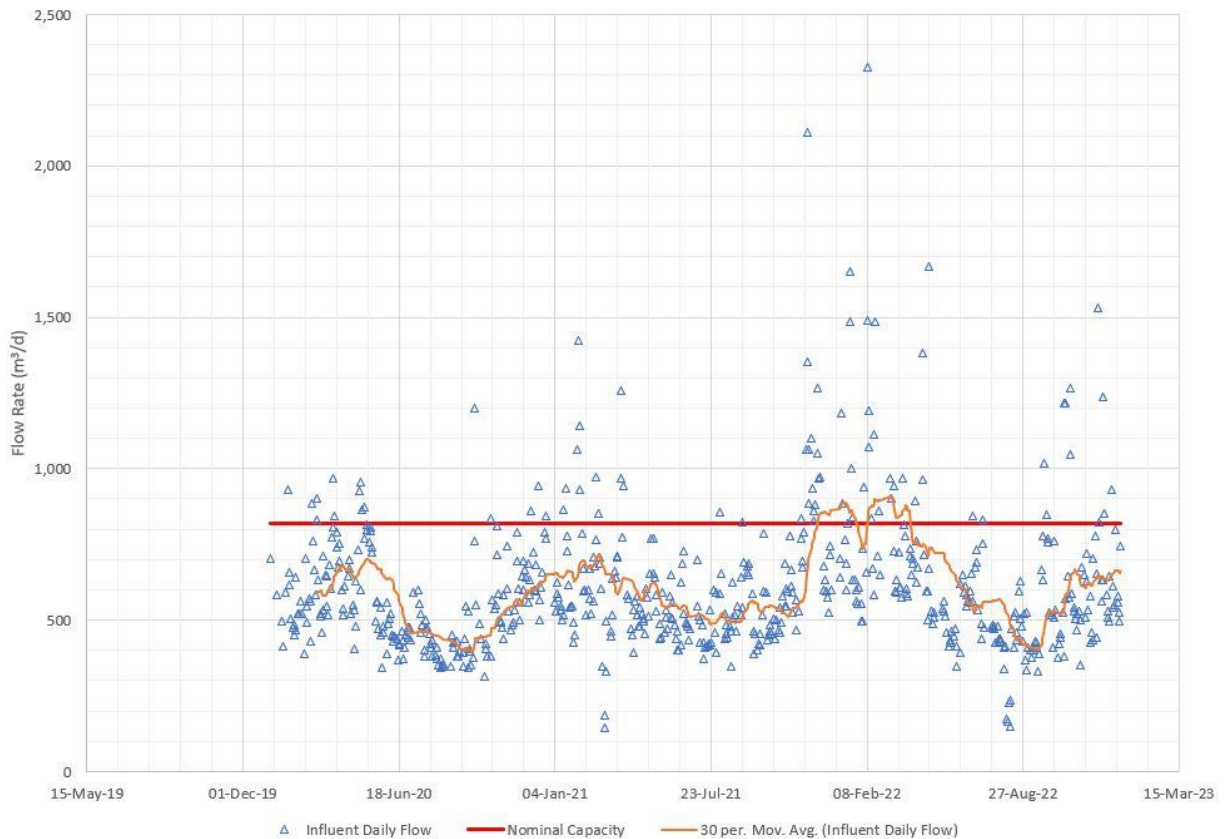


Figure 5-9 Daily Flow Rate

The Peak Daily Flow over that time was of 2,424 m³/d, with the 99th percentile being 1,485 m³/d (392,206 USgpd). This results in a ratio of peak to average flows ranging from 2.1:1 to 3.6:1. It is typical for such systems to exhibit a ratio ranging from 3:1 To 4:1.

The NSE Approval to Operate carries several effluent criteria:

- ▶ Carbonaceous Biological Oxygen Demand (CBOD₅) must be less than 20 mg/L
- ▶ Total Suspended Solids (TSS) must be 20 mg/L
- ▶ E. Coli content below 1,000 CFU/100 mL

The quarterly averages for these thresholds are generally compliant, as illustrated on Figure 5-10 to Figure 5-12. Some exceedances of the thresholds are noted for disinfection. Spikes coincide with colder temperature in winter, when nitrification reaction rates are slower.

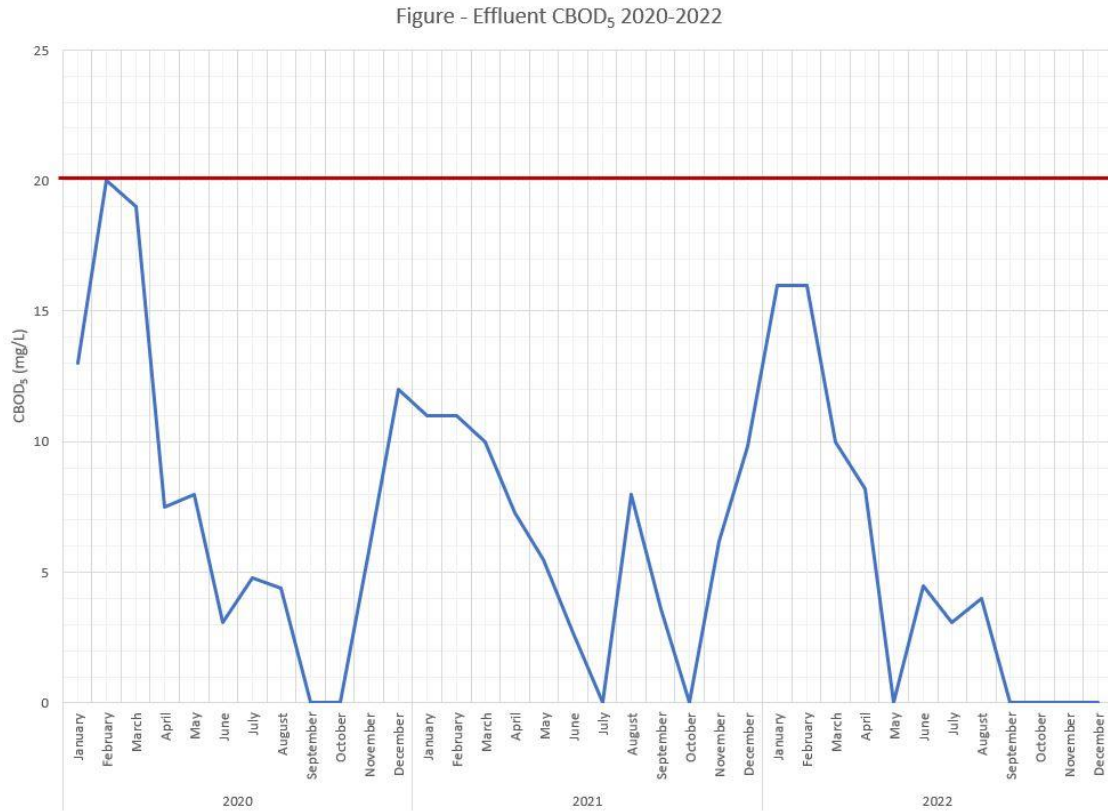


Figure 5-10: Effluent – CBOD

Figure - Effluent TSS 2020-2022

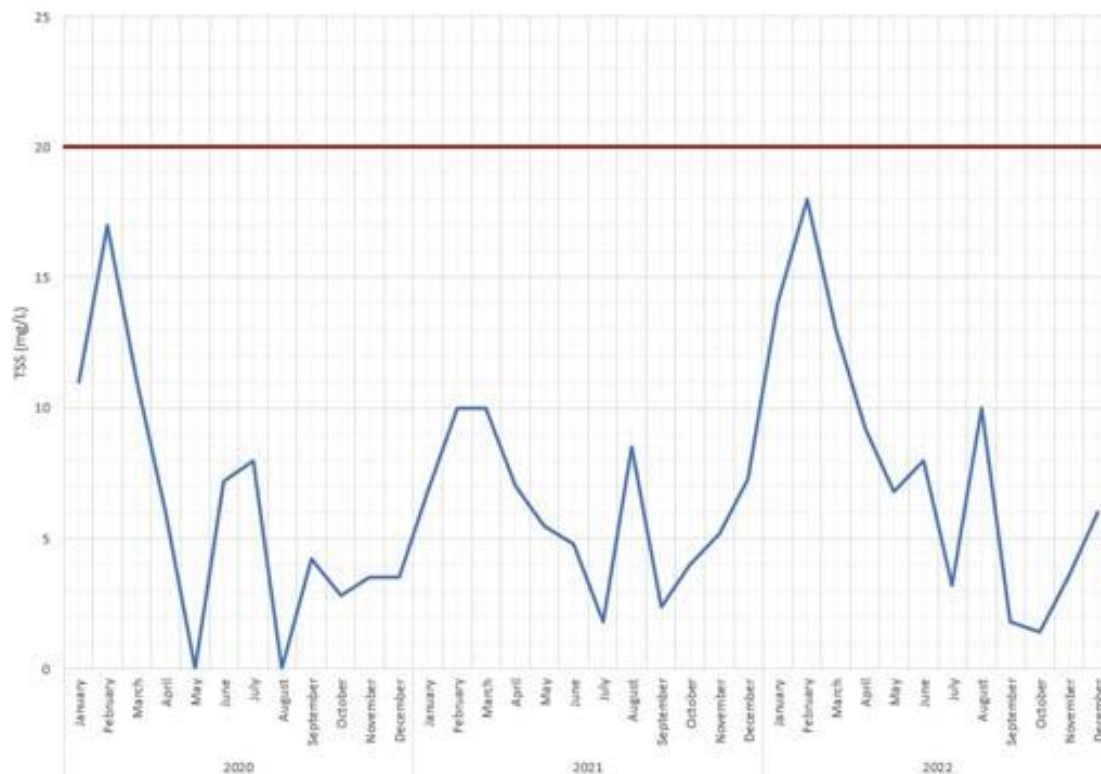


Figure 5-11: Effluent – TSS

Figure - Effluent E. Coli 2020-2021

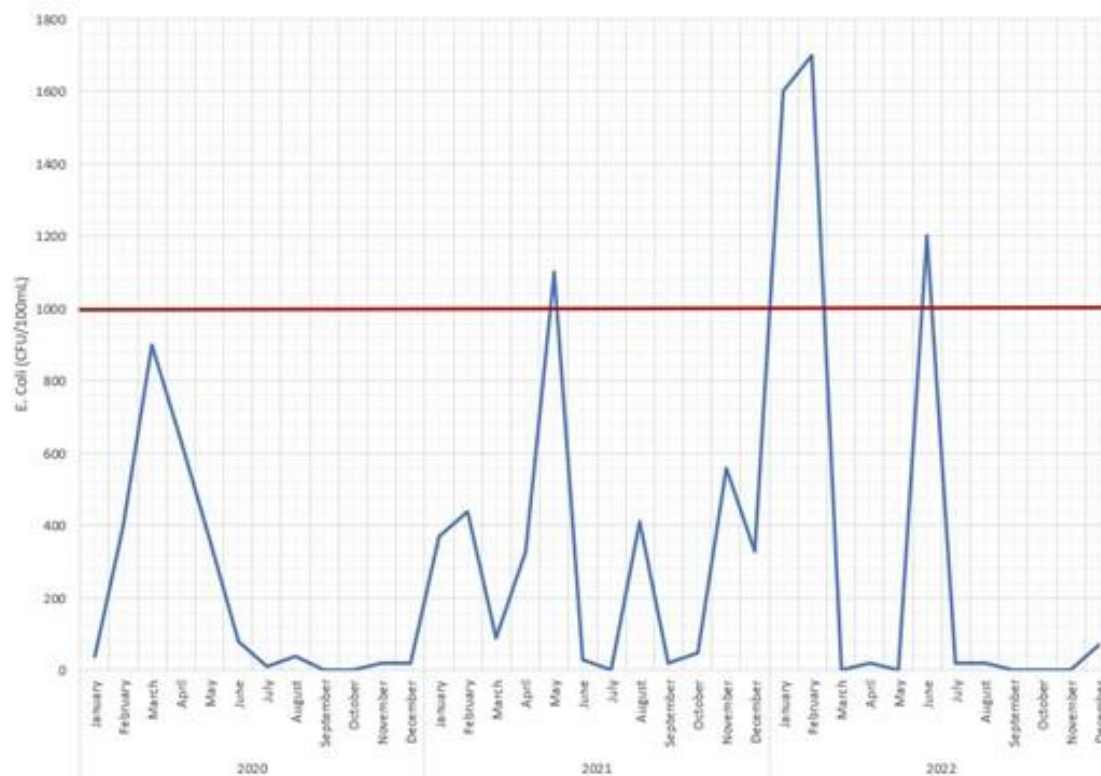


Figure 5-12: Effluent - E.coli

The lagoon designed for wastewater strength of 150 mg/L (122.7 kg/d of BOD). This is equivalent to a theoretical per capita wastewater loading of 0.08 kg BOD/cap-d. The average of three influent wastewater grab samples provided to CBC was below the theoretical per capita loading in the Atlantic Canada Wastewater Guidelines Manual (0.056 vs. 0.08 kg/cap-d). This suggests that the existing blowers appear capable of BOD removal at current loading rates. CBCL recommends that staff continue to sample the influent to support capacity evaluation. Strength in excess of the design loading will impact available capacity.

Based on discussions with operations staff, blowers and UV are routinely inspected and maintained. Staff are not aware of any instances of sludge removal at the facility. Existing coarse bubble aerators are original to the facility.

Inflow & Infiltration (I&I) reduction strategies may help to free up long-term capacity, by reducing unnecessary loading on the plant. This will become more important as the older sections of the flow collection system age and degrade. As discussed below, this is more apparent in the older gravity sewers.

5.2.2 Collection System

The flow collection system covers much of the Town's built-up area, extending from High tide Road on Main Street West to the Winding River Consolidated School in the east, and south on St. Andrews Street (see Figure 5-13).

Eight pumping stations pump sewage from low areas along wastewater force-mains, to gravity sewers that convey flows to the treatment plant via a 9th pumping station on Joffre Street. The pumping stations have a nominal useful service life of approximately 50 years and are in good condition.

The force-main system consists of approximately 40% new pipes with condition rating 1, and 60% older ones with rating 3, based on their age. All pipes are PVC.

The gravity sewers, consisting entirely of concrete pipes, vary in terms of condition, with the majority being classified with condition 3, on account of dating to approximately 1969. Any occurrence of seepage of groundwater into the sewers would increase the flows conveyed to the treatment plant. As noted, the flow data reviewed at the plant suggests that this is not currently a significant issue.

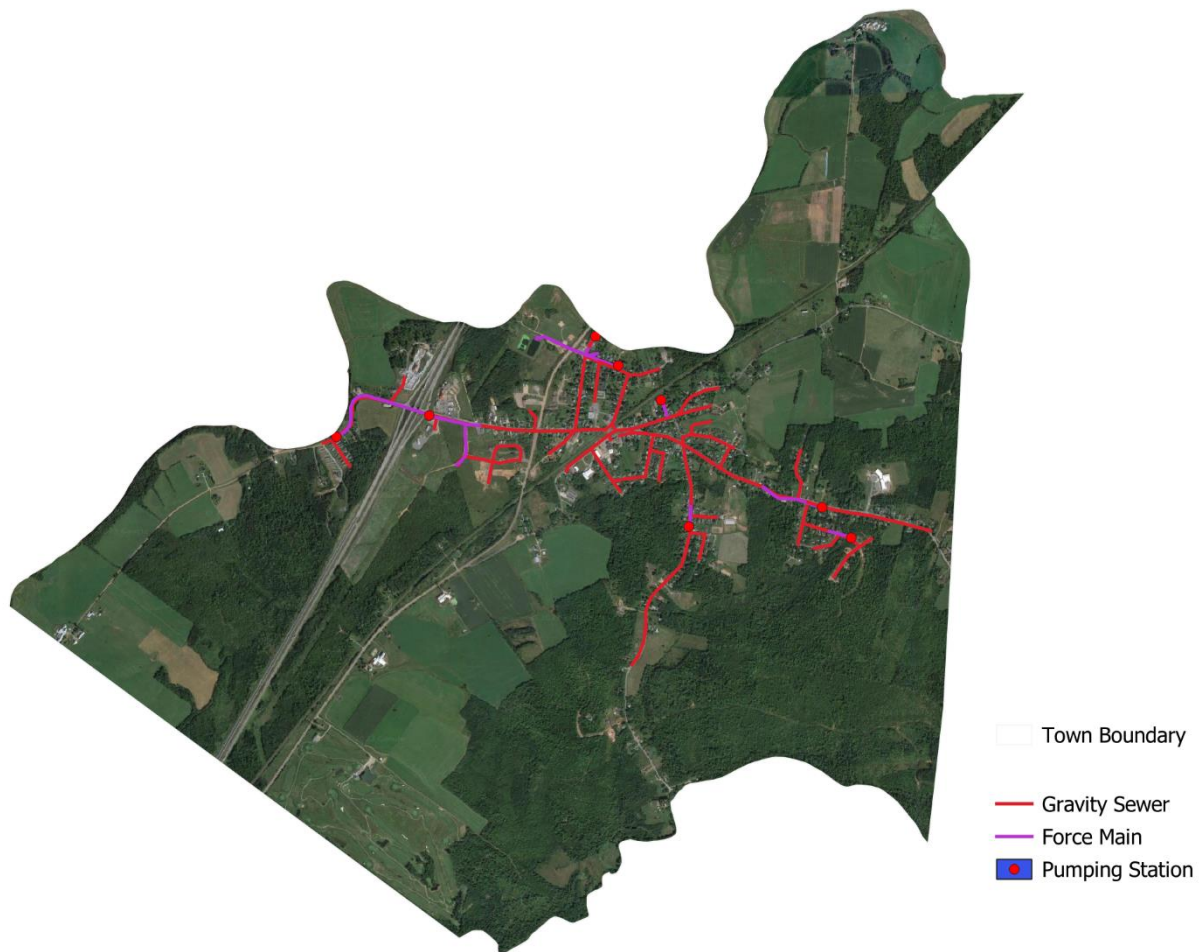


Figure 5-13: Wastewater Collection System

5.3 Transportation Infrastructure

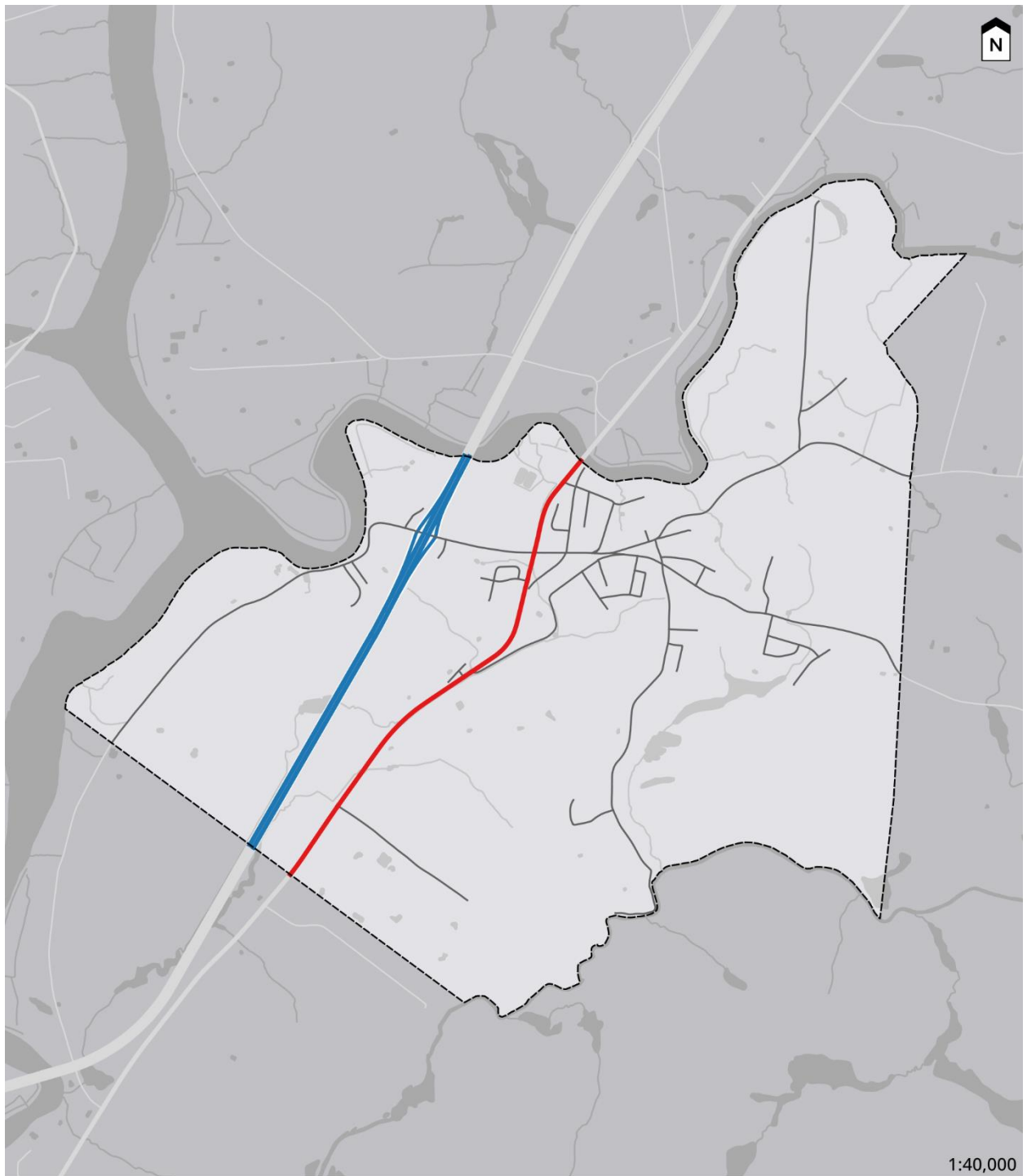
5.3.1 Existing Road Network

The Town of Stewiacke mobility network (see Figure 5-14) is characterized by an irregular street pattern composed primarily of local streets. The Town’s only east/west thoroughfare, Main Street West and Main Street East, is bisected by the provincial Highway 2 running north/south. To the west of Highway 2, Main Street West passes through the Highway 102 Interchange, providing access to the province’s main trade corridor. The Town currently owns, operates, and maintains all roadways within the Town boundary except for Highway 2 and Highway 102. The Town’s local roads currently operate with a posted speed limit of 50km/hr, with the exception of the school zone on Kitchener Street where the posted speed is reduced to 30km/hr. The posted speed limit of 80km/hr on Highway 2 is reduced to 50km/hr at the rail overpass south of Ridge Avenue. The posted speed of 50km/hr is maintained until Highway 2 passes over the Stewiacke River at the town boundary.

