

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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### **1.1 Preface**

The first Official Plan for the Town of Souris was prepared in 1993. Prior to that date development was controlled under a development bylaw which was passed under the Town Act in 1980. This document represents the first Plan Review of the Souris Official Plan.

### **1.2 Purpose**

The Official Plan for the Town of Souris is a formalized statement of Goals, Objectives, Policies and Plan Actions approved by Town Council concerning the nature, extent and pattern of land use and development within the Town until the year 2017.

The Town's Goals as set out in the Plan indicate overall policy direction while the Objectives and Policies deal with specific topics and issues. Plan Actions are statements indicating specific initiatives or directions which will be undertaken to implement the Plan's Policies and Objectives.

The Official Plan guides the physical, social and economic development of the Town. It provides the policy framework for the Town of Souris Development Bylaw and policy direction for Council's actions in relation to: economic development initiatives; public works; social programs; municipal services; environmental standards; and, fiscal management.

### **1.3 Planning Area**

The Official Plan covers all the geographic area contained within the legal boundaries of the Town of Souris. Although the Plan formally addresses only those matters which arise within the Town's legal boundaries, consideration has also been given to the Town's relationship with neighbouring municipalities, adjacent rural areas, the region and the province as a whole.

### **1.4 Legal Enablement**

The Town of Souris derives the majority of its powers from the *Municipalities Act* and the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* empowers Council to appoint a Planning Board, adopt (and amend) an Official Plan and subsequently to adopt implementing land use and development control bylaws. The *Municipalities Act* empowers Council to make other bylaws and/or implement programs and strategies to help implement other aspects of the Official Plan.

## 1.5 Official Plan Review

An Official Plan is intended to be a dynamic planning tool and should be subject to periodic review and/or amendment. The Official Plan will therefore be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure its compatibility with changing circumstances. A formal, comprehensive review shall be undertaken every five years, starting in the year 2007.

## 1.6 Plan Contents

The *Planning Act, R.S.P.E.I., 1988, Cap P-8*, requires that an Official Plan shall include:

- a statement of economic, physical, social and environmental objectives;
- a statement of policies for future land use, management and development, expressed with reference to a specified period not exceeding fifteen years; and
- proposals for its implementation, administration and the periodic review of the extent to which the objectives are achieved.

This document contains seven sections:

1. Introduction
2. The Town of Souris
3. Economic Development
4. Future Development Goals
5. Objectives, Policies and Plan Actions
6. General Land Use Plan, and
7. Implementation

The first section deals with the purpose, scope and legal enablement for the Official Plan. The second section summarizes the background studies and provides a description of the physical, social and economic characteristics of the Town. The third section provides a framework for economic development. The fourth section provides a broad summary of how the Town desires to see its development unfold in the future. The fifth section is the core of the document, stating objectives, policies and intended actions for specific topics. The sixth section includes the General Land Use Plan or Official Plan Map. The last section sets out the process for administering and implementing the Official Plan and Development Bylaw.

## **2.0 THE TOWN OF SOURIS**

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### **2.1 Historical Background**

Souris is the French word for mouse. According to a local history written by Adele Townshend, the name is generally believed to refer to the plagues of mice that devastated early inhabitants' crops. "The story is told that a French vessel passing by the bay in the early 1700's was forced to cut through the waves of drowned mice and so gave the name to the area. The 1744 map of Sieur de la Roque names the bay, Havre a la Souris."

The first inhabitants of the area were the Mi'Kamas who had an encampment at the head of the Souris River, overlooking the river and the bay. The first non-native settlers were several Acadian families who arrived in 1740 but left shortly after the fall of Louisbourg in 1758.

In 1764, while surveying the Island, Samuel Holland called the area Colville Bay. Other names have included Grand Haven, New Bristol and Red Cliffs. The names Souris West and Souris East, for lots 44 and 45 respectively, eventually stuck and were used until 1967.

Scottish settlers came to the area as early as 1772 with English and Irish settlers following in 1810. As referenced in the title of Adele Townshend's community history "Ten Farms become a Town", the area which was to become Souris was made up of ten farm lots with shorefront, cleared land for cultivation and inland stands of timber. John Knight, Souris' founder, laid the foundation for the town when he acquired a small wharf and built a breakwater. This marked the beginning of Souris as a commercial port.

Souris' early economy was founded on agriculture and shipbuilding. The shipbuilding industry reached its peak during the 1860's. During this time there were 200-300 people employed in various shipyards on the Souris River. In 1863 one hundred ships were built in Souris and sold in England. The industry went into decline at the end of the nineteenth century with the depletion of timber resources and the increased demand for iron ships.

The construction of the railway to Souris in 1870 was another major milestone for the Town.

Souris was officially incorporated as a Town in 1910, but it was only in 1967 that the town's name was formally changed from "Souris East" to "Souris".

## **2.2 Recent History and Development Trends**

While the economy of the Maritime Provinces generally declined after Confederation, Souris maintained a reasonably strong local economy during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as a harbour and rural service centre. With the relatively rapid rural depopulation of the 1960's and 1970's (and the resultant growth of urban centres such as Charlottetown) the local economy started to fall into decline.

As with many rural centres in the Atlantic region the relatively untapped bounty of the offshore fishery was seen to be one possible solution. In 1958 the Usen Fisheries plant opened. At its peak the plant hired over 300 people, 250 in the plant and 50 on the 5 offshore trawlers. As offshore fish stocks declined many fish plants also started to decline. Usen's future was strengthened, however, when Georgetown Seafoods closed and its fleet of trawlers and valuable redfish quota were allocated to Usen. With this redfish quota and a fleet of new trawlers purchased in the late 1980's, Usen's future looked promising. This all came to a sudden and tragic end however on September 21, 1993 when the plant burned to the ground.

At this point Souris' economy was already struggling with declining retail activity and the closure of the railway in the mid 1980's. For several years after the Usen fire, there was a significant impact on the local economy due to the loss of jobs and resultant loss of disposable income, an impact which remains visible today. In recent years the Provincial and Federal governments have started to address the local employment crisis through the development of the Souris Food Park and its two anchor tenants, Agri-West and Polar Foods.

## **2.3 Site and Situation**

The Town of Souris is located at the eastern end of Prince Edward Island in Kings County. It has a total land area of 3.8 square kilometers. The Town is 81 kilometers from the Provincial Capital - Charlottetown and 137 kilometers from the Confederation Bridge. The Wood Islands ferry terminal, connecting to Nova Scotia, is 69 kilometers to the south.

Souris is situated on a prominent point of land overlooking Colville Bay to the southwest. The Town is bounded by the Bay and the Northumberland Strait to the south, the Souris River to the west and Norris Creek to the east.

The terrain is gently sloping from the highest point of land in the northern portion of the Town at approximately 38 meters falling to sea level at the Souris River. Along the balance of the shore there are prominent cliffs which increase in height as you travel to the east.

## 2.4 Existing Land Use

A present land use survey was conducted during the fall of 1999. The results are displayed on Map 1. The map reflects a land use pattern with a number of interesting features. Perhaps most striking is the dominance of public sector/institutional and industrial land. This reflects the town's role as a cultural and social centre and also the significance of the port and the community's strong ties to the primary sectors.

Commercial activity is centred in two locations, the historic downtown core area on Main Street and the newer and rapidly expanding peripheral retail development at the Main Street Mall at the eastern end of town. While the downtown remains active, it does display a number of vacant storefronts. Like many other communities Souris has seen a movement of newer and larger retail facilities to the periphery of town where land costs are somewhat lower and parking can be more easily accommodated.

The decline in economic activity downtown had led to visible physical deterioration particularly in some of the more prominent heritage structures, the most prominent being the Matthew & MacLean Building which had been vacant for a number of years. The Town purchased the building in late 2000. Community organization secured financing to commence restoration of the property. The main floor now houses the relocated Visitor Information Centre, as anchor tenant, plus an upscale gift shop and café. Plans are underway for development of an interpretive room adjacent to the Information Centre and boutique office space on the second floor.

While it is not realistic (and perhaps not even desirable) to attempt to re-establish high volume retailing in the downtown, the downtown offers unique potential for tourism, service activities and specialty retailing. The future health of the downtown will be dependent however on continued efforts by municipal and provincial governments to encourage physical upgrading, parking improvements and the development of new anchor activities.

Residential development is a much less predominant land use in the town than it is in more suburban communities. Most residential development is located in quite close proximity to the core area. Vacant residential lots are extremely hard to find and newer residential subdivisions on the outskirts of town are almost non-existent. As noted earlier, it is apparent that in recent years most newer housing has tended to locate beyond the boundaries of the town.

The housing stock in the town is in generally good condition but there are a significant number of substandard units. Older mobile homes are scattered throughout the town and there is one small mobile home park adjacent to Souris Regional High School on Longworth Street which poses a serious concern for adjacent property values. The town also has a significant number of assisted housing units including numerous seniors' units

and a smaller number of public housing units.

Table 1 summarizes the types and number of dwelling units in Souris as determined by the 1996 Census.

**Table 1**  
**Occupied Private Dwellings by**  
**Structural Type of Dwelling**

Single-detached house	345
Row House	65
Movable dwelling	30
Apartment Building, less than five storeys	25
Semi-detached house	15
Apartment, detached duplex	10

Source: 1996 Census

Table 2 provides a breakdown of building activity in the town from 1980 to 1998. In recent years housing starts have been extremely limited. Unless new residential lots are developed within the town in the very near future it is apparent that there will soon be no further potential housing development other than minor infilling and replacement of existing substandard structures.

**Table 2**  
**Building Permits**

Year	Single Family	Duplexes	Apartments	Row	Total
1980	2	0	8	0	10
1981	1	0	0	5	6
1982	1	0	0	6	7
1983	0	6	0	0	6
1984	3	0	6	0	9
1985	5	0	0	0	5
1986	3	6	6	0	15
1987	7	0	0	0	7
1988	5	0	0	0	5

1989	5	0	6	0	11
1990	0	4	0	0	4
1991	3	2	0	0	5
1992	4	0	4	0	8
1993	2	0	0	0	2
1994	6	0	0	0	6
1995	0	0	1	0	1
1996	2	0	0	0	2
1997	4	0	0	0	4
1998	3	0	2	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>118</b>

## 2.5 Population Analysis

While residential construction has shown consistent (albeit relatively slow) growth since 1980, population levels in the Town have been declining since the early 1960's. In 1901, the population of Souris stood at 1,140 people. By 1961, this figure had risen significantly to 1,537. Since that date, with the exception of a brief period of growth between 1971 and 1976 census figures show a steady decline in the Town's population.

