



Town of Souris

2023 Official Plan

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for approval

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1 INTRODUCTION

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 passed under the *Town Act* in 1980. This document represents the results of the 2022-2023 review of the Souris Official Plan and together with any Appendices or Amendments constitutes the Official Plan for the Town of Souris, hereinafter referred to as the ‘Town.’ This process was led by Registered Professional Planners under SJ Murphy Planning & Consulting.

1.2 Purpose

The Official Plan for the Town 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 2038.

The Town’s Goals as set out in the Official 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 Official 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’s Land Use Bylaw, hereinafter referred to as the ‘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. Although the Official 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 derives the majority of its powers from the *Municipal Government Act* and the *Planning Act*. The *Municipal Government Act* which took effect on December 23, 2017, requires the Town to provide “municipal planning services, including an official plan and bylaws,” and enables other bylaws and/or implement programs and strategies to help

implement other aspects of the Official Plan. The *Planning Act* empowers Council to appoint a Planning Board, adopt 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, more comprehensive review shall be undertaken every five years, with the next review due in 2028.

1.6 Plan Contents

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

1. Introduction – deals with the purpose, scope and legal enablement for the Official Plan
2. The Town of Souris Today - summarizes the background studies and provides a description of the physical, social and economic characteristics of the Town and provides a framework for economic development.
3. Future Development Goals - provides a broad summary of how the Town desires to see its development unfold in the future
4. Objectives, Policies and Plan Actions - forms the core of the document, stating objectives, policies and intended actions for specific topics
5. Future Land Use Map – identifies spatial development goals for the Town, and
6. Implementation - sets out the process for administering and implementing the Official Plan and Development Bylaw.

2 THE TOWN OF SOURIS TODAY

2.1 Historical Background

Souris is part of Mi'kma'ki, the traditional, unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people for more than 12,000 years. The Mi'kmaq have been closely associated to Souris as they continued to use and gather in the area well into the 20th century.

Various waves of European settlers, starting with Acadians in the early 1700s and, following the Acadian expulsion, Scottish, English and Irish immigrants began arriving in 1772 into the 1800s. Agriculture and shipbuilding were mainstays of the local economy with as many as 1324 people living in the region in 1861.

2.2 Existing Land Use

Souris boasts a significant industrial land base, reflecting the significance of the port and the community's strong ties to primary sectors, particularly in relation to industrial food production where employment in this sector exceeds 34% compared to all other occupations.

Commercial activity is located along the main street and has expanded to include summer tourism activities along the new boardwalk.

Housing types are mixed with just over half being single-unit dwellings and the remainder a mix of higher density structures from duplexes, low rise apartments. Mobile homes are an issue in the town particularly in relation to the park adjacent to the school. Almost 60% of the housing stock in the Town was built prior to 1980.

The Town's role as a cultural and social centre is also reflected in the institutional and public sector buildings located throughout the municipality. As well, recreational facilities are abundant with both indoor and outdoor assets available in all seasons with programs catering to all age groups.

2.3 Demographic Analysis

The Town of Souris is home to 1079 residents (2021 Census), an increase in population of 2.5% from 2016. This is a notable increase compared to the loss of 10.2% of the population between 2011 and 2016. Further, the population is slowly aging where, in the last ten years, the median age rose from 47 to 51 years. The Souris Background Report provides a detailed examination of demographic trends. Importantly, population growth projections prepared in 2023 based on provincial data projects Souris' population to grow by 74% by 2041 by at least 800 people.

2.4 Development Trends

Only 2% of the Town's dwelling units were built between 2016 and 2021, including a number of townhouse dwellings. While approximately 170 permits were issued over that period, the majority were for accessory buildings and in the commercial, industrial, and institutional category, although those latter included business permits. The cost of servicing land for new residential subdivisions and the limited footprint of the Town, along with an aging population, are likely factors in the pace of growth. Housing requirements to meet the demand for projected population growth are 384-478 new units by 2041 which translates to 19-24 units each year. According to the 2021 Census, Souris' housing stock grew by only 0.8 units a year since 2016.

2.5 Municipal Services/Infrastructure

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. The municipal treatment system received significant upgrades in 1996 and 2021. 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, as well as the threats posed by coastal erosion.

Municipal Water

It is anticipated that all new development within town limits (residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial) are connected to the town water system. Following the establishment of the Souris Food Park, the town now has four wells, the largest of which was established to support the elevated water consumption requirements of the food processing plants. The older three wells are currently idle and the Town is looking to decommission one. The central water distribution system was installed in the 1960s.

Stormwater Management

While most streets in the town do not have storm sewers, stormwater runs from the highest points of the town to the shoreline via three main storm systems, all of which are separated from the sewer systems.

Fire Protection

The town has a volunteer fire department which also provides services to the outlying rural areas. A new fire hall is being considered to accommodate modern equipment and training facilities.

Police Protection

The town 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 7 full time members.

2.6 Transportation

Vehicular

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.

Marine

One of the key components of Souris' transportation infrastructure is the Town port. The Port of Souris is open for shipping and kept free of ice year-round. There are four wharfs, an active fishery, the ferry terminal for the Magdalen Islands Ferry, and a developing marina complex.

Pedestrian

Souris has an excellent pedestrian system including 4.9 km of town-owned (and maintained) sidewalks, and 1 km of boardwalk, the MacPhee Avenue Trail, as well as a section of the Confederation Trail. The sidewalk system connects most areas of the Town and most major pedestrian destinations.

2.7 Institutional and Community Facilities

Souris has a wide range of institutional facilities, including four heritage church buildings (one of which is now used as a mixed-use commercial building), one regional school; an early learning and child care centre; a community hospital; public library, Regional Services Centre, and municipal administration building on Main Street.

2.8 Parks and Recreation

Souris boasts a wealth of recreational facilities for the community including:

- Eastern Kings Sportsplex
- Eastern Kings Fitness Centre Incorporated
- Jerry McCormack Memorial Complex
- Gymnasiums and fields at the School
- Connolly Park
- Centennial Park
- Gerald Clinton Ball Field
- Souris Racetrack
- Souris Skate Park and Outdoor Courts
- CN Park
- Gateway Park
- Silver Threads Club
- Confederation Trail

2.9 Economic Development

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 highly dependent on these two resource sectors. Retail and tourism play smaller but growing roles in the local economy and the growth potential of tourism is promising.

Industrial Activity

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 has capacity to accommodate additional light manufacturing and service businesses. The new Souris Food Park is already home to several large plants and can accommodate additional growth in this sector.

The creation of the Souris Harbour Authority in the 2000's after federal divestiture has facilitated the long-term economic viability of the port. The wharf and storage sheds are in excellent condition and the Harbour Authority operates a range of associated operations, from cold storage facilities, leasing of space, and dry boat storage.

2.10 Environmental Protection

The Town is a coastal community, much of which is vulnerable to erosion, and some of which is facing a growing risk of coastal flooding over time.

Climate Resiliency

The effects of climate change are being increasingly felt and will continue to impact the Town in a variety of ways. Projections for 2080 show warming temperature trends, with an expected increase in the average temperature of more than 4C in the Town. The number of days above 30C will increase dramatically and the last spring frost is projected to move to four weeks (25 days) earlier than in was in 2005 by 2080.