A distinctive feature of the road network is that it radiates outwardly from Downtown , with relatively few connections between the spokes. This results in large areas bounded between George Street & St. Andrews Street, St. Andrews Street & Kitchener Street, and Kitchener Street & Main Street with poor connectivity. This pattern requires much of the movements between these areas to pass through Downtown and double back. The CN corridor and Highway 2 have a single crossing point along Main Street, exacerbating the major bottleneck in the middle of Town.

This condition creates a point of conflict between local and regional road users. Goods movement between Highway 102 and areas to the west such as Musquodoboit, must pass through the Downtown area, which is increasingly perceived as a defining feature of Stewiacke, to be enhanced as a place amenable for walkers, cyclists and non-motorized users of all ages and abilities. The road layout in the Downtown further exacerbates this conflict, as two near-parallel roads, Main Street and Kitchener Street, must cross in proximity to a rail crossing. This situation is discussed below, and some alternatives are explored.

Furthermore, as the road network does not offer any routing choices for cross-Town circulation, there is no formal hierarchy between roads in the network. There is no formal distinction between operational and functional differences, and all Town roads are classified as local. This compounds the problem of conflict between competing and incompatible road users.



Road Network

- Highway
- Arterial
- Local

Figure 5-14 Existing Road Network

5.3.2 Existing Active Transportation Facilities

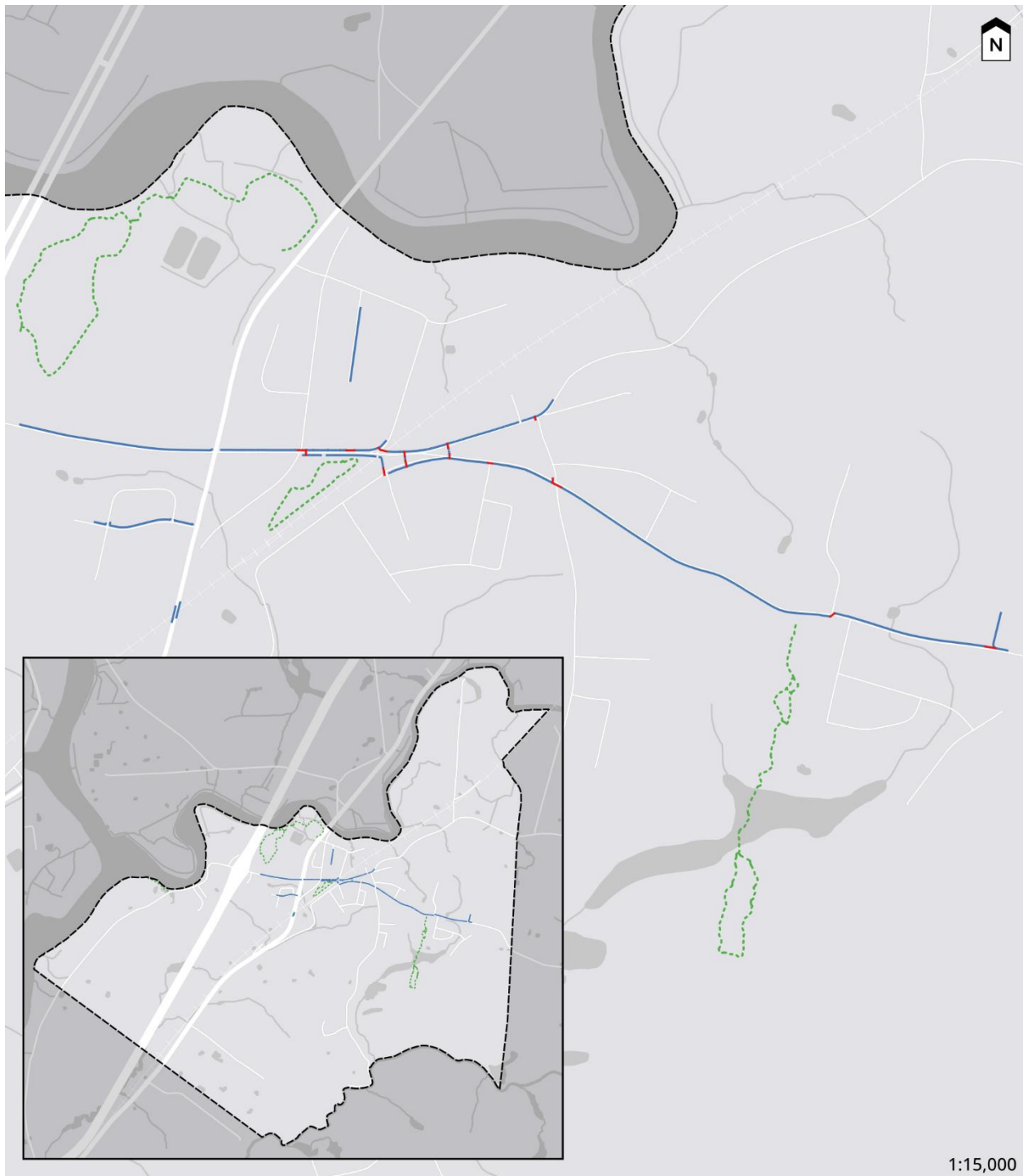
The Town currently owns and maintains all sidewalks and crosswalks within the town boundary. Many of the Town's streets feature narrow road widths with limited to no active transportation infrastructure, causing feelings of unease toward walking and cycling. Additionally, much of the existing infrastructure does not meet either the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations or Canadian Standards Association B651-18, *Accessible Design for the Built Environment*.

As illustrated in Figure 5-15, existing active transportation infrastructure is limited. Existing sidewalks primarily serve east/west pedestrian movement along the Town's main thoroughfare, spanning from Mastodon Ridge in the west to Winding River Consolidated School in the east. Additional segments of discontinued sidewalk are being reviewed throughout the Town, to complete the gaps in sidewalk coverage as well as a limited number of crosswalks providing safe crossing for pedestrians. Riverside Avenue, for example, has a new sidewalk extending from Joffre Street to Main Street. Sidewalks are a mix of asphalt and concrete pavement, with most segments considered to be in fair to good condition.

Unsafe conditions for pedestrians crossing at the junction of Highway 2 and Main Street was a key concern flagged throughout the public engagement process. Likewise, participants identified the need for safe infrastructure for active transportation users travelling along Highway 2 to the Community Centre and Recreation Grounds along with other key destinations throughout the Town.

As a provincial road, Highway (Trunk) 2 is currently under review to be designated a cycling road route within the Blue Route Provincial Cycling Network (Figure 5-16). At present, there are no dedicated cycling facilities in Stewiacke, forcing cyclists to mix with motorized vehicles in the roadway or ride illegally on a sidewalk.

The Town owns and maintains several trails including the Stewiacke River Country Trail, John Crawford Trail, Stewiacke River Park Trail, Meadows Two Rivers (Fish Shack) Trail, and the Dennis Park Loop Trail. Many of the trailheads are not connected to sidewalks, making access to trails challenging for those not travelling by motor vehicle.



Active Transportation Network

- Sidewalk
- - - Trail
- | Crosswalk

Figure 5-15: Existing Active Transportation Infrastructure

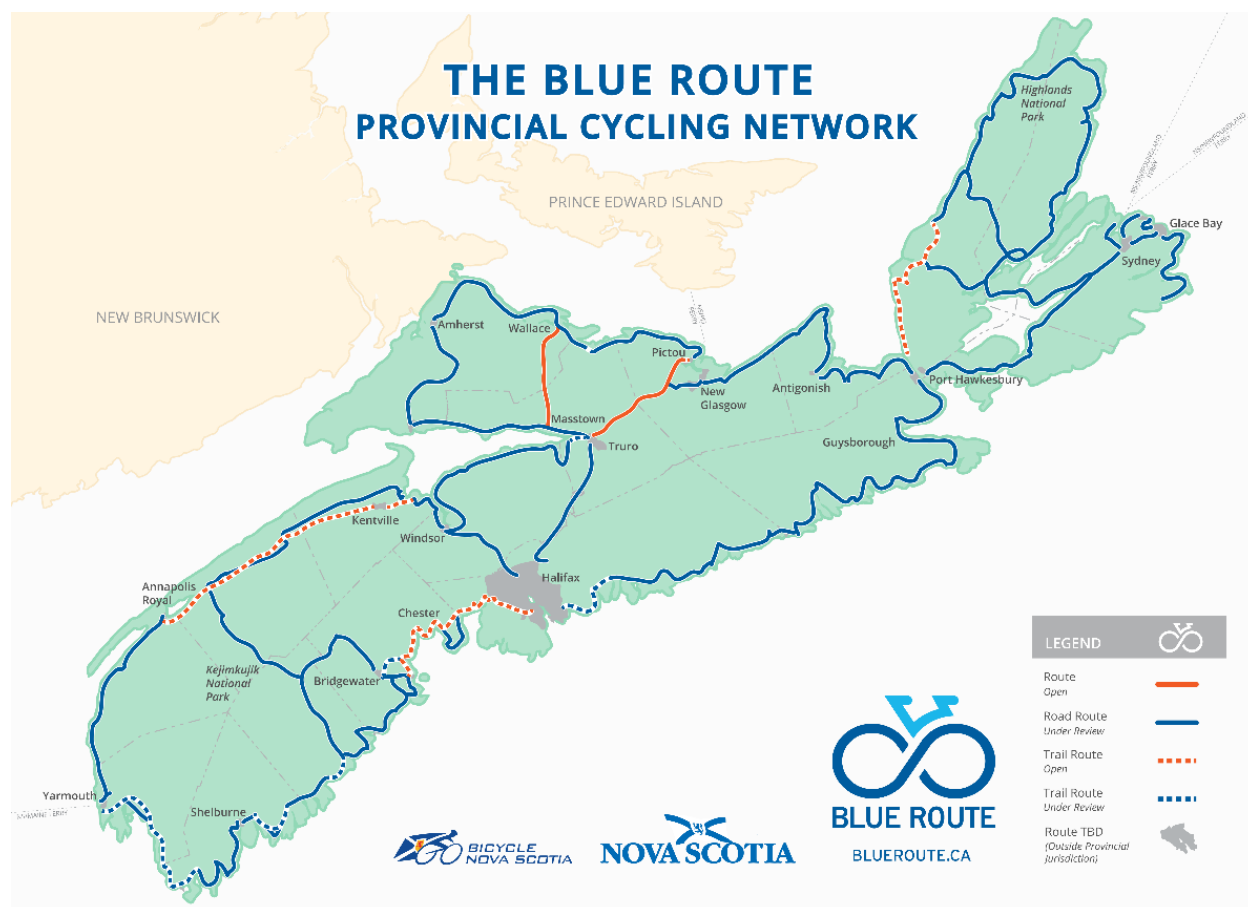


Figure 5-16: Blue Route Provincial Cycling Network Map

5.3.3 Safety Audit and Signal Warrant

Throughout the engagement process, numerous safety concerns were brought forward by residents highlighting speeding and safety of active transportation users as issues in the Town. A key area of resident concern is the junction of Highway 2 and Main Street. To gain an understanding of the conditions at main intersections and other flagged areas attempts were made to conduct a safety analysis assessing historical collision data.

Collision data provided by the RCMP was made available through an aggregated report for the Colchester County area. The aggregated collision data provided reveals the following general trends in Colchester County from 2019 to 2022:

- ▶ Highway 102 from Stewiacke to Brookfield traditionally has had numerous Fatal and Serious Injury (FSI) collisions.
- ▶ Most FSI collisions occurred between the hours of 12:00 to 20:00.
- ▶ Most FSI collisions occurred Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays.
- ▶ Most FSI collisions occurred in May to August.
- ▶ There are no specific trends for FSI collisions.

More detailed, disaggregated, collision data may provide a clearer understanding of the perceived hazards.

For the purposes of this study, two signal warrant analyses were being conducted at the intersections of Highway 2 & Main Street, and Main Street East & Kitchener Street. The analysis used the methodology set out for Traffic Signal Warrant the TAC, and adopted by NS Public Works for peak period volumes.

Turning Movement Counts (TMC) surveys were conducted on April 4th, 2023 at the intersection of Main Street & Highway 2, and Main Street & Kitchener Street. As illustrated on Figure 5-17 and Figure 5-18, bi-directional peak hour vehicular volumes are in the order of 300-500 vehicles along Main Street. This is well within the capacity of the road, which would be expected to accommodate a demand approaching 900 vehicles per direction during the weekday peak hours.



Figure 5-17 Bi-Directional Vehicular Volume - Weekday AM Peak Hour



Figure 5-18 Bi-Directional Vehicular Volume - Weekday PM Peak Hour.

It is understood that the Town has deployed radar-based speed and vehicle counters at several locations. This data will inform recommendations for any traffic management actions and proposed recommendations.

The warrant analysis prepared for the two surveyed locations suggests that, under current travel demand conditions, signalization is not warranted at either location. The Main Street & Highway 2 intersection experiences a total of over 3,500 vehicular movements between the weekday AM and PM peak periods, with few pedestrian crossings (see Figure 5-19). Should volumes increase by 50%, consistent with at least a doubling of the Town population, signalization would be warranted.

The Downtown location at Main Street & Kitchener Street was found to experience close to 50% lower volumes than Highway 2 location; signalization is currently no warranted, based on the TAC methodology, and would require very significant pedestrian volumes or higher vehicular volumes to be warranted in the future (see Figure 5-20).

Main Street (name)	Highway 2	Direction (EW or NS)	NS
Side Street (name)	Main Street	Direction (EW or NS)	EW
Quadrant / Int #	CHECK SHEET	Comments	

Road Authority:	NS TAT
City:	Town of Stewiacke
Analysis Date:	2023 Jan 17, Tue
Count Date:	2023 Apr 30, Sun
Date Entry Format:	(yyyy-mm-dd)

Lane Configuration		Excl LT	Th & LT	Through	Th+RT+LT	Th & RT	Excl RT	Upstream Signal (m)	# of Thru Lanes
Highway 2	NB	1			1			5,000	1
Highway 2	SB	1			1			5,000	1
Main Street	WB	1			1				
Main Street	EB	1			1				

Are the Main Street WB right turns significantly impeded by through movements? (y/n) n
 Are the Main Street EB right turns significantly impeded by through movements? (y/n) n

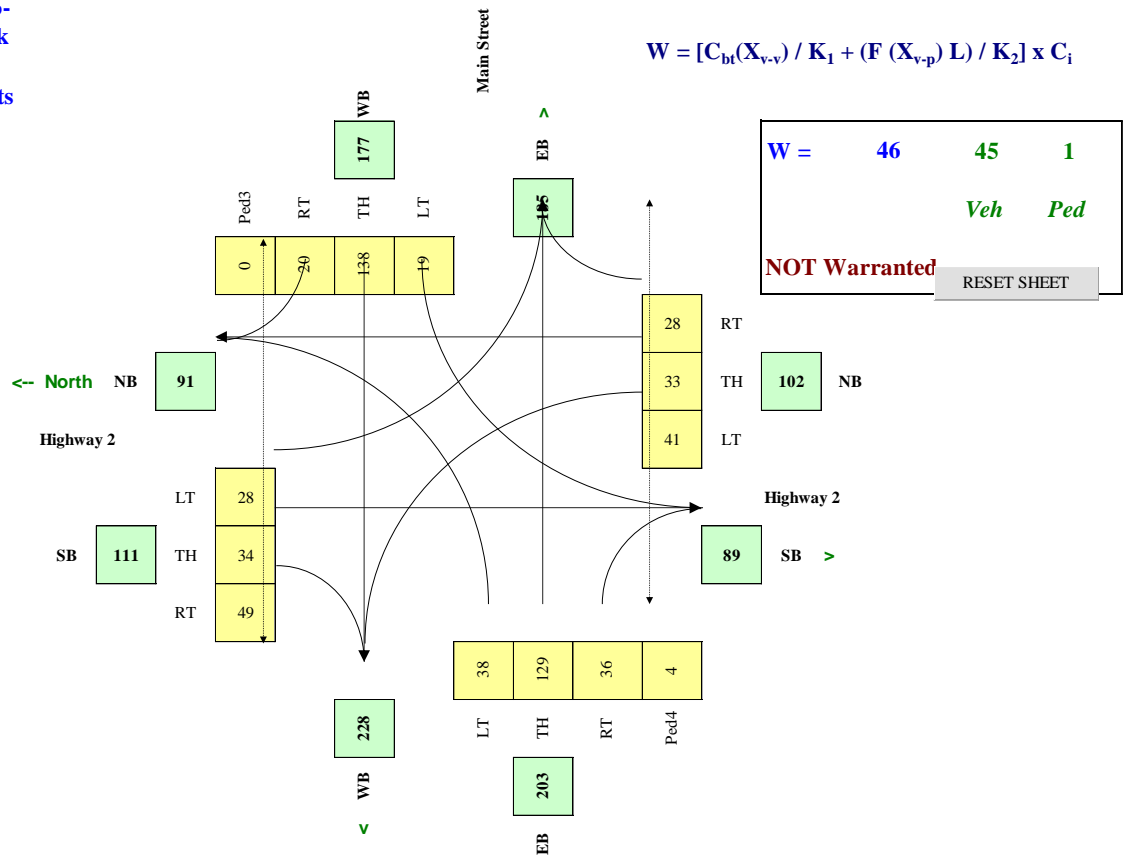
Other input	Speed (Kmh)	Truck %	Bus Rt (y/n)	Median (m)
Set Peak Hours	NS 50	3.0%	n	
	EW	1.0%	n	

Demographics		
Elem. School/Mobility Challenged	(y/n)	y
Senior's Complex	(y/n)	y
Pathway to School	(y/n)	y
Metro Area Population	(#)	1,500
Central Business District	(y/n)	n

Traffic Input	NB			SB			WB			EB			Ped1 NS		Ped2 NS		Ped3 EW		Ped4 EW	
	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	W Side	E Side	N Side	S Side				
06:00 - 07:00	19	14	5	5	24	42	8	117	6	26	27	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
07:00 - 08:00	48	16	15	26	24	63	14	212	22	29	88	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
08:00 - 09:00	46	30	16	19	30	49	18	173	16	32	104	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
15:00 - 16:00	50	42	45	32	33	52	27	107	17	40	160	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
16:00 - 17:00	40	62	41	40	52	36	26	111	28	40	211	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	
17:00 - 18:00	43	35	47	47	38	51	21	109	32	60	182	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Total (6-hour peak)	246	199	169	169	201	293	114	829	121	227	772	217	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	
Average (6-hour peak)	41	33	28	28	34	49	19	138	20	38	129	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	

Average 6-hour Peak Turning Movements

$$W = [C_{bt}(X_{v,v}) / K_1 + (F(X_{v,p}) L) / K_2] \times C_i$$



Traffic Signal Warrant Spreadsheet - v3H © 2007 Transportation Association of Canada

Figure 5-19 Main Street & Highway 2 Signal Warrant Analysis

Main Street (name)	Main Street	Direction (EW or NS)	NS
Side Street (name)	CHECK SHEET	Direction (EW or NS)	EW
Quadrant / Int #		Comments	

for Warrant Calculation Results, please hit 'Page Down'

Road Authority:	NS TAT
City:	Town of Stewiacke
Analysis Date:	2023 Jan 17, Tue
Count Date:	2023 Apr 30, Sun
Date Entry Format:	(yyyy-mm-dd)

Lane Configuration		Excl LT	Th & LT	Through	Th+RT+LT	Th & RT	Excl RT	Upstream Signal (m)	# of Thru Lanes
Main Street	NB	1			1			5,000	1
Main Street	SB	1			1			5,000	1
Kitchener	WB	1			1				
Kitchener	EB	1			1				

Are the Kitchener WB right turns significantly impeded by through movements? (y/n) n
 Are the Kitchener EB right turns significantly impeded by through movements? (y/n) n

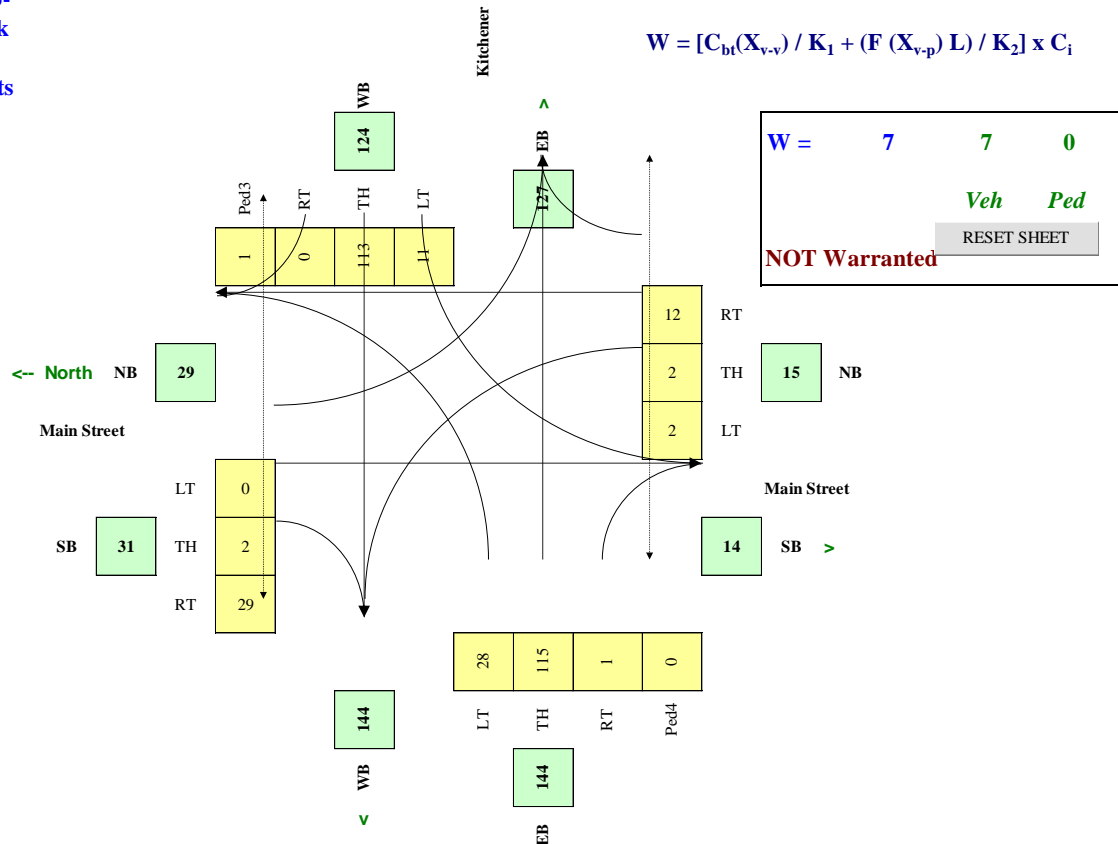
Set Peak Hours		Speed (Kmh)	Truck %	Bus Rt (y/n)	Median (m)
Main Street	NS	50	6.0%	n	
Kitchener	EW		6.0%	n	

Demographics		
Elem. School/Mobility Challenged	(y/n)	y
Senior's Complex	(y/n)	y
Pathway to School	(y/n)	y
Metro Area Population	(#)	1,600
Central Business District	(y/n)	n

Traffic Input	NB			SB			WB			EB			Ped1 NS	Ped2 NS	Ped3 EW	Ped4 EW
	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	LT	Th	RT	W Side	E Side	N Side	S Side
06:00 - 07:00	0	0	0	0	3	26	6	89	0	5	14	0	1	0	0	0
07:00 - 08:00	0	1	12	0	6	45	17	159	0	4	82	0	0	0	0	0
08:00 - 09:00	1	1	8	0	1	25	15	150	0	14	75	4	1	0	2	0
15:00 - 16:00	3	3	20	1	1	25	9	79	0	36	146	1	5	0	0	0
16:00 - 17:00	3	2	8	0	0	29	6	97	0	46	190	1	1	0	1	0
17:00 - 18:00	2	2	21	0	1	24	11	106	0	60	183	1	1	0	4	0
Total (6-hour peak)	9	9	69	1	12	174	64	680	0	165	690	7	9	0	7	0
Average (6-hour peak)	2	2	12	0	2	29	11	113	0	28	115	1	2	0	1	0

Average 6-hour Peak Turning Movements

$$W = [C_{bt}(X_{v-v}) / K_1 + (F(X_{v-p})L) / K_2] \times C_i$$



Traffic Signal Warrant Spreadsheet - v3H © 2007 Transportation Association of Canada

Figure 5-20 Main Street & Kitchener Street Signal Warrant Analysis

5.3.4 Downtown & Main Street Observations

In December 2022, the project team toured Stewiacke’s Historic Downtown and Main Street area to see and experience the streets as pedestrians and drivers. The **Main Street Assessment Method** (nsfm.ca/main-streets.html) was used to guide this exercise. It provides 16 different theme areas for investigation and improvements that may apply in a downtown context. The following topics inform the Guiding Principles.