Table 1 depicts total population and rates of growth or decline from 1961 to 1996. Over that thirty-five year period the population of the Town declined by 244 people or almost 16 per cent. Stemming or reversing this decline in population is one of the most serious challenges facing the Town.

**Table 3**  
**Town of Souris**  
**Population Growth/Decline**

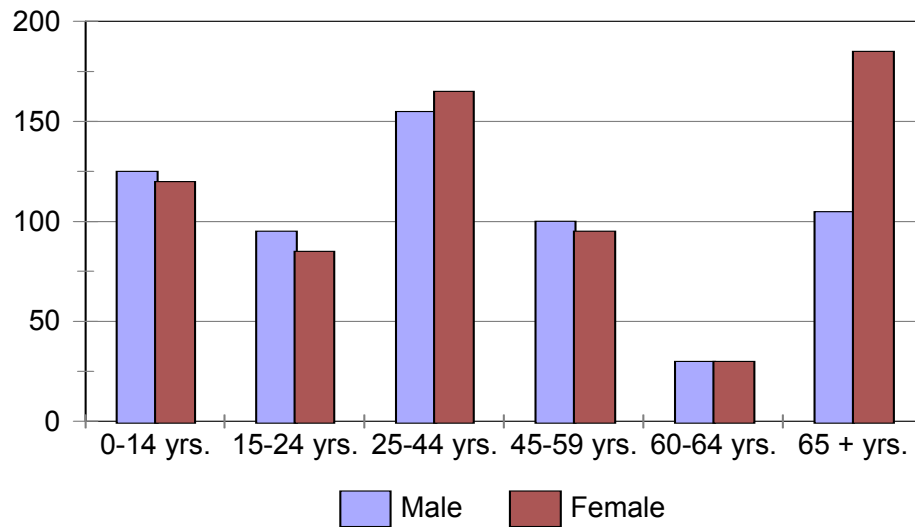
Year	Population	Growth/Decline	Percentage Growth/Decline
1961	1537		
		- 94	- 6%
1966	1443		
		- 50	- 3%
1971	1393		
		54	4%
1976	1447		
		- 34	- 2%
1981	1413		
		- 39	- 3%
1986	1374		
		- 41	- 3%
1991	1333		
		- 40	- 3%
1996	1293		

Another population trend in the Town which also poses interesting challenges for the future is aging. Figure 1 illustrates the age/sex profile for the Town in 1996. The distribution of population across the six age categories is similar to that of the province as a whole with one notable exception. The 65 + age group comprises 22 per cent of Souris' population, compared to 13 per cent of the provincial population. In terms of actual population numbers, there were 210 people in the town aged 65+ in 1981, by 1996 this number had increased to 290.



**Figure 1**  
**Population by Age and Sex**

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A closer study of the profile indicates that there is a dramatic increase in population between the 60-64 age group and the 65+ age group. This indicates that many of these seniors 65+ are not long term residents who have “aged in place” but are rather individuals who have moved into the town. This trend is also apparent in some other Island communities and is driven by rural seniors who have to leave their homes and seek locations like Souris with hospitals, doctors, pharmacists and other local services close at hand.

This burgeoning seniors' population will place ever increasing demands on the community to supply specialized health and social/recreational programming. Seniors' housing, long term care facilities, meals on wheels and mobility assistance will all likely face increasing pressures and pose challenges for Town Council, community groups and the community at large.

Future population trends are difficult to project and will be closely tied to the Town's ability to increase its housing stock. While much of the population decline over the last 30 years has been due to the increasing dominance of Charlottetown, Souris has also lost many younger and middle aged families (particularly its professionals and business people) to the surrounding rural areas, particularly Souris West and Souris River. The availability of large, scenic lots at relatively low prices (and much reduced taxes) has proven to be an irresistible lure for many.

This localized "brain drain" has created a number of unique problems. As the pool of human resources in the town become depleted (due to outmigration, aging and general population decline) there are less people who qualify to offer for Town Council and a reduced pool of potential volunteers. This has led to problems in filling many vital community roles (and excessive demands on those who do choose to serve). While some functions have been regionalized (such as the Eastern King's Arena Board) and can tap a broader regional pool of human resources, other activities are clearly suffering.

One possible answer to all of the above noted issues is amalgamation. This is a very contentious issue, however, and is not likely to be considered in the short term. Another option is increased regionalization, including consideration of expanded regional boards addressing issues such as recreation, planning and development control, servicing and even key economic development issues such as the Wharf and the downtown. A last option could be adoption of a version of the election procedures utilized in the Resort Municipality where eligibility to vote or to hold office is not simply limited to residents but is expanded to include property owners and business operators.

The economic future of the Town shows some promise but population levels will remain stagnant or continue to decline unless the Town can create cost effective housing options for younger families. Continued growth in the seniors' population will also be dependent on increased seniors' housing and maintenance or expansion of health care services in the Town.

## **2.6 Municipal Services/Infrastructure**

### **a) Sewage Treatment**

The Town of Souris has two separate sewage treatment facilities. One serves the

needs of the Souris Food Park and the other serves the needs of the balance of the Town.

When the Souris Food Park was established it was determined that given the relatively high levels of water consumption by food processing operations that a dedicated sewage treatment system was required. Accordingly the Park installed its own SBR (sequential batch reactor) plant and its own outfall. This plant remains owned and operated by the Provincial Government and it is assumed that all future tenants of the Park will also be served by this facility.

In fact, both the Babineau Seafoods Plant (Polar Foods) and the Agri-West Plant have their own pre-treatment systems. The Agri-West Plant has a large anaerobic digester and the Babineau plant screens much of its solids and flushes processing water directly into the outfall.

The balance of the Town is served by a two-cell treatment lagoon located in the southern portion of the Town adjacent to Colville Bay. The system has one aerated cell and one settling cell. Total capacity is 170,000 gallons per day and current peak demand is approximately 140,000 gallons per day. At a conservative figure of 70 gallons per day/person, this would accommodate an additional 428 residents. Provided, therefore, that no large water consuming businesses are located in the Town (other than in the Food Park), the treatment system has adequate capacity to accommodate many years of growth at current or even expanded growth rates.

The municipal treatment system received a significant upgrade in 1996 and is now considered to be in good condition. With the addition of ultra-violet disinfection in 1996, the system is now rated as providing “semi-secondary” treatment and effluent quality exceeds that of many other Island municipalities.

**b) Sewage Collection**

Most of the properties within the Town of Souris are served by sanitary sewer services. The Town’s sewage collection system is somewhat complex due to the elevated location of the treatment plant and the Town’s terrain. Sewage is collected by gravity through a system of concrete sewer mains, some 10 inch diameter but mostly 8 inch, to three low points in the town. At these points 3 separate sewer lift stations pump the effluent via force mains and gravity sewers to a fourth large lift station near the wharf, from here the effluent is pumped once more to the treatment plant. While the Town’s maintenance staff do an excellent job of operating and maintaining this system, it is relatively expensive when compared to systems which can operate on primarily gravity flows.

The concrete sewer mains which make up the majority of the collection system were installed in 1962. The treatment plant was installed in 1979. There are 37,000 feet of cement gravity sewer lines and 5,000 feet of force mains, some of which are iron and the most modern are plastic.

The concrete sewers are prone to relatively high levels of infiltration (this is compounded by poor grading at some manhole sites) and blockage from tree roots. Overall, however, the system is in reasonable condition. A selective sewer main replacement program has been put in place to address the most problematic areas, combined with a regular flushing program and selective video inspections. At present, however, only about 25 per cent of the system has been fully inspected and an annual program must be put in place to complete this work. Annual budgets should also be supplied for selective sewer main replacement and on-going flushing of the system. There are also a number of older “no-corrode” laterals in the Town which will all need replacement in the near future.

**c) Central Water Supply**

**Wellfields**

Prior to the establishment of the Souris Food Park the Town had three separate well sites, none of which had particularly strong flow characteristics. One well is located on Longworth Street with a peak production of 175 gallons/minute. Another is located on Union Avenue (near the water tower) with a peak production of 225 gallons/minute and the third is in the Souris Industrial Park with a peak production of 125 gallons/minute.

Given the high water consumption of food processing operations, the Food Park had to establish a new well field. This is located adjacent to the Industrial Park and to the north of the Race Track. It contains 3 wells each with a peak production of 385 gallons/minute and a fourth well with capacity of 250 gallons/minute. These four wells are also connected to a new diesel electric generator which ensures water supply even during a power outage.

In total these new wells far exceed the total demand of both the Food Park and the Town. In fact all 4 wells are seldom operated together. Given these new wells the former 3 smaller wells are currently idle. In the future it is likely that one or more of these smaller wells will be abandoned.

Fire rated water pressure is supplied to most of the town by a water reservoir

located on the highest point of land in the Town on Union Street. The reservoir contains 250,000 gallons but its effective storage is only 30,000 gallons (after which point some areas of the town lose water pressure). The reservoir supplies excellent pressure to most of the lower parts of the town but pressure for residences near the reservoir is somewhat marginal. Increasing the height of the tank would cure this problem but the cost would be high and given the age of the tank may not prove feasible. Given the elevation of the Food Park, a pumping station had to be installed to provide fire rated pressure to this facility.

### **Distribution**

The central water distribution system was installed in 1962 and is constructed of ductile iron. Most of the water mains are of 8" diameter. The lines connecting from the Water Tower to Main Street which provide the primary pressure are 10" and 12" in diameter. While the water distribution system is in relatively good condition and should remain serviceable for many years, the iron water mains are prone to breakage due to the relatively brittle nature of the material and various bedding problems in the Town.

The town maintenance staff keep records of all water main breaks and have started a program of replacing problematic sections with modern plastic pipe. This program should continue. The Town has also taken the opportunity during major road reconstruction (such as Chappel Street) to replace the piping in these areas.

#### **d) Stormwater Management**

Stormwater run-off in the town flows generally from the highest point in the town north of Longworth and Union St. to the south, toward the shoreline. Most of the streets in the town do not have storm sewers. The three main storm water systems in the town are as follows: 1) in the west a new storm sewer is located on Chappel Street which connects to a storm sewer on Main Street which runs westward to the beginning of the causeway; 2) a second system starts at Colville Street and runs southward along Parkside Avenue to the harbour; and 3) a new system starts on Main Street to the east of the Main Street Mall and runs eastward to Norris Creek.