Flood and Erosion Risk maps illustrate current flood and erosion hazard areas along the coast as well as under climate change projections by 2100 due to sea level rise. Climate change may also impact the Town's groundwater supply as a result of saltwater intrusion or drought. As well, property-level stormwater management will be needed to deal with increased precipitation and extreme weather events as a result of climate change.

Climate Change Mitigation

Energy

Increased demand for new renewable energy may occur at different scales, from single-detached dwellings, multi-unit dwellings, or larger commercial applications. These systems may also include energy storage systems of varying scales. There is a need to balance the need for, and facilitation of, renewable energy options and climate change mitigation against the potential resistance to changing technology and their impacts on the landscape in the community.

Transportation

The Town remains heavily dependent on fossil-fuel powered vehicles for transportation. Directing new residential development to more compact subdivisions and increasing connections between residential developments and the core serviced area would reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Promoting more flexibility in working from home allows for the reduction in vehicular travel. A relatively new provincial rural transit system operated by T3/Transit PEI offers new, albeit limited, access to public transportation, which may help to offset some single-occupancy vehicle travel.

Carbon Sequestration

The promotion of reforestation and afforestation efforts acts as carbon sinks and promotes ecological health within the watershed offers additional options for mitigation.

Climate Change Adaptation

Coastal and Overland Flooding

Adapting to threats of coastal flooding due to climate impacts means it is critical for the Town to regulate how new development in at-risk areas is undertaken.

Stormwater Management

The more frequent intense precipitation events associated with climate change will likely impact existing properties and infrastructure, as well as new development. New development projects should address stormwater management by integrating future climate considerations into subdivision design, stormwater management, and other infrastructure and asset management.

3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

3.1 Introduction

In seeking to enhance the overall appeal of Souris as a place to live, visit and operate a business and to generally improve the quality of life in the Town, this Plan will provide a framework for future municipal planning and development that supports and encourages positive development in the Town. The goals presented in this section are broad statements indicating the overall shared vision of the Town Council, residents and property owners in terms of the future evolution and development of the Town and provide the framework and general direction for subsequent, including more detailed statements which follow.

3.2 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 and Council has prioritized enabling more housing development. 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 which 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.

The Future Development Concept reflected in this Official Plan sees 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 continue to be a focus to strengthen industrial employment opportunities.

The future of the port will be protected and the expansion of tourism accommodation, attractions and services encouraged, while access to appropriate, accessible, and affordable housing will be a priority within the Town. Co-operation and collaboration with our rural neighbours will continue to be a focus, building on a history of inter-dependence. In short:

Souris is a resilient community with quality services and natural assets and a vibrant and connected economy, where a high quality of life exists for residents of all ages to live, work, and play.

3.3 Goals

Social

- To provide a range of housing options to meet various socio-economic needs
- To create a safe and resilient community
- To foster social interaction and healthy lifestyles for all residents of the Town

Economic

- To develop a strong local economy
- To attract and support value-added and light industries
- To protect the long-term viability of the Town's resource sector
- To build a local green economy

Physical

- To maximize efficiency and minimize potential conflicts in the development and use of land
- To ensure high quality municipal infrastructure
- To build placemaking into land-use decisions

Environmental

- To protect the quality and supply of groundwater and surface water resources in and adjacent to the Town.
- To protect and enhance the health of the natural environment in the Town.
- To increase the Town's climate change resiliency and minimize contributions to climate change.

4 OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PLAN ACTIONS

4.1 Introduction

This Part represents the policy core of the Official Plan. Within the broad policy framework laid down by the previous part, 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.

4.2 Social Objectives and Policies

Housing

While the 2021 Census saw a reversal of previous population decline, it will be difficult to truly assess long term trends outside of temporary shifts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic until the next census is conducted in 2026. Meanwhile, the Town's aging population continues to present challenges for the maintenance of a population sufficient to maintain service levels and community vitality. Further, the lack of available housing of all types currently limits its ability to retain residents and promote population growth which is expected to increase significantly in the coming years. While housing availability is a substantial stressor across the province, the availability of serviced land for development within the Town, as well as variety of housing forms, are additional factors for Souris, a fact recognized during community outreach actions for the Official Plan review and in local media. The prioritization of policies that support additional and varied housing will be of critical importance in ensuring that the needs of residents and businesses can be met.

Efforts must continue to include a focus on improving the quality of the current housing stock and promoting higher residential development standards, without inappropriately impeding the ability of the community to address core housing needs.

Objectives:

1. To encourage the development of a mix of housing stock in the community to meet the needs of residents at any age and any income level.
2. To actively promote the Town as a residential location.

3. To encourage a broad range of cost-effective residential development opportunities in the Town.

Housing Policies:

Policy SOC-1: Designation and Zoning

It shall be the policy of Council to designate and zone sufficient residential land to accommodate the projected and potential housing needs of the Town during the period of the Official Plan.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall establish residential designations and residential zoning shall be in conformance with the Future Land Use Map.
- b) The Bylaw shall zone sufficient residential land to meet the current and anticipated needs of the Town and establish development standards for low, medium, and higher density residential development.
- c) The Bylaw shall establish three residential zones – Low Density Residential (R1), Medium Density Residential (R2) and Mixed Density Residential (R3).
- d) The integration of housing options shall be encouraged, while using strategies such as landscaping buffers to minimize conflicts between residential and other uses.
- e) The Bylaw shall establish standards and criteria supporting clustered housing developments enabling more than one residential building on a single parcel.

Policy SOC-2: Special Residential Uses

It shall now be the policy of Council to support and encourage special residential uses and supportive housing such as group homes, dormitories, rooming houses, and community care facilities, nursing homes, and senior citizen homes within the Town. Those uses will be identified as shared housing and will be directed to higher density residential areas as a special permit use and, in the case of shared housing with special care such as community care, nursing homes and senior citizen homes, to the Public Service and Institutional Zone as a permitted use.

Plan Actions

- a) The Bylaw shall establish 'shared housing' and 'shared housing with special care' as categories of use and shall distinguish them from both short-term rentals, B&Bs, and other tourism establishments, and from multi-unit residential developments.

- b) The Bylaw shall include 'shared housing' as a category of residential use, based on uses that contains 4 or more bedrooms, that meet one or more of the following: (i) that are rented for remuneration as separate rooms for residential accommodation; or (ii) that are operated by a non-profit organization or a registered Canadian charitable organization that provides support services to the occupants of the shared housing use.
- c) The Bylaw shall further include 'shared housing with special care' as a subcategory of 'shared housing' use that is designed to provide a level of care to residents with cognitive, physical or behavioural limitations, including options for individual dwelling units for occupants; 'shared housing with special care' uses must meet the definition of 'shared housing' use.
- d) The Bylaw shall include shared housing with special care as a permitted use in the Public Service and Institutional (PSI) Zone and shared housing as a permitted use in the Mixed Density Residential (R3) Zone.
- e) The Bylaw shall include shared housing with special care as a special permit use, subject to consideration of their impacts on surrounding land uses, traffic generation and fire safety, in the Medium Density Residential (R2) Zone.

Policy SOC-3: Accessory Apartments

It shall now be the policy of Council to permit accessory apartments through the establishment of a secondary suite within single-detached dwellings or a garden suite in a structure accessory to a single-detached dwelling, where residential uses are permitted.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall permit one secondary suite in any single-detached dwelling, or a garden suite in a structure accessory to a single-detached dwelling, in any zone.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish standards for accessory apartments including but not limited to size and changes to the exterior appearance of the residence, and addressing location, servicing, buffering, parking requirements and other matters.