Destinations and Experience of People Walking and Using Mobility Devices

Starting along Main Street West, we found the Highway 2 pedestrian crosswalk difficult to distinguish from the roadway, and sightlines and vehicle speeds made crossing the intersection feel unsafe. The lack of sidewalks along Highway 2 meant that walking to the Community Centre did not feel safe or pleasant. The crossing of Highway 2 is wide and vehicles move fast, and so the crossing feels unsafe for all pedestrians, but especially children and those with reduced mobility (see Figure 5-21).



Figure 5-21: Crosswalk at Highway 2 and Main St intersection

On Main Street, walking was generally a predictable and pleasant experience with lights, decorations, and defined crosswalks. At the intersection with Kitchener Street and George Street, the division between the roadway, parking and sidewalk space became difficult to determine in some areas. The crosswalks in this area were generally well defined, though limited sightlines to oncoming traffic and parked vehicles made using some crosswalks feel unsafe (see Figure 5-22). These concerns, along with related concerns were also identified in the Truro-Colchester Region Accessibility Action Plan.



Figure 5-22: Sidewalk/Parking/Roadway Downtown

While touring the Downtown, we found that about half of the commercial and public buildings have a step or lip that someone must cross to enter. This combined with few accessible parking spaces and in some places an indistinguishable walkway, present barriers for those with reduced mobility or vision impairments to make their way around to destinations Downtown.

While driving, parking options were sometimes poorly delineated, and it was difficult to know what shops or services were located there that might be worth stopping for. The signage in this area encouraged us to continue travelling away from the Downtown rather than to stop and visit. The irregular intersection of Main Street E, Kitchener St and George St was challenging to navigate (see Figure 5-23).



Figure 5-23: Intersection of Main Street E, Kitchener St and George St in Downtown Stewiacke

Cluster of Destinations

In general, there was not a strong cluster of destinations that made us want to stop and stroll from shop to shop. This clustering of businesses can be a goal for the Downtown, since there is already an appealing mix of older and newer structures, along with key

community buildings and destinations. For Stewiacke, these already include Dennis Park, town hall, library, churches, and the legion, as well as accommodations options (Bed and Breakfast and short-term rental). The addition of businesses Downtown can add to the vibrance and appeal of the area. We also found the appearance of many buildings to be dated, though some are better kept up than others, and murals help to add character to the area.



Figure 5-24: Entering the Downtown - With a Range of Destinations and Existing Buildings

6 GROWTH AREAS

Accommodating projected population growth is a critical challenge that requires careful planning and consideration of a range of factors. As previously discussed in Section 2.2, the Town has experienced a significant increase in development activity since 2020, and Stewiacke will note an increase in the housing supply and higher population.

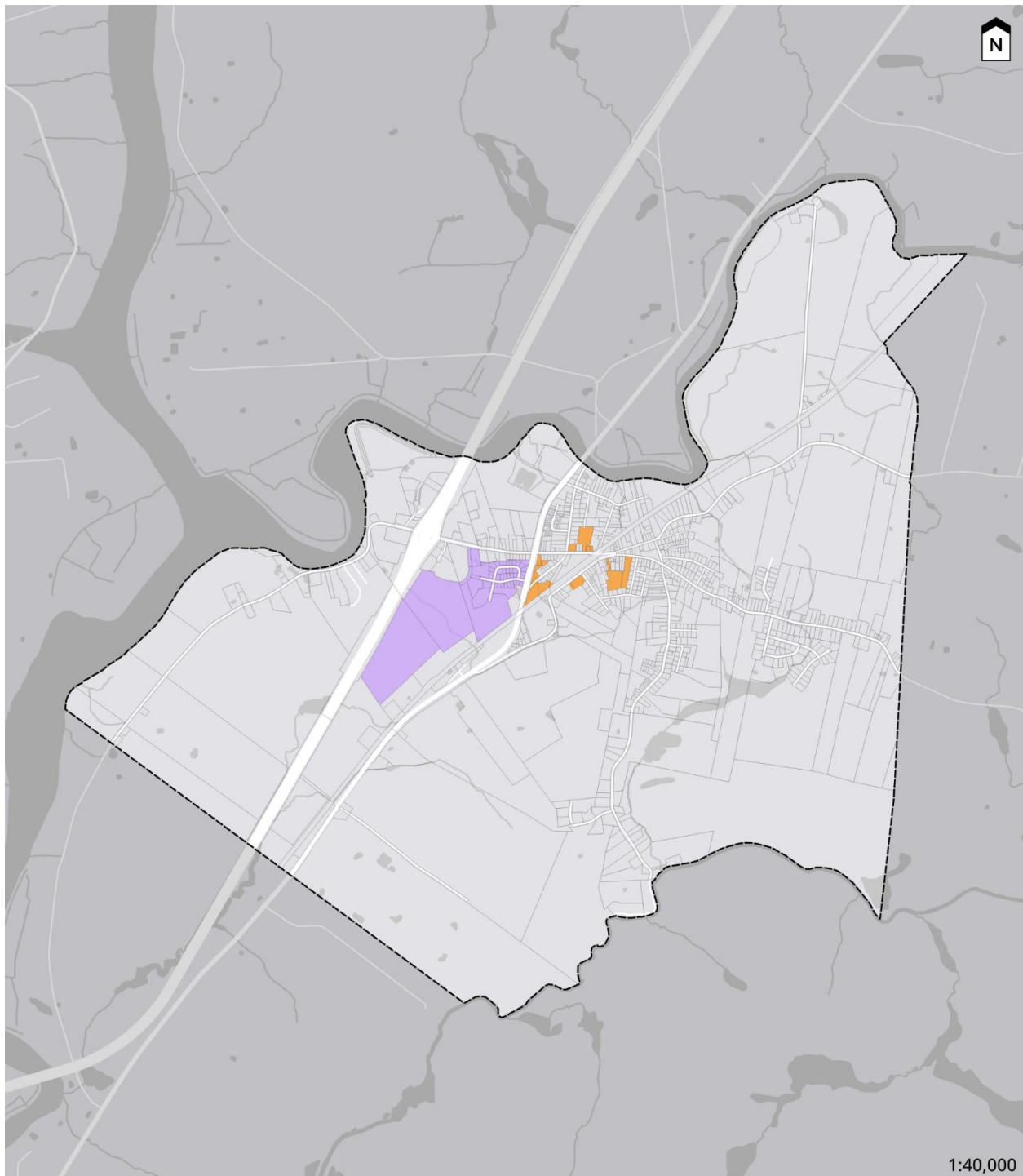
To address the Vision expressed by Town residents, new development must incorporate a range of housing types, including single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, multi-unit apartment buildings, and mixed-use developments that combine housing with retail or commercial uses. This will provide a variety of housing options for different income levels and family sizes, ensuring that our community remains diverse and accessible. However, determining appropriate site locations for new development is critical, and should be guided by key principles such as the efficient use of municipal infrastructure, promotion of infill development, and promoting walkability to reduce reliance on personal vehicles. By directing physical growth to serviceable areas, we can maximize the use of existing infrastructure, and by promoting infill development, we can direct reinvestment to high-priority growth areas while reducing sprawl and preserving green spaces.

Ultimately, accommodating projected population growth requires a comprehensive and sustainable approach that considers the needs of current and future generations. Two development approaches are considered: infill, and greenfield.

6.1 Infill Development

Figure 6-1 illustrates several key future growth opportunity sites that were identified by stakeholders as a focus for the short to medium terms. These priority growth sites include Stewiacke River Crossing currently under development as well as underused or vacant land prime for infill and redevelopment.

Promoting compact development and increasing density within the existing built fabric can provide a range of fiscal benefits to the Town, as well as significant environmental and social advantages. Currently, the Town of Stewiacke has an overall population density of approximately 0.36 people per acre; a result of the large swaths of undeveloped land that occupy approximately two-thirds of the Town's total land area.



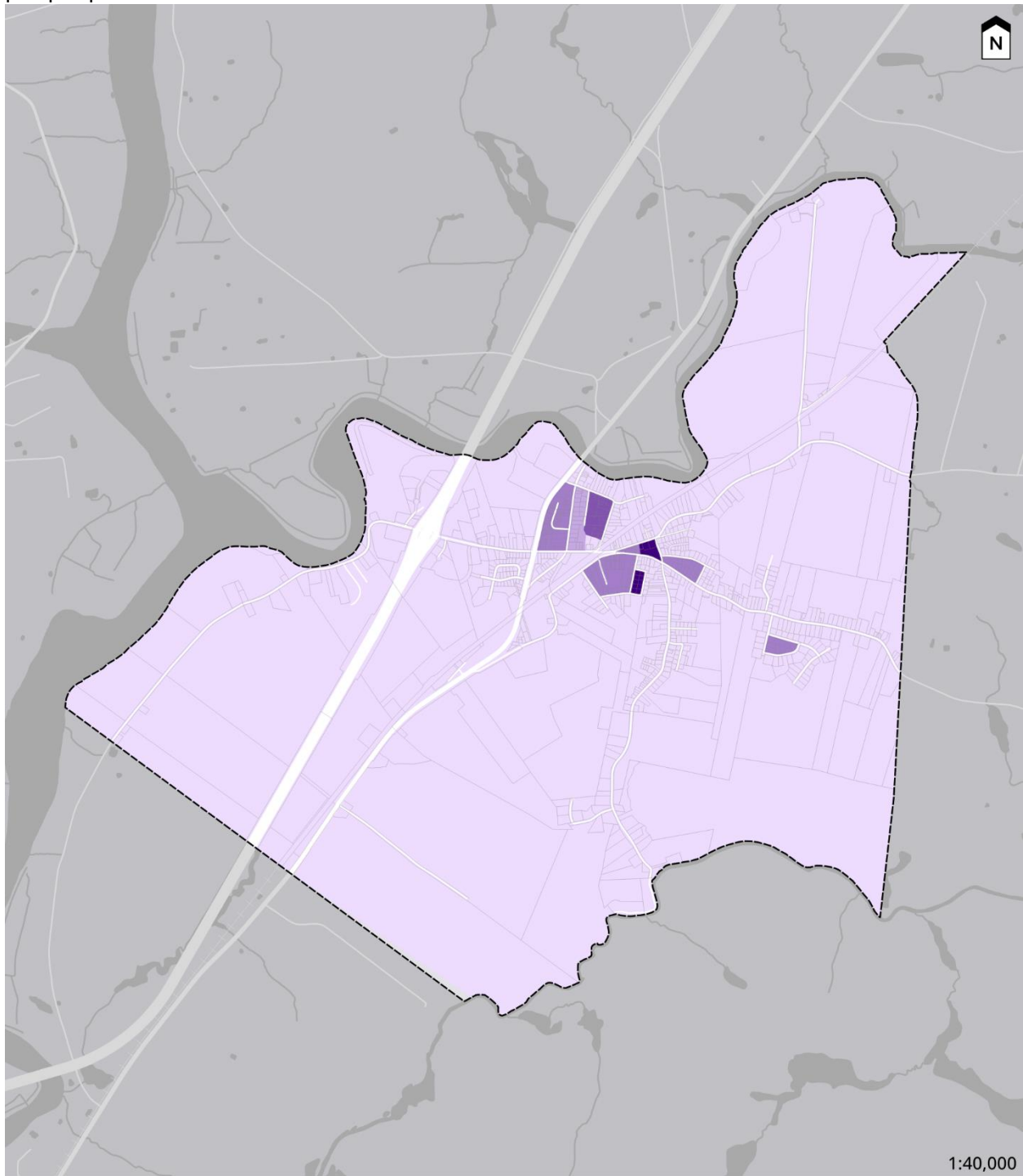
Future Growth Opportunity

- In progress
- Opportunity Site

Figure 6-1 Priority Growth Sites

At a finer scale, Figure 6.1 illustrates population density by dissemination block as per the 2021 Census. In contrast to the low overall population density, centrally located residential neighbourhoods are considerably more densely populated. Excluding dissemination blocks that are largely occupied by undeveloped land, the remaining blocks of mainly residential

use have population densities ranging from 3.57 to 11.7 people per acre; averaging 6.5 people per acre.



Population Density
(Population per acre)

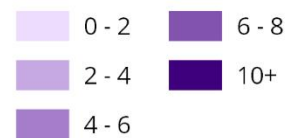


Figure 6.1: Population Density by Dissemination Block (2021 Census)

Figure 6-2 through Figure 6-5 provide planning and design precedent for built form from four municipalities with population densities representative the Stewiacke the status quo growth scenario. These examples demonstrate how land use policies can be implemented to support efficient land use through mixed-use development to revitalize the downtown area.



Figure 6-2: Wolfville, NS.



Figure 6-3: Kentville, NS.



Figure 6-4: Hudson, QC.



Figure 6-5: Netcong, NJ.

6.2 Greenfield Development

Considering the infill potential outlined above, the Town of Stewiacke has significant underdeveloped properties with residential land use designation. As illustrated on Figure 6-6, there are approximately 720 hectares of land, approximately 50% which is cleared, with the rest wooded.

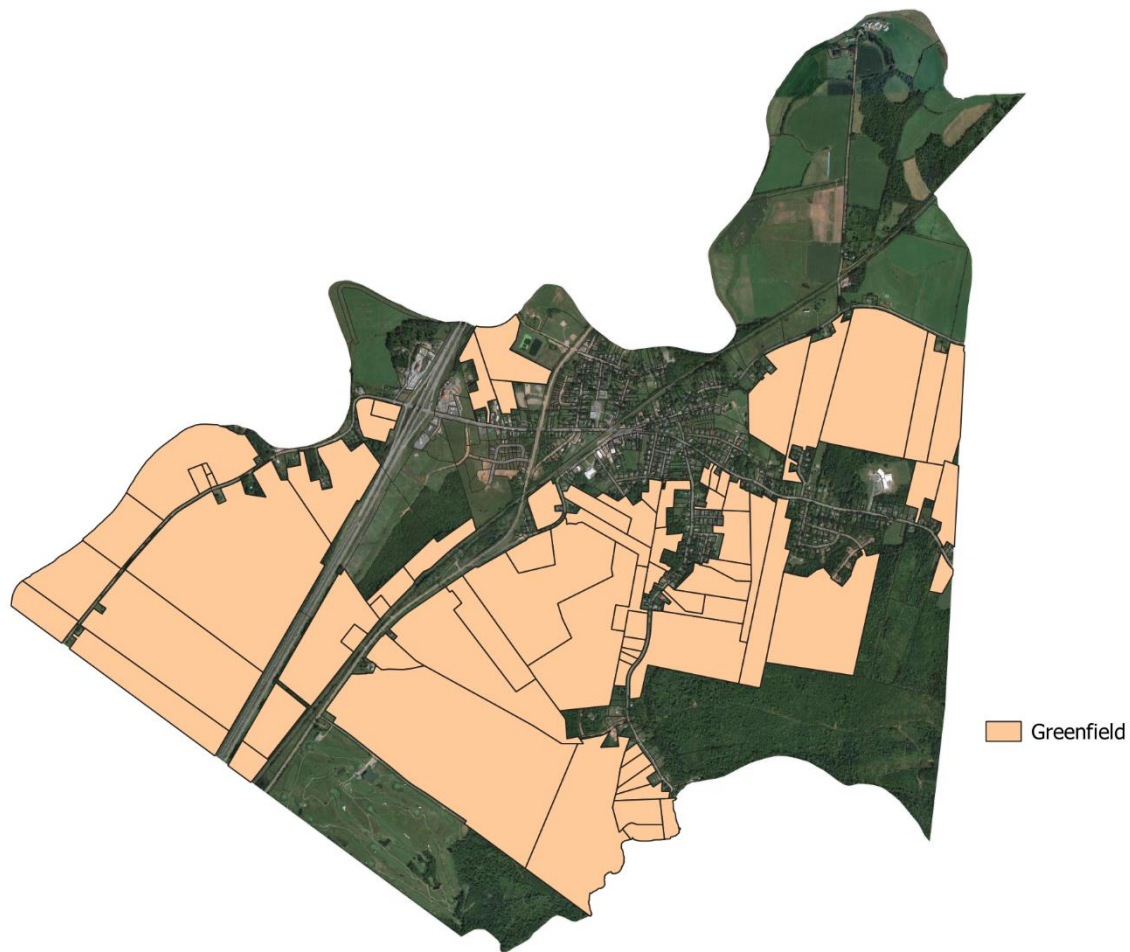


Figure 6-6 Underdeveloped Land Parcels

Review of population and dwelling densities in the Town's built-up area suggests average population densities of 8-13 persons per hectare, and 8 dwellings per hectare (see Figure 6-7). At such development densities, a fraction of the Town's cleared areas could accommodate all the Anticipated High Growth scenario.

Candidate properties for development would need to be evaluated in terms of serviceability by water and wastewater services, connectivity to the local and regional transportation networks, and suitability for development. The latter would be affected by grades, proximity to water, and geology.

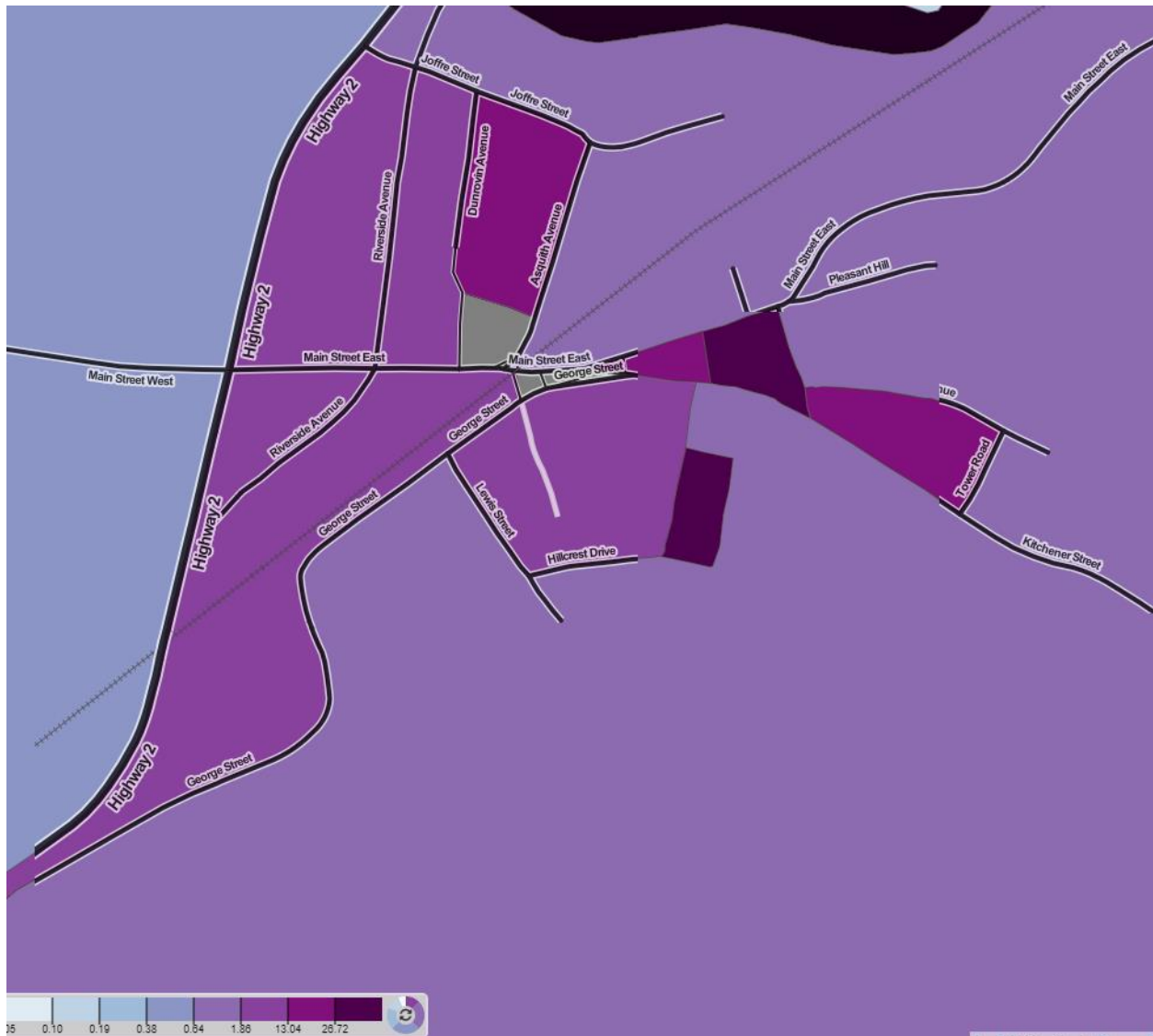


Figure 6-7 Population Density Map - Source: Stats Can Census Mapper

6.3 Regional Considerations

When planning for growth the Town should participate closely with the JRTA's RTP process, as the recommendations of the new Regional Plan may have repercussions on the Town's development path. Specifically, Stewiacke has large undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels adjacent the Highway 102 and rail corridors, like the Perry Lake development. Should the RTP find a future rail service viable, these land parcels may become more attractive for the allocation of regional growth and infrastructure investments.