Of these three storm sewer systems only the Main Street system is in need of upgrading (a situation which may have been compounded by the new feeder system on Chappel Street). There are also several areas of the town, particularly in the central residential area where storm water improvements are needed. In the future the town could benefit from the preparation of a comprehensive storm water management plan with a proposed implementation strategy for priority

areas.

**e) Solid Waste**

The Town of Souris faces the same challenges over solid waste collection and disposal as all other Island municipalities. The Provincial Government has now largely taken over this responsibility and is moving the province toward a centralized solid waste management system. At that point the collection fees and policies will largely be outside the control of the Town. Council will retain an ongoing role, however, in promoting the three r's of solid waste management.

**f) Fire Protection**

Souris has a municipal volunteer fire department. The Souris Fire Department also provides services to a rural fire district including an area from Red Point to East Baltic and extending north to Naufrage. The Fire District is administered by a 3 member board.

The department is 100 per cent volunteer and has a full compliment of 25 members. Currently 18 members reside within the town and 7 reside outside the town. The force has a mix of ages and training levels. Equipment includes the normal small equipment plus the following:

- a 1992 emergency response van, equipped with 10 air packs, a "jaws of life", stretcher, etc.
- a 1988 tanker with 1,000 gallon water tank
- a 1993 - 1050 pumper with 1,000 gallon water tank
- a new 2000 - 1050 pumper with 2,000 gallon water tank and foam
- use of a forestry truck with 1,000 gallon water tank
- porta pump with 500 gallons/minute capacity

At present the fire department is felt to be in excellent condition. In the future there may be a need to expand the fire hall to accommodate equipment and training facilities. The site has adequate room for any future expansion. The department also has an excellent shared response relationship with the Eastern Kings Department, St. Peter's and Central Kings.

The town is also served by Kings County EMS ambulance service. The company has 3 ambulances, 1 in Souris, 1 in Montague and 1 which floats. They are co-located with the fire department and their presence significantly relieves pressure on the department to have paramedics or specialized medical equipment (such as defibrilators).

**g) Police Protection**

The Town of Souris receives its police protection from the R.C.M.P. under the Provincial Policing Contract. The Souris detachment is located in the town and includes 5 full time members. Crime statistics in the Town are quite low and the town is generally felt to have no major policing or security issues.

A new R.C.M.P. detachment building was recently constructed on Main Street in the eastern end of the Town. It officially opened in August, 2001.

**2.7 Transportation**

**Vehicular**

Souris is located on a major Provincial arterial highway, Route 2, which connects the eastern and western ends of the province. This highway also forms part of the “Kings Byway” scenic drive. When combined with the Magdalen Islands ferry terminal, this results in relatively high tourist traffic throughout the summer.

As a Town, Souris is responsible for the ownership and maintenance of all roads within the municipality with the exception of “designated” Provincial roads or highways which are deemed to play a regional transportation role. These designated streets include Main Street (Route 2), Chappel Street, Longworth Avenue, Church Street, MacPhee Avenue, and Knight’s Avenue.

The Provincially designated roads in the Town are all in a reasonably good state of repair and are constructed to a high standard. Longworth Avenue is scheduled for upgrading in the near future. Many of the local streets, however, are quite narrow and are of a more marginal standard of construction. The current state of repair of Town owned streets is, however, reasonably good and no major problems have been identified.

While a number of the intersection angles of local streets are problematic (particularly where they intersect with Main Street) and several streets are extremely narrow, our discussions with the RCMP identified no serious traffic problems in the Town. The only specific issue raised by the RCMP was the sudden peak traffic flows from the Magdalen Islands ferry compound along Main Street when ferries unload. This only occurs once a day however and the congestion is of relatively short duration.

As part of any long term plan for road upgrading the most dangerous

intersections along Main Street should be identified (on a priority basis). As land becomes available (and as budgets permit) efforts should be made to re-align these intersections to enable the traffic on the minor streets to approach Main Street at more of a right angle.

The other serious traffic concern affecting the town is the future of the causeway on Route 2 at the western approach to the town. During recent years this causeway has experienced significant rates of erosion. During the major storm during January, 2000, a large section of the roadway was placed in jeopardy and immediate repairs and erosion control structures had to be installed. Further to the west much of the dune system protecting the Souris Beach Park facility was completely destroyed. In the immediate future the Provincial Government must start to put in place some form of long term protection for this critical transportation link.

### **Marine**

The Souris Port is a major multi-use facility. Throughout its recent history it has served the inshore fishery (primarily lobsters), a mid-shore fleet, a fish processing plant and associated offshore fleet, an inter-provincial ferry service, international shipping, short term freight storage and a recreational marina complex. The port is also equipped with a slipway and travel-lift, installed originally to service the mid-shore fleet.

The Port of Souris is open for shipping and free of ice for approximately 11 months each year (longer than any other Island port). While officially the port is closed from December 1<sup>st</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>, ships have been routinely loaded in Souris as late as January 31<sup>st</sup>. There are four wharfs, an active fishery, the ferry terminal for the Magdelan Islands Ferry, and a developing marina complex.

The approach channel is 100 m wide and 6.7 m in depth and the Port is protected by a 567 m breakwater. Central to the Souris Port facilities is the Marine Terminal Wharf, 183 m in length, with a depth of 6.4 m on the west and 4.9 m on the east. The Fisherman's Wharf is 375 m in length and 1.5 m in depth. The Eastpark Wharf is 142 m in length with a depth of 3.0 m and the former Usen's Wharf is 152 m in length with a depth of 4.2 m.

The heated storage shed on the Marine Terminal Wharf is the single largest storage facility (2,860 m<sup>2</sup>) at any of the four Island ports. This facility, as well as the prolonged ice free conditions, allows Souris to maintain a significant role in the export of potatoes and offers significant potential for expanded shipping activity. The Magdelan Islands ferry runs from April 1, to September 30 with one 4.5 hour crossing per day, 6 days per week.



While the port plays a vital role in the local and regional economy the threat of the eventual loss of Federal support for the facility poses major concerns. Current shipping volumes and revenues would not permit the port to maintain its operations without continued government support. Future support for the port will become a major concern over the next several years and it is hoped that the senior levels of government will realize the critical economic importance of this facility and support its continued viability. The town, local shippers and the regional business community can also play a vital role in promoting increased shipping activity from the port.

### **Pedestrian**

Souris has an excellent pedestrian system including 16,000 ft. of town owned (and maintained) sidewalks and a significant section of the Confederation Trail. The sidewalk system connects most areas of the Town and most major pedestrian destinations. The system has received significant recent upgrading and is rated to be in excellent condition. The Town also has excellent maintenance equipment and staff and is able to maintain the system at a reasonably high level throughout the year. In order to maintain the current high level of service, however, routine upgrading will be required on an ongoing basis. Expansion of the system should be undertaken as budgets permit but should be based on a long term sidewalk plan.

The section of the Confederation Trail within the Town is in good condition and offers an excellent resource for recreational walkers, joggers and hikers. While the Trail is used by snowmobilers in winter, walkers still appear to have been able to maintain some access. This does represent a potential safety concern, however, and if pedestrian volumes increase, this conflict may have to be addressed (at least within the boundaries of the Town). The Trail also has an excellent connection to the Elmira main trail, offering great opportunities for local users and a considerable tourism opportunity in the future.

## **2.8 Institutional Facilities**

For a community of its size Souris is extremely well supplied with institutional facilities. Perhaps the most prominent from an architectural perspective is St. Mary's Catholic Church. Constructed in 1901 by Island architect William Chritchlow Harris Jr. of Island sandstone and rebuilt in 1930 after a major fire, this church is a commanding landmark and a key physical and cultural cornerstone of the community. Equally important from a social perspective are the Town's three other churches, St. James United, St. Alban's Anglican and Lighthouse Baptist Church.

Souris is also the site of two prominent regional schools, Souris Consolidated serving

grades 1 to 8 and Souris Regional High School serving grades 9 to 12. Souris

Consolidated has an enrolment of 234 students. This figure has dropped from 293 students five years ago and is projected to continue to decline to 200 students before stabilizing at that level. Of the current enrolment of 234 only 80 students or one-third reside within the Town.

Souris Consolidated was constructed in 1968 but has received ongoing upgrading and is considered to be in excellent physical condition. The only notable problems are the poor physical condition of the playground equipment which is in need of immediate replacement and the tennis courts which are currently being replaced. This playground not only serves the needs of the school but it is also the only playground available in the Town during the summer and off-school hours.

Souris Regional High School has an enrolment of 370 which has remained stable over the last five years. The school has 8 feeder schools, the largest being Souris Consolidated immediately across the street. Souris Regional High is a highly integrated facility (probably due in large part to its relative isolation) and contains academic programs from grades 9 to 12 and also a number of technical programs such as woodworking, welding and auto mechanics. Less than 20 percent of the students reside within the Town.

The first wooden building was constructed in 1955 but was replaced by a modern brick structure in 1985. The school is currently in excellent physical condition but the technical workshop space is cramped and in need of expansion.

Souris is also served by two private pre-school facilities, the Souris Day Care Centre and the Souris Kindergarten which operates in the basement of the Souris Consolidated School. The Town also has some post secondary programming at the Souris Holland College Centre above the Main Street Mall.

Souris is also fortunate to have a modern (1983) community hospital with 17 beds and also a private physicians' clinic. The long term care needs of seniors are served by Bayview Lodge, a community care facility and Colville Manor, a long term care facility. Souris also has a pharmacy, dentist and veterinary clinic.

Provincial Government programs and services are available at the Johnny Ross Young Regional Services Centre which was relocated to a new building on Green Street in 1991. Municipal administration services are located in the Town Hall on Main Street, together with the Town library and the Council Chambers.

## **2.9 Parks and Recreation**

The importance of recreational facilities and programs in the life of a community should not be underestimated. For communities like Souris which provide a central service role for a large rural service area, recreation and recreational infrastructure play a particularly significant role. Given the capital and operating costs of many recreational facilities they can often only be supplied on a regional basis. Recreational programs not only contribute to the social, physical and mental health of the community, they can also significantly compliment economic activities and can in fact represent a productive element of the local economy (as well demonstrated by the City of Summerside and other communities).