Policy SOC-4: Housing Forms

It shall now be the policy of Council promote the development of a range of housing forms and densities in order to meet the housing needs of residents of different ages, stages, abilities and incomes, while ensuring the compatibility of dwelling types with permanent neighbourhoods. This will be accomplished by establishing criteria for the locations in which certain types of prefabricated homes and the standards for their placement to promote the sensitive integration of different housing forms that balance affordability with compatibility with adjoining residential uses.

Plan Actions:

- a) Modern “mini-homes” shall be permitted under the Bylaw but only when they are affixed to a foundation and are CSA-approved.
- b) Tiny homes shall be included as a residential type of use permitted within clustered housing developments or as a form of housing to accommodate farm labourers in the Agricultural zone.
- c) The Bylaw shall include prefabricated modular houses and mini-homes as types of single-detached dwellings.
- d) Older style mobile homes (transportable on their own wheeled chassis) which have a unique style and character shall be restricted to the existing mini-home court adjacent to the school.
- e) The existing mini-home court shall be continued as an existing approved use under the new R3 Zone. The site shall continue to be monitored and the owners required to maintain their units in an appropriate manner. When units become dilapidated, Council shall take action to encourage their removal.
- f) No further mini-home courts shall be permitted in the Town except as clustered housing in any zone where clustered housing is a permitted or special permit use.
- g) The Bylaw shall establish minimum requirements for the provision of accessible dwelling units in larger multi-unit buildings.

Policy SOC-5: 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 landowners and developers to facilitate residential development.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Council may designate surplus Town-owned land for residential development where appropriate.
- b) Council shall work with local employers and developers to identify opportunities for serviced residential developments.
- c) Council shall seek to identify opportunities for partnering with private sector developers and not-for-profit community organizations for the creation of new housing options.
- d) Council shall pursue all opportunities for funding and cost-sharing support to encourage and develop new housing in the Town.

Safe & Resilient Community

The Town of Souris directly supplies or contracts for the provision of a range of municipal

services, including collection and treatment of sanitary waste, central water supply, fire services, and police protection. The Town has joint responsibility with the Province for stormwater 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. Recent upgrades have been made to some infrastructure, although some systems, such as stormwater and utility lines, are increasingly vulnerable to a changing climate.

Objectives:

1. To provide cost effective emergency and first responder services
2. To plan and prepare for human and natural disasters, including through risk reduction

Community Safety Policies:

Policy SOC-6: Protective 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 and to continue to provide municipal and regional fire services through the Souris Fire Department.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall continue to contract additional police protection through the Province's contract with the R.C.M.P.
- b) Council shall work closely with the R.C.M.P. to monitor security issues in the Town and to ensure adequate levels of policing.
- c) Council shall continue to provide fire protection to the town and surrounding fire district through the municipally-owned Souris Fire Department and to supply funding necessary to maintain equipment, facilities and training at high levels.

Policy SOC-7: Emergency Management Planning

It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that the municipality's Emergency Measures Program, including an EMO Plan and bylaw, is maintained, updated, and exercised in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall continue to maintain, update, and revise the Town's Emergency Measures Plan and bylaw and maintain the overall EMO Program as required under the *Municipal Government Act* and the *Emergency Measures Act*.

- b) Council shall work with other municipalities in the region to identify opportunities for the coordination of emergency preparedness and response efforts.
- c) Council and the Emergency Management Coordinating Committee shall take into consideration the increasing impacts of climate change in identifying hazards and potential emergency shelter needs, including the potential use of emergency shelters as cooling shelters.
- d) Council and the Emergency Management Coordinating Committee shall identify areas at risk of coastal flooding ahead of anticipated storm surge events to assess the ability of emergency responders to gain access.
- e) The Bylaw will include future emergency hazard considerations in the design and development standards for new subdivisions and development projects.

Social Interaction and Healthy Lifestyles

Souris has an impressive array of recreational facilities and programs and the community is serviced by a range of organized sports programs, as well as additional activities for youth. The Town is fortunate to be extremely well supplied with institutional facilities including schools, churches, a hospital, nursing home, government service centre, police detachment, fire hall, town hall and library. While there may be some opportunity for the development of additional facilities, particularly if the recent trend of population growth can be maintained, the Town's major challenge will be to ensure the continued health of the current institutional facilities in the Town.

Priorities include the continued development of programming for youth and young families and integrating physical activity into everyday activities by continuing to build on existing active transportation infrastructure.

Objectives:

1. To maintain and expand recreation programs and facilities in the Town.
2. To encourage social engagement that is supportive and inclusive.
3. To support the development of the Town in a way that contributes to overall affordability.
4. To promote youth retention and the recruitment of young families to the Town.
5. To protect and enhance current institutional facilities and public services in the Town and encourage additional services over time.

Recreation Policies

Policy SOC-8: Recreation Programming and Facilities

It shall be the policy of Council to provide recreation programs and sports and recreation facilities that meet the needs of residents.

Plan Actions:

- a) Open spaces and properties used for parkland or recreational uses shall be designated as Parks and Open Space on the Future Land Use Map and zoned as Open Space (OS) in the Land Use Bylaw.
- b) Council shall support and encourage efforts to promote recreation programs.
- c) Council shall promote the Town as a venue for organized sports and recreation tournaments and events.
- d) Council shall encourage and provide recreational activities and programs that stimulate the mind as well as the body.
- e) Council shall routinely inspect and maintain sports and recreation facilities owned by the Town and upgrade facilities as budgets permit, based on an assessment of need and demand.

Policy SOC-9: Active Play Areas

It shall be the policy of Council to provide improved active play areas throughout the Town, within easy and safe access of all residential neighbourhoods.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall identify opportunities for new and expanded facilities such as dog parks, taking advantage where possible of town-owned lands.
- b) Council shall integrate active transportation into open space and recreation infrastructure development to facilitate accessibility and functionality.
- c) The Bylaw shall include uses ancillary to recreation uses, such as commercial shops along the boardwalk as permitted uses,
- d) The Bylaw shall establish requirements and criteria for the dedication of parkland or cash-in-lieu of parkland, or a combination thereof, in new subdivisions.
- e) Council shall prioritize the inclusion of shading in the design and development of any public spaces to provide opportunities for cooling with the anticipated rise in temperatures associated with climate change.

Policy SOC-10: Regional Collaboration

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the residents and community organizations and

establish effective working relationships with other sport and recreational groups in the Eastern Kings Region, collaborating with neighbouring municipalities and communities in the broader region to take advantage of shared opportunities.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall seek opportunities to collaborate with surrounding municipalities and communities to meet the recreation needs of residents and develop the critical mass and ensure economies of scale in the development and operating of facilities and programs.
- b) Council shall work with community boards and organizations in its efforts to promote regional facilities as a venue for tournaments and events.

Social Engagement Policies

Policy SOC-11: Inclusion and Accessibility

It shall be the policy of Council to use recreation and community programs and facilities to develop an inclusive and engaging community, meeting the needs of all residents regardless of age, income, or ability.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall identify opportunities to foster and encourage volunteer participation in all aspects of the delivery of recreation programs.
- b) Council shall include principles of building community in the development of events and programming.
- c) Council shall support and promote seniors' programs and support efforts to expand seniors' programming.
- d) Programs and facilities shall be assessed with regards to their level of accessibility to residents of all needs and abilities.