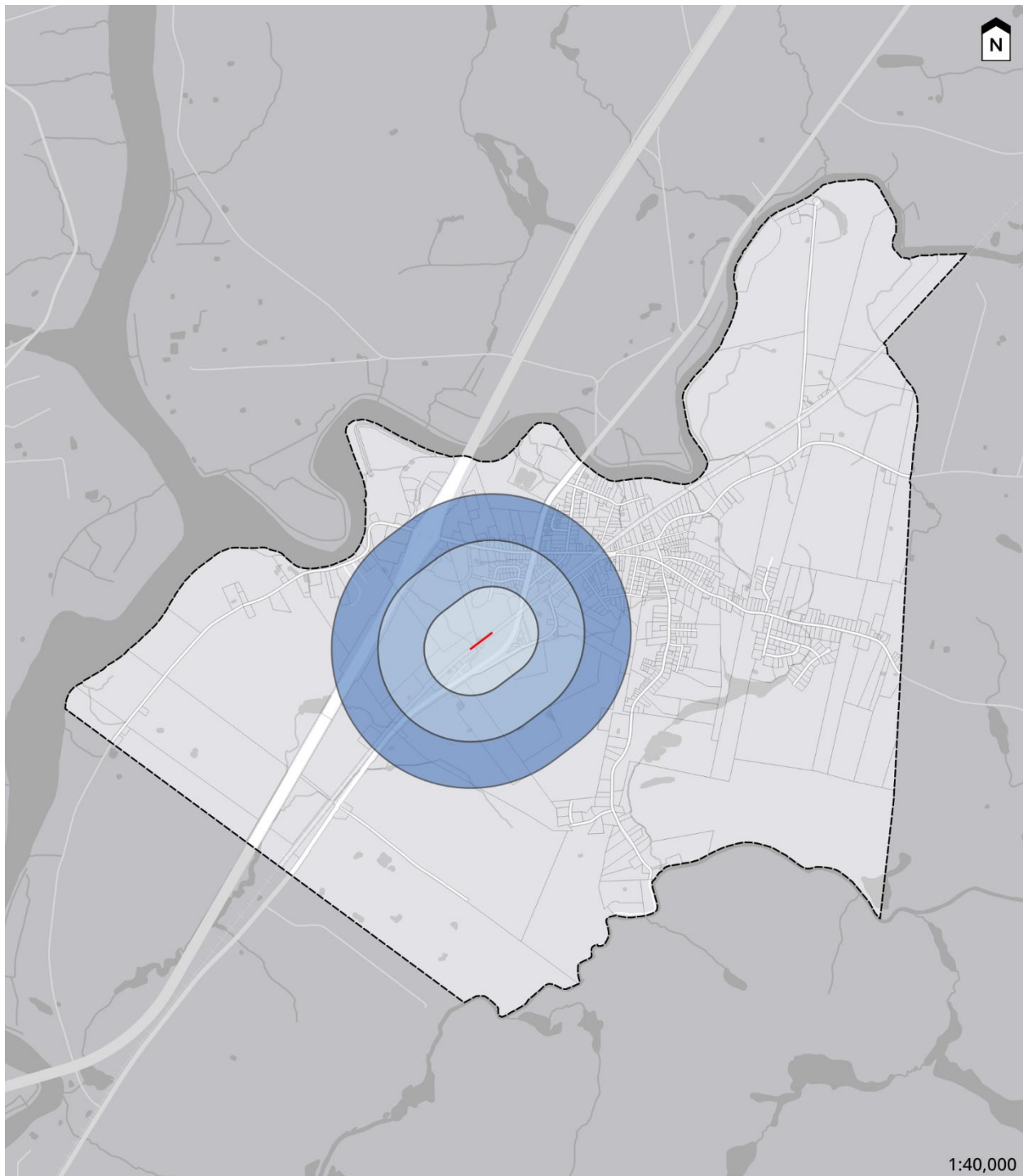
Designing and intensifying land use within walking distance of higher-order transit such as commuter rail, is referred to as Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Key components of TOD include:

- ▶ **Mixed-use Development:** Incorporating residential, commercial, and recreational spaces in close proximity, resulting in a vibrant living environment.
- ▶ **Affordability:** Diverse and affordable housing options, promoting social and economic equity within neighbourhoods.
- ▶ **Walkability and Connectivity:** Designing safe, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly streets that encourage walking, biking, and connecting to various modes of transportation.
- ▶ **High-quality Public Spaces:** Creating attractive and functional gathering spaces, such as parks, plazas, and green spaces, to foster community interaction and improve liveability.
- ▶ **Culture and Identity:** Preserving and enhancing local cultural heritage and creating distinctive architectural designs that reflect the unique character of the area.

Figure 6-8 illustrates the planning implications of a commuter rail station, in 300m, 600m, and 900m bands, corresponding to 5-10-15-minute walking times, in a TOD planning context. Commuter rail catchment areas would account for a significant portion of such a system's ridership. They typically have convenient access to the commuter station, generally through direct walking, cycling, or enhanced local public transport connections. Some factors that can influence the size and shape of these catchment areas include:

- ▶ **Proximity:** The closer a location is to the station, the more likely it is to fall within its catchment.
- ▶ **Accessibility:** The ease of reaching the rail station from various parts of the catchment area, such as availability of pedestrian walkways, bike lanes, and feeder bus services.
- ▶ **Density:** The population and employment density in the area around the rail station, which can determine the potential demand for commuter rail services.

The intent of such as designation would be to focus higher-density residential development and ancillary commercial development within these commuter rail catchment areas. Through the sheer advantage of proximity, residents of these areas commuting out of Town for work or school would essentially be captive to the train, finding it preferable to driving. Should such a transit service materialize between Truro and Halifax, it would capture a major portion of commuter travel demand.



Commuter Rail Catchment Area

- Potential Site - Commuter Rail Platform
- 300m Catchment
- 600m Catchment
- 900m Catchment

Figure 6-8 Hypothetical Commuter Rail Catchment Area

This approach to development would have several advantages. First, it would provide a critical mass of riders necessary to sustain the service financially. Second, it would create a dense hub of customers for local services, attracting a variety of commercial, institutional, leisure and other uses that are not currently justified by Stewiacke's small and sparse population. Third, it would allow the rest of the Town to maintain a lower residential density consistent with a small-town or village feel. Single-family or semi-detached housing could remain the norm outside of the Commuter Hub, thereby minimizing the perceived ill effects of higher densities.

Implementing policies which promote TOD initiatives can have multiple benefits. Residents benefit from enhanced access to job opportunities, better housing options, increased quality of life, and reduced dependence on cars, resulting in cleaner air and less traffic congestion. Businesses can attract more customers and benefit from increased foot traffic. The Town can maximize the efficient use of land, stimulate economic growth, and attract a higher tax base due in part to the increased property values associated with well-designed TOD projects. By prioritizing TOD, Stewiacke can leverage existing rail infrastructure to nurture community growth that is sustainable, cohesive, and accessible.



Figure 6-9: Commuter Rail TOD in Netcong, New Jersey.



Figure 6-10: Commuter Rail TOD in Netcong, New Jersey.



Figure 6-11: Commuter Rail TOD in Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Quebec.



Figure 6-12: Commuter Rail TOD in Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Quebec.

To this end, the Town should carry out its ongoing planning efforts in concert with the complementary RTP process.

7 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Guiding Principles for Growth

The following Guiding Principles were developed based on engagement findings and can be used to guide the Town of Stewiacke’s decision-making around planning and investment. These principles emerged from the community engagement and discussions with Town Council, Planning Advisory Committee, staff, stakeholders, and residents. Further commentary is provided in Table 7-1.



Table 7-1: Guiding Principles for Growth

<p>Continue to envision the future with community members.</p>	<p>The Town should continue to engage community members on envisioning the future of the Town so that as growth continues it is managed appropriately. This Vision can look to amplify the upsides of growth and mitigate negative aspects. This vision development should focus on the future of Uptown, Downtown and the Main Street connection between the two. The area of focus should be between the intersection at Main Street and Gibson Street (“Uptown”) and the fork of Main Street and St. Andrew’s Street (the “historic Downtown”). This Vision development should consider concepts for redesigning of the downtown core’s street and sidewalk network to improve amenity, safety and accessibility.</p>
<p>Grow recreation & the arts.</p>	<p>Recreation and arts programing for all ages should grow along with the population and adapt to the needs of the changing population.</p>
<p>Make Downtown a great place to be.</p>	<p>Make Downtown an enjoyable place to spend time by having a variety of activities. One way to develop this vision is to think about <i>the Power of 10+</i>, a concept described by the Project for Public Spaces as follows: “Places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that particular place, reflecting the culture and history of the surrounding community. Local residents who use this space most regularly will be the best source of ideas for which uses will work best.” The Power of 10+ exercise can help facilitate placemaking conversations and enable community members to be at the heart of improvements. Considerations for Downtown Stewiacke can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Park and kids play space; ii. Murals; iii. Events; iv. Performance spaces; v. Arts spaces; vi. Café/restaurants; vii. Walking and cycling spaces; viii. Learning experiences; ix. Local foods and products; and x. Professional services.

Bring shops & services back Downtown.	Encourage businesses providing everyday goods and services to locate in ground floor spaces Downtown. Support activity on the street (e.g. cafes with outdoor seating, new businesses, events, murals) that encourage residents and visitors to walk and explore.
Encourage high quality development..	Enhance and enforce site design and construction standards to ensure attractive landscaping in new development. There is also a potential for mixed-use development to be enabled through a development agreement process or zoning changes.
Enable a variety of housing types in the right place.	Enable housing options for a variety of ages, abilities and incomes, and permit higher densities (i.e. townhouses/apartment buildings) at well-served locations. Consider how the town can appropriately encourage a variety of housing types, including manufactured homes, cluster housing, and mixed-use development. The Town can advocate and work with non-profits and the provincial government to support low-cost, affordable, and accessible housing.
Provide mobility & accessibility for all.	Consider and implement recommendations of the Truro-Colchester Region Accessibility Action Plan and the Walk and Wheel Pedestrian Infrastructure Analysis Report, while advocating for accessibility improvements in new buildings and roadway construction.
Invest in transportation infrastructure.	Support and implement traffic calming measures on roads entering the town so that traffic slows as it reaches Downtown. Address safety and lighting concerns with existing sidewalk and crosswalk facilities, especially at Highway 2 and Main Street, in coordination with the Provincial Department of Public Works. Encourage cycling along the Highway 2 Blue Route as planned by the Province. Encourage cycling within the town through bike racks, traffic calming and facilities for cycling. Support the development of bus transit to connect residents to adjacent destinations, including East Hants, the airport, and HRM (and potentially points north including Millbrook and Truro). Consider the future possibility of commuter rail development whereby Stewiacke becomes a transit hub.
Upgrade and maintain utilities.	Ensure utilities are capable of meeting Town needs for an expanding population, and that they support the financial and environmental sustainability objectives of the Town.

7.2 Water System Recommendations

Stewiacke has taken a good step towards ongoing inspection, monitoring and improvement of its overall supply, treatment, and distribution systems through a formal asset management framework. The existing WTP is well maintained and operated in accordance with regulatory standards, but most of the equipment is original and is at or past its expected useful life based on age. The expected life for many components of a water treatment system, including major mechanical, electrical and controls equipment, is 15 to 30 years. The risk of failure to key systems (pumping, filters, clarifiers, structural elements) increases with age.

Despite this, diligent operation and maintenance may extend the life of the facility indefinitely if combined with routine asset replacement, minor upgrades and major facility upgrades if intended to keep the facility substantially in service for the next operating lifecycle of 20-30 years.

Considering the age of the treatment infrastructure and inherent risks associated with the St Andrews River supply, it is also reasonable for the Town to consider all available alternatives for upgrade or substitution of the existing water supply and treatment infrastructure for the next operating lifecycle, particularly as this period corresponds with the potential for significant growth in the community and associated increased stress on the existing water infrastructure.

To this end, the Town has commenced the process of certifying an alternative groundwater source. A separate assessment is being prepared under separate cover by others to examine the characteristics of the new water source and provide recommendations on the feasibility of a new treatment plant. Completion of this phase of work will include:

- ▶ A complete permit application ready for submission to NSE;
- ▶ A recommended treatment technology and conceptual design of the water treatment plant and associated infrastructure. This will outline the recommended connection points to the existing system and any recommended updates to the existing infrastructure.
- ▶ A capital cost estimate accurate to 30% for each of the Water Supply System including wellfield development, water treatment plant, water storage and water transmission.

This phase of work will be followed by a call for detailed design of the new system, for ultimate tendering and construction.

With respect to the distribution infrastructure, as development extends into new areas, and as deficiencies are identified in the distribution system, newer parts and equipment will be substituted. The Town may consider the development of new subdivisions to tackle some

of the more extensive upgrades needed to the distribution system as the opportunity may arise.

7.3 Wastewater System Recommendation

Two different growth scenarios were evaluated with resulting populations of 1,980 and 3,140 respectively, corresponding to the growth trends discussed above.

Assuming a per capita loading rate of approx. 403 L/cap-d (0.403 m³/cap-d), a theoretical organic loading rate of 0.08 kg BOD/cap-d, and a lagoon volume of 11,400 m³ (per cell), the existing two-cell lagoon can accommodate a population of 1,950 people (ADF of 840 m³/d).

Options to support growth and development in excess of available capacity may include adding a third lagoon cell, aeration upgrades, or alternative treatment processes. Expansion to a three-cell lagoon would accommodate a population approaching 3,140 (ADF of 1,350 m³/d), assuming similar future loading. The Town’s asset management system makes allowances for replacement of a wastewater treatment lagoon at a cost of approximately \$387,500, including engineering, inspection, and removal.

Based on review of recent experience with similar facilities in Nova Scotia, expansion to a third lagoon could cost closer to \$1,937,500 million (as summarized in Table 7-2). This order of magnitude estimate would be refined through a detailed assessment of the existing treatment plant, and the conceptual design additional cells and equipment.

Table 7-2 Wastewater System Upgrade Cost

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST
1	Lagoon Cell	\$ 750,000
2	Aeration system and blowers	\$ 500,000
	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST (Excluding Contingencies and Allowances)	\$1,250,000
A	Engineering, Inspection & Removal Contingencies (55%)	\$ 687,500
	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$1,937,500

A significant portion of the flow collection system appears to be old, particularly the gravity sewers. Deficiencies will become more apparent over time, and issues of infiltration into the system may have long-term impacts on the lagoon’s treatment capacity if left unchecked. The Town has an established asset management framework in place, and the infrastructure assets are inspected and monitored.

Development of greenfield areas may consider a combination of onsite treatment, and the construction of a parallel flow collection system to bypass the older pipes, and reduce the pressure on them, thereby mitigating the risk of infiltration and deterioration.

7.4 Development Areas

The greenfield development areas identified above were refined further with the exclusion of all watercourses and a 20m protective setback.

Areas below an elevation of 11m, equivalent with the height of the wastewater treatment berms, were excluded. Small slivers of land less likely to be developed as subdivisions were similarly excluded. Rights of way were also laid out along conceptual new roads, with 20m allowances, further discussed in 7.6.1. The resulting parcels of interest are illustrated on Figure 7-1.



Figure 7-1: Developable Areas

As summarized in Table 7-3, these areas would cover approximately 650 hectares, of which 350 are wooded. Detailed maps of each area are included in Appendix B.

Table 7-3: Development Area Ranking (1 = earliest, 5 = farthest)

Development Area	Cleared (Hectares)	Wooded (Hectares)	Total (Hectares)	Development Timeline
1	39	17	56	5
2	29	64	93	5
3	11	10	20	4
4		14	14	2
5	23	23	46	Deferred
6	3	13	16	1
7	14	27	41	1
8	12	10	22	3
9	35	30	64	3
10	7	36	43	3
11	59	28	86	4
12	67	79	147	5
Total	299	350	649	

Areas 1-3 are located on the west side of the Highway 102 corridor, with limited road connectivity and servicing, and some distance from the Town core. They are mostly wooded, are close to the banks of the Shubenacadie River and may have additional setback requirements to mitigate the risk of erosion and flooding, and their development may take the longest time.

Area 1 (illustrated conceptually on Figure 7-2) is characterised by a drumlin approximately 45m high along its southern edge, with the ground sloping towards the Shubenacadie River and Highway 102; its northern half is relatively flat at an elevation of 30m.

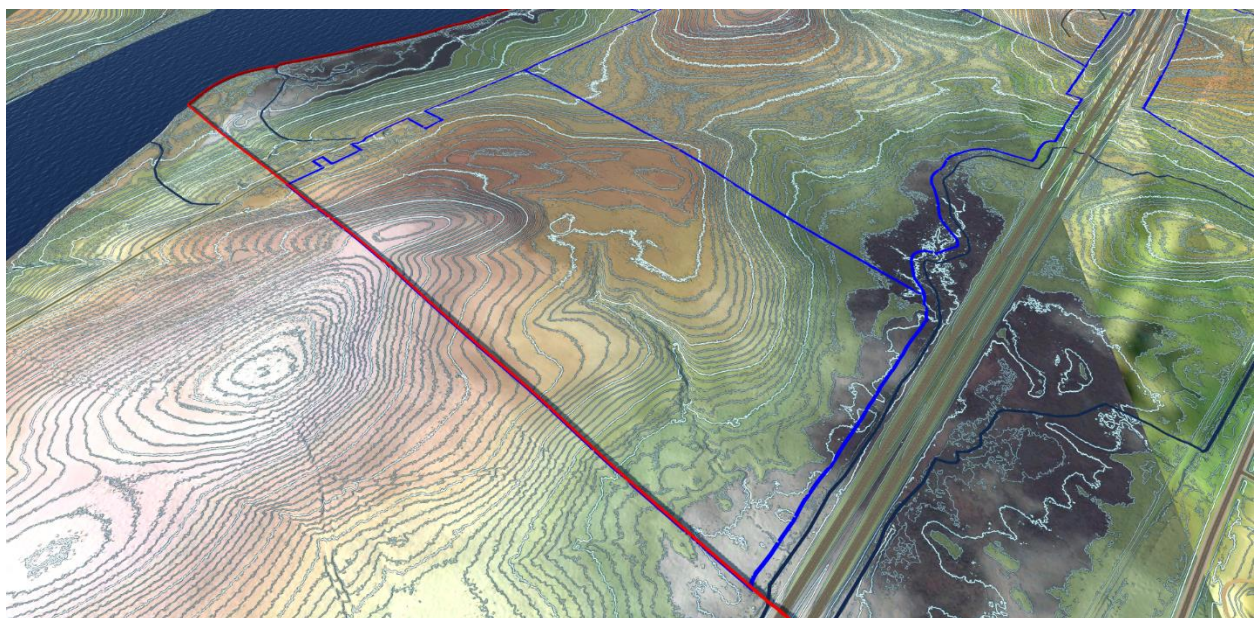


Figure 7-2 Conceptual Development Area 1

Area 2 exhibits a ride along Main Street West, sloping relatively steeply to the river, but with smoother slopes towards the Highway 102 corridor, which is traversed by a creek (see Figure 7-3). The southern corner of the area includes the creek and may exhibit a wet environment.

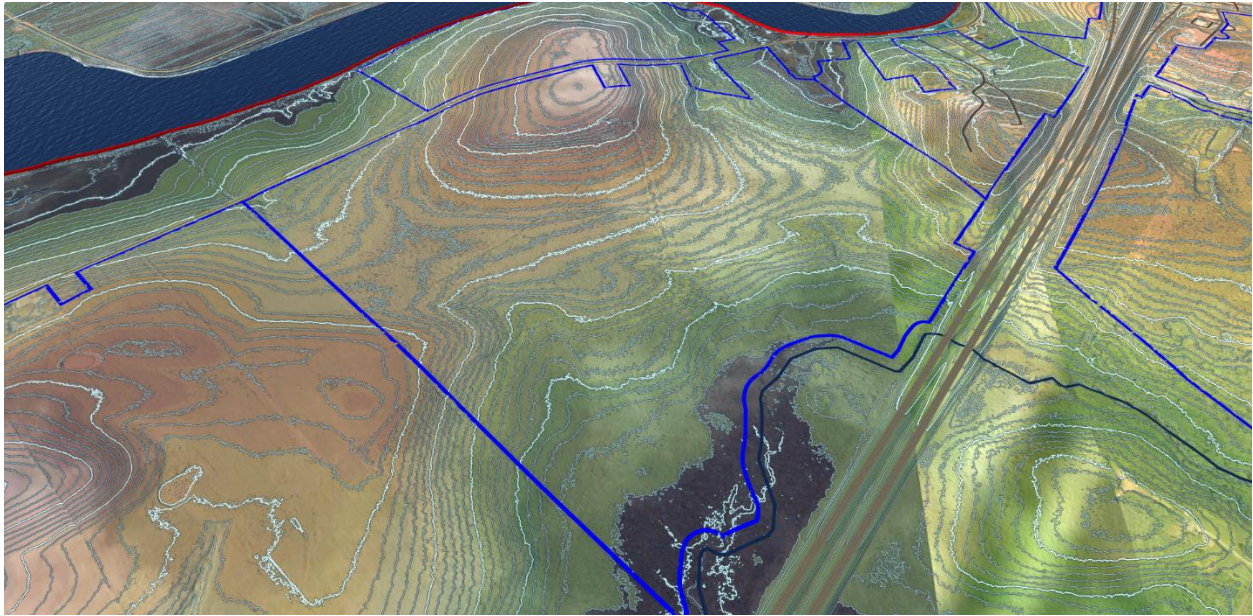


Figure 7-3 Conceptual Development Area 2

Area 3 (illustrated on Figure 7-4) includes the mini home park, and is bound by Main Street West. It is characterised by a 40m rise adjacent the Highway corridor, sloping to the river. This area has access to water and sewer servicing terminating at Low Tide Road on Main Street West.