While the Town of Souris has an impressive array of recreational facilities and programs, a number of problems and challenges are evident. During our consultations it became apparent that there is an overall lack of co-ordination in recreational programming ; some facilities are in need of upgrading; and, there are gaps, particularly in meeting the needs of those who do not participate in organized sports. Marketing and promotion of programs is also inadequate and the availability of volunteers is becoming a problem.

### **Eastern Kings Sportsplex**

Located at the eastern boundary of the town, the Eastern Kings Sportsplex was constructed in 1979 containing an artificial ice rink, change rooms and support facilities and hall/meeting space on the second floor. A four lane 5 pin bowling alley was added in 1990. The facility is truly “regional” in nature and is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors. While the Sportsplex operates as an independent non-profit corporation, the Town of Souris guarantees its long term debt and appoints 2 of the 6 members on the Board.

The Sportsplex has faced similar challenges to those faced by other community rinks over the past 20 years. As operating costs have increased and amateur hockey enrolments have continued to decline, operating budgets have had to be supplemented by dances, bingo and other activities. Unfortunately the bowling alleys have not improved the bottom line of the facility primarily due to very low summer volumes.

The Board is seeking to address the need to upgrade the facility and resolve its revenue shortage by proposing a major renovation to the facility including a dramatically improved entry, upgraded meeting space, a new kitchen, offices, washrooms and other general site and building improvements. The second phase of the plan includes the addition of a new curling rink. While much of the cost of this \$750,000 expansion and upgrading will be sought from senior levels of government, there will be a significant requirement for local financial support. The new facility should, however, represent a significant boon to the local economy.

### **Jerry McCormack Memorial Complex**

Located directly to the rear of the Eastern Kings Sportsplex, this complex includes one of the best regulation size soccer and baseball fields on Prince Edward Island. These high quality facilities have enabled the town to host major sport events such as the Souris International Soccer Classic. With the proposed upgrading of the adjacent Sportsplex facility and the addition of seating and lighting these facilities should be able to compete for major regional, national and even international events.

### **Souris Regional High School**

Located on Longworth Street in the western end of town, Souris Regional High School offers a variety of recreational facilities that are available to students and the public. The school has a regulation size soccer field which is actively utilized by local soccer leagues, a baseball field which is used on a less frequent basis, a gymnasium which is utilized by high school teams and also recreational basketball and other programs and a cafeteria which is available during off-school hours for wedding receptions and other private events. The schools' classrooms are also actively used during off-school hours for community schools, air cadets and other community meetings.

### **Souris Consolidated School**

Souris Consolidated school is located at the corner of Longworth Street and Church Street. Its grounds contain the Town's only playground (which is currently in need of major upgrading), three minor soccer fields and basketball nets in the parking lot. The site also previously included tennis courts which were removed last year due to poor condition. These were the only courts in town and should be replaced.

The school also has a gymnasium which is actively used during off-school hours for karate, basketball and other activities.

### **St. Mary's Parish Hall**

The hall is located on Main Street and is owned and managed by St. Mary's Catholic Church. The facility is used by the church for social activities but is also available for wedding receptions, dances and other public gatherings. The Souris Air Cadet Squadron meets there every Tuesday evening.

### **Connolly Park**

Connolly Park is located on Main Street. It is a passive municipal park including seating areas, picnic tables and a gazebo.

**Centennial Park**

Centennial Park is also a passive municipal park. It is located on the shore adjacent to Breakwater Street and offers a dramatic view of the harbour. In addition to seating areas the park also includes a monument to fishermen who have lost their lives at sea.

**Clinton & MacAulay Ballfield**

This is a small ballfield which is located on private property owned by Clinton & MacAulay Ltd. While the field is in only marginal condition it is actively used during the summer. Plans are currently being considered to develop a small municipally owned park in this area and to relocate and upgrade the ballfield.

**Souris Racetrack**

The Souris harness racing facility, located just to the east of the Souris Industrial Park, contains the racetrack, some run down stands and a small baseball diamond to the north of the track. The ball diamond is in active use but the track facility has fallen into disrepair. Its future at present is uncertain and it is unlikely, given the decline of the industry across the region, that the facility will ever regain its former role as a centre of activity.

**Silver Threads Club**

The Silver Threads Club is a privately owned and operated building on Main Street, operated by a Board of Directors. During its peak the Club boasted over 100 active members. Current membership has dropped to 50 and a number are no longer active. The club hosts a number of activities for seniors both within and outside of the town boundaries. These include dances, card play, birthday parties and a foot care clinic. Members of the club also participate with other seniors in a walking club sponsored by Heart & Health and a weekly seniors bowling league. Every Christmas the Souris Lions Club also sponsors a seniors' christmas party at the Legion Hall.

**Confederation Trail**

Walkers in the town also have use of the Confederation Trail, which bisects the town from Chappel Street to the harbour. The trail also connects to the main east-west trail further to the north. During the winter months the trail is used by snowmobilers.

### 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 The Local Economy

Souris is primarily a service centre, serving the needs of a large rural economic region which is dominated by agriculture and fishing. The Town's port facilities and its industrial base are also highly dependent on these two resource sectors. Tourism plays a smaller role in the local economy but its growth potential is extremely promising.

Souris is located in Lot 45. While its trade area likely exceeds the boundaries of this area, the 1996 Census figures for agricultural production in Lot 45 (see Table 4) are indicative of the level of economic activity generated by this sector.

**Table 4**  
**Farm Activity, Lot 45**

	Lot 45	Provincial Total
Total number of farms	45	2,217
Total area of farms		
Acres	13,656	655,365
Hectares	5,526	265,217
Total farm capital	\$23.5 million	\$1,417 billion
Total gross farm receipts	\$6.6 million	\$349.2 million
Total farm expenses	\$5.3 million	\$288.6 million

Source: Agricultural Profile of the Atlantic Provinces,  
Statistics Canada Agricultural Division, Census 1996.

Fish landing figures for Souris are also available on an annual basis. Table 5 provides a summary of the value of fishing landings in the Town for 1996. The predominance of lobster in terms of value is clearly evident.

**Table 5**  
**Value of 1996 Landings in Thousands of Dollars, Souris**

Groundfish			Pelagic & Estuarial		Shellfish	
Cod	13.87	Herring	242.24	Bar Clams	.08	
American Plaice	196.06	Mackerel	.55	Soft Shell Clams	1.27	
Yellowtail	1.20	Tune, Bluefin	78.43	Sea Scallop	134.93	
Greysole/Witch	1.69	Alewives (Gaspereau)	.95	Lobster	1411.38	

Winter Flounder	47.16	Skate	3.16	Rock Crab	10.57
White Hake	3.36	Smelts	.57	Snow Crab	360.88
		Dogfish	2.20		
		Silversides	13.10		
Groundfish Total	263.34	Pel. & Est. Total	341.20	Shellfish Total	1919.11
		<b>Port Total</b>	<b>2523.65</b>		

Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, DFO Statistics

A review of labour force statistics provides an excellent indicator of the make up of the local economy. Table 6 illustrates labour force statistics by industry or economic sector.

**Table 6**

<b>Labour Force by Industry</b>		
	<b>Size of the Labour Force</b>	<b>Percent of the Labour Force</b>
Fishing and trapping industries	110	17%
Retail trade industries	105	17%
Other service industries	70	11%
Manufacturing industries	65	10%
Educational service industries	55	9%
Health and social service industries	40	6%
Accommodation, food and beverage service industries	35	6%
Transportation and storage industries	30	5%
Government service industries	30	5%
Other	25	4%
Agricultural and related service industries	20	3%
Construction industries	15	2%
Wholesale trade industries	15	2%

Source: 1996 Census

It is evident that while agriculture is the biggest contributor to the regional economy, it employs a relatively small number of people. The fishery provides significantly higher employment levels. By far the greatest employment levels,

however, are created from “value-added” types of activity and retail/service activities of various forms. While the 1996 Census shows only 65 people employed in manufacturing this figure does not reflect the new Babineau Seafoods Plant (now part of Polar Seafoods) with 170 peak employment and Agra West with peak employment projected to be 120 people.

As noted previously, tourism employment indicates only a moderate level of economic activity. It is expected that these numbers will also have increased by the 2001 Census and this sector of the local and regional economy is projected to continue to grow rapidly as Kings County continues to expand its share of provincial tourism visitation and revenues.

### **3.2 Recent Developments and Trends**

Retailing and service activity showed significant decline in the 1970's and 80's. This was largely as a result of the impact of rural (and local) population decline and a trend toward centralization of retail activity in the larger centres such as Charlottetown. While the growth of large scale retail and service facilities in Charlottetown has shown dramatic recent growth, there has also been somewhat of a resurgence in retailing in rural centres at some distance from Charlottetown. Recent expansion at the Main Street Mall is indicative of this trend.

While “high order” infrequently purchased goods and services have continued to be centralized, “low order” daily needs such as food, drugs and hardware supplies are showing expansion in communities like Souris which are somewhat remote from the larger urban centres. The dramatic retail expansion in Montague could pose a threat to Souris retailers but travel times to Montague are still significant and this is not felt to be a major concern at the present time. As noted earlier, however, the decline of economic activity, and resulting physical deterioration in the downtown does pose a serious concern for the Town.

As also noted earlier, the two major new tenants at the Souris Food Park have had significant local employment impacts. Unfortunately this employment is still highly seasonal at present. Once the impact of the new ownership at the Agra West Plant is fully felt, it is hoped that employment levels will become much more consistent and hopefully increase. While no further tenants for the Food Park have been identified considerable capacity remains to accommodate additional value-added industries or other light manufacturing concerns.

Tourism development, while still highly seasonal in terms of economic activity and employment, has shown dramatic growth both provincially and in Kings County since the opening of the Confederation Bridge. Figure 2 illustrates travel visitation growth on Prince Edward Island.



**Figure 2**  
**Pleasure Travel Visitations**  
**1993 - 1998**

Figure 3 illustrates the growth in travel (or tourism) revenues. In 1999 the total provincial revenues increased to \$302 million.

**Figure 3**  
**Growth in Pleasure Travel Receipts**

While Kings County's share of this total has been increasing it is still below the area's potential. Eastern Kings is lagging even farther behind other parts of Kings County. Figure 4 illustrates total visitation for Eastern Kings. In 1999 this total increased to 47,900 persons.

**Figure 4**  
**Eastern Kings Tourism Region**  
**Overnight Visitation**

Figure 5 illustrates total visitor receipts.

