

APPENDIX D:

EMERGING POLICY THEMES FROM SEPTEMBER CONSULTATIONS

FUTURE LAND USE IN THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (CDD).

Recognizing the majority of vacant land in Wolfville is designated as Comprehensive Development District, many participants requested greater certainty around the future land use developed on those parcels. MPS policies could be enhanced to require a concept plan prior to any development proceeding on lands within this designation. The completion of Secondary Plan for both the Kenny Farm lands and the eastern development lands was suggested as a mechanism for the Town to work with landowners and determine the appropriate land uses in those areas. Alignment of the Land Use By-Law and the MPS designation would serve these sites more appropriately, and the opportunity to rezone the land to 'Future Development Zone' would more accurately reflect the intent for development in future.

RESIDENTIAL USES IN THE R2-4 ZONE ALONG SUMMER STREET, ACADIA STREETS, AND PROSPECT STREET.

Large heritage homes have predominantly been converted to student rental properties and remained that way over the long term. Concerns about property decay and over-occupation were raised. This area was considered an appropriate location for increased residential densities, but existing housing stock may limit the opportunity to implement new forms of housing on the ground. The intent of the zoning within this area is not being realised. A review of zoning provisions in this area to provide opportunities for appropriate infill, and to address conversion pressures is needed.

EXPANDING THE CORE

A review of existing uses in and around the downtown indicated that there are areas on the fringes that function as part of the commercial core of Wolfville. Adjustments to the boundary of this designation should be considered to more accurately delineate Wolfville's commercial area and encourage investment. Changing the designation name from Commercial Core to "Community Core" may also better reflect the variety of uses that residents want to see in their downtown.

CREATING A LIVE-WORK PRECINCT IN THE C-2 ZONING ALONG SUMMER STREET, GASPEREAU AND LINDEN AVENUE.

Existing uses along Summer Street don't showcase the potential for mixed use buildings that is intended through the zoning, and were considered to be part of the downtown core area. The few examples of houses where commercial uses have been established at grade haven't been found to really reflect the true live-work opportunity available through the current zoning. Many recognized the potential for small scale office and commercial uses along Summer, Acadia and Prospect Streets, and the inability to implement it in practice. The opportunity to create a distinct

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precinct of live-work units in this area would provide a new form of housing for the Town and encourage artists and creative industries to locate in Wolfville.

PROTECTING IMPORTANT PUBLIC SPACES ON THE ACADIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS.

The importance of strong connections between Acadia University and the Town were apparent in discussions with all stakeholders. Land uses and relations between both the university and the Town were repeatedly noted as a cornerstone of Wolfville's success and identity. The symbiotic relationship these institutions and land uses share should be better expressed in the Town's policies and land use by-law. Specific mention of the role the campus plays in the provision of public open space brought forward the need to consider how existing land uses on the campus plan are recognized and preserved in the Town's policy and regulatory framework.

ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT IN THE CORE.

Many participants wanted to see continued investment and residential development in downtown Wolfville. The need for more residential alternatives in proximity to Main Street was highlighted as a core need for senior, low income and student populations. A variety of incentives to encourage development within the downtown were discussed. Exemptions on Cash-in-Lieu and open space contributions were flagged as a potential opportunity for the Town to generate increased development interest. The ability to offer such an incentive under the Municipal Government Act was unclear. Further investigation into this potential incentive is needed.

ADDRESSING EXISTING PARKING CONCERNS IN THE DOWNTOWN.

Parking constraints downtown were flagged as a continual concern for businesses and local residents. Despite the availability of parking on the periphery many felt that the parking options within walking distance of Main Street at peak periods were strained. Existing parking patterns and local perceptions were noted as part of the problem. There is currently no legislated requirement for parking provision with development applications. Implementation of parking requirements, permissions for Cash-in-Lieu in place of parking, and the development of a parking permit system were considered possible solutions to address the current challenge.

ACCESSIBILITY AND IMPROVEMENTS TO ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE.

Providing infrastructure that is appropriate for seniors, youth and families was considered an important goal for the Town. Poor road conditions, gaps in sidewalk and cycling connections, and insufficient street lighting were raised as issues to be addressed through this review. The existing road hierarchy could be outlined in the MPS with clear design standards for sidewalk and lighting provision and cross sections. Elm, Harbourside, Gaspereau, and Front streets were considered 'priority streets'.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POLICIES.

There is currently a lack of existing policy direction regarding appropriate stormwater management

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measures on any development application. This is a noted gap in the policy framework for future development in Wolfville. The requirement for a stormwater management plan with every development application and the extension of those requirements into the Land Use By-Law and Subdivision By-Law was highlighted as a priority.

INVESTING IN HARBOUR PARK.

Many participants identified Harbour Park as a key public open space for local residents and an important focal point for the Town along the waterfront. Most participants also felt this park was not being utilized to its full potential due to poor access, a lack of connectivity and limited investment in recreational infrastructure. This park was considered a priority among participants.

HOUSING ALTERNATIVES.

Housing form, tenure and location were raised as a limitation for many when looking for a place to live. Many people voiced concerns about having appropriate housing options for all, and the clear demand for more housing options within walking distance of the shops and services along Main Street. Conversion of existing large single-family properties in Wolfville's core was seen as resulting from a lack of rental and smaller unit alternatives for resident student and senior populations. Student accommodation on Acadia's campus was noted to be not at full capacity as a result of changing consumer preferences. Existing single-family detached properties could be supplemented with more ground-oriented housing types, such as semi-detached homes and townhouses, to increase density and provide options to the market. Secondary suites and communal housing models, such as cluster housing, could also help to supplement the existing supply of single family homes.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY.

Housing affordability was raised as a core concern for many residents of Wolfville. The lack of affordable housing targets within the existing MPS policies should be addressed through this review. Consideration of incentives for provision of affordable housing in new developments should be given. All new single family housing should be zoned "R1A" to allow for the provision of secondary suites.

OAK STREET EXTENSION.

The extension of Oak Avenue would allow for severance of existing large lot frontages along Main Street, to accommodate new infill lots for development and moderate density increases in this area.

OVERUSE OF DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS.

A number of participants felt that development agreements often resulted in slow approval timelines and delays in the development approval process. These delays lead to frustration and rising costs, and could discourage new development and investment in Wolfville. Development Agreements in certain one-off applications were considered overkill, where others may be addressed through a more consistent framework. A review of the current approval process was considered a positive step toward encouraging new development in the Town. The Site Plan Control process may address some of these concerns.