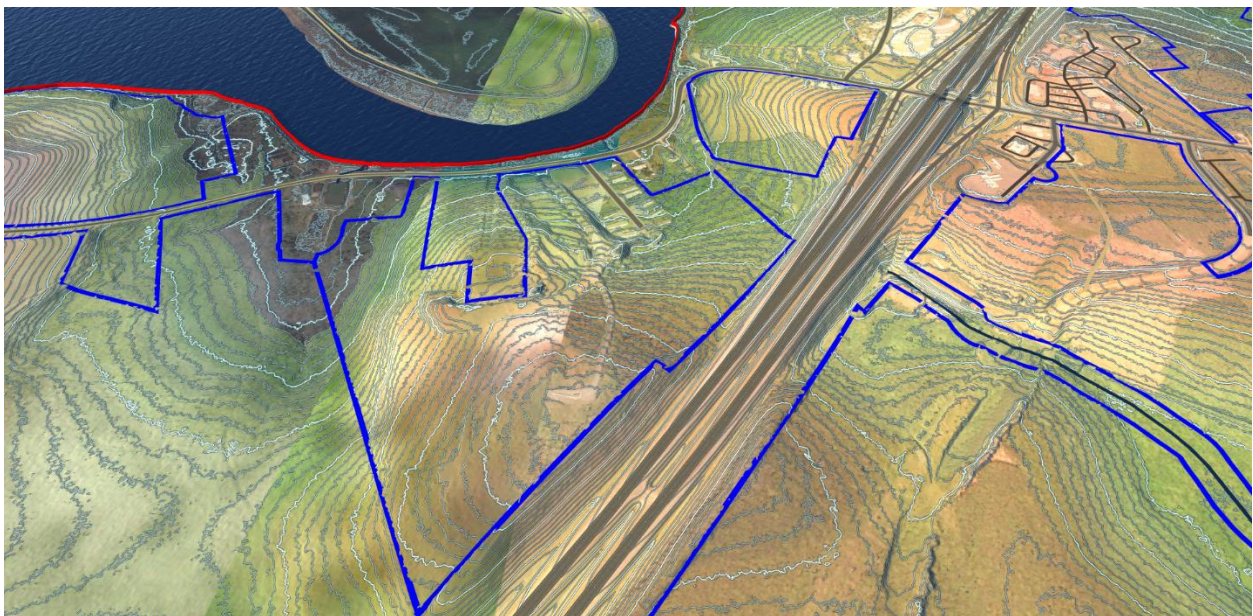


Figure 7-4 Conceptual Development Area 3

For general planning purposes, areas 4 to 7 would be easiest to develop, as they have access to existing water and wastewater servicing and are a continuation of the existing Town fabric. These lots are mostly wooded, and would require clearing.

Area 4 includes the banks for the Stewiacke River, and may be subject to larger setbacks to mitigate the risk of coastal erosion and flooding. Such setbacks would most accurately be determined by a Townwide study, and further direction from the Province. Illustrated conceptually on Figure 7-5, it is a wooded parcel, inscribed between the Mastodon Ridge commercial development, the Stewiacke Community Centre, and the wastewater treatment plant. It is bisected by a hydro corridor. It features gentle grades sloping northward from the plateau forming Mastodon Ridge.

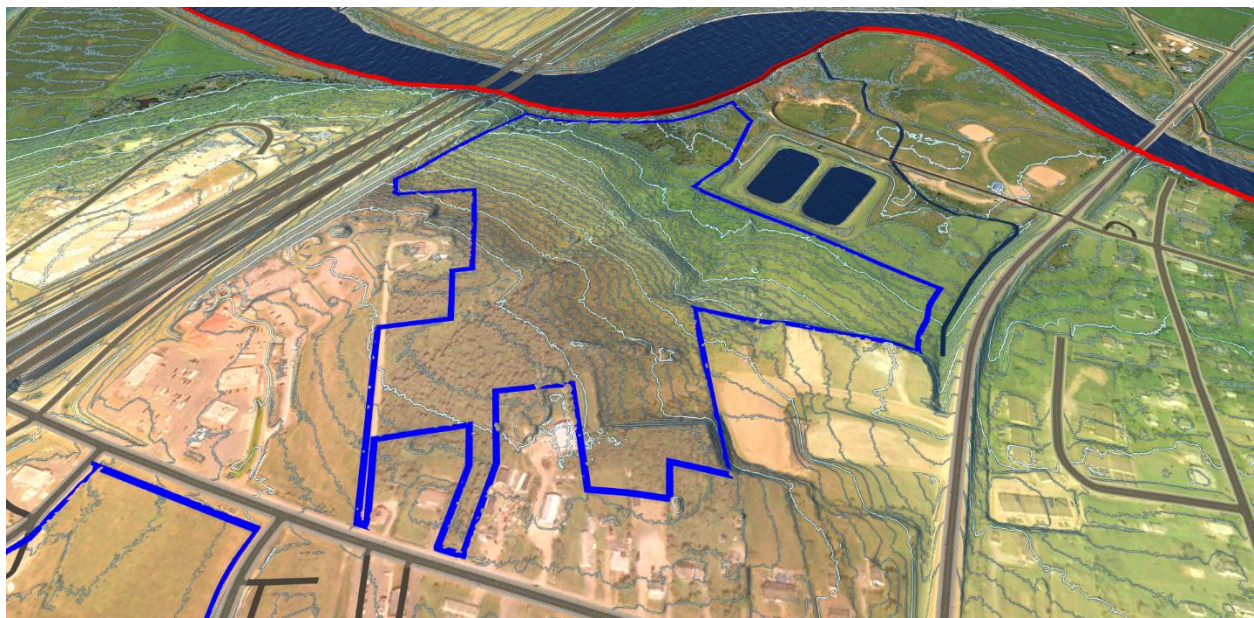


Figure 7-5 Conceptual Development Area 4

We note that much of Area 5 (see Figure 7-6) corresponds to the Perry Lake development proposal, part of which is currently under construction. This area is also adjacent the Highway 102 and the rail corridor, making it attractive in the context of a potential commuter rail service. It is therefore recommended that development plans in this area be reconsidered in collaboration with the RTP process, to ensure compatibility between the two planning efforts.

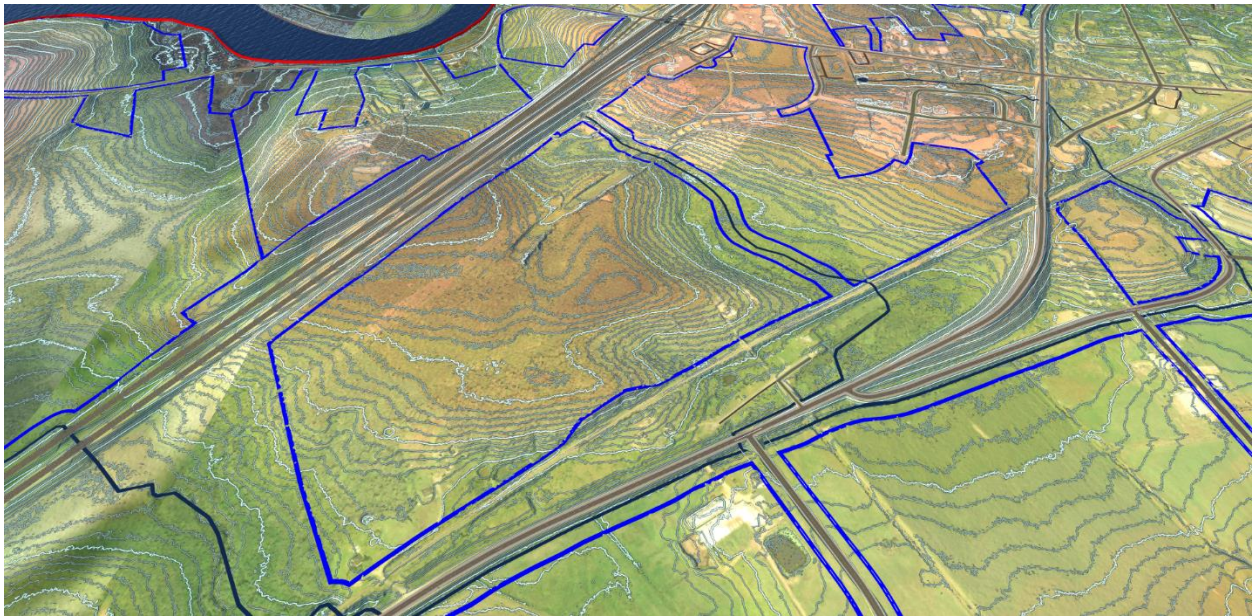


Figure 7-6 Conceptual Development Area 5

Area 6 fills in the lands between George Street and St. Andrews Street (see Figure 7-7). It is crossed diagonally from east to west by a creek. The westernmost parcel of land is bound by Trunk 2, the rail corridor, and George Street, and is generally flat. The other two parcels slope gently towards the creek and would require additional road connection to fully

This area would have the potential for a new east-west road connecting George Street to St. Andrews Street.

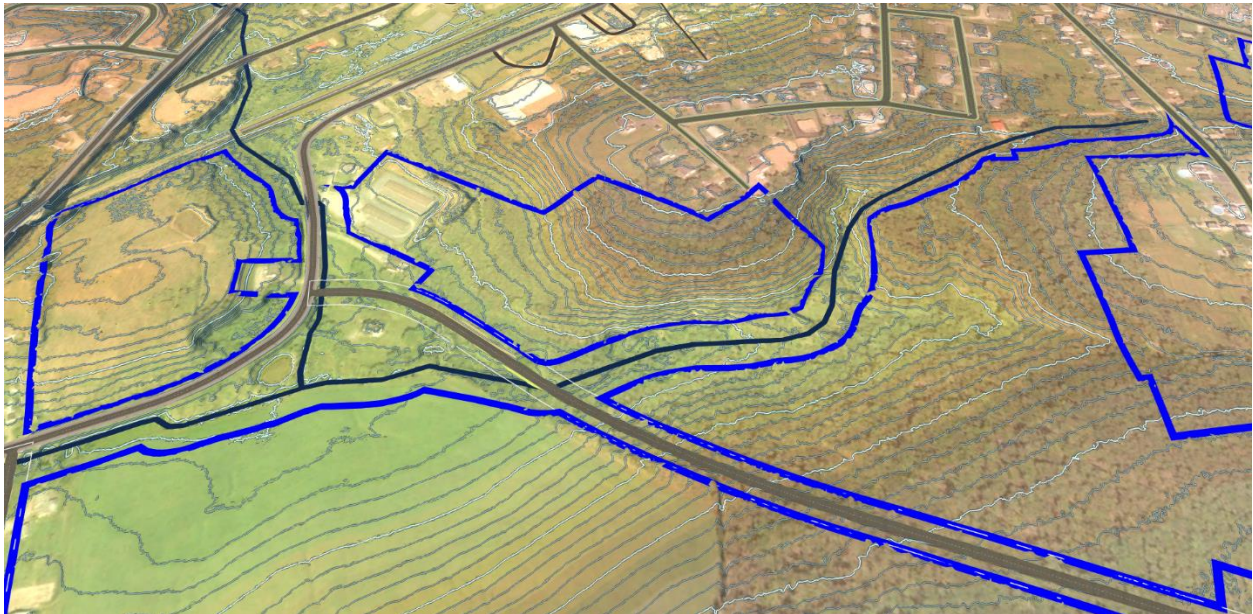


Figure 7-7 Conceptual Development Area 6

Area 7 is also crossed by a creek system, generally draining towards the west. It features several parcels that may be connected to Kitchener Street or St. Andrews Street, as well as to new development at Hillside Crescent and Sherbrooke Street (as illustrated on Figure 7-8). All parcels slope inwards towards the creek/ravine system.

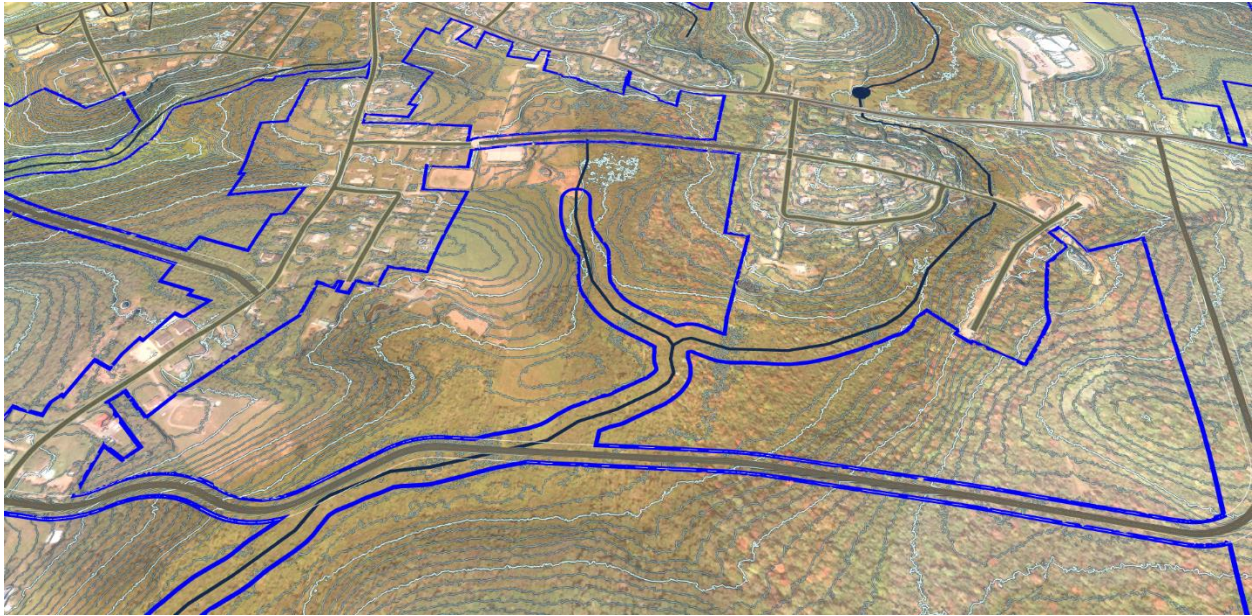


Figure 7-8 Conceptual Development Area 7

Areas 8, 9 and 10 would require extension of a longer east-west road between George Street, St. Andrews Street, and Kitchener Street to service fully. Hilly terrain would also require some terracing and careful laying out of water and wastewater connections. Approximately half of areas 8 and 9 slope towards George Street and are cleared, while their wooded half slope back towards St. Andrews Road (see Figure 7-9 and Figure 7-10). Development of these areas may require separate sewersheds, with connections onto both George Street and St. Andrews Street.

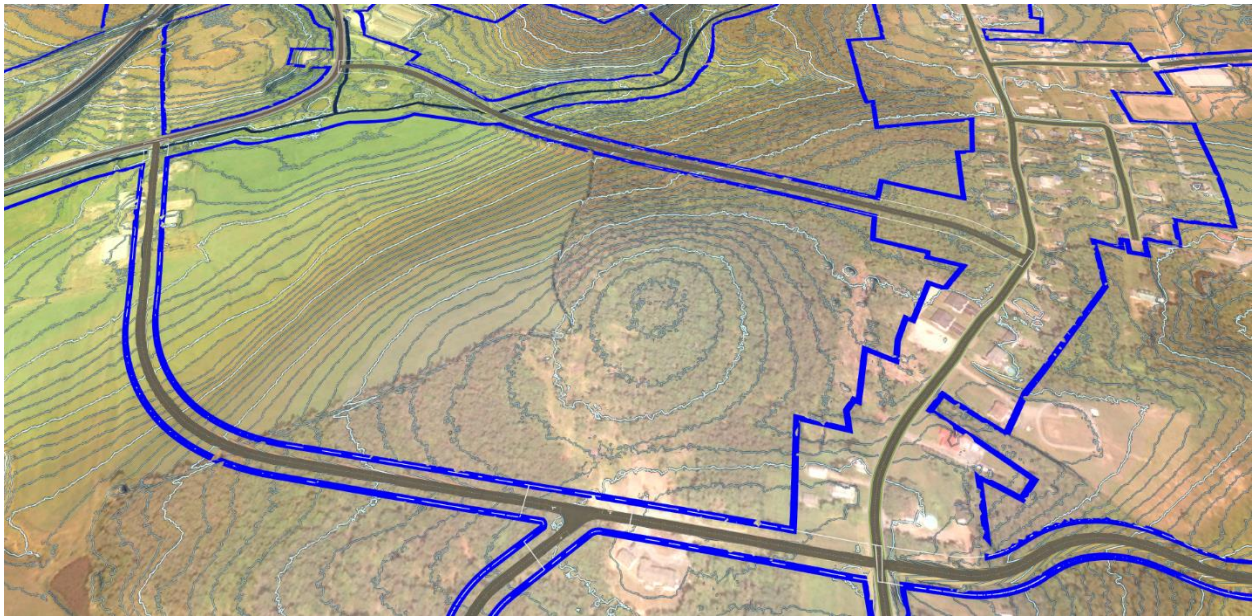


Figure 7-9 Conceptual Development Area 8

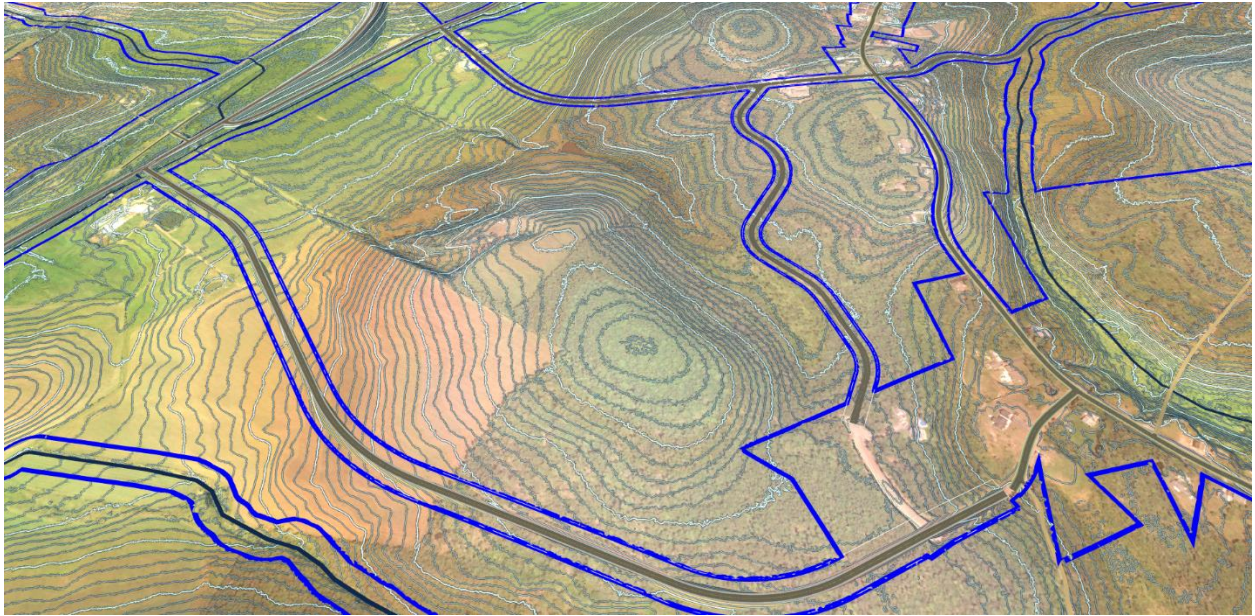


Figure 7-10 Conceptual Development Area 9

Area 10 is mostly cut off from existing roads by a watercourse (see Figure 7-11). The land slopes northward from the Town’s highest hill. While some parcels may be developed along St. Andrews Street, the rest of this area would require full extension of a new road to provide adequate access and servicing.

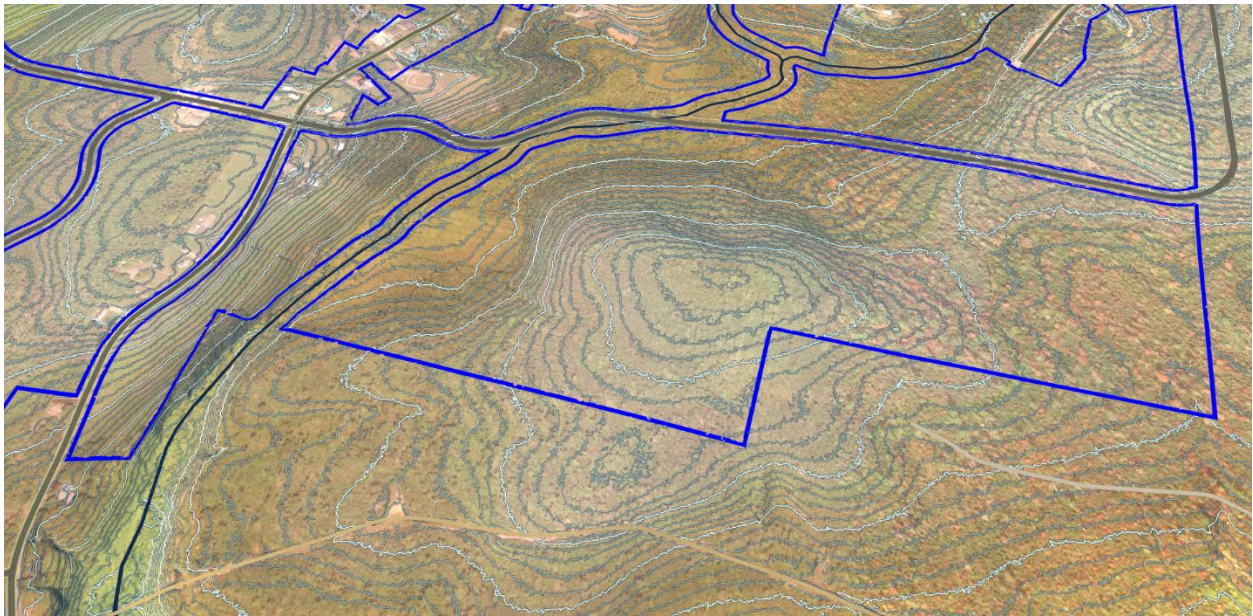


Figure 7-11 Conceptual Development Area 10

Areas 11 and 12 are farthest from the Town centre, and may occur on the furthest timeline. They are partly wooded and would require additional roads to service and access fully. Area 11 occupies the lands between Kitchener Street and Main Street, north of the Winding River Consolidated School (as illustrated on Figure 7-12). It is characterised by several drumlins and grades sloping towards a creek system. The area would be well serviced by a north-south road, perhaps as an extension of Matthews Drive, thus allowing connections to existing water mains and sewers. Areas closer to Main Street would require that services be extended along that road, as they currently stop just north of Pleasant Hill.