**Figure 5**  
**Visitor Receipts**

With a continued aggressive marketing campaign by the Kings County area and

with the opening of the new National Park at Greenwich, it is projected that Kings County's share of the provincial tourism pie will continue to expand. The Souris area can capitalize on this growth but only through continued local product development and promotion efforts.

## **4.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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### **4.1 Introduction**

The Goals presented in this Chapter are broad statements indicating the overall shared vision of Souris' Council, residents and property owners in terms of the future evolution and development of the Town. The Goals provide the framework and general direction for subsequent, more detailed statements which follow.

### **4.2 Future Development Concept**

The Town of Souris faces a number of significant hurdles to re-establishing its former economic vitality and its appeal as a residential community. These hurdles are not insurmountable but success will require effective local leadership and planning and capitalizing on the Town's (and the Region's) unique strengths and talents. These include the Region's rich cultural traditions, its skilled and motivated labour force, the strong rural economy, the ice-free harbour and port facilities, the area's extraordinary natural beauty and the pride and commitment of its residents. While some challenges will require the continued support of the two senior levels of government, the impetus for development must come from within and Council must provide strong leadership. This Plan cannot address all issues facing the Town but it can and must provide a framework for future municipal planning and development which will support and encourage positive development in the Town.

The Future Development Concept reflected in this Official Plan would see the Town of Souris continue to rebuild and diversify its economy, employment and assessment base. The Town's vital service centre role will be maintained and enhanced. The downtown core will receive special attention and efforts will be targeted at restoring its historic vitality. Food processing and other value-added and diversified manufacturing enterprises will be sought to strengthen industrial employment opportunities.

The future of the port will be strongly protected. Expansion of tourism accommodation, attractions and services will be encouraged. Residential standards will be improved and a range of cost-effective housing opportunities will be encouraged and supported within the Town. Co-operation and joint-planning with

our rural neighbours must be a priority and the Region must increasingly acknowledge and reinforce the mutual dependence of Souris and its rural hinterland.

### **4.3 Goals**

#### **4.3.1 General**

- To enhance the overall appeal of Souris as a place to live, visit and operate a business.
- To generally improve the quality of life in the Town.

#### **4.3.2 Social**

- To foster the creation and maintenance of safe, efficient, stable and visually appealing residential neighbourhoods.
- To foster social interaction and healthy lifestyles for all residents of the Town.
- To provide a range of housing opportunities to meet various socio-economic needs.
- To place increased emphasis on the special needs of seniors, youth and the mentally and physically challenged.

#### **4.3.3 Economic**

- To improve the viability of the commercial core area
- To continue to attract value-added and light industries.
- To protect the long term viability of the Town wharf.
- To protect the viability of the Town's fishing industry.
- To expand retail and service activities.
- To expand tourism development opportunities and better capitalize on the Town's tourism potential.
- To increase the Town's employment and assessment base.

- To maintain affordable property tax rates and utility rates for all Souris property owners.

#### **4.3.4 Physical**

- To establish a plan for future development which maximizes efficiency and minimizes potential land use conflicts.
- To ensure an adequate supply of serviced land to accommodate the projected needs of various land uses within the Town for the period of the Plan.
- To encourage the maintenance of a safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian circulation system in the Town.
- To manage storm water run-off in a safe and cost-effective manner.
- To encourage the maintenance of a high standard of physical appearance for all properties in the Town.
- To encourage the preservation and enhancement of the Town's historic buildings.

#### **4.3.5 Environmental**

- To protect the quality and supply of groundwater and surface water resources in and adjacent to the Town.
- To encourage responsible waste management.
- To protect air quality.
- To protect and enhance significant natural areas in the Town.

## **5.0 OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PLAN ACTIONS**

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### **5.1 Introduction**

This Chapter represents the policy core of the Official Plan. Within the broad policy framework laid down by the previous chapter, the following Objectives provide more precise statements which address specific issues and concerns within

the Town.

Policies and Plan Actions outline the proposed course of action to achieve the performance targets described in the Objectives. Policies indicate with some precision the approach the Town will take in pursuing its Objectives. Plan Actions are concrete measures which implement that approach.

## **5.2 Agriculture**

While the Town of Souris' ties to the surrounding agricultural community are very strong, there is a minimal amount of land within the restricted boundaries of the Town which remains in agricultural production. The one significant block of agricultural land within the Town also represents one of the best potential locations to accommodate future residential growth.

### **Objectives:**

- To minimize conflicts between farmers and residents within the Town.
- To maintain land in agricultural production until such time as it can be efficiently and appropriately converted to residential use in response to market demands.
- To continue to foster a strong relationship between the Town and its agricultural service area.

### **Policies:**

#### **Policy PA-1: Zoning**

It shall be the policy of Council to designate any significant blocks of vacant land in the Town which have the potential to remain in viable agricultural production. These blocks of land shall remain designated for agricultural use until they are required to accommodate residential growth.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall designate an Agricultural Reserve (A1) of all those large blocks of land which are in agricultural use and are not currently approved for urban use.

- Re-zoning of these lands to residential use shall be encouraged in response to new residential development proposals.
- Council shall work with the local farming community and residents to minimize land use conflicts.

### **Policy PA-2: Animal Husbandry**

It shall be the policy of Council to limit or preclude the keeping and raising of farm animals and other animals which could pose a nuisance to adjacent property owners.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall establish regulations controlling the keeping and raising of farm animals within the Town.
- The Development Bylaw shall also establish controls on the establishment or enlargement of kennels, aviaries, fox ranches and other operations which could cause a nuisance to adjacent residents or property owners.

## **5.3 Residential**

Perhaps the single biggest challenge currently facing the Town is population decline. Simply designating additional land for residential development will not increase housing demand. This will only result from continued efforts to expand economic activity and employment and proactive efforts on the part of Council to promote Souris as a residential location and an attractive investment opportunity for residential developers.

Efforts must also be focused on improving the quality of the current housing stock and promoting higher residential development standards.

#### **Objectives:**

- To actively promote the Town as a residential location.
- To encourage a broad range of cost-effective residential

development opportunities in the Town.

- To protect the character and appearance of established neighbourhoods.
- To encourage residential development standards which stress safety, efficiency, aesthetic appeal, land use compatibility and fostering of a healthy lifestyle.

**Policies:**

**Policy PR-1: Zoning**

It shall be the policy of Council to designate sufficient residential land to accommodate the projected and potential housing needs of the Town during the period of the Plan. Existing residential areas shall be protected from encroachment of conflicting land uses.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall zone sufficient residential land to meet the projected needs of the Town.
- Residential zoning shall be in conformance with the General Land Use Plan.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish zones and development standards for Single Family, Two Family and Multiple Family forms of residential development.
- Zoning shall be utilized to provide protection for existing residential neighbourhoods from encroachment by conflicting land uses and to direct and encourage future residential development.

**Policy PR-2: Residential Development Standards**

It shall be the policy of Council to establish residential development standards relating to density, architectural harmony, building type, lot sizes, set backs, amenity areas, parking, buffering and other matters in order to enhance the health, safety and convenience of residents.



**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall establish residential designations for low, medium and high density.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish residential development standards relating to lot sizes, set backs, servicing, amenity areas and open space, parking, buffering, architectural harmony and other related matters.

**Policy PR-3: Accessory Apartments**

It shall be the policy of Council to permit the establishment of one accessory apartment in any single family dwelling in any zone.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall permit one accessory apartment in any single family residence in any zone.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish standards for accessory apartments limiting their size and number of bedrooms, limiting changes to the exterior appearance of the residence, and addressing parking requirements and other matters.

**Policy PR-4: Garden Suites**

It shall be the policy of Council to permit the location of a garden suite on any single family dwelling lot under certain restrictions.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall permit the locating of a mobile “garden suite” on any single family dwelling lot for use by an immediate family member of the resident property owner.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish development standards for garden suites addressing: architectural harmony, location, servicing, parking,

buffering, size and other matters.

### **Policy PR-5: In-Home Occupations**

It shall be the policy of Council to permit a range of in-home businesses, provided that there is no significant negative impact on adjacent properties or the immediate neighbourhood.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall permit the establishment of limited in-home occupations in all single family residences.
- The Development Bylaw shall define the types of business activities which may be permitted in a residence.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish standards for home occupations, which limit potential residential conflicts such as noise, hours of operation, square footage, number of employees, parking, signage, physical changes to the structure, outside storage and any other factors which may represent an impediment to the safety, convenience or enjoyment of neighbouring residents.

### **Policy PR-6: Prefabricated Homes**

It shall be the policy of Council to not discriminate against housing forms based solely on the method of construction. Older style mobile homes which have a unique style and character shall be restricted to mobile home courts. Further, the current mobile home court shall be carefully monitored and upgraded. Modern “mini-homes” shall be permitted in residential areas only where they are compatible with adjacent residences in terms of size and architectural style. Larger “modular” homes shall be permitted in all residential areas.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Traditional “mobile homes” shall only be permitted in a designated mobile home park.

- The current mobile home park shall be monitored and the owners required to maintain their units in an appropriate manner. When units become delapidated, Council shall take action to encourage their removal.
- Modern “mini-homes” shall be permitted under the Development Bylaw as a “special permit use” but only when they are deemed to be architecturally compatible with adjacent homes.
- Larger, “modular homes” shall be permitted in all residential zones.
- No further mobile home courts shall be located in the Town but consideration may be given to the establishment of a “mini-home” subdivision if it is developed to a high standard and well segregated from existing neighbourhoods.

#### **Policy PR-7: Housing Development and Promotion**

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the private sector and government agencies to actively promote Souris as a residential development opportunity. Council shall aggressively pursue opportunities to develop existing Town owned land and to partner with other land owners and developers to facilitate residential development.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall designate surplus Town owned land for residential development where appropriate.
- Council shall work with local employers and developers to identify residential development opportunities.
- Council shall seek to identify opportunities for partnering with private sector developers.
- Council shall initiate a promotional campaign, hopefully with private sector partners aimed at

attracting new residents to the Town. Targeted efforts will focus on employees in the Town and in the immediate region.

- Council shall pursue all opportunities for funding support to encourage and develop new housing in the Town.

#### **5.4 Commercial**

Souris' two major challenges - the decline in population and the decline of the commercial core area, are obviously closely linked. As the number of customers and resultant available disposable income has declined, so has the level of commercial services. The plight of the core area and Main Street has been further compounded, however, by the movement of a number of anchor retail facilities to the periphery of Town (the Main Street Mall) combined with the growth of "large box" retailers in Charlottetown and now Montague.