Policy SOC-12: Affordable Community

It shall be the policy of Council to consider the impacts of council decisions, spending, and policies on community affordability.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall assess municipal decisions regarding capital investments and programming with the goal of assessing the impact of such decisions on user fees, tax rates, and utility fees.
- b) Council shall strive to develop programs and facilities that are inclusive, affordable, accessible and offer a full range of options.

Policy SOC-13: Youth Retention

It shall be the policy of Council to focus special attention on the needs of local youth and young families.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall develop and support programming that supports youth activities and provides opportunities for young families to foster active lifestyles and social development within the town.

Institutional Policies

Policy SOC-14: Institutional Designation and Zoning

It shall be the policy of Council to identify and protect established institutional facilities from the encroachment of conflicting land uses and to designate additional institutional lands in response to demand while promoting the integration of institutional activities into the community fabric where appropriate.

Plan Actions:

- a) Existing institutional uses shall be designated as institutional and zoned under the Bylaw as Public Service and Institutional (PSI).
- b) The Bylaw shall establish development standards for institutional uses.
- c) The Bylaw may include institutional uses as special permit uses in other zones.

Policy SOC-15: 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 Actions:

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

4.3 Economic Objectives and Policies

Strong Local Economy

Positioning Souris as a vibrant regional and provincial destination that is able to meet the needs of its residents of all ages, and those of young families in particular, is linked to services and the availability of housing. Souris' two major challenges over the past few decades – the decline in population and the decline of the commercial core area – are closely linked. Concerted efforts have taken place over recent years to upgrade the appearance and level of commercial activity in the older commercial core, while local festivals and events have also worked to create a draw to the community.

With the ferry, the area's natural beauty, and the interest in ecotourism, 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 from Council, local development groups and the local business community. Services and amenities that function as a draw for travellers are also key features that increase the livability and quality of life for residents, particularly in relation to active transportation linkages, wayfinding, and other features relating to the creation of a strong sense of place. In turn, tourism has the potential to contribute significantly to reinvigorating the historic downtown area and support services for residents and create spaces that encourage residents and visitors alike to linger.

Objectives:

1. To expand retail, service, and business opportunities in the Town, including in the core area
2. To strengthen and expand local and regional tourism opportunities

Commercial Policies:

Policy EC-1: Designation and Zoning

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

Plan Actions:

- a) The Future Land Use Map shall identify and designate commercial areas in the Town.
- b) The Bylaw shall zone commercial land as General Commercial (C1) in conformance with the Future Land Use Map.
- c) The Bylaw shall establish permitted uses, and development standards for the General Commercial zone.

Policy EC-2: Downtown Core

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to stimulate and support efforts to upgrade and reinvigorate the downtown core area, in particular with regards to the ongoing physical upgrading and economic renewal of the Town's historic main street commercial district as appropriate overtime.

Plan Action:

- a) Council shall continue to work with affected landowners and businesses, local development groups and the senior levels of government to identify opportunities to enhance the core area, with an emphasis on the development of new anchor facilities, parking, streetscape and infrastructure improvements, maintenance and upgrading of building facades.

Policy EC-3: Retail & Service Sectors

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

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall maintain a close relationship with local business operators and pursue opportunities to support and encourage local business.
- b) 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.
- c) Council shall work with local development groups, federal and provincial agencies to actively encourage entrepreneurial activity in the Town and foster the launching of new local businesses.

Policy EC-4: Home-Based Businesses

It shall now be the policy of Council to permit a range of home-based businesses to promote life-work flexibility.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall permit the establishment of a range of home-based businesses in all single-detached residences, and where appropriate, other types of dwellings.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish standards for home-based businesses to 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 other factors which may represent an impediment to the safety, convenience or enjoyment of neighbouring residents.

Policy EC-5: Tourism Opportunities

It shall be the policy of Council to promote the Town as a tourism destination by targeting development efforts toward strengthening local and regional tourism infrastructure, attractions, services, accommodations and related business and employment opportunities.

Plan Actions:

- a) 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.
- b) Council shall support efforts by local service clubs, church groups, and other organizations to develop and promote local activities such as festivals, craft fairs, garden parties, heritage days, fishing and boating regattas, nature walks, and lobster suppers.
- c) Council shall continue to facilitate the development and promotion of the Confederation Trail and the development of facilities at the entry to the Town and the terminus adjacent to the Wharf aimed at promoting the Town and its facilities, including information kiosks and rest areas.
- d) Council shall work with local interest groups and the Province to create activities and venues to better interpret and promote the Town's rich history and cultural traditions to visitors.
- e) Council shall pursue and support development opportunities for the Souris wharf, such as increased ferry services or recreational/tourism activities.

Industrial Centre

Souris' wharf remains a viable and active shipping and fishing facility with excellent docks, warehousing, access routes which still have 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 and industrial uses.

Additional industrial lands should not be required for the period of the Official 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:

1. To continue to promote Souris as an industrial location
2. To effectively manage present industrial areas in the Town
3. To protect the long-term economic viability of the Souris Port as key infrastructure for industrial activities.

Industrial Policies:

Policy EC-6: Designation and Zoning

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

Plan Actions:

- a) The Future Land Use Map shall identify and designate areas for industrial uses.
- b) The Bylaw shall zone the three established industrial areas as Industrial (M1).
- c) The Bylaw shall establish development standards and list permitted uses for all industrial development.
- d) 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 EC-7: Industrial Developments

It shall be the policy of Council to identify measures to minimize land use conflicts between industrial development and other land uses.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall establish development standards, including requirements for landscaping, to minimize the impacts of a growing industrial sector on adjacent non-industrial land uses.

Policy EC-8: Industrial Promotion

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Province to promote the Town as a prospective location for new industrial development and to support the expansion of existing industrial operations.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall encourage and support prospecting efforts by the Province to attract new industrial development to the Town, with a particular emphasis placed on food processing firms and operations to facilitate the creation of high-quality, year-round employment.
- b) Council shall continue to work the Souris Harbour Authority to promote the on-going success of the port, shipping facilities, and other associated operations.

Viable Resource Sector

While the Town's ties to the surrounding agricultural community are very strong, there is a minimal amount of land within the boundaries of the Town remaining 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, notwithstanding section which are within the Town’s wellfield. This juxtaposition puts the Town in the position of seeking to balance support for existing agricultural operations and the broader agricultural community with the longer-term residential needs of residents. Supporting local fishing activities will also remain a strong priority, recognizing the significant economic impact that fishing provides to the community and the region.

Objectives:

1. To continue to foster a strong relationship between the Town and its agricultural service area.
2. To protect the long-term economic viability of fishing activities in the Town

Resource Use Policies:

Policy EC-9: Supporting Agriculture

It shall be the policy of Council to support the agricultural community within and adjacent to the town.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Town will support the continued presence of the local Farmer’s Market.
- b) The Town will support the development of agricultural-related uses on lands designated for Industrial and Commercial uses as the service hub for the Eastern Kings region.

Policy EC-10: Changes in Agricultural Designation and Zoning

It shall now be the policy of Council to designate land currently in agricultural production as Residential on the Future Land Use Map to signal the long-term vision of the Town to eventually convert this land to residential use in response to future market demands and resident needs, while protecting existing resources uses as permitted uses.