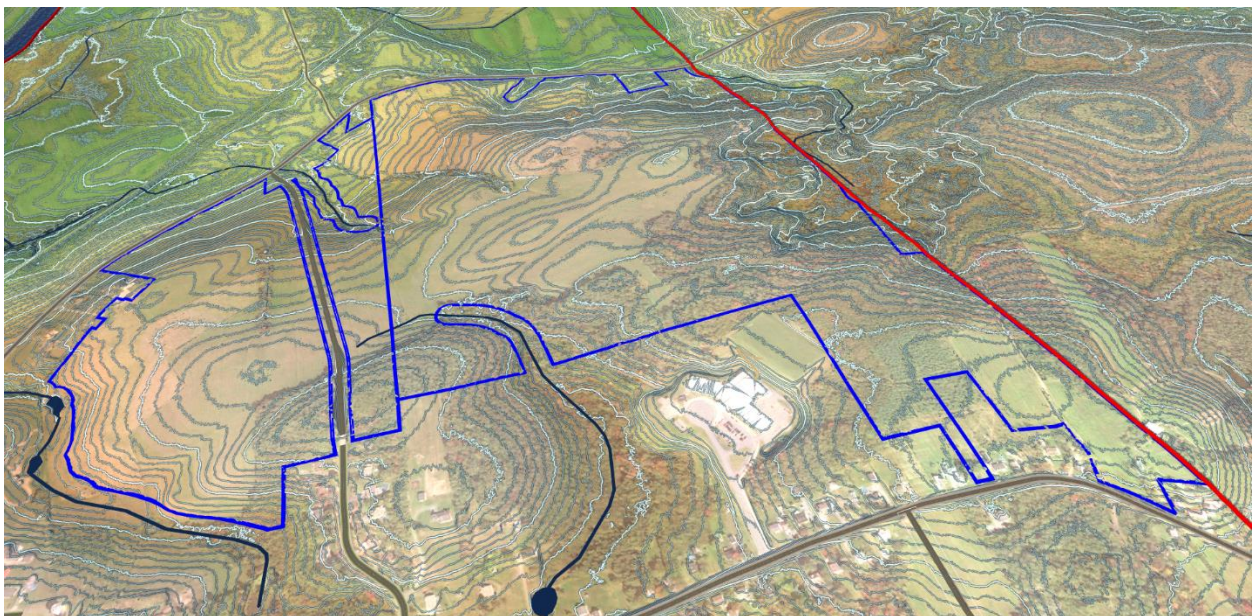


Figure 7-12 Conceptual Development Area 11

Area 12 is dominated by a large drumlin in the centre, sloping towards Trunk 2 to the west, and towards the St. Andrews River to the east (As shown on Figure 7-13). Is bound by the golf course to the south and features a creek on the north side. Development of this area would be terraced; it would be possible to extend Little Road to connect to St. Andrews Street, thereby forming a complete loop. The south-eastern corner of this area slopes towards the St. Andrews River and would be difficult to service.

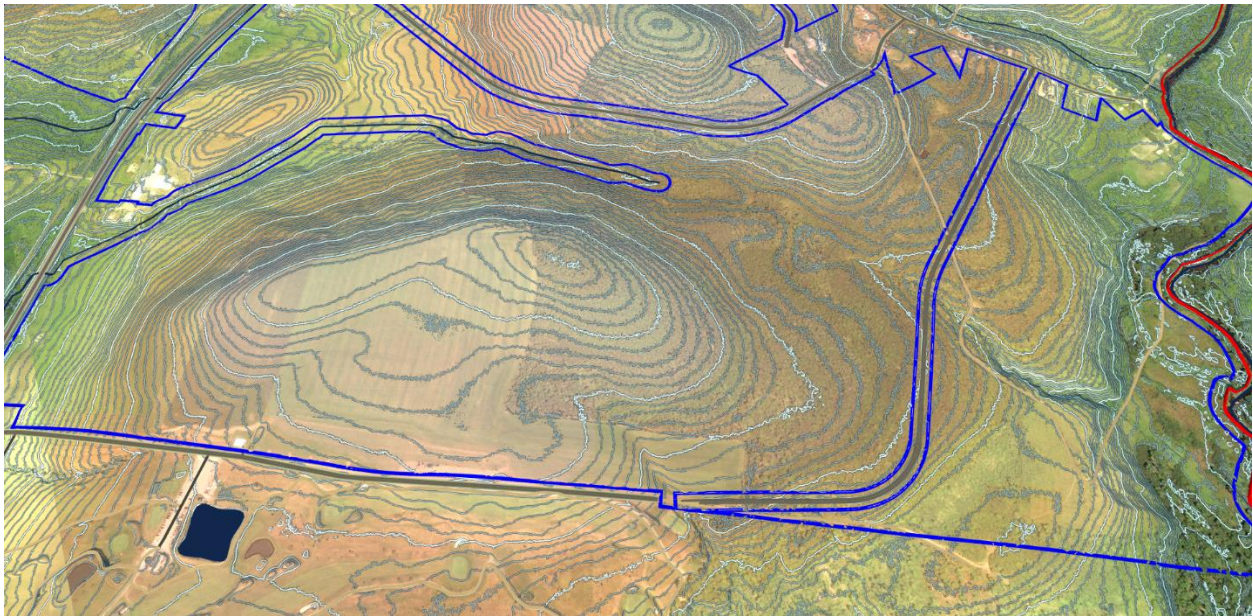


Figure 7-13 Conceptual Development Area 12

Several density typologies can be considered for development areas, ranging from very low-density of 2-4 dwellings per hectare, through the current Stewiacke average of about 8 dwellings per hectare, to much higher densities of 17-35 dwellings per hectare (as summarized in Table 7-4).

Table 7-4: Development Densities

Development Pattern	Persons per Hectare	Dwellings per Hectare
Sparse	4	2.2
Low Density	8	3.7
Stewiacke Average	13	8
Medium Density	28	13.7
High Density	36	17
Dense	70	35

As presented in Table 7-5, the development of a few of these candidate development area at historical densities would accommodate the Anticipated High Growth scenario.

Table 7-5 Potential Development Yield

Development Area	Total Hectares	Units (Sparse)	Units (Low)	Units (Stewiacke Average)	Units (Medium)	Units (High)
1	56	160	320	520	1120	1440
2	93	260	540	870	1870	2420
3	20	60	120	180	420	520
4	14	40	80	140	290	370
5	46	130	250	430	950	1200
6	16	50	90	160	330	420
7	29	50	140	260	560	730
8	22	50	130	210	460	570
9	64	170	360	590	1300	1670
10	55	150	310	500	1110	1420
11	86	250	490	800	1730	2230
12	147	410	830	1360	2960	3800

7.5 Flood & Erosion Risk

We note that the Town has not directly addressed the risk of erosion and flooding along the banks of the Shubenacadie and Stewiacke Rivers. Both are within the tidal range of the Bay of Fundy, and are therefore considered coastal areas, subject to upcoming regulations under the Coastal Protection Act. The Act will place the requirements of horizontal and vertical setbacks from the ordinary high-water mark, to reduce the risk of development being exposed to erosion and flood. The horizontal setbacks may extend beyond the 20m currently required under the Town's Land Use By-Law, to as much as 80-100m. Any development proposed along the riverbanks should have an erosion assessment study done by a qualified engineer, to confirm the risks and design accordingly, until such time as further direction is provided by the provisions of the Act.

The Town may also proactively undertake a townwide study, following the recommendations and specifications of provincial staff.

7.6 Transportation System Options

To improve overall circulation and enhance the experience of multi-modal users in Downtown Stewiacke, we recommend incorporating complete streets road design principles, which prioritize the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. This may involve widening sidewalks, installing clearly marked crosswalks, and reducing vehicle speeds.

Overall, we believe that incorporating complete streets road design principles in partnership with policies to support efficient land use can help to revitalize the downtown area and make it more appealing to residents and visitors alike. By prioritizing the needs of all road users and creating a vibrant, walkable, and accessible downtown area, it can help to support local businesses, promote active transportation, and build stronger, more connected communities.

- ▶ Initiate the development of an Active Transportation Plan to set the foundation for developing a well-connected, attractive active transportation network that is safe, convenient, and user-friendly.
- ▶ Initiate the development of a sidewalk/crosswalk remediation plan to improve the condition of existing sidewalks and related pedestrian infrastructure to comply with provincial standards.
- ▶ Conduct a pilot program to test the viability of the preferred design concept for the reconfiguration of roads in the downtown core.

7.6.1 Regional Roads

Considering the connectivity and circulation bottleneck formed in the Downtown area, further expansion of the Town's built-up area should be conducted with a matching expansion of the road network. As illustrated conceptually on Figure 7-14, overall connectivity may be enhanced by introducing cross-connections between the radial roads extending from Downtown. This would form additional "rings" around the historical core of Stewiacke, allowing more direct links across Town.

The pace of new construction would dictate the phasing of new roads. Starting with Areas 4-7,

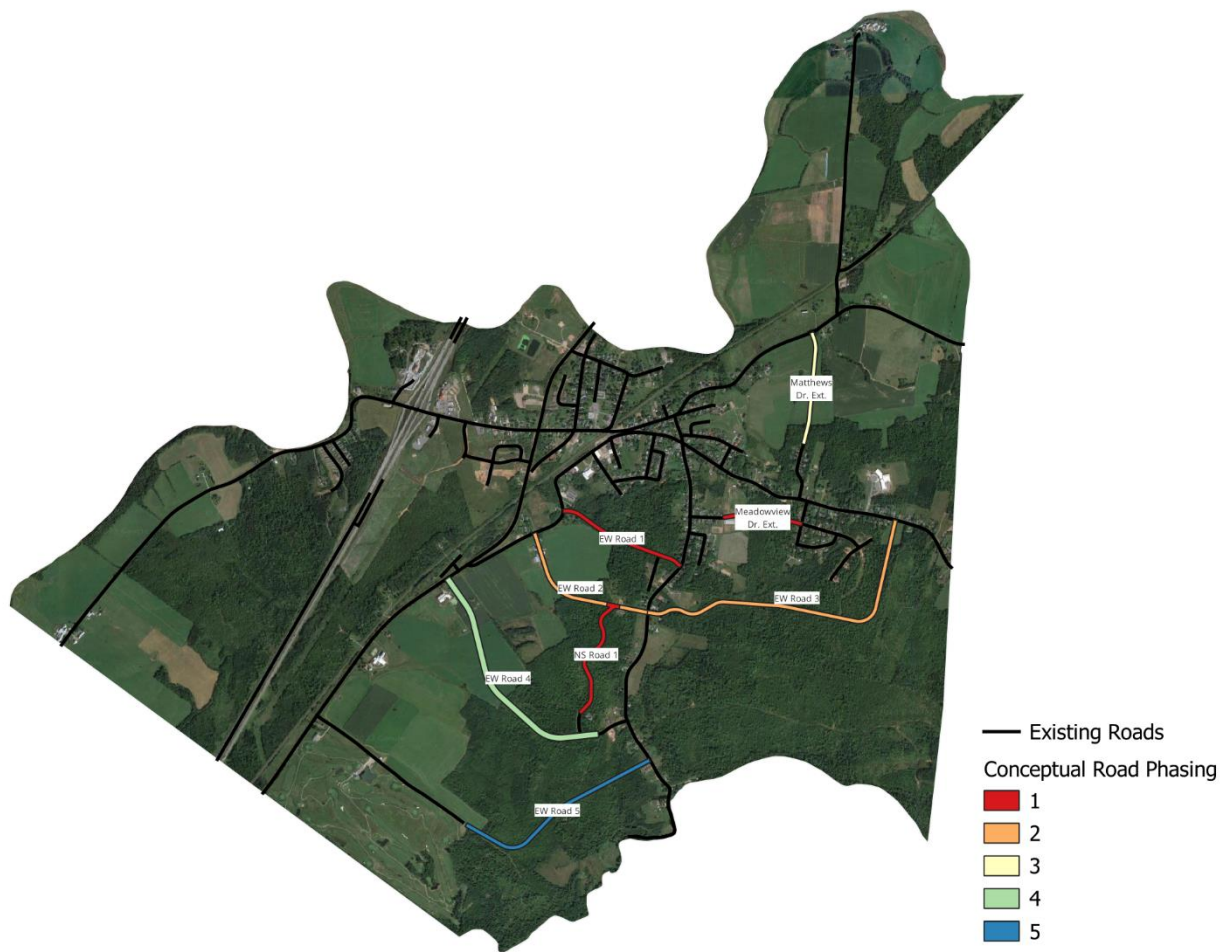


Figure 7-14: Potential New Roads

7.6.2 Active Transportation

Rural areas can often present unique challenges for active transportation. However, there are still opportunities to promote and improve active transportation in Stewiacke. One approach is to focus on improving the safety and accessibility of existing infrastructure, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails. By making these facilities more visible, better maintained, and easier to use, people may be more inclined to walk or bike to local destinations. This could also include adding more benches or rest areas along pedestrian routes, as well as improving wayfinding signage to help people navigate the area more easily.

Another strategy is to promote and support the development of active transportation facilities providing connections local destinations and amenities, such as trails, parks, shopping areas, and community centers. These destinations can serve as anchors for walking and biking trips, providing opportunities for exercise, recreation, and social interaction. By connecting these destinations with safe and accessible infrastructure, the

Town can create more vibrant and appealing areas that encourage people to get outside and explore their surroundings.

Overall, promoting active transportation requires a multifaceted approach that addresses both infrastructure and destination development. By adopting a proactive and collaborative approach, the Town can create a more livable, healthy, and sustainable environment that supports active transportation for all residents. As discussed in section 2.3, the *Walk and Wheel Pedestrian Infrastructure Analysis Report* provides recommendations for both section-specific improvements along Main Street East and West as well as broader recommendations for policy, programming and further studies. While the recommendations outlined in the walkability report provide a guide for improvements to the pedestrian environment within the project's Main Street study area, improvements to the town-wide active transportation network are needed to address deficiencies and provide safe multi-modal travel options and reduce dependence on cars for transportation.

Recommendations

- ▶ Initiate the development of an Active Transportation Plan to set the foundation for developing a well-connected, attractive active transportation network that is safe, convenient, and user-friendly.
- ▶ Initiate the development of a sidewalk/crosswalk remediation plan to improve the condition of existing sidewalks and related pedestrian infrastructure to comply with provincial standards.

Both infill and greenfield development bring the potential for improved Active Transportation connectivity, as they would open new road links and connections across Town. As discussed further below, these development areas feature engaging topographies, with access to a significant creek and ravine system. Development would thus carry the opportunity to develop a well-connected trail system tying new built areas to the core of Stewiacke and promoting an active mobility pattern.

7.6.3 Downtown Reconfiguration

The existing auto-centric road layout within the downtown core has narrow sidewalks and lacks cycling facilities. As illustrated in Figure 7-15, the current design does not provide a safe environment for active transportation users, nor does it create an environment that is inviting for residents and visitors to visit and spend time. The opportunity exists to reconfigure the road network with an improved pedestrian and streetscape environment, allowing improved circulation, to promote activity, enhance the downtown experience, and support thriving adjacent land uses. Three conceptual layouts have been prepared to demonstrate what reconfiguration of the downtown road network could look like; they are described below and presented in larger format in Appendix C.

7.6.3.1 Existing Layout



Figure 7-15: Downtown Existing Conditions

7.6.3.2 Concept 1: Downtown Loop

In Concept 1, Main Street East maintains two-way traffic movement while George Street would be reduced to one-way movement eastbound between Maple Avenue and Kitchener Street (see Figure 7-16). Essentially, this design creates a simplified loop that reduces vehicular conflict points in front of Town Hall, while maintaining two-way flow at the four main access points into the Downtown area. Under the existing layout, parking is informal making parking spaces difficult to distinguish. Concept 1 would formalize parking by incorporating clearly delineated spaces for back-in angled parking on George Street across from Town Hall.

Furthermore, the adoption of back-in angled parking over parallel parking would present several advantages:

- ▶ The driver has a better view of vehicles and bicycles when exiting the parking space into the travel lane.
- ▶ Removes the difficulty of backing into moving traffic.
- ▶ Easier than parallel parking.
- ▶ More efficient use of space.
- ▶ Encourages vehicles to travel at slower speeds.



Figure 7-16: Downtown Loop

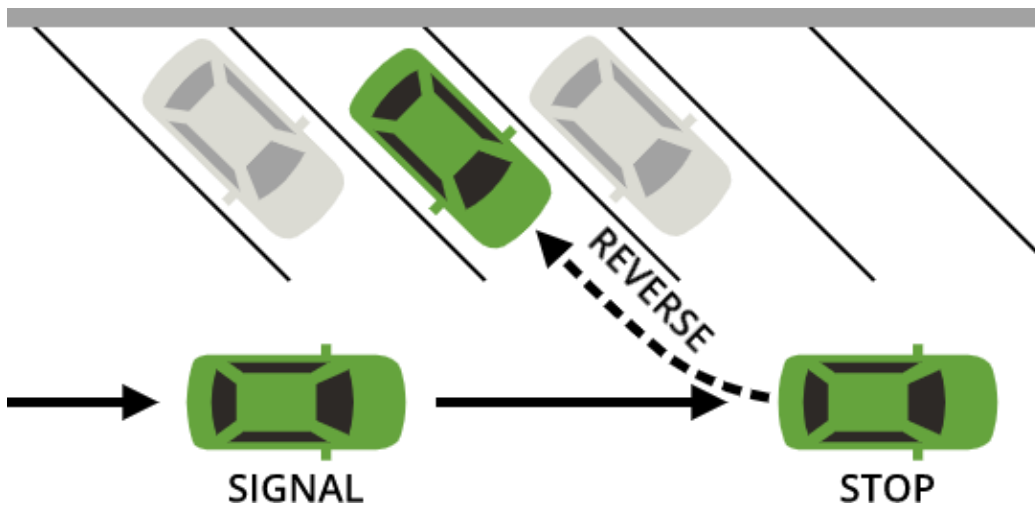


Figure 7-17: Back-in Angled Parking

Additional parking spaces would be provided by formalizing parking on the land currently used for parking across from Home Hardware and adjacent to the train tracks, improving the efficiency of the space. Lastly, concept 1 would result in an increased amount of green space for public use.

An additional advantage of this concept is that it does not require additional pavement, only the re-allocation of existing space. It would therefore be possible to test this concept on a temporary basis using non-permanent materials such as bollards, planters, paint, and signage (see Figure 7-18). We recommend the Town conduct a pilot program to test the viability of the designs until roads come up for recapitalization, at which point permanent changes can be introduced.



Figure 7-18: Example – Use of Removable Bollards and Paint



Figure 7-19: One-way street pilot project conducted in Saint Andrews, NB.

7.6.3.3 Concept 2: Downtown Intersection

Concept 2 would reconfigure the road layout to create a 4-way stop intersection with potential for signalization (see Figure 7-20). The single-point intersection reduces the complexity of the existing road network and reduces vehicle conflict points. This layout would retain all movements across the Downtown, while recovering orphaned open spaces for other uses such as parks or development. Driveway access can be maintained, but most parking would be relocated to a formalized parking lot across the Home Hardware site.

Unlike the Loop, Concept 2 would require reconfiguration of road alignments and the construction of a new intersection roughly in the middle of the Downtown green space. It would require removal of curbs, and the pavement of new road segments, and would therefore not be suitable for a pilot project. A traffic microsimulation analysis using the PTV VISSIM software suggests that a 4-way stop control would operate very well with current vehicular volumes during both the weekday AM and PM peak hours (see Figure 7-21 to Figure 7-24) for speed and Level of Service results.