Concerted efforts have commenced to upgrade the appearance and level of commercial activity in the older commercial core. The Town purchased the historic Matthew & MacLean property. With assistance of community groups, funding was obtained to restore the building. The relocation of the Tourism Visitor Information Centre to the central core, the opening of a café and gift shop in the restored building are the immediate results of this initiative. Efforts to encourage neighbouring landowners to improve their properties' appearance are ongoing. The addition of office space and an interpretive room are planned for the second phase of the Matthew & MacLean Building restoration.

The Town is also particularly well positioned to capitalize on the rapid growth of tourism in the eastern region of the province. This will require aggressive leadership, however, from Council, local development groups and the local business community. Tourism also has the potential to contribute significantly to reinvigorating the historic downtown area.

#### **Objectives:**

- To actively support and strengthen existing local businesses.
- To more effectively promote the Town as a commercial location and a tourism destination.
- To encourage the development of expanded local retail and service activities.

- To stimulate and support efforts to upgrade and reinvigorate the downtown core area.
- To expand local employment and the commercial property tax base.
- To strengthen and expand local and regional tourism attractions.
- To strengthen and expand local tourism accommodations, services and to better capitalize on the Town's tourism potential.

**Policies:**

**Policy PC-1: Zoning**

It shall be the policy of Council to develop appropriate commercial zoning designations and to use zoning to direct commercial activity into the two primary established commercial areas of the Town.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall establish commercial zoning designations and development standards for Commercial Retail and Commercial Service zones.
- The Development Bylaw shall zone commercial land in conformance with the General Land Use Plan.
- The Development Bylaw shall designate the historic commercial core area as Heritage Commercial.

**Policy PC-2: Retail/Service**

It shall be the policy of Council to aggressively pursue new retail and service activity for the Town of Souris and to work with the current business community to support and strengthen existing businesses.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall maintain a close relationship with all local business operators and pursue opportunities to support and encourage local business.

- Council shall work with local development groups and the business community to identify and pursue opportunities for joint promotion of the Town and local businesses and attractions. Target markets would include local residents, residents within the Town's established trade area and tourists.
- Council shall work with local development groups, federal and provincial agencies to actively encourage entrepreneurial activity in the Town and foster the start up of new local businesses.

### **Policy PC-3: Commercial Core Area**

It shall be the policy of Council to devote particular attention to the physical upgrading and economic renewal of the Town's historic Mainstreet commercial district.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall develop an action plan for Mainstreet upgrading in concert with affected land owners and businesses, local development groups and the senior levels of government.
- Emphasis shall be placed on the development of new anchor facilities, parking, streetscape and infrastructure improvements, maintenance and upgrading of building facades.

### **Policy PC-4: Mathew-MacLean Building**

Given the architectural and historic significance of the Mathew-MacLean Building, it shall be the policy of Council to support and encourage the physical upgrading and commercial/institutional re-use of this important commercial landmark.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to support local efforts to develop a comprehensive Business Plan addressing the completion of the physical upgrading, financing

and long term use and management of the building.

- Council shall, as part of the Business Plan, investigate the feasibility of developing a strategic plan for other complimentary cultural, tourism and interpretive facilities within the restored heritage building.

#### **Policy PC-5: Tourism**

It shall be the policy of Council to target development efforts toward strengthening local and regional tourism infrastructure, attractions, services, accommodations and related business and employment opportunities.

##### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall develop a local Tourism Development Strategy, based on promoting the Town's unique culture and history and the region's significant natural features.
- Council shall encourage local service clubs, church groups, etc. to actively pursue and promote local activities such as festivals, craft fairs, garden parties, heritage days, fishing and boating regattas, nature walks, lobster suppers, etc.
- Council shall continue to facilitate the development and promotion of the Confederation Trail and develop facilities at the entry to the Town and the terminus of the Trail aimed at promoting the Town and its facilities.

#### **Policy PC-6: Signage**

Since as a Town, Souris does not fall under the provisions of the Highway Advertisements Act, it shall be the policy of Council to develop and implement a Signage Bylaw.

##### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall develop and adopt a Signage Bylaw as

part of the Development Bylaw.

## **5.5 Heritage**

The Town of Souris has a rich culture and history tied to its Scottish and Acadian roots and the Town's strong mercantile and maritime traditions. Fortunately the Town retains a significant portion of its historic commercial core and a thriving commercial waterfront which provide opportunities to attract tourists and interpret the Town's history. There are also a number of significant historic homes and institutional buildings which are important to preserve and enhance due to their historic importance and their impact on the local landscape. The cultural and economic significance of these buildings and streetscapes must be recognized and protected.

### **Objectives:**

- To identify, preserve and enhance buildings and streetscapes which have historic or architectural significance.
- To encourage interpretive activities which effectively portray Souris' rich history and cultural traditions to visitors.
- To better capitalize on the economic development potential of the Town's heritage.

### **Policies:**

#### **Policy PH-1: Preservation**

It shall be the policy of Council to identify and preserve important heritage places, structures and streetscapes in the Town.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall designate the historic downtown core area as a Heritage Commercial Zone and shall establish restrictions on changes to the architectural style of building facades and architectural standards for new construction in the area.
- Council shall also seek to identify significant heritage structures and places outside of the Heritage



Commercial zone and work with property owners to encourage their preservation and upgrading.

- Council shall also place restrictions on the demolition of heritage structures.

### **Policy PH-2: Promotion**

It shall be the policy of Council to encourage and support efforts to interpret and promote the history of the Town to visitors.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall work with local interest groups and the Provincial Government to create activities and venues to better interpret and promote the Town's rich history to visitors.

## **5.6 Industrial**

The Town of Souris has a strong industrial base which is closely tied to the region's primary sectors: agriculture and fishing. Industrial lands are adequate, well serviced and well located. The original Industrial Park at the eastern end of Town is municipally owned and has capacity to accommodate additional light manufacturing and service businesses. The new Souris Food Park is already home to two large food processing plants and can accommodate additional growth in this sector.

Unlike many other communities who have traded off the industrial potential of their waterfronts for recreational and tourism development, Souris' wharf remains a viable and active shipping and fishing facility with excellent docks, warehousing, access routes and some room for growth. While recreational uses of the wharf are currently being promoted this should be done in a manner which does not jeopardize traditional commercial uses.

Additional industrial lands should not be required for the period of the Plan, but Council must work with current industrial users and the two senior levels of government to ensure that Souris continues to be promoted as an excellent location for industry and shipping and that current industrial facilities remain well managed.

#### **Objectives:**

- To continue to promote Souris as an industrial location.

- To effectively manage present industrial areas in the Town.
- To protect the long term economic viability of the Souris Wharf for shipping and fishing.
- To minimize land use conflicts between industrial development and other land uses.
- To expand industrial employment.

**Policies:**

**Policy PM-1: Zoning**

It shall be the policy of Council to restrict future industrial development in the Town to established industrial areas and to minimize land use conflicts between industrial development and other land uses.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall zone the three established industrial areas in the Town as Industrial zones.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish development standards for all industrial development.
- No further land shall be zoned for industrial development without an amendment to the Official Plan and careful consideration of any potential land use or transportation conflicts.

**Policy PM-2: Promotion**

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Provincial Government to promote the Town as a prospective location for new industrial development.

**Plan Action:**

- Council will encourage and support prospecting

efforts by the Provincial Government to attract new industrial development to the Town.

- Particular emphasis shall be placed on food processing firms and operations which will create high quality, year round employment.

## **5.7 Public Service and Institutional**

Souris is fortunate to be extremely well supplied with institutional facilities including schools, churches, a hospital, nursing home, government service centre, police station, fire hall, town hall and library. While there may be some opportunity for the development of additional facilities, particular if recent population trends can be reserved, the Town's major challenge will be to ensure the continued health of the current institutional facilities in the Town.

### **Objectives:**

- To protect and enhance current institutional facilities and public services in the Town.
- To prevent the encroachment of conflicting land uses.
- To provide opportunities for the growth of existing and new institutional facilities.

### **Policies:**

#### **Policy PI-1: Zoning**

It shall be the policy of Council to protect established institutional facilities from the encroachment of conflicting land uses and to designate additional institutional lands in response to demand.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall designate all institutional facilities as Public Sector and Institutional zones.
- The Development Bylaw shall establish development standards for all institutional uses.

**Policy PI-2: Institutional Development**

It shall be the policy of Council to support the long term viability of local institutional facilities and encourage upgrading and expansion.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall support and encourage efforts to maintain or upgrade existing institutional facilities in the Town.
- Council shall support efforts to locate additional institutional facilities in the Town and to expand current facilities.

**5.8 Parks and Recreation**

The Town of Souris has an impressive array of recreational facilities and programs. As noted earlier, however, there are a number of problems which must be addressed. The first is the lack of effective co-ordination between recreational programs. This will hopefully be addressed through the designation of a Recreation Chairman on Council and the hiring (with the assistance of the Provincial Government) of a Recreation Director.

While organized sports programs are well provided there is a need for additional activities for youth. The Town's major recreational complex, the Eastern Kings Sportsplex is in need of repairs and upgrading and a development plan has been put in place to address these needs. Playgrounds and facilities for small children are not well supplied in the town. In general the marketing and promotion of recreational facilities in the Town is ineffective and the availability of volunteers is rapidly becoming a problem.

**Objectives:**

- To maintain and improve the current recreation programs and facilities in the Town.
- To encourage the direct participation of recreation users from outside the municipality in recreational program planning and operations.
- To foster more effective co-ordination and promotion of recreational programs.

- To foster stronger volunteer participation in all aspects of recreation.
- To target the special needs of youth, seniors and the physically and mentally challenged.
- To provide improved active play areas throughout the Town, within easy and safe access of all residential neighbourhoods.
- To provide recreational activities which stimulate the mind as well as the body.

**Policies:**

**Policy PP-1: Co-ordination and Promotion**

It shall be the policy of Council to provide more active co-ordination and more effective promotion of recreation programs both within the Town and in its rural service area.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall appoint a Recreation Chairman and direct him/her to form an ongoing Recreation Co-ordination Committee made up of the Chairman, Recreation Director and representatives of all organized sports and recreation groups in the Town.
- The Committee shall be open to non-residents of the Town and shall also establish effective working relationships with other sport and recreational groups in the Eastern Kings Region.
- Council shall support the interim hiring of a Recreation Director and shall pursue various funding options to ensure that this becomes a full time position.
- Council shall support and encourage efforts to more actively promote recreation programs.
- Council shall promote the Town as a venue for organized sports and recreation tournaments and

events.