Plan Actions:

- a) Any significant blocks of undeveloped land in the Town which remain in viable agricultural production shall be designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map.
- b) The Bylaw shall zone as Agricultural (A1) those large blocks of land which are currently in agricultural use to support existing uses as permitted uses.
- c) At such time as agricultural production and uses cease, the re-zoning and transition of these lands to residential use in conformity with the Future Land Use Map shall be encouraged in response to new residential development proposals in order to increase housing options for current and future residents.

Policy EC-11: Livestock Activities

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

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall establish regulations controlling the keeping and raising of livestock within the Town.

Policy EC-12: Souris Wharf

It shall be the policy of Council to support the fishing sector, particularly as it pertains to activities at the port.

Plan Action:

- a) Council shall continue to actively encourage fishing and value-added activities at the Souris Wharf.

Policy EC-13: Excavation Pits

It shall be the policy of Council to enable excavation pits as a special permit use in appropriate areas of land zoned for Industrial uses.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall include excavation pits as a special permit use in the M1 Zone.
- b) Authority for the regulation of excavation pits shall remain with the Province.

Local Green Economy

Energy independence strategies can achieve several outcomes, reducing carbon footprints while enabling options for residents and property owners to reduce costs and explore alternate technologies. Regulating wind energy facilities, solar energy and other energy infrastructure will be important for balancing the protection of community character with the reduction of the Town's climate footprint.

Objectives:

1. To encourage energy conservation and the use of alternate and renewable energy sources.

Energy Independence Policies

Policy EC-14: Renewable Energy Systems

It shall be the policy of Council to support the use of renewable energy generation systems

aimed toward enabling economic benefit for the community and individual residents, and to support the incorporation of alternative energy technologies and infrastructure for both the direct benefits to citizens and the avoidance or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall permit and establish standards for roof-mounted and ground-mounted solar systems.
- b) Council shall work with all levels of government to encourage residents to consider renewable energy sources in new and existing development.
- c) Council shall explore options for promoting the incorporation of renewable energy systems, such as charging infrastructure, into new developments.
- d) The Bylaw shall permit wind turbines of a maximum capacity of up to 100 kw as a permitted use in the Industrial zone and as an accessory use in the Agriculture Zone. Wind turbines of a capacity between 100 kW and 1 MW shall be included a site-specific amendment use in the Industrial Zone, and the Bylaw shall establish standards regulating the size and placement of wind turbines.
- e) Council shall support the development of new energy facilities in the Industrial Zone where it has been determined that any potential environmental and nuisance impacts can be mitigated.

Policy EC-15: Energy Efficiency

It shall be the policy of Council to build energy efficiency into the development of any future municipal buildings and infrastructure, and to encourage energy efficiency features in private development.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall work with other levels of government, community organizations, and developers to promote the adoption of energy efficiency standards and measures.

4.4 Physical Objectives and Policies

Managing Land Uses

Giving the limited footprint of the Town and in light of the priorities associated with active transportation and meeting the significant housing needs of the community, as well as the value expressed by the community regarding quality public spaces, ensuring the efficient use of land will be increasingly important over time. This efficiency will be dependent upon promoting a mix of uses and densities, building active transportation options into new development projects and infrastructure upgrades, and ensuring development standards meet the current priorities of the community.

Objectives:

1. To minimize land use conflicts through zoning and development standards
2. To promote the efficient use of land

General Land Use Policies

Policy PHY-1: Lot Design and Servicing

It shall be the policy of Council to ensure that land is zoned and developed with foresight given the limited footprint of the municipality, the importance of the long-term sustainability of infrastructure, and the changing needs of residents over time.

Plan Action

- a) The Bylaw shall establish lot size and layout requirements that will maximize the efficient use of land over time.
- b) Density and mixed uses that are consistent with or are an enhancement of the traditional concentration of uses in the core shall be promoted, particularly adjacent to Main Street.

Policy PHY-2: Development Standards

It shall be the policy of Council to establish development standards relating to density, building type, lot sizes, setbacks, amenity areas, parking, buffering and other matters to enhance the health, safety and convenience of residents and the general public.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall establish development standards relating to lot sizes, setbacks, servicing, amenity areas and open space, parking, building height, buffering and other related matters.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish criteria and standards for temporary uses to manage the nature, timing, and impact of such uses.

Infrastructure

Town responsibility for many of the roads is expected to continue and emphasis will remain on ensuring maintaining a high standard of road condition and upgrades where needed and as funding is available. Storm drainage is likely to continue to be a priority for the foreseeable future as increased rain events will intensify. Engagement with the Province regarding the maintenance of provincially-owned roads will also continue.

Active transportation, including sidewalk networks, the Confederation Trail, and multi-use systems offer a strategic opportunity to enhance quality of life (including economic and health-related) of residents, reduce the local carbon footprint by promoting non-vehicular means of commuting and travelling, and build tourism-related infrastructure. Ongoing maintenance and

expansion of these, whether by the Town or other levels of government or organizations, will be key, and the identification of additional support facilities and linkages to promote local usage and the attraction of visitors will be a long-term process.

Municipal utility infrastructure upgrades have undertaken in recent years and also remain key to ensuring the long-term health of the town, the region, and the environment.

Objectives:

1. 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 Official Plan.
2. To identify and pursue short and long-term enhancements of the Town's active transportation and vehicular systems.
3. To manage stormwater run-off in a safe and cost-effective manner.

Infrastructure Policies:

Policy PHY-3: Serviced Land

It shall be the policy of Council to maintain and upgrade the Town's infrastructure, particularly the utility systems, as needed to ensure that serviced land is supported over the Official Plan period.

Plan Action:

- a) Council shall ensure asset management practices are in place to build on recent work undertaken to expand the water and sewer systems.

Policy PHY-4: Streets

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure or successor departments 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 Actions:

- a) Council shall continue to engage with the Province regarding the condition of provincial roads within the Town and key connecting routes to the Town.
- b) 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.

- c) 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 PHY-5: 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 Actions:

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

Policy PHY-6: Active Transportation

It shall be the policy of Council to integrate the principles of active transportation into Town actions and decision-making in order to develop a strong, inter-connected active transportation system over time.

Plan Action:

- a) Council shall work with residents, business owners, landowners, and other interested parties to identify options to expand the existing system and develop linkages over time.

Policy PHY-7: Stormwater Management

It shall be the policy of Council to work closely with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure that stormwater 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 Actions:

- a) Council may develop an overall Stormwater Management Plan for the Town.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish requirements for drainage plans and/or stormwater management plans for new subdivisions and developments, to supplement any standards imposed by the Province.
- c) The Town will work with the Province to ensure that stormwater systems are properly installed and maintained in the Town.

- d) Council shall, wherever possible, protect and enhance the existing surface water drainage systems in the Town, and upgrade its capacity to handle stormwater run-off.
- e) Any assessment of proposed physical changes or infilling of any stream, wetland or water course shall include, in addition to all appropriate environmental protection considerations, a detailed assessment of any stormwater run-off implications.

Placemaking

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 industrial and commercial waterfront which provide opportunities to both meet the needs of residents and attract tourists and interpret the Town's history. Given the success of program-related heritage protection, the focus of the Official Plan will shift away from regulation and build more of a focus on programs, collaboration and supporting the efforts of the community to preserve and enhance significant buildings.

Objectives:

1. To encourage the maintenance of a high standard of physical appearance for all properties in the Town which stress safety, efficiency, aesthetic appeal, land use compatibility and fostering of a healthy lifestyle.
2. To identify, preserve and enhance buildings and streetscapes which have historic or architectural significance.

Placemaking Policies:

Policy PHY-8: Signage

It shall be the policy of Council to continue to regulate signage in the Town in a manner that is keeping with the spirit and intent of the *Highway Signage Act*.

Plan Action:

- a) The Bylaw shall include standards for signage.

Policy PHY-9: Placemaking

It shall be the policy of Council to adopt zoning and development standards that contribute to a strong sense of place, building on the Town's history.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Town shall encourage property owners and developers to maintain and develop properties in ways that recognize and reinforce the integrity of the town and the core in particular as a regional service centre.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish standards consistent with a small urban centre that reinforce a built fabric and mix of uses associated with vibrant towns and villages.

Policy PHY-10: Heritage Preservation

It shall be the policy of Council to identify important heritage places, structures and streetscapes in the Town, and support the adaptive re-use and maintenance of such heritage structures.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall encourage the preservation and upgrading of significant heritage structures and places, working with property owners where appropriate.
- b) Council shall work with property owners to find alternatives to the demolition of heritage structures.
- c) Council shall support initiatives to ensure the long-term sustainability and preservation of heritage structures through changes in use.

4.5 Environmental Objectives and Policies

Clean Environment

The Town is fully dependent upon 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.

A healthy environment is also critical not only to the health and well-being of our residents and the flora and fauna of the area, but is also as an economic resource. The appeal of Souris and the entire Eastern Kings Region as both a tourism destination and as a place to call 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.

Souris benefits greatly from its coastal location but it is also highly exposed to erosion, particularly along its cliffs, resulting from sea level rise and storm-related flooding. Given the close proximity of a number of residences, as well as significant road and utility infrastructure, to these rapidly eroding cliffs, the Town must soon develop a strategy for addressing this significant environmental risk.

Objectives:

1. To provide high quality domestic water supply for all residents, property owners and businesses in the Town
2. To implement buffering and erosion control standards and strategies
3. To provide efficient and cost-effective central wastewater collection and treatment services within the Town
4. To provide general environmental protection in relation to air and noise pollution
5. To participate in the management and enhancement of significant regional habitat and natural systems including the Souris River

Environmental Policies

Policy ENV-1: Ground Water

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

Plan Actions:

- a) New land uses which would pose a serious risk for ground water contamination such as chemical plants or underground storage depots shall be strictly regulated in the Town.
- b) Council shall work with the Province 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.
- c) Development permit applications shall be required to identify any chemical storage areas or underground petroleum storage.
- d) Council shall encourage the maintenance and protection of features which contribute to ground water re-charge such as wetlands, stormwater 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.
- e) 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.
- f) The Bylaw shall establish requirements for an expanded 60-metre buffer on town-owned land adjacent to watercourses and wetlands and Council shall work with local environmental groups and property owners to identify other measures to promote enhanced environmental protection on privately-owned land.

Policy ENV-2: Central Sewage Collection and Treatment

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

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall require that new subdivisions and development be connected to the municipal water and sewer system at the developer's expense.
- b) Where immediate connection to the municipal water and sewer system is not feasible, the Bylaw shall permit the future connection to be addressed through a development agreement or subdivision agreement, as appropriate.

Policy ENV-3: 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 Actions:

- a) Council will continue to operate and protect the Town's current well fields in the most efficient manner.
- b) The Bylaw shall establish standards related to development within the designated wellfields in order to protect the Town's water supply over the long term.
- c) Council shall identify appropriate actions to enhance the security of the Town's water supply and implement them in a timely manner.

Policy ENV-4: 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 other levels of government to protect and upgrade the other major surface water systems such as the Souris River.

Plan Actions:

- a) The Bylaw shall establish a conservation setback or buffer area adjacent to all streams, drainage courses, ponds and wetlands limiting construction activities and protecting vegetation from encroachment by structures and land use activities and shall apply an overlay zone to these areas, to be called the Environmental Reserve (Overlay) (ER) Zone.
- b) The Bylaw shall require construction activities adjacent to streams or wetlands to implement erosion control measures.

- c) The 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 ENV-5: Air Quality

It shall be the policy of Council to promote tree planting and preservation.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall identify opportunities to plant trees and preserve existing stands of trees, particularly on Town-owned land and along rights-of-way.

Policy ENV-6: Habitat Areas

It shall be the policy of Council to work with the Department of Environment and local watershed and environmental organizations to identify significant habitat areas and other sensitive natural areas in the Town, to restrict development in and adjacent to these areas, and 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 Actions:

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

Climate Change Resiliency

Being resilient to climate change means considering changing climate in all municipal decision-making. Using a climate change lens is vital in land use decisions and promotes decisions and actions that will help mitigate climate impacts such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration, while building long-term adaptation standards into day-to-day design and regulation standards.

Objectives

1. To minimize the effects of coastal erosion and flooding where possible
2. To limit the climate impacts of transportation activities
3. To promote using mitigation measures in land development to reduce climate impacts
4. To integrate climate change considerations into decisions on municipal policies, programs, and facilities, and in relation to applications for subdivision and development

Climate Change Policies

Policy ENV-7: Coastal Properties

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

Plan Actions:

- a) All areas subject to current or projected flood and erosion risk shall be identified in Schedule B.
- b) The Environmental Risk (Overlay) Zone in the Bylaw shall include provisions to protect the Town's sensitive coastal environment and limit risks to public health and safety and potential damage to property related to coastal flooding and erosion.
- c) The Bylaw shall require a provincial coastal hazard assessment prior to the review of a development or subdivision application on any coastal property.
- d) The Bylaw shall establish vertical and horizontal setbacks between new developments and eroding shorelines to provide sufficient distance to ensure that the adverse effects of erosion or flooding do not endanger the development over its lifetime.
- e) Council shall continue to work with the Province to protect roads and critical infrastructure 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.

Policy ENV-8: Subdivision Design and Sustainable Practices

It shall be the policy of Council to support new development that promotes sustainable practices and climate change resiliency, including the utilization of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, groundwater protection, reduced water consumption, and stormwater management for the purpose of groundwater recharge. It shall further be the policy of Council to encourage compact development design to reduce dependence on non-renewable forms of energy and dependence on vehicular travel.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall encourage subdivisions with compact designs and sensitive forms of infill and densification of existing dwelling lots in order encourage developments that are walkable and suitable for active transportation.

- b) Council shall consider transportation options when reviewing subdivision applications to reduce the distance required for travel by gas-powered vehicles and encourage subdivision and road network designs that reduce energy use, support alternative transportation modes, and enhance public safety such as sidewalks, park and ride facilities, charging stations, and crosswalks.
- c) The Bylaw may establish criteria for reporting on energy efficiency or other sustainable practices in the development application process to facilitate the tracking and promoting of such practices.
- d) The Bylaw may establish standards and criteria for development and construction practices that support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including such things as permeable surfaces, subdivision design, the protection of forest cover, and natural infrastructure.

Policy ENV-9: Climate Change Decisions

It shall now be a policy of Council to review policy, program and capital decisions using a climate change lens to ensure that decisions are being made that adapt the community to future climate change impacts of sea level rise, extreme weather and increasing temperatures.

Plan Actions:

- a) Council shall establish a climate-resilient decision tree with which to process actions on municipal infrastructure and facilities.
- b) Council may investigate the broad range of impacts of climate change on the community, including but not limited to, health, food security, and air quality and identify areas in which the Town may act.

5 FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map is a generalized conceptual representation of the direction Council envisions land use patterns taking over the next fifteen years. It signals expected long-term uses but does not have place limits on current land uses in the Town. Instead, the Future Land Use Map lays the foundation and establishes the direction for the Zoning Map in the Bylaw, which is much more precise in terms of boundaries of specific zones within the broader land use designation categories. The Zoning Map must conform to the policies of the Official Plan and the Future Land Use Map laid out in Appendix A, except where otherwise specified in policy in this Official Plan.

The Future Land Use Map will contain the following land use designations, which shall lay the framework for land use zones under the Bylaw:

Land Use Designation	Zone	Zone Symbol
Residential	Low Density Residential	R1
	Medium Density Residential	R2
	Mixed Density Residential	R3
	Agricultural (holding)	A1
Commercial	General Commercial	C1
Industrial	Industrial	M1
Parks and Open Space	Open Space	OS
Institutional	Public Service and Institutional	PSI

The Bylaw shall also include the following overlays not included in the Future Land Use Map but indicated in Schedule B – Protected Areas:

Zone	Overlays	Symbol
Underlying zone	Environmental Reserve (Overlay)	ER
	Wellfield Protection Area A	A
	Wellfield Protection Area B	B
	Wellfield Protection Area C	C

In formulating the Future Land Use Map, 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 areas or adjacent to major traffic routes
- established residential areas shall be maintained as residential over time
- residential "infilling" shall be encouraged
- new peripheral residential development shall be encouraged adjacent to existing residential areas
- existing agricultural lands shall be considered lands for future residential uses
- all other relevant policies and principles included in this Plan.

Council may, on application, amend the Official Plan's generalized Future Land Use Map and the Bylaw's Zoning Map to designate additional land for specific uses, subject to Plan policies outlined in Part 4.

6 IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Administration

Administration of this Plan is the responsibility of Council. Council shall, however, seek the input of the Planning Board, and where appropriate, other committees, on matters pertaining to the Official Plan and its implementation. The primary implementation tool for the Official Plan is the Zoning and Subdivision Control (Development) Bylaw. Aspects of the Official Plan may also be implemented through other municipal bylaws and regulations, Council’s operating policies and procedures, the municipal financial plan and other appropriate Council actions. Council may also delegate aspects of the implementation of this Plan or the Bylaw to a Development Officer appointed by Council.

6.2 Implementing Bylaw

Concurrently with the adoption of this Official Plan, Council shall adopt an updated Bylaw to conform with the policies and provisions of this Official Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning Act*. The new bylaw shall be titled the Land Use Bylaw, Bylaw #. Both documents take effect upon approval by the minister responsible for the *Planning Act*.

The 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 “special permit” uses, representing uses that are not permitted as-of-right but which may be appropriate on certain properties within a zone, subject to established criteria and processes for evaluating such special permits.

Approval of Development or Change of Use

The Bylaw shall set out processes and requirements for:

- any person undertaking any development or change of use of land or premises to apply for a development permit, including any exceptions;
- the processing and making of decisions by Council or the development officer of such applications based on the provisions of the Bylaw and this Plan;
- the identification and inclusion of such conditions as Council deems appropriate to development permits and subdivision approvals to ensure conformance with this Official Plan and the Bylaw;

- the submission of a construction plan for the development, including such details as construction phasing, stockpiling of soil, screening or fencing, erosion or run-off control measures, heavy truck access, and any other item that could present a nuisance or hazard during construction;
- the submission of a site plan, footing plan, stormwater management or drainage plan, and/or landscape plan to assist the Development Officer or Council in determining if the proposed development meets the requirements set out in the Bylaw; and
- requirements for approved permits to 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, relating to matters such as the National Building Code, fire protection, health and safety, sewage disposal, signage, plumbing and electrical installations, and others. The Town will liaise with Provincial officials during the application review process as appropriate.

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.

Subdivision and Development Agreements

The Bylaw shall allow Council to, at its discretion, require the developer of a subdivision or a development to enter into a Development or Subdivision Agreement. This agreement shall contain all conditions attached to the development permit or subdivision approval, including financial performance bonds, which are deemed necessary by Council to ensure conformance with the provisions of the Bylaw and this Plan, and will be legally binding on both parties.

Variances

The Bylaw shall establish procedures for the granting of variances to the provisions of the Bylaw in circumstances where a proposed development may not be able to meet the requirements of the Town's Bylaw where, owing to conditions peculiar to the property and not the result of the action of the applicant, a literal enforcement of the zoning requirement would result in unnecessary and undue hardship, and where the general intent of this Official Plan is upheld and such variance will not be contrary to the public interest.

6.3 Budgeting

While the Bylaw, as well as bylaws passed under the *Municipal Government Act*, is the primary tool for controlling and directing private sector development activities in the Town, the municipal financial plan is the key policy tool for directing the activities of Council. As such, the budget is a key implementation tool for the policies laid out in this Official Plan and, to the

extent practicable, the budget should conform with the policies of this Official Plan.

Budget Policies

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

- The Bylaw shall include a schedule of fees for applications under the Official Plan and Bylaw, and Council may amend the schedule from time to time by resolution in accordance with section 135 of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- Council shall pursue a “user pay” approach for programs and services where appropriate, while accounting for socio-economic inequities.
- Council shall continue the arrangement with the Province to have the National Building Code and building permits administered provincially until such time as Council determines it is in the interest of the Town to administer the National Building Code directly.
- Council shall pursue all available options for cost-sharing and maximize assistance from other levels of government.
- Council shall consider establishing reserve funds to cover the professional and legal expenses relating to the administration, enforcement, and review of this Official Plan and the Bylaw over time, and set aside funds on an annual basis where municipal revenues permit.

Capital Priorities

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

Treatment Plant Facility

- alternative energy source

Water Supply

- exterior resurfacing of water tank

Fire Hall

- construction of new fire hall
- new ladder truck

Recreation Facilities

- upgrades, or replacement if necessary) of Sportsplex

6.4 Review

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

6.5 Amendments

Council may amend the Official Plan and Bylaw as circumstances change in the Town or in response to requests from the public, in accordance with all processes, requirements and criteria of the *Planning Act*, this Official Plan, and the Bylaw.

6.6 Posting of Decisions

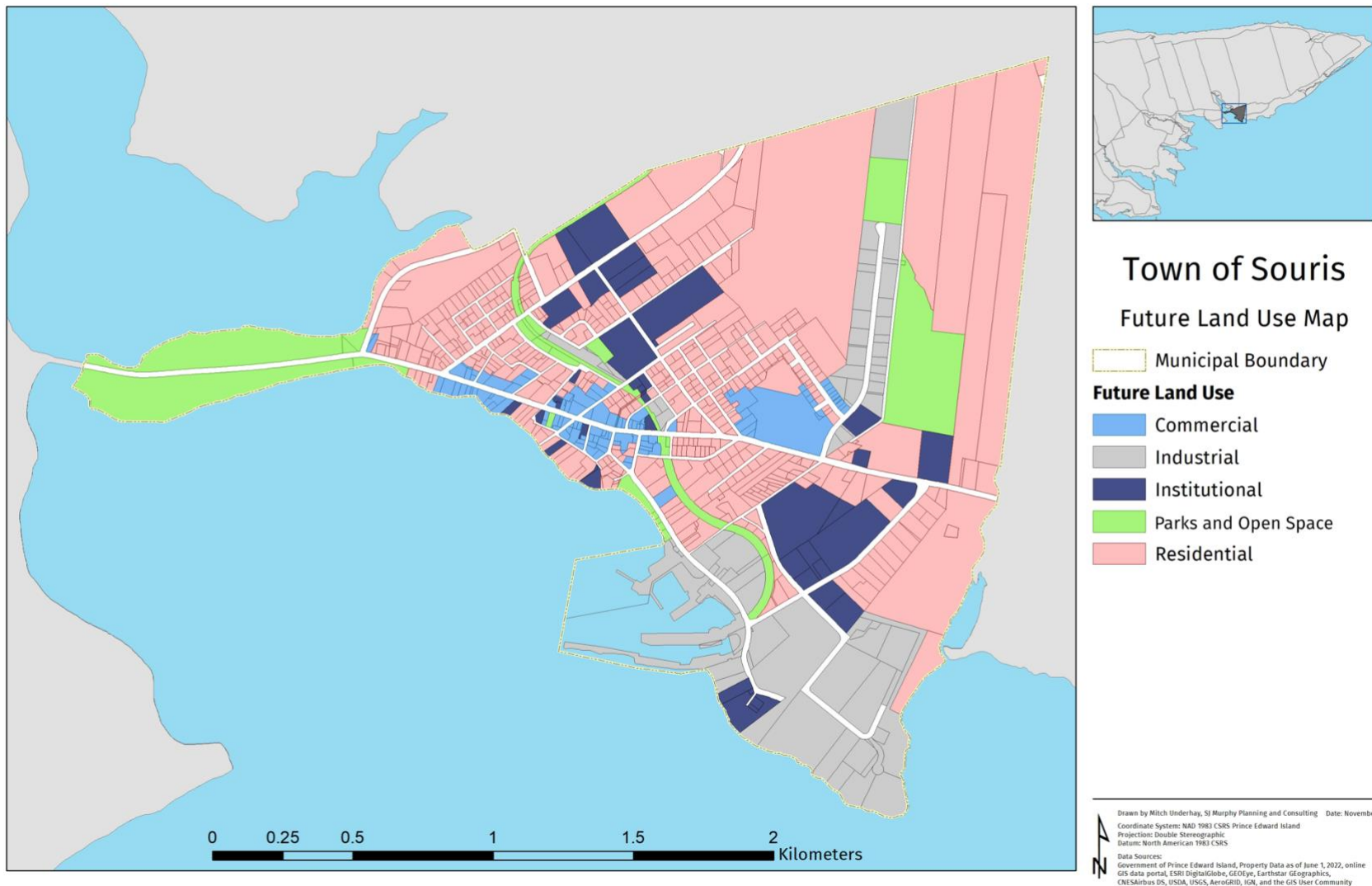
The Development Officer shall post all decisions made in respect of an application under the Bylaw for:

- a development permit;
- an occupancy permit, in relation to a matter under the *Planning Act*, regulations made pursuant to the *Planning Act*, or the Bylaw;
- a preliminary or final approval of a subdivision;
- an amendment to a bylaw, including an amendment to the zoning map established in the Bylaw or an amendment to the text of the Bylaw; or
- any other decision for which notice is required under the *Planning Act*, in accordance with the requirements of section 23.1 of the *Planning Act*.

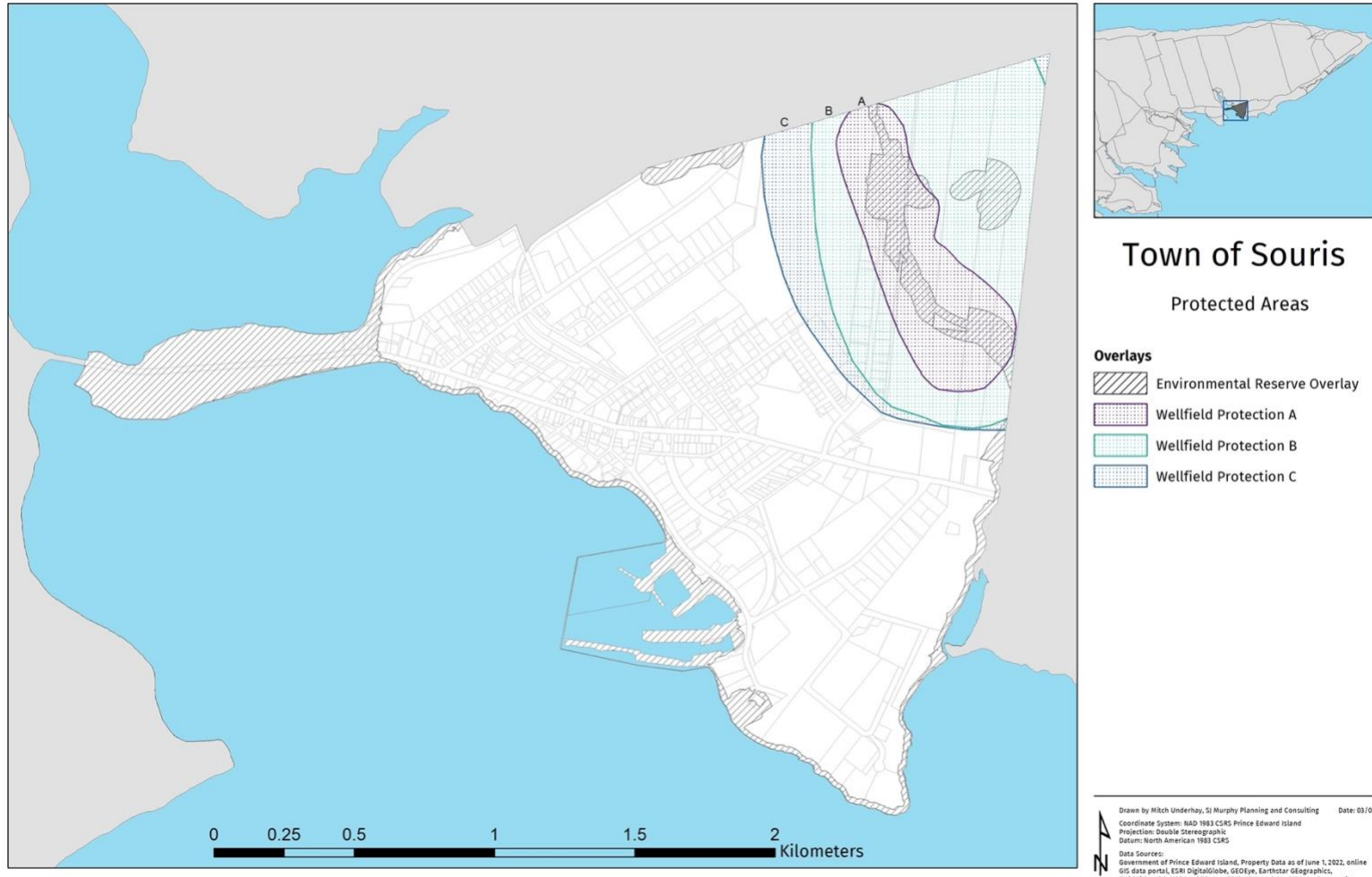
6.7 Appeal Procedure

All appeal procedures shall be undertaken in accordance with Part V of the *Planning Act*.

Schedule A: Future Land Use Map



Schedule B: Protected Areas



Schedule C: Background Study and Community Profile