Figure 7-20: Downtown Intersection



Figure 7-21 4-Way Intersection - Speeds - AM Peak Hour

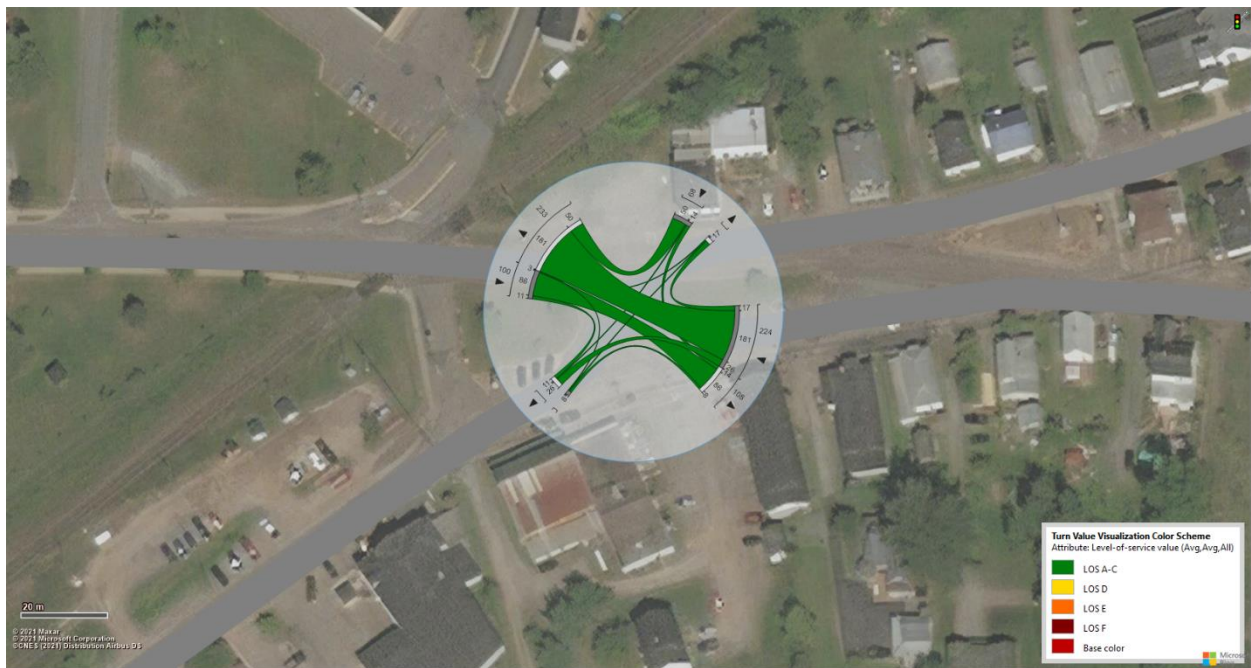


Figure 7-22 4-Way Intersection - LOS - AM Peak Hour



Figure 7-23 4-Way Intersection - Speeds - PM Peak Hour

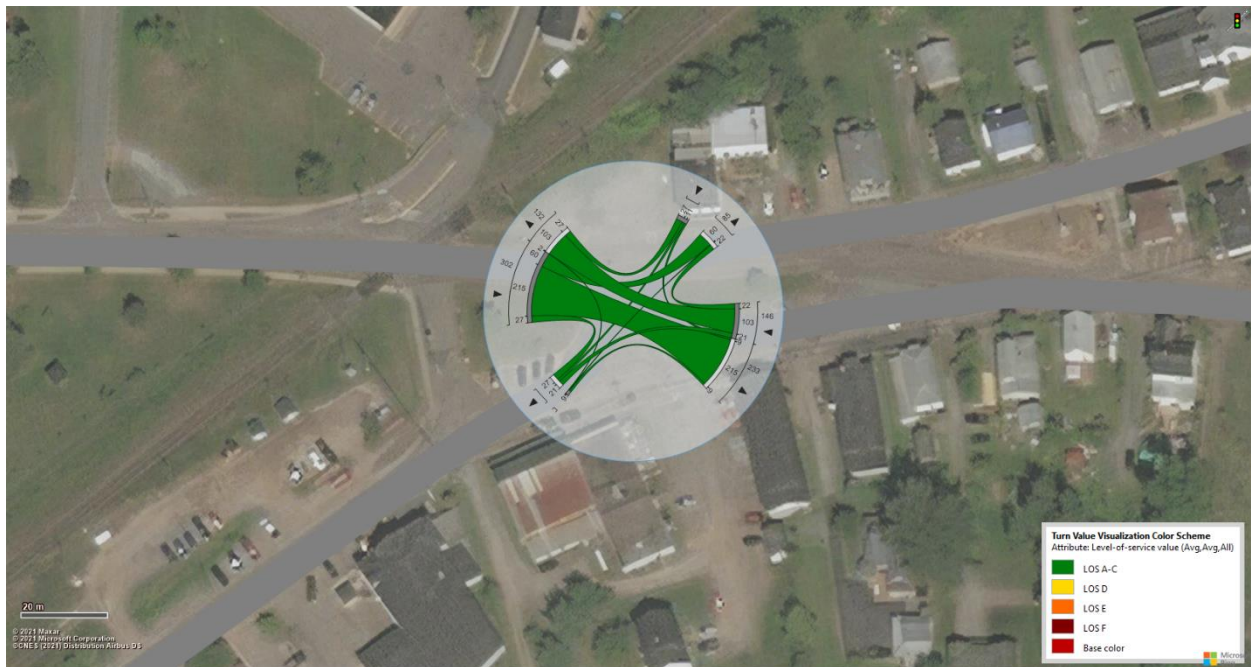


Figure 7-24 4-Way Intersection - LOS - PM Peak Hour

7.6.3.4 Downtown Roundabout

Concept 3 would present a variation on the 4-way intersection, with a single-lane roundabout (see Figure 7-25). Given the narrowness of the Downtown, however, the roundabout would be limited to an inscribed diameter of 34m. While a roundabout reduces complexity and has the potential to provide higher vehicular capacity than is possible in a stop-controlled intersection, it presents some constraint on larger vehicles through its small size. Large trucks would still be able to negotiate all movements but will have to do so at reduced speeds and with more care.

This concept would also increase the amount of usable space in the area, allowing for more place-making. Since vehicles are not forced to stop, this concept would not have the same traffic calming effect as the 4-way intersection. As with Concept 2, a roundabout would require some reconstruction of the area, and it would not be feasible to test on a trial basis. Current on-street parking would be accommodated on a formalized lot on the site of the old train station; access to Whistler's Pub parking may also need to be redirected via Maple Avenue, alongside Home Hardware.

VISSIM microsimulation analysis suggests that this roundabout configuration would operate equally well to the 4-way intersection.



Figure 7-25: Downtown Roundabout

7.7 Open House

On February 2, 2023, the consultant team and staff hosted an Open House at the Community Centre. At this event we interacted with approximately 22 residents in-person. The Open House was live streamed on Zoom and approximately 6 people attended the event virtually. Members of the Town Council and staff were also in attendance. The event was advertised on the Town's website, newsletter, and on Facebook.

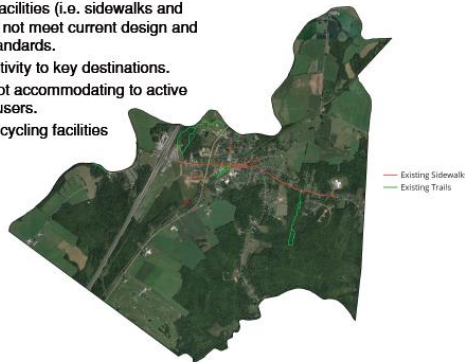
The purpose of the Open House was to share an update on the project with the community, and engage the public on the Emerging Directions and their vision for Downtown. In addition to introducing the project and sharing what we had heard so far, the following boards were also presented at the Open House (Figure 7-26 to Figure 7-28). They detail the Town's current Active Transportation Network, two preliminary road realignment concept designs for the Downtown, and maps identifying areas for residential growth.

The board content was discussed in detail during the Open House presentation. CBCL also provided an update on analysis into the Town's water and wastewater capacity.

Active Transportation (AT)

Existing Conditions - key issues

- » Many walking facilities (i.e. sidewalks and crosswalks) do not meet current design and accessibility standards.
- » Limited connectivity to key destinations.
- » Downtown is not accommodating to active transportation users.
- » No designated cycling facilities



AT Network Concept

- » Upgrade existing facilities to meet design and accessibility standards.
- » Connectivity to key destinations (i.e., Downtown, recreation facilities, Mastodon Ridge, school).
- » Encourages choice of using active transportation.
- » Contributes to a vibrant and active Downtown Stewiacke.

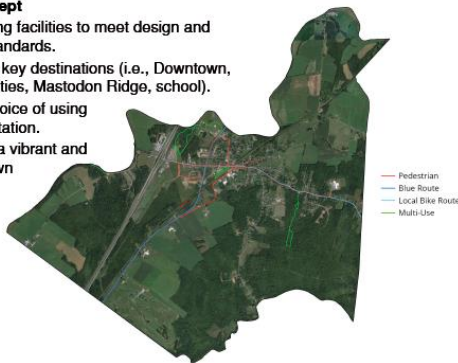


Figure 7-26: Active Transportation Network Board

Downtown Design Concepts

Existing Conditions - Issues and Opportunities



» The existing road layout within the downtown core is auto-oriented, has narrow sidewalks, lacks cycling facilities, and does not provide a safe and inviting street environment.

» The opportunity exists to reconfigure the road network with an improved pedestrian and streetscape environment, allowing improved circulation, to promote activity, enhance the Downtown experience, and support thriving adjacent land uses.

Draft Design Concept A



- » Simplified one-way loop
- » George St becomes one-way eastbound after Home Hardware.
- » Main St East becomes one-way westbound between Public Works Building and Asquith Ave.
- » Increases public green space.
- » Reduced vehicle conflict points.

Draft Design Concept B



- » Simplified one-way loop
- » Main St East becomes one-way westbound between 96 Main St E and Asquith Ave.
- » Increases public green space.
- » Maintains two-way access to/from Kitchener St and Main St East in the east.



Figure 7-27: Downtown Road Realignment Concepts Board

Long-Term Development & Density

Development within existing service boundaries

Development within potential commuter rail catchment area

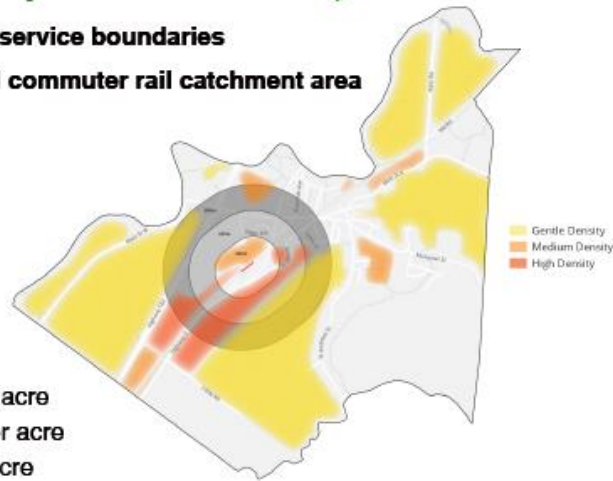
- » 300m, 600m, 900m

Variety of housing types

- » Multi-unit apartments
- » Townhouses
- » Duplex and triplex
- » Single family homes

Proposed density targets

- » Gentle Density: 0-4 ppl per acre
- » Medium Density: 4-9 ppl per acre
- » High Density: 10+ ppl per acre



What can growth look like in Stewiacke?

Downstreet and Main Street Areas



Transit Oriented Multi-Unit Housing



Figure 7-28: Residential Growth Opportunities Board

7.7.1 Open House Feedback

Table 7-6 summarizes comments from the presentation question and answer period, and conversations had with the public during the event.

Table 7-6: Open House Comments

<p>Historic Downtown & Road Realignment Concepts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Like the idea of a pedestrian friendly downtown and seeing more people Downtown. Difficult to picture what downtown could be since there's little activity/draws there now. The town hall and legion were considered major draws. Interest in making it more of a destination/draw. Need to envision where and what shops and services would locate there. There used to be more shops and services in the area (e.g. where the new multi-unit housing development is before the old building burned down). ▶ Issues with existing road network: drivers attempting to travel directly from Main St E to George St through the centre; drivers traveling along George St to Kitchener St have to look over left shoulder to see if there is oncoming traffic from Main St E; difficult for drivers to direct people through the downtown to Main St E or Kitchener St; long ended trucks parking in front of the Home Hardware present sight hazard for pedestrians; and speeding through Downtown. ▶ Centre median/green space/ roundabout change would have huge impact on community. Opinions differed on how to slow traffic especially since there have been studies in the past on similar topics and the current design was meant to help with speed. ▶ Concerned that turning George St/Main St into a loop would too confusing and take too much extra travel time. Difficulty for visitors to understand the one-way loop. ▶ The downtown design concepts could help to mitigate speeding issues for vehicles travelling eastbound out of town on Main St. Intervention is needed to slow down westbound vehicles coming into Town. ▶ Some did not like back-in angled parking. May be a preference for drive in rather than back in parking. Perhaps no parking is needed at all if the parking lot across from Home Hardware is formalized. ▶ Not sure if the Downtown green space will be usable. Wouldn't feel safe to have kids play there. The green space in the Hydrostone (in Halifax) works because there are lots of shops and people living nearby – it is a very walkable area. This is not the same context and is more of a thoroughfare to go elsewhere. ▶ Recommendation to keep the loop two way for Main St (Ok for George to become one way with parking). Like option 2 more because its closer to what's already happening and maintains the option to travel in both directions on Main St.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Need to accommodate large logging and dairy trucks that frequently travel on Kitchener and Main. Approx 30 trucks per day through downtown – many milk trucks serving farms. ▶ Need to consider impact on emergency service response time.
Active Transportation & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Interest in connecting Downtown and Uptown for more than vehicles. Important to support other modes of transportation, especially as the Town continues to grow. ▶ Little to do in Stewiacke as a middle aged person. Lots going on for youth and seniors, but adults sleep here not live here.
Vehicle Movement & Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Traffic calming cannot be only at the downtown loop – there needs to be efforts to slow traffic further along Kitchener St and Main St E between Downtown and the east boundary of town. ▶ Residents of properties adjacent to Hwy 2/Main St have concerns about traffic volumes at peak pm hours. ▶ Interest in connecting Riverside Ave to Ridge Ave & Hwy 2. ▶ Overnight freight trains blare horns at odd hours of the night which can disturb nearby residents and guests.
Additional Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The properties on the four corners of Hwy 2/Main St were said to have been purchased some time ago by Provincial Dept of Public Works to accommodate a redesign of the intersection. Questions remain about project status and timeline. ▶ Concern about the tax base and where funding will come from for various projects, including library, streetscape changes, and utility upgrades. ▶ Residents spoke both for and against investing in a new library. Those in favor spoke to its potential benefits as a community hub, retail space and meeting area. Those opposed questioned how it would be funded and how the Town could afford it given other infrastructure/ utility investment priorities. ▶ The plan should consider the needs for community-based arts spaces and programming in Stewiacke (see Appendix 5.2 for letter submitted by the Rising Tides Art Society). ▶ Need to clarify infrastructure capacity and whether it can support immediate growth. ▶ Need to explain why some residents have brown water – is it specific to the properties or system wide?



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APPENDIX A

Community Survey Open Ended Comments

On the topic of "population growth and shifting demographics" is there anything we should look into more deeply?

- Opportunities for all ages - preschool children to older adults
- I like the prospect and location for a new library but the current lot has nice market vendors throughout the summer which is huge for a small rural community. This is something that should be expanded on. Somewhere people can go to buy local things, enjoy nature outside, and gather as a community. Something that people would drive out here to come to. People want a deeper connection to their food and community which this should provide
- Access to public transit in downtown or possibly elsewhere (eg maritimes bus / taxi / and particularly shuttle similar to trans county transportation services [tcts} based in bridgetown, ns) the shuttle service mentioned could cater to all but particularly those having medical appointments in halifax or truro areas.
- Developing drainage management plans for the entire town, as well as requiring drainage plans for be incorporated into all subdivision approvals for new development
- Green space or buffer requirements in all new development approvals
- Consider needs for water, wastewater, and runoff/ drainage controls with increased population growth
- The whole province has an aging population and so does the town. Overall it is nice to have younger families choosing stewiacke. We should place equal focus on both age demographics. Access to get around town in all seasons for walking and on a scooter, biking lanes, and transport assistance services should be implement. Subsidies if required. This would also open all areas of the town to support home businesses.
- Eliminate the types of housing allowed in the town of stewiacke. Modular (or mini) homes have progressed in design over the years, they are stylish, one-level, and affordable to purchase, own and maintain.
- Infrastructure, roads and water/sewer expansion to all areas in town limits
- There is a lack of opportunities for people to spend money in the community/fuel the economy. We are in need of an area(s) for people young and elderly to spend time and enjoy. The only spot we have to offer for that currently would be maybe whistlers pub, however, it could use some "competition" to drive their workforce a little more.
- I feel like although the average income may be 70k something, a large portion of people are much much lower than that in income and are having a hard time finding accommodation here
- Infrastructure to support increased population growth (water supply, sewer lines, roads etc. For example).
- The streets are a mess. The potholes are getting much worse and it is not a 'new' issue. Across from the park we dodge the holes. Below town across from the fire

hall, beside the newest buildings the street is dangerous as we have to dodge more traffic and bigger holes.

- Limited child care options for early years, with only one day care in the community we are forced to travel to halifax to find care
- Affordable housing/apartments. Most people can't afford upwards of 1500\$a month in rent for a small apartment. Also affordable senior housing.
- Capacity for water supply and sewage treatment to accommodate growth
- Need for improved street and sidewalk maintenance
- Development of drainage management plans
- Incorporating green space requirement in development plans
- Assessing need and potential for incorporating access to public transit (eg bus /taxi) into downtown area
- Forecast income growth as well. It would be interesting to see if new residents moving into town will increase the average income, and create the need to reassess needs/wants more regularly. Engage the community more often and through various channels; i'm only aware of the one december meeting. This survey is very appreciated but is it being distributed further than through facebook? It's important to hear all voices by expanding communication methods and strategies.
- Create and publish (widely through various accessible channels) more volunteer opportunities, e.g., park/garden ambassadors, rec assistants, senior and youth, special events, etc...
- No, but as a relative newcomer to the community, i do think the challenge of developing a sense of community for newcomers along with traditional stewiacke people is formidable. There seems to be certain activities that only newcomers participate in, and separate activities that old timers participate in.
- Ensuring there are adequate medical facilities for the population growth i.e.
- Medical doctors, dentists, optometrist etc
- Also a gymnasium/fitness center would make sense for the community too.
- The impact housing has on our water supply.
- Water supply/ quality is an issue already, is there a plan to deal with this when the population increases?
- What about the environmental impact on continued growth? Specifically, our town's water and waste water infrastructure cannot continue to accommodate the shifting demographics. The town doesn't even own the land the water source comes from nor is there a signed agreement.
- If your trying to increase population of stewiacke you need a proper infrastructure as the present water system cannot handle the present residents of stewiacke barely wash dishes or bath. Second if residents are paying the high taxes they deserve the services. So fix what you have before expanding.
- Why are our taxes significantly higher than surrounding areas?

- The process for new builds in stewiacke does not seem effective. The apartments downtown have left loose gravel in front that is constantly falling into the sidewalk to the point that my young child can't enjoy biking there. The development on ruby's way has been a mess for neighbours with windcrest ave being damaged (since fixed) and what seems to be little to no regard for clearance at lot edges.
- I hope to see real attention given to our seniors and their ability to access services within their community
- And to keep the communities average income in mind when moving forward with growth so no one is ' left behind
- Demographic data should be compiled and shared with the community and be part of the plan, if it hasn't been done already. In addition to considering needs of families with children, sustainable growth planning should explicitly consider the growing needs of older seniors who want to stay in the community for their whole lives, and have different needs from younger residents and families as they age. Specific types of housing (smaller, accessible, easy to maintain especially outdoors), recreation opportunities that focus on social aspects for seniors, and, in particular, local availability of support services (such as home care, property maintenance services, grocery delivery, transit) and assisted living facilities, are needed to enable this and should be encouraged with thoughtful policy and town initiatives following from a strategy.
- A new library is needed. Pretty cramped for evening activities and group socials.
- A community rider for people who have disabilities is needed .
- Affordable housing is needed badly.
- Downtown core or historic downtown. Need a vision for this. A place for shops or boutique type shops, cafés, unique type shops. But there will need to be some signage to direct traffic from highway 102 and # 2 to venture in. This will help those who can't get to uptown and also improve look and feeling of historic downtown.
- The seniors that live downtown need a way to get uptown to shop. They don't all drive and some have walking issues.
- There are indeed a variety of housing types being built throughout the town, but we need to take care not to use up all potential community space downtown with residential development. Our downtown should be a place of community and cultural services and with very limited options for the town to develop such things, putting up yet more residential in the downtown will block any opportunity to do that. Nobody will want to visit and stroll around our town if there is nothing to do there. Also, we need to encourage planners to develop a realistic definition of 'affordable' housing. As in - not a \$350,000 home, which was proposed in a past plan. Just because a property is on a postage-stamp sized lot and on top of the one next door, or is an apartment, doesn't mean it's affordable - that means it's high-density. Developers have jumped on the marketing bandwagon with this one and are using the term 'affordable' to advance their projects when it doesn't apply. It

sounds nice, but the reality is that an affordable mortgage for many is \$150,000 or less and for rent, it's \$800/month or less. Affordability is directly related to the cost of rent or mortgage, not density. Citizens will be watching this terminology in future.

- More mention of water infrastructure and school infrastructure concerns if we continue to grow needs to be taken into consideration. Also we don't want to have a tone of apartments making the area too congested.
- While demographics are slowly shifting, the issues facing residents is and continues to be.
- The high rate of property taxes.
- The average income of a household in the town would be closer to 55000.00 not 75000.
- The definition of "" affordable"" housing needs to be defined.
- Yes getting a bank back in stewiacke
- Activities for adults to do as not everyone has kids or are seniors. For example: roller skating, pickle ball, tennis etc.
- There is no discussion about the impact that growth has on our water supply and the surrounding natural habitats

On the topic of "walking, accessibility and cycling" is there anything we should look into more deeply?

- Excellent identification on the key areas requiring change, pedestrian accessibility is becoming more important than ever, steps need to be taken to plan for a future safe network for all. The junction of hwy 2 and main street should use a roundabout to control traffic flow and make it safer for pedestrians, hwy 2 should have sidewalks on either side of the main st intersection. The second possible solution to traffic at the centre of town should have comparable parking incorporated within the island part instead of back-in parking on the street. A 4-way stop should be established at main st east and riverside also at kitchener and st andrews as well as a 3-way at main st east and st andrews.
- Calming traffic is a great opportunity. The challenge is the hwy 2 intersection and higher speed in either direction. I would like to see this become a 4 way stop for the safety of all.
- Not sure if a roundabout is best for hwy 2 junction, simple traffic light that senses vehicles should suffice. Improve sidewalks. Luckily stewiacke is small enough it doesnt really need serious cycling infrastructure, just accessible sidewalks to get around and to other nature trails.
- Crosswalk at post office needs greater visibility and safety measures taken (eg over head lights) particularly since fatality occurred there recently. This is a priority.
- The town knows the challenges yet is not placing a high priority in this area. Consider a complete refocus and redesign in the center of town and then tying divisions throughout the town into the center. Create a flow that encourages

walking, ease of movement through the whole town space. Connect key centers like the community center to library to parks and trails to the school and key facilities we have in the town, like the horse barns. Consider these designs with emphasis on ease of flow, beautification, safe access for all age groups, and creating a walking mobility through the whole of the town. This will foster small home business growth. And have a focus to reduce fast driving. Slow down!

- Sidewalks should be widened in most areas of town, especially if a wheelchair is to be able to use them. Some sidewalks also end quite suddenly for residents in those areas, aka main street east. Intersection of riverside and main street east is also highly used and should be examined closely. I think the flags have helped but it is a busy crosswalk.
- Definitely look to take advantage of the green space we can offer in the downtown area block. We need to draw people to want to spend time here/picnic thus wanting to spend money within the downtown core.
- Sidewalks on busy roads such as st. Andrews street
- With the influx of newer homes adds more traffic on that road making it unsafe to walk. People feel they can fly down that road"
- In intersection on main street is a nightmare where people think it is a two way stop when crossing the old highway. There needs to be more clarity and i think full lights there would help. Stopping the old highway with a set of lights. Too many close calls and accidents there from people not understanding when it is their turn to go
- Wheelchair access around town ie stores,library etc.
- As uptown grows, it would be great to have crosswalks and sidewalks. Not just crossing highway 2, but further towards main st west and to mastodon ridge.
- Making the new development areas (nslc, bank machine, future grocery store) walkable or otherwise more easily accessible for those living in the downtown core (community shuttle? Dedicated pedway from downtown?).
- Building a roundabout at hwy 2 & main intersection.
- The sidewalks in town are in terrible shape. It makes it challenging for strollers and walking. In winter, the uneven and patchy sidewalks make ice accumulate. That all being said, our town does a great job with snow and ice removal and maintenance! Proper concrete sidewalks vs asphalt should be constructed.
- Better make crosswalks with lights at all crosswalks. Either lights or a round about at the main intersection.
- Possibility of improving visibility at certain crosswalks with overhead signs /lights where none currently exist (eg near post office)
- Improved sidewalk surfaces for walking
- Consider potential for incorporating certain dykes near town into trail system
- Main road and sidewalk conditions need improvement. Bylaws need to be adhered to, e.g, property conditions, loose and non-stop barking dogs, etc... no use having bylaws if they aren't enforced.

- As a side note, i'm not sure how many people attended to give feedback, and the attendees' diversity, to know if these 'correctly understood' questions provide the proper weighting for direction on future planning decisions. This comment is applicable to all categories of questions on the survey.
- The hwy 2 and pedestrian crosswalk with a roundabout needs to be addressed with the province
- A crosswalk to the community centre and the rec ground will tie them into the greater community and allow for accessible access.
- Along with bike trails , it would be cool to see a bike park with a pump track and some jumps or obstacles. It would be a great way to encourage kids to be active and outside as well as get everyone more interested in cycling. I agree more bike trails is a great idea.
- Cyclist and find cars/trucks are not giving enough space when passing . More walking trails would be great as well. Sidewalks are in very poor shape as well.
- You can't push a stroller on the existing sidewalks in town. I can't imagine how someone with mobility issues moves around
- Too dangerous to walk around town. You take your life in your hands every time you try to use a crosswalk.
- The roadways are already very easy to navigate and understand and changing the intersection near the cenotaph would not be ideal, and make it harder to navigate for anyone who wishes to visit and much harder to tow a trailer in and around which could be an issue considering the amount of tractors and livestock trailers that use that area.
- There should also be an access from joffre st. To the park/athletic fields/walking path north of the community center at the moment you take your life in your hands trying to get across there, and drivers almost always exceed the speed limit coming down the hill. It's dangerous and someone could easily get killed there.
- There should also be an access from joffre st. To the park/athletic fields/walking path north of the community center at the moment you take your life in your hands trying to get across there, and drivers almost always exceed the speed limit coming down the hill. It's dangerous and someone could easily get killed there.
- Sounds like a lot of money to be invested that is good for a healthier community, but current roads in town that are horrendous and require more than a resurfacing need to be addressed first. The rest is luxury.
- Automated flashing crosswalk lights at post office and riverside and main
- Sidewalks out main st east should be extended. There is a very dangerous corner just after the sidewalks end and there is no curb or area to get off the road when walking in this area.
- I worry about speeding traffic on main street around the time that kids are walking to catch the bus/come home from school. Especially in the morning, it's so busy and

traffic is often travelling over 50k. Are there any ways to help decrease speed to make it safer for the kids at this time?

- Already mentioned but hugely agree with improving access via a crosswalk to the recreation grounds, firehall, and uptown. Put a sidewalk on hwy 2.
- These are all important issues but i would worry about fixing our current roads and sidewalks before adding more. Our current sidewalks have asphalt poured over old concrete sidewalks and it rough - a rolled ankle waiting to happen. Riverside dr is borderline impassable for pushing a stroller or pulling a wagon. Adding a sidewalk or path to the community centre isn't worth anything if we can't safely get to the path.
- Additionally, there are things the town could be doing now to make things more accessible. There are no parking spaces or crosswalks painted next to the library/hall and vehicles (predominantly from whistlers) are always blocking the right of way for pedestrians. We also have an issue with people parking up on our sidewalks. I am 100% in favour of adding more to our town so we can enjoy it but it's hard to get excited when the same issues persist with our existing infrastructure.
- I find many distractions coming up to the crosswalk at riverside ... not sure of the solution of if others find the same...
- Also hope to see a round about at the intersection reconsidered
- These are laudable goals and it's important that other aspects of the plan don't inadvertently destroy the desire to walk or cycle to downtown or uptown along main because of excessive commercial development driveways fronting on main. Put the development onto the side streets (eg, gibson drive, entry to old foodland area,etc). Lots of driveways intersecting the main sidewalks and bike paths are dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, etc. The provincial plan to put a roundabout at highway 2 should be opposed because that will cause higher speeds along main and endanger people trying to cross highway 2 even more than at the current crosswalk (which is at least visible straight ahead to cars on highway 2, and won't be if there is a roundabout because drivers will be looking left towards oncoming cars). I suggest a four way stop instead is in stewiacke's best interest. Also when it comes to improving the redesign of downtown, it's important not to lose the character of a town centrepiece that is provided by "squabble green", the cenotaph and the old post office (don't pave over everything for the sake of more parking as has been proposed in the past by adjacent business owners). This area provides the town with its centre and area of focus, and it should be enhanced as part of a redesign. An additional goal should be to reduce the road surface area and increase green and amenities (add flowers, maybe public art).
- I agree that the crosswalk across the #2 is not very safe for residents. Once you cross over, it would be great to have a sidewalk to the recreation centre/fire department.

- I think having a safer intersection, with a sidewalk directly to the community centre is huge. It will also help pedestrians travel uptown.
- A sidewalk is needed beyond the elementary school on kitchener street heading towards town limits. This is a safety issue for staff and students who walk to school. Especially in the winter trying to navigate on icy road shoulders.
- Biking trails
- These are all very important issues.
- Speed is another factor that needs to be heavily considered.
- Speeding along kitchener st continues to worsen with every summer.
- Please consider speed bumps nearest to the school zone along kitchener street to reduce speed.
- Biking for sure a road resign would benefit, and new paving
- Fix the sidewalks we have. They are broken and uneven. They can not be cleared of snow and ice properly. They are dangerous!
- Parking on george st between home hardware and frank's pizza is a disaster. Fire hydrant constantly blocked. Cars park where a sidewalk should be. Pulling out of laundry/library lot is dangerous. The whole strip is not safe for walking.
- The diagonal parking strip is not deep enough to accommodate long trucks/vans.
- Many sidewalks need resurfacing to allow safer walking.
- We have several small trails, is there a way to link them to make a bigger trail.
- Traffic calming also required on kitchener street a major throughway from the upper stewart, musquodoboit areas.
- I think you've covered just about everything.
- The intersection of main street and highway 2 should receive priority for a four-way stop, traffic lights, roundabout - whatever can be done. There is a well-known crosswalk to go from the corner of main to pick up the sidewalk on the other side, but there are no marked crosswalks to cross main street at the intersection for a person wanting to cross to the new subdivision. Vehicles coming into town on main street east are chronically too fast. We need traffic calming at the top of the hill just before entering the residential area of town and also between the st. Andrews st. Intersection and the cenotaph stop sign. Love the idea of placemaking downtown.
- With the increase of new homes and more to come, I'm concerned about the excessive speeding on St Andrews Road. Many, many people run, walk their dogs and bike on this road and with no sidewalks and the pavement worn at the edges makes barely enough room for a car it is dangerous, especially at night. More recently after fiona, there was damage to trees that have not been properly cleaned up and a light is still out at the crest of a blind hill near #156 making that blind crest black at night. Adding proper sidewalks on this road and or installing speed bumps would drastically reduce speed making it safer for residents and pet to make use of a lovely road without constant concern for vehicles racing by.

- Highway # 2 is very busy and i don't think a 'walking path' would suffice for access to the community centre and rec grounds. A proper sidewalk with curbs (similar to hilden and shubie) is required.

On the topic of "a changing downtown, main street, and uptown" is there anything we should look into more deeply?

- Better define the crucial role of a new library in attracting growth, it's not just a book lender but a community resource centre.
- Affordable housing is an issue in every community. Ensure there are plans in the downtown area for this so services are within walking distance for residents.
- Perhaps a new grocery store at the highway and redevelop the foodland lot into a community farmers market venue. Uptown should be more retail while downtown should have more services and community engagement.
- Plan for future commuter rail transit. Despite nothing planned provincially and cn ownership of tracks, the towns along hwy 2 could easily be reconnected for commuter transit between truro and halifax. This would bring people into the community to boost the economy, while allowing denser developments to preserve the natural landscape we all love and enjoy.
- Consider improving access to public transit in downtown, or possibly elsewhere (eg maritimes bus / taxi / and particularly shuttle similar to trans county transportation services [tcts} based in bridgetown, ns) the shuttle service mentioned could cater to all but particularly those having medical appointments in halifax or truro areas.
- Consider co-locating transit station(s) at or near library location. Maybe coffee shop as well.
- Consider business related traffic to shops and services located east of the cenotaph on main st east, when trying to quiet traffic with a round about or otherwise. While a roundabout may be preferable to creating a one-way street situation, the round about would need to be more "round or oval" than "square or a rectangle". Traffic should continue to flow and not have to stop (or nearly stop to negotiate a right angle turn as presently shown on options mapping. The priority should be traffic / pedestrian safety, not trying to turn the green space into a park. At least one of the affected businesses (the b&b) caters to clients (frequently from other countries) who are totally unfamiliar with the area, generally arriving at night, and who are in unfamiliar rental cars - making finding their destination challenging. This makes simple and straight forward routes and signage a necessity in order to reach their destination safely.
- Pursue quieting of residential areas near the railway crossing, while striving to "quiet" and slow traffic in the downtown for pedestrian use. It would be a priority for residents in the surrounding area to have the train whistle discontinued at night to allow "as of right" peaceful enjoyment of their property. This action is an increasingly important priority and benefit to town residents as residential development is increasing near the train crossing area. This action would also very

much benefit businesses eg the b&bs in town. Safety at the crossing would not be compromised as the gate, bells ,and flashing lights preclude anyone from entering the trains path. The whistle, particularly at night, is simply redundant, unnecessary, and disruptive."

- Think about parking too
- I feel that the town hasn't taken into consideration the amount of seniors who walk to foodland. I feel quite sorry for them. They lost a bank machine and now foodland is going.
- I believe to have a concept of a 'main st' will not work. In the uptown area we are seeing those main types of business required (nslc, foodland, fastfood, gas) and maybe in time, all on it's own, we will see a bit more. Redefine the main st model. Create the flow, look into shared street spaces design, and you will see an organic sprouting up of small service business that can make the pedestrian drop in. Build and design with a moto, live, work and play in your town. With climate, fuel costs, wellness and health as our responsibility, stewiacke can services all these aims for a sustainable future. Halifax, enfield and truro give us the access to all major needs. Stewiacke is a home community.
- Keeping amenities downtown, especially for seniors and those not able to drive as often. Simple groceries and atms being moved are not so simple for those involved. Its not ideal for the commercial buildings to be completely separate from the residential buildings, there needs to be a mix in order for growth to be maintained and walkability.
- I feel taking advantage of the mixed use buildings would be perfect for the historic downtown core. This could be used again to encourage more people to the downtown area while also giving housing options.
- It is a shame first the bank and now the groceries are going so far away from the seniors they will not be able to walk to obtain these services. We do not have public transit of any kind to help them
- A huge new library is going to be a waste of tax payer's dollars. Yes, likely a new library is needed, but it should not be big !
- There are not a lot of options for commercial rental in the downtown area currently
- A new library should not be a consideration, it should be considered a necessity. This should be at the top of the councils list of things to fix. A pool with a gym should also already be in the works with the population growth there is absolutely more demand for this service.
- Assessing need and potential for incorporating access to public transit (eg bus /taxi) into downtown area
- Encourage suitable new businesses to locate in downtown core where properties have been left vacant through closures or relocation (eg old foodland property)

- There are several buildings that appear abandoned and are not only visually unappealing but dangerous. Their condition may also be distracting new residents and businesses. How can we deal with that?
- Re: the section below...i don't know enough about our current overall rec programs, which are successful, the costs or each, or which new programs would be beneficial, to respond on behalf of stewiacke. Personally, however, i think a pickle ball/tennis court would be popular.
- It would be great to see more restaurants downtown.
- Would love to have another restaurant (not fast food)
- A mix is residents homes and businesses is just what makes stewiacke unique, and making it all commercial would take away some of its charm and make into more a a situation like sackville. It's a rural town.
- I agree with all points except a new library in stewiacke. This concept should not even be considered. I would like to see viable robust data to support a new library in the community. How many people access the library on a daily basis? What age groups? What times each day? Show me credible evidence that would support my tax dollars going into a new library versus road improvements or reliable water sources. A town of approx. 1500 people cannot fiscally support a new library. It is an irresponsible idea when everyone is financially strained in our current economic climate.
- Why is there not consideration of a multi use building for town hall and library. When there is multi-use building there not money spent on multiple buildings and multiple maintenance cost.
- Focus on commercial on the bottom with residential above for main street. I picture one of the most scenic and best main streets in nova scotia; wolffville. A lot of the commercial spaces have residential above.
- There needs to be some significant thought put into the main st and highway 2 intersection in terms of traffic measures. The town is getting too busy for a two-way stop intersection. If more businesses come downtown, this will only increase the problem.
- The downtown core has a lot of potential. I really like the new cafe and i think it would go great with a library in the same space. I picture the halifax library where there is a coffee shop built in but you can also access from outside and not go to the library. The current library is not attractive and is dungy and old.
- One of the most important items to keep in mind is the fire station. The town is one of the fastest growing in nova scotia and the infrastructure and services need to grow with it. With the new buildings and technology (electric charging at petro can) the fire station needs new equipment. They're running out of space and are crammed to provide all of the services they do. They desperately need more space, whether that is a renovation or a new building. The community centre above is the centre of the community and should not be forgotten. The dances and community

events that are hosted there bring everyone closer together and are the life and spirit of stewiacke."

- The library is the most important development for me and my family. It is amazing to be able to have access to this space but the current space is not user friendly as everyone already knows. Let's get this project going!
- I like the idea of mixed commercial/residential buildings. I am sad that foodland is moving uptown. I walk there often and it's easy for me to continue to do so uptown however it's will be difficult for seniors/kids. Children enjoy walking to foodland to get treats but i won't be letting them cross hwy 2 until there are improvements in the saftey.
- I'm not sure residential densification will have a big impact on traffic patterns. Most live too far away to comfortably walk downtown and back (especially those with young families).
- I would be staunchly opposed to considering development agreements as a method to allow for mixed-use buildings. The last one of those to get approved wound up being a 6 unit apartment building that has rocks bleeding onto the sidewalk, cigarette butts all over the ground in one end of the building, and broken glass on the sidewalk every second week by its garbage area. They are a ticket for someone to ""build apartments with the understanding that the main floor could be converted to commercial"" - with our housing shortage, who is going to successfully make that change without grief and pushback. Make it commercial or leave it residential - straddling the line is not a good move for our town. I get angry every time i walk by that new building on main - it was a big mistake and we were better off with an empty lot. I'm very pro-development but that was a big miss.
- Allowing more commercial development directly fronting on main street between the uptown and downtown areas (ie, a commercial 'strip' on the main access into the downtown and surrounding residential area) is likely to have the opposite effect of traffic calming and walkability; see the section of elmsdale between highway 102 and 2 for an example of this. Residents don't want to become another elmsdale with traffic jams to get between their homes and the highways or having to run a gauntlet of commercial exits if walking along main. The more driveway entrances to commercial lots fronting on main, the worse the traffic will become on main. Existing commercial areas in the downtown and uptown areas can accommodate alot more commercial development fronting on entryway side streets, instead of on main. A previous pac designed the uptown area this way on purpose. Stewiacke can still choose not to have the ugly, busy 'strip' entering town that is an undesirable characteristic of most north american towns but has been avoided in much of europe through good planning. Also a vision for main street should include architectural considerations, as per a previous pac's lub. Let's stand out as unique, not repeat the same mistakes as other towns.

- I will be interested to see what happens to the old foodland location. That could be a great space for a recreation space (tennis courts/gym?) If the town was ever able to purchase the land.
- A new library downtown with a cafe and multi use room for hands on craft/trades/homesteading teaching would be amazing
- Parking!! Especially in the summertime with the new splash pad .
- New library would be great with additional computer stations, faxing, copying etc.
- I agree with the downtown not knowing what it wants to be. I really don't consider it a " down town" there are no down town shops to speak of like smaller community-tatamagouche, parrsboro
- Using historic downtown to help create a sense of small town community. Not sure how but i see it as a place to park your car, stroll around. In addition families can feel safe letting their children come to dennis park unattended.
- That's correct - it's not clear if the downtown wants to be residential or a 'main street'. This will be a critical consideration going forward. If we want stewiacke to have a vibrant, interesting and 'visit-worthy' downtown, we need to allow for commercial and social services there. The big river cafe has proven that people will stroll and recreate downtown if given the places to visit. We know the library will be well-visited as will dennis park. We need to also continue to preserve and beautify green space, make sure there are options for cafes and small markets. We need to nurture our downtown. There is already a concrete jungle at the highway 'uptown'. We don't need another one. The downtown should be quaint, attractive and a place where people can relax and recreate.
- This is a complex area and should not be covered under one topic.

Other amenities that are important to consider?

- Activities for all ages considered as there are gaps. The above suggestions are a good start as not everyone has the ability to head into truro.
- Transit and accessibility to nature
- Sports that may be accommodated at the wrc school.
- Walking and hiking trails, rock climbing, year around social center for all ages, and park/garden spaces. .
- Take advantage of our large green spaces and set up orienteering events or outdoor concerts.
- Picnic tables,or places to sit outside
- Arts center
- Ensuring a community centre is maintained if the fire department is replaced.
- Indoor hockey and curling rink. We currently play in brookfield and there are so many stewiackers that we could have a team. I would also love to see an aquatics centre like the east hants aquatics centre built here in our growing town some day.
- Library!!! Rec facility has dance/yoga studio space

- Arts is not represented here at all and can be a large community base hub for many. There seems to be a large growing base of people who are interested in performing arts, visual arts and music. I don't personally live in the area but do have a business in stewiacke.
- Improvements to outdoor facilities and trails
- A family resource centre and community wellness centre that offers parenting classes, cooking/food budgeting , employment support etc.
- Badminton / other sports that might be accommodated at wrc school
- Medical walk-in, shops, healthier sit-down dining, coffee shop, small garden shop - basically new amenities i order to spend locally.
- Community indoor pool
- Adding a chain link fence to the existing basketball court so it could possibly become a multi-sport area (pickle ball, tennis, etc.) And it would become a nicer area to play basketball.
- Soccer fields, it would be great for stewiacke to have its own team again
- A store front to purchase livestock feed or items or horse items as there is a very strong equestrian community present.
- Ask the young people what they would like to see. There are not enough activities in this town for pre-teens and teens.
- Ask the young people what they would like to see. There are not enough activities in this town for pre-teens and teens.
- If you had a community centre/fitness centre that was designed with some of the ideas above it might work. The problem is, big ideas come with big price tags which translates to people paying a lot for the service. If the choice is buying food to feed your family vs a fitness membership, we know the answer.
- Do something with the land the old school used to reside on. Lots of rats and ticks. Perhaps a park for locals living within walking distance.
- Anything that can improve health and recreation of a community is really important. I can't imagine we can do it all but i am really happy with what has happened here over the past few years. And it's important to consider all ages in developing new facilities and spaces. I'd love to see spaces where people that are more hands on can create things, a maker/tinker space? Tool lending library? I think these things could go into the library space possibly? As long as the fitness classes keep continuing through the rec dept i think that is great.
- Green spaces
- A walking track would be popular for many
- Basketball
- Walking and cycling paths linking arterial streets (eg,st andrews to george, kitchener near school to midway up st andrews, etc. Good for kids biking to school and for encouraging walking for access and recreation
- Gym

- The existing no other ideas at this point, but i really appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback as someone who loves outside the town's boundaries!
- Perhaps a fitness centre above the library, or in an old building no longer being used. Or a “sports facility” offering sports for youth, fitness centre, youth groups, classes etc.
- More shopping opportunities: strip malls for clothing retails
- Barber, local meat and veggies.
- Stewiacke rec is doing an amazing job with parks and rec, i just feel that some older children are ruining it with vandalism. Maybe a camera system could be put in, and the vandals put to justice?
- Enhancements to community centre as needed, promoting the arts like plays, music, crafting, painting etc.
- Swimming pools, indoor and outdoor memberships
- Stewiacke needs an inclusive arts and resource centre focusing on uniting the residents of our community and surrounding communities providing theatre, arts, community resources
- Yes. There are only three items on the list above that are not sport or fitness related. Stewiacke needs to get on board with the modern definition of recreation. Recreation includes arts and culture. The sports-centric approach excludes entire sectors of our population, such as seniors and every single person who wants to do something other than sports. If we want to create places where all ages and demographics can intersect, we need to think about where people can go to do art together, cook together, enjoy knitting together, enjoy entertainment, or taking in a talk from an expert on some topic/hobby. There is very little for teens here, especially teens who have no interest in team sports, which is a very large percentage of them. Also, there are no social options for teens to nurture their creativity or learn life skills outside of a sports environment.
- Swimming pool or indoor play place for kids.
- Community resource centre arts, theatre, activities uniting all ages of the community etc
- Lawn bowling for seniors
- Green spaces in new housing and commercial developments.

APPENDIX B

Conceptual Development Areas

APPENDIX C

Conceptual Downtown Layouts



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