### **Policy PP-2: Recreation Facilities**

It shall be the policy of Council to routinely monitor the physical condition of all sports and recreation facilities owned by the Town and upgrade facilities as budgets permit, based on an assessment of need and demand.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall conduct routine inspections of all Town owned recreation facilities.
- Available upgrading budgets shall be allocated based on physical need and program participation levels.
- Council shall seek the input of the Recreation Coordinating Committee prior to establishing recreation budgets.
- Council shall place priority on maintaining the upgraded playground at Souris Consolidated School, the refurbished tennis courts and developing additional playgrounds in the southern and eastern portions of the Town.

### **Policy PP-3: Eastern Kings Sportsplex**

It shall be the policy of Council to support the Board of Directors in its current efforts to upgrade and expand the facilities at the Eastern Kings Sportsplex.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall actively support the current business plan for repairing and upgrading the Eastern Kings Sportsplex facility.
- Council shall also support the addition of a curling rink to the facility, given sufficient demand and financial support.

- Council shall work with the Board of Directors to more effectively promote the facility as a venue for tournaments and events.

#### **Policy PP-4: Other Programs**

While organized sports will always be a major component of recreational programming and expenditures, it shall be the policy of Council to also address the recreational needs of youth who are not active in organized sports, seniors and the physically and mentally challenged.

##### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall support and promote seniors' programs such as Silver Threads, Heart and Health, walking clubs, etc. and support efforts to expand seniors' programming.
- Council shall encourage the development of a Youth Drop In Centre or Boys and Girls Club in the Town and actively support local groups targeting activities for youth.
- Council shall support and encourage programs accessible to or targeted at the physically and mentally challenged.

#### **Policy PP-5: Voluntarism**

It shall be the policy of Council to promote voluntarism both in the Town and in our rural service area and to more adequately acknowledge the vital role played by volunteers in the day to day life of the Town.

##### **Plan Action:**

- Council shall prepare a Volunteer Development Strategy.
- Council shall expand efforts to recognize the invaluable contribution of the Town's volunteers and shall initiate activities such as a "volunteer recognition day".

- The Recreation Director shall be directed to play a key role in supporting and developing volunteer recruitment and support initiatives.

## **5.9 Municipal Services**

The Town of Souris directly supplies or contracts for the provision of a range of municipal services including: collection and treatment of sanitary waste; collection and disposal of solid waste; central water supply; fire services and police protection. The Town has joint responsibility with the Provincial Government for storm water management and emergency measures.

In general the Town's municipal services and infrastructure are in good condition and able to meet demands with a high level of service. Given the age of some of the systems however, considerable ongoing maintenance and upgrading will be required.

### **Objectives:**

- To provide efficient and cost effective central waste water collection and treatment services for all present and future property owners within the Town.
- To provide high quality domestic water supply for all residents, property owners and businesses in the Town.
- To provide for the special servicing needs of industrial users.
- To provide cost effective police and fire services.
- To provide efficient municipal maintenance services.
- To provide for solid waste management, collection and disposal in a manner which minimizes financial costs and environmental risks.

### **Policies:**

#### **Policy PS-1: Central Sewage Collection and Treatment**

It shall be the policy of Council to provide high quality, cost effective waste water collection and treatment services for the present and future built-up areas of the Town.



**Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to place a high priority on completing the inspection of all concrete sewer lines and continue a regular flushing program.
- Sewer lines found to be in poor condition or incurring frequent repairs shall be replaced on a priority basis.
- Council shall also place high priority on the replacement of the remaining “no corrode” laterals in the Town.

**Policy PS-2: Central Water Supply**

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to supply adequate, high quality, fire-rated central water supply services to all users in the Town.

**Plan Action:**

- Council will continue to operate the Town’s current well fields in the most efficient manner.
- Council shall examine methods for increasing available water pressures in those areas of the Town where service is currently marginal and implement the preferred option as budgets permit.
- Council shall identify appropriate actions to enhance the security of the Town’s water supply and see that these actions are implemented in a timely manner.

**Policy PS-3: Storm Water Management**

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Department of Transportation and Public Works to ensure that storm water run-off is managed in a manner which is cost-effective and environmentally sensitive and which minimizes risks to public health, safety and private property.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall develop an overall Storm Water

Management Plan for the Town.

- The Town will work with the Department of Transportation and Public Works to ensure that storm water systems are properly installed and maintained in the Town.
- All new subdivisions and major developments shall be required to submit a storm water management plan, subject to standards imposed by Council and the Department of Transportation and Public Works.
- Wherever possible it shall be the policy of Council to protect and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in the Town, and to upgrade its capacity to handle storm water run-off.
- No physical changes or infilling of any stream, wetland or water course shall be allowed without the approval of Council and a detailed assessment of any storm water run-off implications.

**Policy PS-4: Solid Waste**

It shall be the policy of Council to promote solid waste reduction, re-use and re-cycling and to work with the Provincial Government to manage solid waste in an economical and environmentally appropriate manner.

**Plan Action:**

- It would appear at present that the future of solid waste management in the Town is totally in the hands of the Provincial Government. Council shall therefore continue to lobby the Province for a central solid waste management system which is equitable, cost effective and environmentally sound.

**Policy PS-5: Police Services**

It shall be the policy of Council to maintain the current arrangement of utilizing the services of the R.C.M.P., under the provisions of the Provincial Policing Contract.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to utilize the services of the local Provincial detachment of the R.C.M.P.
- Council shall work closely with the R.C.M.P. to monitor security issues in the Town and to ensure adequate levels of policing.
- Council shall continue to work to ensure that the new R.C.M.P. detachment building remains within the boundaries of the Town.

**Policy PS-6: Fire Protection Services**

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to provide municipal (and regional) fire services through the Souris volunteer fire department and to continue to provide the department with the financial resources required to maintain a highly trained and well equipped fire service.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to support the efforts of the Souris Fire Department and to supply funding necessary to maintain equipment, facilities and training at high levels.

**5.10 Transportation**

As a Town, Souris is responsible for the ownership and maintenance of all public roads within the municipality with the exception of “designated” Provincial highways or roads. With one exception the Provincial roads within the Town are all in reasonably good condition, with Longworth Avenue scheduled for upgrading in the year 2000. Local streets are also in fair condition, but some are quite narrow and many lack adequate storm drainage. There are also a number of intersections along Main Street which have undesirable intersection angles.

Souris has an excellent pedestrian circulation system containing 16,000 feet of Town owned and maintained sidewalks and a section of the Confederation Trail. Sidewalks are in a good state of repair and the Town has an effective maintenance capability. The Confederation Trail is fully developed and offers exceptional hiking potential but additional support facilities are required to attract visitors.

One of the key components of Souris' transportation infrastructure is the Town Wharf. While the wharf and storage sheds are in excellent condition, the long term economic viability of the Wharf is threatened by the removal of Federal financial support.

**Objectives:**

- To maintain a high standard of maintenance on regional arterial routes and Provincial highways in the Town.
- To maintain a high standard of maintenance on Town owned streets.
- To address traffic hazards in the Town.
- To improve storm water drainage on Town owned streets.
- To maintain a safe and efficient pedestrian circulation system in the Town.
- To develop destination facilities along the Confederation Trail.
- To minimize safety and noise concerns related to truck traffic.
- To maintain and enhance the viability of the Souris Wharf.

**Policies:**

**Policy PT-1: Streets**

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Department of Transportation and Public Works to ensure that the key routes leading to the Town and Provincially controlled streets within the Town are maintained at the highest possible levels. Council shall also ensure that Town owned streets are maintained at a standard which adequately reflects their role and level of use.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to work with the Provincial Department of Transportation and Public Works to monitor the condition of all Provincial roads within the Town and key connecting routes to the Town.

- Council shall maintain all Town owned streets to the highest level possible within local budgetary constraints, with the highest priority being placed on streets with highest projected traffic volumes.
- Council shall pursue opportunities to assemble land adjacent to intersections along Main Street where there is a need (and potential) to correct unsafe intersection angles, as budgets permit.

### **Policy PT-2: Road Classification**

It shall be the policy of Council to categorize all streets, roads and highways in the Town based on their traffic volumes and functions.

#### **Plan Action:**

- Council in conjunction with the Department of Transportation and Public Works will prepare a transportation plan for the Town identifying all existing and proposed arterial, collector and local streets.
- Arterial roads carry the largest volumes of traffic and function to route inter-community or cross-community traffic around residential neighbourhoods. These roads provide access through the Town and to industrial and commercial areas within it.
- Collector streets carry traffic from minor streets to arterials. They gather traffic from local streets and distribute it to other local streets or to major arterials, and vice versa.
- Local streets serve mainly to provide access to individual properties. They are meant to be used almost exclusively by those who live on the street, or in the case of a local commercial or industrial street, those people accessing the businesses on that street.

**Policy PT-3: Pedestrian Circulation**

It shall be the policy of Council to develop and maintain a pedestrian circulation system in the Town which provides safe pedestrian linkages throughout the Town and between all major destinations.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall establish a long term plan for sidewalk construction and maintenance, together with a long term capital budget.
- Priority shall be placed on major traffic routes, particularly where they connect to major pedestrian destinations such as schools, churches, shopping areas and parks or playgrounds.

**Policy PT-4: Confederation Trail**

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the Provincial Government and local interest groups to ensure that the Confederation Trail within the Town is well maintained and effectively promoted.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall work with the Provincial Government and local interest groups to ensure that the Confederation Trail within the Town is well maintained.
- Council will promote the Trail as a tourism attraction.
- Council will pursue the development of information kiosks and rest areas on the Trail at the entry to the Town and at the terminus adjacent to the Wharf.

**Policy PT-5: Souris Wharf**

It shall be the policy of Council to work with regional businesses, current wharf users and the Federal and Provincial Governments to ensure that the Souris Wharf facilities are maintained at a high level and remain designated as one of the Province's key shipping terminals.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall continue to work with all other concerned parties to lobby the Federal Government to continue to support the port of Souris and to maintain and upgrade the shipping facilities at the Souris Wharf.
- Council shall continue to actively encourage increased shipping and fishing activities at the Souris Wharf in order to increase revenues.
- Council shall pursue other development opportunities for the wharf such as increased ferry services or recreational/tourism activities.

**5.11 Environment**

A healthy environment is not only critical to the health and well being of our residents and the flora and fauna of the area, it is also an economic resource. The appeal of Souris and the entire Eastern Kings Region as both a tourism destination and a home is strongly based on the area's natural beauty. Natural features, surface water systems, vegetation and habitat areas must all be managed with great care.

The Town is also totally dependent on ground water resources for domestic and industrial water supplies. It is therefore critical that the Town work with the Department of the Environment to protect this invaluable resource from depletion or contamination.

Souris benefits greatly from its coastal location but it is also highly exposed to erosion, particularly along its cliffs. Given the close proximity of a number of residences and several roadways to these rapidly eroding cliffs, the Town must soon develop a strategy for addressing this significant environmental risk.

**Objectives:**

- To protect the quality and quantity of the Town's vital ground water resources.
- To protect and enhance the quality of surface water systems in the Town.
- To participate in the management and enhancement of significant

regional natural systems including the Souris River.

- To protect the Town's significant natural features.
- To protect and enhance wildlife habitat areas within and adjacent to the Town.
- To encourage the preservation and planting of trees in the Town.
- To implement policies controlling erosion from construction and farming activities in the Town.
- To minimize the effects of coastal erosion where possible.
- To encourage acceptable minimum maintenance standards and the control of unsightly premises.
- To protect air quality and minimize nuisances related to noise, dust, vibration, etc.

**Policies:**

**Policy PE-1: Ground Water**

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the Department of Environment to protect both the quantity and quality of ground water resources in the Town.

**Plan Action:**

- Land uses which would pose a serious risk for ground water contamination such as chemical plants or storage depots shall not be permitted in the Town.
- Council shall work with the Department of Environment to identify and control potential point sources of pollution such as underground gasoline or fuel oil tanks, chemical storage, refuse or dump sites and abandoned wells.
- Development permit applications shall be required to identify any chemical storage areas or underground petroleum storage.



- Council shall encourage the maintenance and protection of features which contribute to ground water re-charging such as wetlands, storm water retention areas, trees and other dense vegetation. Council shall seek to identify and protect major aquifer re-charge areas both within and outside the Town.
- Council will identify literature on water conservation, safe disposal of household and business hazardous wastes and other information pertaining to the protection of the water supply and make it available to residents and property owners.

#### **Policy PE-2: Surface Water**

It shall be the policy of Council to protect and enhance the quality of streams, ponds, wetlands and rivers within the Town and to work with our neighbours and the Federal Government to upgrade the other major surface water systems such as the Souris River.

#### **Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall establish a conservation setback or buffer area adjacent to all streams, drainage courses, ponds and wetlands limiting construction activities and protecting vegetation.
- The Development Bylaw shall require construction activities adjacent to streams or wetlands to implement erosion control measures.
- The Development Bylaw shall restrict any infilling or alteration of surface drainage features without the issuance of a development permit and performance of an environmental assessment, and the issuance of a stream alteration permit where required by Provincial regulations.

**Policy PE-3: Habitat Areas**

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the Department of Environment to identify significant habitat areas in the Town, to restrict development in and adjacent to these areas, to encourage the implementation of management plans and to work with the Province and our neighbours to jointly protect significant habitat areas in the region.

**Plan Action:**

- Council shall work with Provincial environmental officials to identify significant habitat areas in the Town.
- Council shall limit development in and adjacent to these areas.
- Council shall encourage public ownership of all sensitive natural areas in the Town and where appropriate encourage the development of management plans.

**Policy PE-4: Air Quality**

It shall be the policy of Council to restrict those activities in the Town which would be detrimental to air quality and to promote tree planting and preservation.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall restrict establishment of industries or other land uses which are deemed to be noxious by reason of smell, particulates or other risks to air quality.
- Council shall implement a bylaw controlling the burning of leaves, grass and refuse in the Town.

**Policy PE-5: Coastal Zone**

It shall be the policy of Council to adopt special policies addressing the unique nature of the Coastal Zone in the Town, particularly addressing sensitive coastal dune systems, beaches and coastal erosion.

**Plan Action:**

- The Development Bylaw shall enforce regulations aimed at providing protection to the Town's sensitive coastal environment.
- Council shall work with the Provincial Government to protect roads in the Town from coastal erosion and to develop contingency plans and where appropriate remedial actions to address the long term effects of coastal erosion on the Town and its property owners.

**6.0 GENERAL LAND USE PLAN**

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The General Land Use Plan is a conceptual representation of the direction Council envisions land use patterns emerging over the next fifteen years. It lays the foundation and establishes the direction for the Zoning Map in the Development Bylaw, which is much more precise in terms of boundaries and land use designations. The Zoning Map must, however, conform to the General Land Use Map.

In formulating the General Land Use Plan, Council has applied the following criteria:

- land use conflicts shall be minimized
- commercial development shall be directed to the two established commercial areas
- industrial development shall be directed to locate in the Souris Food Park, the Town's industrial park and adjacent to the Wharf.
- higher density residential developments shall generally be located in close proximity to commercial or industrial areas or adjacent to major traffic routes
- established residential areas shall be protected
- residential "infilling" shall be encouraged

- new peripheral residential development shall be encouraged
- all other relevant policies and principles included in this Plan.

**MAP 2**  
**GENERAL LAND USE PLAN**

## **7.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **7.1 Administration**

Administration of this Plan is the responsibility of Council. Council shall, however, seek the input of the Planning Board on matters pertaining to the Plan. The primary implementation tool for the Plan is the Development Bylaw. Aspects of the Plan may also be implemented through other municipal bylaws and regulations, Council's operating policies and procedures, the municipal budget and other appropriate Council actions. Council may also delegate aspects of the implementation of this Plan or the Development Bylaw to a Development Officer appointed by Council.

### **7.2 Development Bylaw**

Immediately upon the approval of this Plan by the Minister of Community Affairs, Council shall amend its current Zoning and Subdivision Control Bylaw to be in conformance with the policies and provisions of this Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*. This revised bylaw shall be referred to as the Town of Souris Development Bylaw.

The Development Bylaw shall set out specific land use zones, permitted uses for each zone, standards and procedures for development and land use, and standards and procedures for the subdivision and consolidation of land in the Town. The Bylaw may also provide for "conditional" and "special permit" uses. Conditional uses shall be subject to such restrictive conditions as Council deems appropriate. Special Permit uses represent exceptions to the "permitted uses" in each zone and shall be approved at the sole discretion of Council.

#### **7.2.1 Approval of Development or Change of Use**

The Development Bylaw shall require any person undertaking any development, change of use of land or premises or subdivision/consolidation of land to apply for a permit using a standard application form. Exceptions shall be noted in the Bylaw. Council may attach such conditions as it deems appropriate to any permit in order to ensure conformance with this Plan.

The Bylaw may also require submission of a Construction Plan for the development outlining such details as construction phasing, stockpiling of soil, screening or fencing, erosion or run-off control measures, heavy truck access, hours of operation and any other item which could present a nuisance or hazard during construction.

Once the development is approved, a numbered permit will be issued which must

be displayed at the site. The receipt of a development permit does not excuse the applicant from complying with any provincial or federal laws in force, such as fire protection, health and safety, sewage disposal, plumbing and electrical installation, disabled access, etc. Council shall maintain a liaison with appropriate provincial officials during the permit-issuing process.

### **7.2.2 Development Agreements**

Council may, at its discretion, require the developer of a subdivision or a development to enter into a Development Agreement or Subdivision Agreement. This agreement will contain all conditions which were attached to the building permit or subdivision approval and shall be legally binding on both parties.

### **7.2.3 Variances**

Council may grant a variance to the provisions of the Development Bylaw where strict compliance would represent an inappropriate burden to the developer and where the general intent of this Plan is upheld.

## **7.3 Budgeting**

While the Development Bylaw and other bylaws passed under the *Municipalities Act* are primary tools for controlling and directing development activities in the Town, the Municipal Budget is the key policy tool for directing the activities of Council. As such the Budget is a key implementation tool for many of the policies and plan actions laid out in the Plan and, to the extent practicable, the Budget should conform with the policies of this Plan.

### **7.3.1 Budget Policies**

Council has established the following fiscal policies as a framework to guide decisions on municipal revenues and expenditures:

- Council shall strive to maintain stable and affordable property tax and utility rates.
- Council shall pursue all available options for cost-sharing and maximize assistance from other levels of government.
- Council shall pursue a “user pay” approach for programs and services where appropriate.
- Council shall not budget for an operating deficit in any fiscal year.

- Any incurred deficit shall be addressed as part of the subsequent annual budget if possible.
- Annual budgets shall include a Capital Reserve Fund.
- Smaller, routine capital expenditures shall be expensed on an annual basis, major capital expenditures shall be amortized over an appropriate period of years in order to maintain stable tax rates and utility rates.
- Council shall continue to maintain low permanent staff levels and contract out for specialized services until needs and projected savings warrant additional staffing.

### **7.3.2 Capital Priorities**

While other capital projects may arise over the life of the Plan, the following items have emerged from the Plan deliberations as current priorities:

- a) Sewer Upgrading
  - selective replacement of concrete sewer mains on a priority basis and replacement of “no-corrode” laterals
- b) Water Supply
  - upgrading of water reservoir capacity
- c) Housing Development
  - servicing of Town-owned vacant land and possible extension of cost-shared services to privately held vacant land
- d) Promotion
  - promotional programs targeted at housing and economic development
- e) Mathew-MacLean Building
  - purchase of option and seed funding for Business Plan (land purchase and upgrading)
- f) Mainstreet Upgrading
  - parking and streetscape improvements



- g) Eastern Kings Sportsplex
  - support for upgrading project
- i) Playgrounds
  - upgrading of playground equipment at Souris Consolidated and addition of playgrounds in southern and eastern neighbourhoods
- j) Ballfield
  - upgrading of relocated Clinton & MacAulay field

#### **7.4 Review**

Council shall, on a regular basis, review its activities in terms of the successful implementation of this Plan in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*.

#### **7.5 Amendments**

The Official Plan and Development Bylaw may be amended as circumstances require in the Town or in response to requests from the public, provided that all provisions of the *Planning Act* are met.

#### **7.6 Appeal Procedure**

Any person who is dissatisfied with a decision of Council in the administration of the Official Plan or the Development Bylaw may, with 21 days of the decision, appeal the decision to the Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission.