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Region of Queen's Municipality
Municipal Planning Strategy



Region of Queens Municipality

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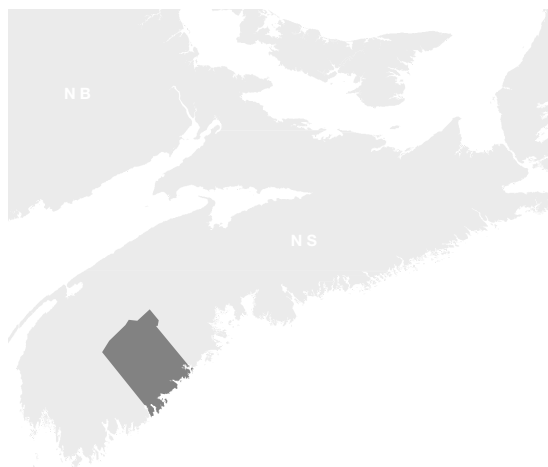
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SCHEDULES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Region of Queens Municipality (“Region”) is located in southwestern Nova Scotia. With a land area of just under 2,400 square kilometres, the Region is the ninth-largest municipality by area in the province. Much of the Region’s population is located along the coast, with major population and service centres in Liverpool, Brooklyn, and up the Mersey River in Milton. Hamlets, such as Port Mouton and Port Medway, provide local centres at many points along the coast.



Queens in the Nova Scotia context

Much of the inland areas of the Region are undeveloped, with large areas of forestry lands, protected parks and wilderness areas, and a sprinkling of agriculture. Caledonia is the primary population and service centre in North Queens. Greenfield provides local services, particularly to the many seasonal properties that surround the multitude of lakes in Queens.

The diverse landscape of Queens is cherished for its vast waters—rivers, lakes, and ocean—abundant forests, and varied communities. Protecting the features that people value, promoting the identity and unique culture of each individual community, and preparing for a sustainable future in the face of change all depend on a collective plan.

This Municipal Planning Strategy (“MPS” or “Plan”) is a legal document, adopted by Council, that sets out strategic policy direction for the Region of Queens Municipality to achieve its vision for a sustainable future. The MPS provides a framework for achieving the economic, social, and environmental goals of our communities, while at the same time maintaining and enhancing existing development, community assets, and quality of life. The document identifies specific land use issues affecting the Region’s communities and sets out goals, objectives, and policies to address them over the next five, ten, or fifteen years.

One of the primary tools for implementing the MPS is the Land Use Bylaw (“LUB”). The LUB is a regulatory document, which sets out specific planning and development requirements in order to meet future development goals. This document establishes such things as boundaries of particular zones, types of uses permitted in the zones, and minimum lot size and setback requirements.

1.2 The Queens Context

1.2.1 An Introductory History of Queens

The Mi’kmaq have travelled along what are now known as the Mersey and Medway river systems for over 5,000 years. The warmer months of the year were spent along the coast, where a diversity of estuaries and salt marshes offered an abundance of food. In the winter, the Mi’kmaq would return to the interior to hunt moose and other animals. For centuries, the area now established as Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site was used by the Mi’kmaq for encampments, hunting and fishing grounds, portaging, trails, and burial grounds, making it an important and sacred cultural landscape. Countless artifacts have been identified within the Park, including over 500 Mi’kmaw petroglyphs, spurring its designation as a National Historic Site in 1995.

Beginning in the 17th century, European settlement led to the displacement of the Territory of Mi'kma'ki. This long and painful history includes the occupation of unceded land and loss of traditional resources, the introduction of European diseases, and the removal of Indigenous children from their homes in the 20th century during the Sixties Scoop and Residential School Program. Nova Scotia eventually set aside land for Reserves, and Mi'kmaq communities continue to inhabit what is now known as the Region of Queens and surrounding areas. Acadia First Nation governs the traditional territory of Nova Scotia's South Shore and has three reserves within the Region of Queens: Medway, Ponhook and Wildcat.

When European settlers arrived in what is now the Region of Queens they followed Mi'kmaq routes to fish, hunt, and trap. The first Europeans known to have visited this area in numbers were the French, drawn to the area's coastline by the fur trade in 1604. The Acadians soon established major settlements in nearby Poboncou (Pubnico) and Port-Royal, though they failed to establish a permanent community in what is now the Region of Queens.

Known as Ogomkegea ("*place of departure*") to the Mi'kmaq, and Port Rossignol by French explorers, Liverpool became a fishing centre. It was renamed by New England colonists (often called the New England Planters) in 1759 following the violent displacement of Acadians in Le Grand Dérangement.

Privateering played an early role in the colonial history of Liverpool where, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, private ship owners received a Letter of Marque from the Crown, giving them permission to attack enemy ships and confiscate goods. While the community was initially sympathetic to the American Revolution, these privateering endeavours began in response to American attacks, and lasted until the end of the War of 1812.

The immigration of Loyalists following the Revolution contributed to the growth of Liverpool and surrounding communities, with a settlement forming in Port Mouton. During this war, Britain promised protection, freedom, and land to any enslaved residents of African descent who would fight for them in the war. When the Revolution came to a close, certificates of freedom were signed and Black Loyalists were shipped out of America, with many landing in Nova Scotia. A total of 558 Black Loyalists arrived in Port Mouton before eventually settling in nearby Shelburne and Birchtown. There, they were given the least desirable land and often forced into indentureships not unlike the slavery they escaped.

During this time, shipbuilding and the timber trade were both profitable industries, and products were exported to Great Britain, the United States, and the Caribbean. By the end of the 1800s, communities like Greenfield, Caledonia, South Brookfield, and Pleasant River were well established. The move into the interior of the Region was supported by the emergence of the forestry industry, as well as agriculture and gold mining. Although the gold mines have long since disappeared, the gold rush that began in 1884 fueled rapid growth in the north of Queens.

This affluence did not last long, however, and the fall of the Bank of Liverpool in combination with steel innovations in ship building initiated a long period of decline. This was eventually recovered by rum running following American prohibition in the 1920s, and the establishment of the pulp mill along the Mersey River shortly after that. By the beginning of the 20th century, tourism had also emerged as a key industry, as the Region's coastline, rivers, and lakes attracted the attention of visitors from across North America. Albert Bigelow Paine, an American author who wrote the now famous "Tent Dwellers" in 1908, recorded the early history of tourism and sport fishing in the Region.

In 1996, the former Municipality of the County of Queens and the Town of Liverpool went through a voluntary amalgamation process that resulted in the creation of the Region of Queens Municipality. Prior to amalgamation, the municipal units were duplicating many services and competing against each other for new development. This move has resulted in significant cost savings, more efficient provision of services, and generally a more positive attitude toward new development in the Region.

In 2012, Bowater Mersey paper mill in Brooklyn closed its doors. The mill was the Region's largest direct employer, and was also responsible for many indirect jobs through its role as a primary customer for the forestry sector in Queens. The closure resulted in a large loss of population in the Region, as many of those laid off went elsewhere in search of jobs. However, the former mill has since been repurposed as a mixed commercial/industrial facility hosting a number of businesses. Perhaps more importantly, the mill's closure has spurred a renewed interest in economic diversity and entrepreneurialism, and a sense of resilience in the community.

Throughout the Region's long history, the Region's landscapes have been home to many, with the abundant natural assets remaining instrumental to its residents' quality of life. Today, these landscapes continue to play a big role in the growth of the largely seasonal residential developments throughout the Municipality. The land that makes up the Region of Queens is primarily rural in nature, and the variety of resource-based industries help define the character of this rural landscape. Of the Region's 53 communities, Liverpool, Milton, and Brooklyn make up the most urbanized area, and play an important role as a centre of service for the entire Region.

1.2.2 Demographics

As of the 2016 Census, the population for the Region of Queens stood at 10,307, down from 11,447 in 2006. This decline is not unique to Queens. Indeed, from 1998 to 2017 Halifax County was the only county in Nova Scotia that grew by any appreciable amount. Three counties essentially remained stable, while all other counties in Nova Scotia experienced a negative annual growth rate.

The factors driving this population change show a similar pattern to those in the surrounding municipalities: births trailing deaths, low international migration trends, and movement within Nova Scotia and within Canada being the most influential migration drivers.

Beyond the overall trend of a declining population, the population of the Region of Queens is aging; from 2006 to 2016 the median age in Queens increased from 46.3 to 53.2. As the table below illustrates, population loss has occurred in the young and working age populations, while retirement age and elderly populations have grown.

Importantly, however, census data is based on primary residents and does not count the effect of seasonal residents on a community’s “effective” population. In other words, the effect of seasonal residents on the need for housing and commercial services is missed by census counts. The Region of Queens has historically been, and continues to be, a popular location for recreational and seasonal residences. This includes coastal areas, as well as around the inland lake systems. Census and assessment data do identify approximately 1,850 of the 6,600 dwellings in Queens (2016 data) as likely being seasonal or secondary dwellings (e.g. cottages), illustrating the importance of this segment of the population to Queens.

Table 1: Population by age cohort in 2006 and 2016

	2006	2016
Total	11,447	10,548
Young (0-19)	2,292	1,683
Working Age (20-64)	6,970	5,920
Retirement Age (65-79)	1,567	2,237
Elderly (80+)	618	708

Source: Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0084-01

1.2.3 Planning in Queens

This Plan and its associated Land Use Bylaw build on the extensive work conducted to develop the previous planning documents, which were adopted in 2009.

Prior to 2009, most areas of Queens were unplanned, with only the communities of Liverpool, Brooklyn, and Milton having local planning documents. Starting in 2003, Council undertook an extensive process to bring comprehensive land use policies and regulations to all lands within the Region.

Because there was little history or experience with planning in most of Queens, Council at the time went beyond the typical plan development process and established six Area Advisory Committees to provide a local voice in the planning process for each community. Outside of the Liverpool/Brooklyn/Milton area these Area Advisory Committees also had the task of developing the very foundations of good planning: a deep understanding of community values and local land use issues.

These extensive efforts were ultimately successful and the 2009 planning documents brought a consistent approach to planning throughout the Municipality. Now, in 2021, the communities of Queens have over 10 years of experience with planning that has helped inform the contemporary issues to be addressed, and the policies of this Plan with which to address them.

1.3 Statements of Provincial Interest

Planning in Nova Scotia is enabled and guided by Part VIII and Part IX of the *Municipal Government Act* (the “Act”). In addition to a long list of criteria for responsible planning, the Act contains five “Statements of Provincial Interest” (a sixth is specific to the convention centre site in Halifax). These broad statements are related to issues that affect all Nova Scotians: drinking water, flood risk areas, housing, agricultural land, and infrastructure. Planning documents must be reasonably consistent with these Statements of Provincial Interest.

The table below provides an overview of each Statement of Provincial Interest, and highlights the policies of this Plan that support each Statement.



Statement 1: Drinking Water

Goal: To protect the quality of drinking water within municipal water supply watersheds.

A clean source of drinking water is an essential component of modern civilization. The Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Drinking Water recognizes this, and requires municipal planning documents to address the protection of municipal water supplies. The Region of Queens has one designated municipal water supply, the Town Lake water supply. The Region owns the majority of the land within the lake’s watershed. The water supply is additionally protected by zoning, which strongly limits the types of uses that can occur within the watershed.

Applicable MPS Policies: 5-90, 5-91, 5-92, 5-93



Statement 2: Flood Risk Areas

GOAL: To protect public safety and property and to reduce the requirement for flood control works and flood damage restoration in floodplains.

The Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Flood Risk Areas specifically applies to areas designated under the Canada-Nova Scotia Flood Damage Program, of which there are none in Queens. However, Council recognizes the spirit of this Statement of Provincial Interest and has implemented minimum horizontal buffers from major watercourses for development within Queens.

Applicable MPS Policies: 4-13, 4-15, 4-16



Statement 3: Agricultural Land

GOAL: To protect agricultural land for the development of a viable and sustainable agriculture and food industry.

The Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Agricultural Land specifically applies to lands with soils identified in the Canada Land Inventory as Class 2, 3, or active Class 4. Queens has no such lands. However, Council recognizes that agricultural activities do occur within Queens on lower-classed soils and are an important part of Queens' landscape and culture. This Plan enables and supports agricultural activities within the Region.

Applicable MPS Policies: 4-49, 4-50, 4-51, 4-52, 4-53



Statement 4: Infrastructure

GOAL: To make efficient use of municipal water supply and municipal wastewater disposal systems.

Infrastructure is the foundation of our communities. It is also a major municipal and provincial expense. The Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Infrastructure encourages efficient use of existing infrastructure and careful consideration when expanding infrastructure. This Plan supports sustainable infrastructure investments by directing the bulk of growth to existing serviced areas and by putting limits on the areas where central water and sewer services are permitted to expand. Additionally, this Plan considers the areas where new roads are desirable and acceptable.

Applicable MPS Policies:

4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-19, 4-20, 4-21, 4-31



Statement 5: Housing

GOAL: To provide housing opportunities to meet the needs of all Nova Scotians.

All residents of Queens, and indeed all Nova Scotians, deserve a home that provides adequate shelter that meets their needs. The Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Housing encourages planning approaches that enable and promote a wide range of housing types to meet these varying needs. This Plan supports diversity in housing by enabling a variety of housing densities and types in each community, reducing lot requirements in serviced areas, avoiding barriers to special-needs housing, and allowing manufactured housing.

Applicable MPS Policies: 4-42, 4-43, 4-45, 4-46, 4-47

Chapter 1 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

2 DEVELOPING THE PLAN

2.1 The Planning Process

This Municipal Planning Strategy contains the vision for the future development of all communities in the Region of Queens, and policies to guide the Region towards this vision. It builds on the extensive work completed to develop the 2009 Municipal Planning Strategy.

Over the course of two years the project team reviewed the strengths and gaps in the 2009 planning documents; conducted background analysis of current issues and trends; engaged with residents, visitors, business owners, and other stakeholders; developed multiple drafts of the new planning documents; and prepared the final documents for adoption by Council.

The process was guided by the Region’s Planning Advisory Committee (“PAC”), a volunteer body made up of councillors and residents. PAC oversaw the formation of the project team; provided direct support for engagement activities; promoted “Queens: Planning for the Future” in the community; and put in many, many hours reviewing and improving the background analysis, policy direction, and draft planning documents.

2.2 Analysis

Development of this Plan was informed by extensive analysis conducted over the winter of 2018/2019. The project team developed a series of six discussion papers:

- Population and Demographics
- Environment
- Residential Development
- Economy
- Infrastructure
- General

These papers used a variety of data—census, assessment, GIS mapping, and more—to develop a picture of Queens in the year 2019, and develop projections for factors that could affect the future of Queens (population, sea level rise, *etc.*). These discussion papers also included a high-level discussion of the broad policy implications of the various topics explored.

2.3 Public Engagement

Planning documents affect many fundamental aspects of people's lives, such as:

- protection of the local environment;
- the infrastructure we use to get around, to provide safe drinking water, and to remove our waste;
- the availability of different types of housing;
- the location and types of businesses and services; and
- the character of communities.

It is essential, therefore, that planning documents reflect the needs and desires of people in the community. The project team conducted extensive public engagement to help understand what are these community needs and desires, and to review the draft planning documents to verify the documents support these needs and desires.

2.3.1 Branding and Website

The plan review project was known publicly as, "Queens: Planning for the Future". The project website (www.queensplan.com) served as a hub for project news, information on engagement events, and as a central repository of documents related to the project.

2.3.2 Formative Open Houses

Through September and October of 2018, the Region and the project team hosted public meetings in seven locations throughout Queens:

- Mersey Point - Mersey Point Hall
- Port Mouton - West Queens Recreation Centre
- Beach Meadows Beach - Seaside Centre
- Milton - Milton Hall
- Liverpool - Queens Place
- Greenfield - Fire Hall
- Caledonia - North Queens Business Hub

Each of the meetings started with a presentation on municipal planning and the plan review process. Participants then spent the majority of each meeting in small group discussions about major planning issues relevant to the whole region, as well as issues specific to each electoral district.

2.3.3 Stakeholder Workshops

The project team held four stakeholder meetings in September and October of 2018. These sessions focused on Businesses; Parks and Environment; Development; and Community Wellbeing.

2.3.4 Surveys

Early engagement included two separate surveys. The general community survey asked respondents a variety of questions including demographic indicators; household size; questions related to the strengths and challenges of the Region; as well as details specific to Liverpool, coastal areas, and inland areas.

The business survey asked respondents questions about the nature of their business, experiences interacting with municipal land use regulation, services, infrastructure, and other impressions about operating a business in Queens.

2.3.5 Internal Workshops

Throughout the planning process the project team conducted update meetings with PAC and Council, as well as specific workshops with municipal departments, PAC, and Council to identify gaps in current planning documents and to determine key policy directions.

2.3.6 Policy Direction Paper

The results of the initial phase of engagement informed development of a “Policy Direction Paper”. This document identified, in high-level terms, the issues raised throughout the background analysis and engagement and included recommend policy approaches to these issues. The project team posted the document to the project website and made physical copies available in seven locations throughout the Region. Community members were invited to review the document and to provide feedback on whether or not the recommended policy directions were appropriate to meet community needs.

2.3.7 Draft Engagement

The second phase of consultation focused on the public drafts of the new Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. Draft engagement was originally scheduled for early 2020 but was postponed due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In the interim, the project team developed a series of informational videos that presented the highlights of the drafts.

Once a low provincial COVID-19 caseload made in-person engagement possible, the project team hosted seven public meetings over the course of September and October of 2020. These meetings included a presentation on the highlights of the draft documents, followed by a Q&A and feedback session. The team held the meetings in the following locations:

- Beach Meadows Beach – Seaside Centre
- Caledonia – Fire Hall
- Greenfield – Fire Hall
- Online
- Port Mouton – West Queens Recreation Centre
- Mill Village – Fire Hall
- Liverpool – Fire Hall

The meetings were supplemented by opportunities for members of the public to contribute phone-in and written feedback on the drafts.

2.4 Issues and Trends

Over the course of the background analysis and engagement a number of broad issues and trends for the future of Queens came to the surface. These issues and trends informed all of the work that went into the updated planning documents.

2.4.1 Natural Environment

The natural environment is perhaps the defining aspect of Queens. Residents and visitors to Queens value the beaches and rocky ocean coast, the rivers, the lakes, and the forests, and want to see these features sustainably protected for future generations.

At the same time, there is a growing awareness that the natural environment can present risks to human development, particularly in the context of a changing climate. The average sea level in Queens is expected to rise by more than a metre by the year 2100, storms of greater intensity are expected to increase erosion and wave run-up, and changes to average annual temperature are expected to affect forest composition and the natural range of pests. Good planning must account for these changes.

2.4.2 Changing Demographics

Like much of Atlantic Canada, the Region of Queens has experienced and is experiencing a declining and aging permanent population. The impact of this is a change in the types of housing, services, and recreation opportunities needed to serve the community. Additionally, this has implications in terms of paying for infrastructure and services; public investments must be made with an eye towards long-term sustainability.

Conversely, Queens also hosts a growing population of seasonal residents, many of whom come from out of province. This demographic has different needs in terms of infrastructure and services.

2.4.3 Housing

As the population ages there is a general need for different forms of housing, including smaller units, barrier-free options, and supportive living. Many people who participated in engagement events noted a need for affordable, well-maintained housing in Queens, and greater access to quality rental properties.

With a highly seasonal population and many businesses tied to seasonal tourism, there are also housing challenges in Queens related to these cycles. Seasonal staff require adequate housing near to their jobs, but only for part of the year.

2.4.4 Economy

The closure of the Bowater Mersey paper mill in 2012 was a shock to the economy of Queens, but it was also an opportunity to explore new, diverse economic activities. Queens continues to have a strong resource sector, but the approach to resources has shifted, as evidenced by initiatives such as the Medway Community Forest Cooperative. Tourism has always been an important part of the Queens economy, but changes in visitor desires have increased opportunities to offer authentic tourism experiences rooted in local character and landscapes. In response, a new generation of entrepreneurs is establishing local businesses rooted in craft.

Land use planning does not actively create economic development, but it does provide the fertile ground in which economic activities can flourish. Many participants in the engagement activities expressed a strong interest in having the new Municipal Planning Strategy support economic development activities at a variety of scales.

Chapter 2 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

3 VISION

3.1 Vision

The way in which our communities develop today impacts the environment, the economy, and our quality of life in the future. Investments in businesses, homes, and infrastructure can last for decades or lifetimes. In the case of things like the location of roads, decisions made today might still be visible hundreds of years from now. It is, therefore, important to make such investments with a plan in mind, and with an eye to supporting both the community's short-term and long-term development needs.

Planning for the future of our communities involves framing a vision of how we would like to see development occur. This vision statement establishes a general community concept. It informs the series of land use priorities Council and the public deem important to the future growth of the Region of Queens Municipality over the next ten to fifteen years.

Region of Queens Municipality strives to be a community that flourishes in harmony with, and due to, an abundance of natural assets; that proactively responds to the threat of a changing climate; where varied housing options and relevant, purposeful employment can be easily found; where the unique attributes, lifestyle, and character of individual communities are protected and enhanced; where diversity is celebrated; and where a shared vision guides sustainable growth and prosperity.

3.2 Goals

Achieving the desired vision for sustainable future growth requires the establishment of a clear set of goals to address the economic, environmental, social, and cultural opportunities and challenges within the Region of Queens Municipality. The goals provide a framework for the formulation of policy that will guide future sustainable development.

1. Develop the Region of Queens in a manner that respects and preserves important natural environments.
2. Recognize natural hazards and the risks of climate change, and develop our communities to minimize risks to human health and property.
3. Recognize and support the unique culture and character of each individual community in the Region while promoting unity and shared responsibility for developing a positive and progressive future for Queens and all of its residents.
4. Promote development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure and services or, where necessary, leads to the provision of new infrastructure and services in locations and of a form that is financially- and environmentally-sustainable.
5. Encourage development patterns that provide for efficient and sustainable transportation and servicing patterns to minimize our contributions to climate change.
6. Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing options in the Region, including diverse price points, locations, sizes, types, and forms of tenure, in a manner that supports, but is not necessarily identical to, the existing character of neighbourhoods in Queens.
7. Support economic development by developing a community where business owners and employees want to live and by providing enough appropriately-zoned land to enable a range of commercial and industrial activities, including encouragement of appropriately scaled home-based business.

8. Promote recreational opportunities of both an active and passive nature within the Region as a major contributor to a high quality of life for both residents and visitors alike.
9. Recognize and accommodate community uses such as churches, schools, and hospitals as integral parts of our communities that contribute greatly toward a higher quality of life.
10. Support the preservation, enhancement, interpretation, and promotion of the Region's historical buildings and landscapes.
11. Utilize and properly manage municipal transportation infrastructure, with consideration for all transportation modes, including active transportation.
12. Implement this Municipal Planning Strategy through the use of clear, consistent, and defensible regulations and through municipal programs and infrastructure investments that are consistent with the Community Vision.

Chapter 3 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

4 GUIDING THE REGION

4.1 Introduction

The Region of Queens spans an area of approximately 2,400 square kilometres, encompassing coastal barrens, lakes, forests, urban areas, and more. These diverse landscapes have a variety of planning issues, each requiring careful thought to address in a sustainable manner. While many of these opportunities and challenges are specific to certain areas or types of landscapes, there are many issues that are general and apply across the Region. This chapter contains the policies that guide those shared issues.

4.2 Community Structure & Design

4.2.1 Context

The Region of Queens has a variety of communities. They differ in their size, commercial options, public services, residential density, economic function, exposure to the risks of climate change, and culture. Each community has a different role to play in the collective functioning of the Region, and different people are attracted to living in different communities based on the services, landscape, character, and environment they desire.

From a sustainable planning perspective, it is important to recognize these differences and direct development and infrastructure investments in a manner that supports each community's broad role and character. To that end, this Plan categorizes land in the Region into one of three classifications:

- Urban Serviced Areas
- Hamlets
- Rural Development Areas

These classifications help structure decisions about what types of development and infrastructure are appropriate for different areas. Further refinement of these classifications occurs through the placement of designations on the Future Land Use Map of this Plan, and in the placement of zones on the Zoning Map of the Land Use Bylaw.

4.2.2 Urban Serviced Areas

The urban serviced areas encompass the regional service centres in Queens: Caledonia and the area collectively covering Liverpool, Brooklyn, and Milton. These communities are the population centres for their areas; host many of the commercial businesses in Queens; and are characterized by higher development densities, dense street and sidewalk networks, and the provision of central water and sanitary sewer services.

The urban serviced areas will continue to serve as the “hubs” of Queens. They provide a residential lifestyle that features proximity and easy access to services and amenities.

Policy 4-1: Council shall, on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, classify as “urban serviced area” the general communities of Caledonia, Liverpool, Brooklyn, and Milton.

Policy 4-2: Further to Policy 4-1, the boundaries of the urban serviced areas shall generally be established on the basis of existing central services or the ability to efficiently extend central services, modified to a limited degree as necessary to accommodate community character, natural features, or to provide good transportation connections between adjacent serviced areas.

4.2.3 Hamlets

Throughout Queens are located communities that act as local centres, providing a limited range of services to the surrounding area and the travelling public. These “hamlets” are often found at crossroads, adjacent to a cherished recreational area, or around traditional employment infrastructure like a wharf or mill. They typically feature a higher density of development than surrounding rural areas, but not to the level that they might be considered “urban”. Due to this higher density and the availability of commercial and community services, the hamlets in Queens are typically quite walkable.

Policy 4-3: Council shall, on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, classify the following communities as “hamlet”:

- (a) Beach Meadows
- (b) Greenfield
- (c) Hunts Point / White Point
- (d) Mill Village
- (e) Port Medway
- (f) Port Mouton
- (g) Summerville Centre

Policy 4-4: Further to Policy 4-3, the boundaries of hamlets shall generally be established on the basis of existing development patterns modified as necessary to encompass areas where new public roads would be appropriate or exclude areas where new public roads would not be appropriate.

4.2.4 Rural Development Areas

The rural development areas encompass stretches of coastline and large tracts of wilderness and resource land. Throughout these areas, resource-based industries such as forestry, fishing, and agriculture define both the landscape and the local economies. These areas are generally characterized by lower densities of development along existing road networks. These areas provide a rural lifestyle and easy access to the varied natural landscapes in Queens. Although the level of planning required in rural areas is generally less comprehensive than in the urban areas, there is still a need for regulations in order to minimize potential conflicts from competing land uses.

The location and intensity of land uses in the rural development areas largely depends on geography. In the southern portions the coastline has experienced a steady growth of low-density residential development and tourist-based industries. The location of several provincial, federal and municipal parks has made the coastline a prime recreational area. As well, the fishing industry has been of key importance in defining the way many of the communities in this area have developed, and will continue to play a significant role well into the future.

In the central regions of the rural development areas, forest resource industries have shaped much of this remote landscape. In contrast, large tracts of crown owned land, including several wilderness protected areas, help to preserve wildlife and provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

In the northern regions of the rural development areas, a mixture of cottage developments, agricultural land, and forestry creates a patchwork of development. In addition, Kejimikujik National Park is a major tourist attraction and recreational asset for the entire Region.

Policy 4-5: Council shall, on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, classify areas outside of the urban serviced areas and hamlets as “rural development areas”.

4.2.5 Community Design

The size of lots and the size and location of buildings has a considerable effect on the character and “feel” of communities. Larger buildings located on small lots and close to the street tend to feel more village-like or even urban, while large lots and buildings located far back from the street tend to feel more suburban or rural. These factors are also very foundational to basic community design; while paint colours and other aspects of building appearance can regularly change, the size of lots and locations of buildings tend to change slowly, if at all.

Lot size is also closely tied to wastewater treatment because properties with on-site septic systems require appropriate land area to effectively disperse effluent without creating environmental problems. Sewer-serviced properties do not require such considerations.

Council believes it is important to guide the character of communities in Queens by adopting lot and building standards that are appropriate to each type of community. At the same time, Council recognizes there are many existing lots that were legally created but may not be able to accommodate development under current planning regulations. Council recognizes the potential burden on landowners if development is made impossible on such lots, and some flexibility is needed to reflect the reality of these legacy lots.

Policy 4-6: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, regulate the size, location, and number of buildings on a lot in order to carry out the intent of each community classification and specific zone.

Policy 4-7: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw, regulate the size of created lots in keeping with the intent of each community classification and specific zone, and consistent with the availability of central services.

Policy 4-8: Council may, through the Land Use Bylaw, relax lot area and frontage requirements on existing undersized lots.

4.2.6 Non-conforming Uses and Structures

Non-conforming uses and structures are those that were legally developed under an older Land Use Bylaw (or prior to any land use regulation) but would not be permitted if the owner tried to develop them under the current Land Use Bylaw. The *Municipal Government Act* provides certain protections and flexibilities to these uses and structures in recognition of the good faith investment that property owners put into them. These flexibilities include allowing the uses to continue, allowing the reconstruction of structures after partial destruction (e.g. due to fire), and allowing residential structures to expand as long as they do not further increase non-conformities. The Act allows municipalities to provide further flexibility for non-conforming uses and/or structures if the Municipal Planning Strategy outlines these relaxations. Council intends to provide additional flexibility for non-conforming uses and structures.

Policy 4-9: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw:

- (a) extend the time period before which a non-conforming use is considered discontinued;
- (b) enable the expansion of non-conforming uses, with controls to limit the impacts of any such expansion;
- (c) allow for the expansion of non-conforming, non-residential structures provided the expansion does not further increase any non-conformity.

4.3 Environment

4.3.1 Context

The natural environment fundamentally shapes the communities of Queens. The topography and geology dictate where rivers flow; where crops and forests grow; where clean drinking water is available; and where it is easier or harder to build infrastructure. The scenic qualities of lakes, forests, and coastlines are an attraction for recreation and development. In fact, the natural environment is perhaps the feature of Queens most cherished by residents and visitors alike.

The natural environment also shapes how our communities change over time. As the climate changes and we experience more frequent storms, erosion, and more intense storm surge, we will need to respond by adapting our infrastructure, land use development patterns, and buildings and by considering where new investments in infrastructure and buildings could be inappropriate.

Finally, we are the stewards of the environment, both for the services it provides to us, but also for its intrinsic, intangible value. Where and how we develop our communities affects the loss or preservation of ecosystems, the degree that natural habitats are fragmented, and the volume of pollutants we release into the environment.

This Municipal Planning Strategy was developed with environmental sustainability principles at the top of mind. Choices about servicing, roads, development densities, and the placement of zones were all made in part to:

- enable people to live close to services, minimizing the need to travel for daily needs;
- make efficient use of existing roads and services before expanding into undeveloped environments;
- reduce development densities and maximize the potential for natural stormwater retention in areas more sensitive to disturbance; and
- prohibit most forms of development in the most vulnerable environments.

These actions are woven throughout the other sections of this Plan. This section addresses specific environmental policies.

4.3.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about the environment:

- Utilize the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw to commit the Region to a sustainable future for all its residents and for the natural environment.
- Protect the valuable and sensitive natural features of Queens, particularly watercourses.
- Avoid developing in environments that present a high risk of natural hazards, either now or in the future as a result of climate change.

4.3.3 Environment in Decision-making

The natural environment is one of Queens' most fundamental assets. Council believes the Region has an important role to play in sustaining this asset, and that the environment should be considered a key factor when making any decision.

Policy 4-10: Council shall consider impacts on the environment as a key factor in decision-making.

4.3.4 Coastal Elevation

The Region of Queens has an extensive ocean coastline, with a length of 343 kilometres when islands are included. This ocean coastline is particularly valued by the community for its beauty, recreational opportunities, ties to the fishery, and as an important and sensitive ecosystem. Over the years the coast has been a major focus for development in Queens, with many homes, seasonal properties, and tourism operations springing up within sight of the ocean.

If little is done to slow climate change, local sea levels in Queens are expected to rise 1.06 m (+/- 0.48) by the year 2100. Combined with a large storm surge and high tide, areas with an elevation of up to 4.31 metres could be inundated. This elevation is relative to chart datum, while the policies below convert this to a datum system commonly used by surveyors. New development must be considerate of these risks, and existing development within this elevation will require adaptation or retreat measures over time.

A particular challenge exists in Liverpool, where a significant amount of existing development is located in the threatened zone. This is also an area where existing waterfront development is a key component of the local economy and the vibrancy of the community. In this case, consideration must be given towards balancing the risks of sea level rise versus the reward that comes from the role the waterfront plays in the community. Council believes it is appropriate to enable some limited forms of non-habitable development in these areas. Outside of Liverpool, development is generally located at higher elevations, though there are some exceptions in areas such as Medway.

Policy 4-11: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, prohibit development of buildings below a vertical elevation of 2.8 metres relative to the Canadian Geodetic Datum of 2013. Exceptions shall be made for non-habitable areas of buildings in serviced areas, industrial uses, low-value development (such as sheds and boardwalks), and buildings that functionally depend on access to the water.

Policy 4-12: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, allow existing buildings to be moved within the minimum vertical elevation provided this improves the situation in relation to the vertical elevation.

4.3.5 Watercourses and Shoreline Buffers

Watercourses are a key feature of the landscape, economy, and culture in Queens, and are important habitat to native plants and wildlife. To demonstrate the impact of this hydrology, lakes and rivers make up 37,000 hectares in Queens, while wetlands total 28,000 hectares; together, the two categories cover one quarter of Queens.

The Region of Queens is home to two primary watersheds: the Mersey River Watershed (146 kilometres in length) and the Medway River Watershed (121 kilometres in length). These drain into the ocean at Liverpool and Port Medway, respectively.

The areas adjacent to these watercourses are important habitats that support biodiversity and help catch silt from erosion as well as other chemicals and nutrients. Disturbing these areas can be extremely harmful to the watercourse and the plants and animals that depend upon it.

The shorelines of waterbodies are also areas of higher risk for development. Erosion can be a slow process, or it can happen rapidly and catastrophically. Higher intensity storms resulting from climate change are expected to increase erosion in Nova Scotia in the coming years.

Council intends to protect the sensitive shoreline environments from development, and development from erosion, by implementing a minimum horizontal setback from significant watercourses and the marine shoreline.

Policy 4-13: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, prohibit development within 15.24 horizontal metres of the ordinary high water mark of inland watercourses in all zones except the Watershed Zone. Exceptions shall be made for limited vegetation removal, recreational and scientific structures, safety structures, and buildings that functionally depend on access to the water.

Policy 4-14: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, prohibit development within 30 horizontal metres of the top-of-bank along the marine shoreline in all zones except the Liverpool Waterfront Zone. Exceptions shall be made for limited vegetation removal, recreational and scientific structures, safety structures, and buildings that functionally depend on access to the water.

Policy 4-15: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, provide flexibility from the watercourse and shoreline buffers for existing undersized lots, and where an existing building is to be moved in a manner that improves the situation in relation to the buffer.

Policy 4-16: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, provide a system to allow for a reduction in the watercourse or shoreline buffer on a lot where the property owner provides an appropriate study prepared by a qualified professional indicating the reduction will not present a hazard to development or an environmental risk.

4.3.6 Erosion Control

Shoreline erosion is a natural and ongoing process. However, that is often little consolation to property owners who face the prospect of losing their property to the sea. As a result, many people turn to erosion control techniques such as armour rock, rip-rap, or retaining walls. While these may be effective in slowing or stopping erosion where they are installed, they can disturb important intertidal habitats and also redirect wave energy to adjacent properties and increase erosion rates there.

Regulation of shoreline erosion control is outside the scope of municipal land use control. However, as of 2021 Council is of the understanding that the Province is working to implement a coordinated, province-wide approach for regulating shoreline modifications. Council is in full support of any such efforts.

Additionally, Council is aware that there is a growing body of research on using natural methods to slow erosion, such as the restoration of coastal salt marshes or installing “living shorelines” that use thoughtful grading and carefully-selected plants to stabilize the shore. Council applauds any land owner who undertakes such an effort, and may explore ways in which such approaches can be used in municipal infrastructure projects.

4.3.7 Dark Skies

With the growth of human developments has come an increase in exterior lighting. Abundant street and property lighting make it easier to navigate at night, provide a sense of safety and security, enhance architectural designs, and can allow outdoor facilities (such as sports fields or wharves) to be used into the night. Despite these benefits, lighting can have negative consequences by obscuring clear views of the night sky and by disrupting animal migration patterns.

A growing awareness of these consequences has led to options for lighting designs that minimize such “light pollution”, and the establishment of “dark sky” programs to identify areas with exceptional night skies. In Queens, Kejimikujik National Park is designated as a Dark-Sky Preserve by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

Council recognizes the value of dark skies for preserving our connection to nature, providing animals with natural lighting cycles and navigation landmarks, and attracting visitors seeking an awe-inspiring night-time experience. Council supports efforts to reduce light pollution and will explore ways in which to improve lighting design in municipal operations and in private development.

Policy 4-17: Council shall, through planning application evaluation criteria of Section 6.6 and through site plan approval criteria of the Land Use Bylaw, evaluate development proposals for light pollution and their impact on dark night skies.

4.3.8 Environmental Review

The Region is home to a variety of important environmental features, including wetlands, dunes, habitats that support species-at-risk, and riparian areas. Residents in Queens put great value on these features, both for their beauty and for the intrinsic environmental value they hold. Sustainable protection and enhancement of the natural environment is of utmost importance to Council.

While many environmental matters in Nova Scotia are regulated by the Province and its departments, the Region still has a significant role highlighting the importance of environmental protection and considering impacts to environmental features when reviewing discretionary development proposals.

Policy 4-18: Council shall, through the planning application evaluation criteria of Section 6.6, review the risk of environmental impacts of planning proposals, such as flooding, sea level rise, pollution, and degradation of habitat for species-at-risk.

4.4 Infrastructure

4.4.1 Context

Infrastructure, whether public or private, forms the basis of our communities. We build it to provide drinking water, remove our waste, power our homes and businesses, facilitate communications, and enable the transportation of people and goods (see next Section).

Infrastructure is also one of the largest public costs; building and maintaining these essential amenities comes with a large financial and environmental burden. As the world's climate changes, there is also a risk for these costs to increase when existing infrastructure is damaged or is no longer adequate to accommodate new demands, such as higher stormwater flows from frequent, intense storms.

In planning for the future, it is important for the functionality and financial stability of our communities to consider how to best use existing infrastructure, how to protect and adapt existing infrastructure to a changing climate, and how to ensure new infrastructure best meets the existing and future needs of the Region's residents and businesses.

4.4.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about infrastructure:

- Make decisions about infrastructure that minimize the Region's contribution to climate change.
- Minimize risks to infrastructure, existing and new, from the impacts of climate change.
- Prioritize the use of existing infrastructure ahead of the development of new infrastructure.
- Protect drinking water quality within the Municipal Water Supply Watershed.
- Take a long-range view for the efficient extension of municipal services within the Urban Service Area.
- Maintain or upgrade existing services.

4.4.3 Central Services

Central services include sanitary sewer systems and piped water.

Central sanitary sewer systems work by using a network of pipes to transfer waste to a central treatment plant. The simplest and most cost-efficient systems use the force of gravity to move the waste to a treatment plant located at the low point of the community.

However, topography sometimes requires the use of lift stations (pumps) and force mains (pressurized pipes) to move the waste uphill. These situations require more complicated (and expensive) mechanical systems and maintenance.

The Region operates three separate sanitary waste collection systems. One is in Milton and pumps to the largest, which serves Liverpool and Brooklyn. The third services Caledonia.

Brooklyn and Liverpool are the only communities in Queens with a central water supply. They rely on Town Lake, to the southwest of Liverpool. The treatment plant is located adjacent to the lake and provides water to a service area from a gravity-based head at a service pressure of 40 psi below an elevation of 30 metres.

Planning protection for the public drinking water supply is covered in Section 5.8, the Watershed Designation.

These central services enable higher densities of development because water provision and sewage disposal does not need to happen on-site. However, these services also come at a significant public cost. Council, therefore, prioritizes the use of existing systems in order to spread the cost of such systems among more users rather than extending services into new areas.

Policy 4-19: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, encourage the efficient use of central services by permitting smaller lot sizes and lot frontages in areas where central sewer, water, or both are present.

Policy 4-20: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, require new development to connect to central sewer, water, or both, where such services are available.

Policy 4-21: Council shall not install, or permit the installation of, public central sewer or water systems outside of areas classified on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, as Urban Serviced Area. As an exception, Council may consider installations:

- (a) of mainlines to connect communities to a wellfield, surface water source, or sewage treatment plant; or
- (b) where such services are necessary the protection of the environment or human health.

4.4.4 Onsite Services

In most areas of Queens, residents and businesses depend on on-site systems to provide water and dispose of sewage.

In Nova Scotia, subdivision of unserviced lots generally requires the subdivider to test the soils for their ability to accommodate a septic system, and then size the lot(s) accordingly. However, there is no such provincial requirement for establishing a source of potable water prior to subdivision.

Council is concerned about the impact that large users of groundwater could have on the available volume in adjacent wells. Therefore, Council has elected to consider the impacts on groundwater supply in the process of any discretionary planning approval, as outlined in Section 6.6.

4.4.5 Utilities

Utilities, such as telephone systems and power lines and substations, are essential to the functioning of modern society and can be found throughout Queens. Such utilities have different land use needs than most other uses. Recognizing their essential function, Council wishes to be clear that utility infrastructure is permitted.

Policy 4-22: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit utility uses in all zones and shall exempt such uses from zone requirements. For greater clarity, these exemptions shall only apply to the utility infrastructure itself, and not related uses like utility company offices or maintenance depots.

4.4.6 Telecommunications Towers

Telecommunication towers provide broadcast facilities for radio, television, and cellular phone services. With growth in cellular services, new technologies such as 5G, and public demand for extensive coverage and bandwidth, the number of telecommunications towers continues to grow.

The development of telecommunication towers in Canada is governed by the *Radiocommunications Act* and supersedes local land use planning. This act encourages colocation of equipment (installing equipment on existing towers) before new towers are developed.

The *Radiocommunications Act* includes a requirement for public consultation before the development of new telecommunications towers. Municipalities may elect to implement their own consultation protocol. In areas where there is no municipal protocol, consultation occurs under the Industry Canada Default Public Consultation Process. Council has elected to implement a municipal protocol.

Policy 4-23: Council shall require proponents for telecommunication towers to host a public meeting to hear comments from the public. The proponent shall:

- (a) serve personal notification of the meeting on all property owners within 300 metres of proposed site; and
- (b) place a notice for the meeting in a local newspaper outlining the date, time, and location of the meeting. Notification shall be placed in the newspaper at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

4.4.7 Solar Collector Systems

Solar collector systems enable the generation of electricity from the sun's rays through technologies such as photovoltaics, or the collection of heat energy for space heating or domestic hot water through technologies such as evacuated tubes. Solar collector systems can be developed on a wide range of scales, from a single rooftop panel servicing a cabin or home, to solar "farms" covering multiple hectares of land.

Council is generally supportive of solar collector systems as a lower-impact source of energy, and recognizes the opportunity such systems offer to property owners to take control of meeting their own energy needs. As a result, the Land Use Bylaw will be flexible in permitting smaller solar collector systems. At the same time, Council recognizes that commercial-scale solar collector systems can require a significant area of land, which may not be the most appropriate use of centrally-serviced lands.

Policy 4-24: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, provide flexibility for accessory solar collector systems by permitting them in all zones and providing exemptions from maximum building height limits.

Policy 4-25: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, only permit commercial-scale solar collector systems in rural zones and industrial zones.

4.4.8 Wind Turbine Generators

Wind turbine generators harness the movement of the wind to generate electricity. Like solar collector systems, wind turbine generators can be constructed on a range of scales, from small turbines powering an off-grid cabin up to collections of multiple turbines 100+ metres tall. As of 2021, the Region has seen the development of one largescale wind energy project, located between Liverpool and Herring Cove Lake.

Wind development in Nova Scotia has slowed in recent years due to capacity constraints on the provincial grid. However, there may still be localized opportunities for continued development, and future grid upgrades may unlock the potential for renewed efforts to develop large-scale wind turbine generators.

Although the coastline of Queens has been identified as the most ideal place for locating these structures, opportunities also exist in other areas of the Region as suitable sites for such development. Council recognizes that the economic and environmental benefits of wind turbine generators can be significant. However, there are also potential impacts that need to be addressed for larger systems, including noise, visual impacts, and blade and ice throw. Council feels that careful consideration is required to limit the potential impacts on the surrounding area.

Policy 4-26: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, define three categories of wind turbine generators:

- (a) Domestic wind turbine generators, which are very limited in scale and intended to generate electricity only for on-site consumption or are mechanical in nature and are intended to pump water.
- (b) Small wind turbine generators, which are limited in scale and are generally intended to meet the electricity needs of on-site uses, but may export energy to the grid through “net-metering” programs.
- (c) Large wind turbine generators, which are large in scale and are intended for commercial supply of electricity to the grid and may be built individually or in a collective “wind farm”.

Policy 4-27: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit domestic-scale wind turbine generators as an accessory use in all zones.

Policy 4-28: Council may, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit small-scale wind turbine generators in all zones except urban serviced residential zones, the Land Lease Residential Zone, Watershed Zone, and Conservation Zone, subject to additional requirements to limit public access and to reduce impacts, such as noise, on neighbouring properties.

Policy 4-29: Council shall consider approval of large wind turbine generators in the Inland Rural Zone, Coastal Rural Zone, Rural Commercial Zone, Heavy Industrial Zone, Fishing and Marine Zone, and Recreation and Open Space Zone by development agreement, subject to the following requirements:

- (a) the project proponent shall establish a project website or webpage, which shall, at a minimum:
 - (i) identify the lands subject to the proposal;
 - (ii) identify the make and model of turbine generators considered for the proposal;
 - (iii) provide a phone number, email address, or contact form to connect members of the public with the project proponents;
- (b) the project proponent shall host a public information meeting to hear comments from the public prior to the public hearing stage, notice of which shall:
 - (i) be placed on the project website or webpage at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting outlining the date, time, and location of the meeting;
 - (ii) be served on all property owners within 500 metres of the proposed site; and
 - (iii) be placed in a local newspaper or newspapers circulating in the municipality, at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting and outlining the date, time, and location of the meeting;
- (c) the project proponent shall submit a decommissioning plan, which will become part of the development agreement; and
- (d) the proposal shall meet the policies for considering development agreements outlined in Section 6.4.

4.4.9 Solid Waste and Recycling

Modern society produces a significant amount of solid waste that must be recycled, composted, or otherwise disposed. For many people, such disposal is “out of sight, out of mind”, yet the reality is solid waste handling is essential infrastructure.

The first step in the process is typically collection at some form of transfer station or recycling depot, where solid waste is collected and sorted before being transferred for processing or disposal. Such facilities can have impacts on neighbouring areas but, due to the short-term nature of their waste holdings, do not have the same land area requirements or environmental risks as the disposal steps. Uses such as transfer stations and recycling depots will be permitted in the appropriate zones, in keeping with Chapter 5 on Land Use Designations.

Disposal facilities, along with salvage yards, typically require large areas of land to be taken out of use indefinitely (at least in terms of practical planning time periods), and thus their location must be carefully considered. They also have the potential for environmental impacts and require careful design and monitoring. While such requirements are typically handled by provincial and federal legislation, there are other impacts such as truck traffic that need to be considered in siting such facilities. As a result, Council intends to consider these uses only by development agreement.

Policy 4-30: Council shall consider salvage yards and solid waste disposal facilities on lots larger than 10,000 square metres in the Inland Rural Zone and Heavy Industrial Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

4.5 Transportation

4.5.1 Context

Transportation networks form the backbone of our communities. Where and how we build roads, sidewalks, trails, airports, and other such infrastructure affects access (for good or bad) to natural areas, resources, business markets, and services. The decisions we make about transportation networks can also affect (for good or bad) our fitness levels and the sustainability of our communities by enabling or discouraging different modes of transportation.

The design of our transportation networks is also closely tied to community character. Wide, winding highways are more closely tied with rural landscapes while sidewalks and narrow streets in an organized grid pattern are typically characteristic of urban areas.

Finally, our transportation networks are often the most long-lasting component of any decisions we make about our communities. While road surfaces and adjacent buildings may have changed over the years, a time-traveler from Liverpool in the 1800s would have little trouble navigating the streets of downtown today.

Effective planning for the future depends, therefore, fundamentally on good decisions about transportation.

4.5.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about transportation:

- Develop transportation networks that facilitate social connections, access to services, recreational opportunities, and economic activity
- Encourage forms of transportation that improve the health of residents and minimize contributions to climate change
- Promote development that utilizes existing transportation infrastructure
- Take a strategic approach to the expansion of road networks
- Establish standards for new transportation infrastructure to promote durability and usability

4.5.3 Public Roads

The majority of roads in Queens are owned and maintained by the Province. However, the Region does own and maintain 35 kilometres of roads within Liverpool.

Prior to 1995, all new public roads in an approved subdivision became the property (and responsibility) of the Province. However, servicing adjustments changed the relationship between the Province and municipalities, and since that time new public roads in approved subdivisions become the responsibility of municipalities.

Efficient maintenance (such as snow clearing) of municipal roads depends on locating most roads in close proximity to each other, so that service vehicles do not have to travel long distances between service areas. Council recognizes that, in a community as large as Queens, there is a risk of dispersed subdivision roads and roads with a high amount of road frontage per lot creating an unsustainable burden on the Region. As a result, Council intends to limit the creation of new public roads to a limited range of areas intended for higher densities of development.

Policy 4-31: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw, prohibit the development of new municipal public roads except in areas identified on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, as Urban Serviced Area or Hamlet, or lands zoned Highway Commercial on the Zoning Maps of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 4-32: Council may, through the Subdivision Bylaw, require lands to be set aside as “road reserves” to connect new public roads to adjacent lands that have the potential to be subdivided and developed with future public roads.

4.5.4 Private Roads

Roads can be developed with the ownership and maintenance responsibilities held by a private entity, such as a “road owners’ association”. These private roads are common in areas where the cost of roads developed to a public standard would be prohibitive, such as cottage areas around lakes and the coast. From a municipal perspective, private roads can be beneficial because they allow development in these areas without requiring the Region to own and maintain roads in far-flung areas.

At the same time, private roads often create challenges. In the past the Region did not have design and construction standards for private roads, so private roads could be built to a low quality, with higher ongoing maintenance costs for the eventual owners and potential access limitations for emergency vehicles. Residents on private roads pay municipal taxes, yet may not receive many of the municipal services (plowing, individual waste collection, *etc.*) provided to residents on public roads. Finally, organizing residents to pay dues and maintain a private road can be difficult, especially if there is a mix of permanent and seasonal residents on the road with different expectations for level of maintenance. As a result, Council believes development on private roads should only be permitted in areas where the benefit outweighs these challenges.

Policy 4-33: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, prohibit development on private roads developed after the adoption of this Plan in Urban Serviced Residential Zones and Urban Serviced Commercial Zones.

Policy 4-34: Council may establish minimum standards for private roads that, at a minimum require:

- (a) private roads to be located on their own lot;
- (b) grubbing, removal of all organic material, and compaction of the subgrade;
- (c) adequate drainage infrastructure;
- (d) a road bed of a hard, durable material, sufficient to bear the weight of emergency vehicles;
- (e) appropriate road identification signage; and
- (f) bridges and culverts appropriately constructed to protect watercourses.

4.5.5 Sidewalks and Pedestrian Connections

Almost every trip begins and ends on foot (or wheelchair). Sidewalks provide a safe, accessible location for pedestrians and wheelchair users to travel. Sidewalks are particularly important in areas with a high volume of vulnerable users, such as near schools or retirement homes. Even beyond these areas, sidewalks are important for promoting active transportation along with its associated health and sustainability benefits.

Existing sidewalks in Queens are located within the cores of Liverpool, Milton, and Caledonia. The current sidewalk networks are generally well-connected, offering a continuous path for users. However, they do not extend to the entirety of these communities. Council is interested in expanding these networks and may do so through municipal investment in established areas. Council also has the opportunity, through the development agreement criteria of Section 6.4, to require retrofitted sidewalks for discretionary approvals in areas without sidewalks.

The cheapest and easiest time to install sidewalks is at the time of road construction. Council, therefore, intends to take advantage of the opportunity created by any new public road construction and may require sidewalks be included in such construction.

Pedestrian connections are also an important tool for comfortable and efficient pedestrian transportation. The old grid layouts present in many of Queens' established communities provide short and logical pedestrian routes between any two points. However, more modern subdivisions often have winding road layouts. Without proper consideration for pedestrian connections between these roads, a short "as the crow flies" distance may functionally become a very long distance to travel on foot.

Policy 4-35: Council may, through the Subdivision Bylaw, require sidewalks on new public roads.

Policy 4-36: Council may, through the Subdivision Bylaw, require pedestrian connections to connect new public roads and private roads to each other, and to important destinations such as, but not limited to, schools, commercial areas, parks, waterfronts, and other amenities.

4.5.6 Parking

Minimum automobile parking requirements help provide a place for residents, visitors, employees, and patrons to park their vehicle without overburdening limited on-street locations, particularly in adjacent residential areas.

However, the provision of parking has a cost, both in terms of the monetary cost of its construction, and in terms of its effect on the character of a community. Overly-large parking areas can create areas that are less desirable for walking, and where asphalt is prioritized over green spaces that contribute to community beauty and assist in reducing stormwater runoff.

Council, therefore, has established minimum automobile parking requirements for some uses to reduce the impacts of parking overflow. However, these minimums were established at a level to reduce impacts at most times of the year, and not to completely eliminate parking overflow at extreme peak times.

In Queens there is also a growing awareness of the need to provide secure, functional parking areas for bicycles. Council does not wish to require bicycle parking at this time, but intends to incentivise business owners to provide bicycle parking.

Policy 4-37: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish minimum automobile parking standards aimed at reducing the impacts of parking overflow on neighbouring streets during typical volumes, but not necessarily during times of peak demand.

Policy 4-38: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish design requirements for required automobile parking spaces and areas.

Policy 4-39: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, encourage the provision of bicycle parking spaces by enabling a reduction in minimum automobile parking spaces if a business owner provides bicycle parking spaces meeting standards of quality and usability.

4.5.7 Airports

Airports can provide important transportation links; enable local air services, such as aerial photography and surveying; support agricultural activities such as spraying or crop analysis; or simply provide a location for recreational piloting. Council recognizes the role these facilities play in the local economy, and is generally supportive of their development. However, there are also potential impacts such as noise, particularly at larger scales. As a result, Council has elected to only consider airports by development agreement in most situations.

Policy 4-40: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit airports in the Heavy Industrial Zone.

Policy 4-41: Council shall consider approval of airports in the Inland Rural Zone, Coastal Rural Zone, Resort Zone, and Rural Commercial Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies for development agreements outlined in Section 6.4.

4.6 Housing

4.6.1 Context

The 10,548 residents of Queens all share a common need: the need for suitable housing. This means housing that is affordable, large enough for the number of people in the household and their life stage, and is at an acceptable level of repair.

Beyond this, people are looking for housing that meets their desires: location, size, type, and amenities. In order for Queens to develop as an attractive and sustainable community, a diverse range of housing options and neighbourhood character are needed to accommodate people at various life stages, income levels, and family sizes.

Meeting these needs and desires in a sustainable manner will depend on gently intensifying existing communities—near to services—through infill development, conversion of existing buildings, and thoughtful expansion of residential areas.

The residential character of communities in Queens are as varied as its people. In the urban serviced areas, the community cores feature large tracts of older single detached dwellings and tree lined streets. In many cases, these large older dwellings have been converted to small multi-unit buildings. The outer areas of these communities feature newer subdivisions on winding streets and the occasional new multi-unit building.

In the hamlets, the residential character is often that of clusters of detached or duplex dwellings, located on smaller lots and closer to the road than in rural areas.

In the rural development areas, residential development is typically strung out along main transportation routes, located on large lots and set back from the road.

4.6.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region’s Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about housing:

- Promote residential growth within established communities, near to services, and away from hazardous or sensitive lands.
- Encourage residential infilling on serviced lands within the Urban Service Areas.
- Guide the evolution of communities and residential areas in a manner that is respectful of, and complementary to, the existing context and character of those communities.
- Direct new residential communities to vacant lands that have the potential for sustainable development through the efficient servicing.
- Encourage an increased supply of rental housing in the Municipality.
- Diversify the available housing stock beyond the traditional dominance of single-detached homes.
- Enable and promote reinvestment in older, larger homes for reuse as housing that meets current demographic trends.

4.6.3 Housing Diversity and Densities

As of 2020, the dominant form of housing in Queens is the owner-occupied, detached home. However, as the demographics of Queens shift to an older population and smaller family sizes, it is evident that diversity in housing options is necessary.

Housing density and scale has a large impact on the character of a community. Permitted densities and scales also affect the cost and diversity of housing that is available in a community. Council intends to enable a wide range of housing options throughout the Region. However, this must be tailored appropriately to the scale and character of each community.

In general, denser forms of housing should be directed to “urban” areas, where services are available to support the higher density of residents. However, there is still some need for higher densities of housing in small communities to support more affordable housing options, to provide options for downsizing, and to expand housing options for seasonal workers (such as tourism staff). In coastal areas, there may also be demand for larger bare land condominium developments, where multiple detached dwellings are located on one parcel but each has its own “unit” of land.

In some cases, a higher density of development may only be appropriate if it is carefully designed through an enhanced planning process. In these situations, Council intends to use the site plan approval process or development agreement process to provide this necessary oversight.

Policy 4-42: Council shall, in the permitted uses in each zone of the Land Use Bylaw, tailor the types and densities of residential uses to the classification of community in which the zone is intended to be used. Rural development areas shall be limited to a low density of development, hamlets shall generally be lower in density with an opportunity for medium densities with careful oversight, and the urban serviced areas shall be the focus of higher densities of residential development.

4.6.4 Accessory Dwellings

The term “accessory dwelling” encompasses a wide range of dwellings that are located on a lot with, and secondary to, another dwelling. These include common terms such as, “secondary suite”, “granny flat”, “carriage house”, “backyard suite”, “auxiliary dwelling”, and more.

Accessory dwellings are one approach to enabling housing diversity and affordability, making better use of existing services, with minimal impact on the character of existing neighbourhoods.

Council is supportive of accessory dwellings, and intends to widely enable their use.

Policy 4-43: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit accessory dwellings in all zones where residential uses are permitted.

Policy 4-44: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, implement standards for accessory dwellings intended to minimize their visibility and impact on the character of existing neighbourhoods.

4.6.5 Converted Dwellings

Within the existing housing stock in the Region of Queens Municipality, there are many large older homes that can be difficult to maintain due to circumstances beyond the owner's control, such as an aging population, shrinking family sizes, and increasing heating and maintenance costs. Council feels there is an opportunity to meet some of the housing needs in the Region through conversion of these houses into multiple units, while at the same time maintaining the character of the existing neighbourhood.

Policy 4-45: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit converted dwellings with the number of permitted sleeping units consistent with the intent of each zone.

4.6.6 Supportive Housing

Supportive housing provides residents with varying levels of care depending on their needs. This may range from a small options home in which adults with disabilities share a collective living arrangement supplemented by visits from support workers, all the way up to residential care facilities offering 24/7 care.

Council believes that all residents of Queens deserve housing arrangements that meet their needs in a location convenient to them.

Policy 4-46: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit supportive housing options, such as small options homes and residential care facilities, in all zones that permit residential uses and to a scale similar to the other residential uses permitted in those zones.

4.6.7 Land Lease Communities

Land lease communities are ones in which the property owner leases plots of land with services and vehicular access, and often provides community amenities like playgrounds or halls. The occupant then places their movable dwelling on the rented plot of land. Traditionally, land lease communities have focused on mobile homes, built on a trailer chassis and readily moved, but in recent decades there has been a trend towards modular and mini homes.

Policy 4-47: Council shall establish the Land Lease Residential Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to accommodate land lease communities.

4.7 Economic Development

4.7.1 Context

Land use planning and economic development are separate yet complimentary endeavors. Land use planning does not directly create new businesses or jobs, but good planning shapes communities so they are attractive to company owners and staff, ensures a ready supply of employment lands in appropriate locations, makes efficient use of public and private resources, and protects existing businesses from conflicting land uses that could limit their operational activities (such as new homes moving in next to an established airport). Conversely, all the best plans in the world will fail if economic development efforts do not support an environment in which diverse people can find meaningful employment.

The economy in the Region of Queens has been in transition over the last decade. The closure of the Bowater Mersey paper mill in 2012 led to the loss of many direct jobs, as well as jobs in related industries. Like other communities in Nova Scotia, Queens is also caught up in larger macroeconomic trends related to demographics and globalization. As a result, the workforce in Queens has been shifting to tertiary industries such as healthcare, professional services, and retail trade. However, primary (resource extraction) and secondary (manufacturing, *etc.*) industries continue to be major employers in the Region.

In the face of local and global forces, a sustainable future for Queens depends on developing an economy that is diverse and resilient. In an increasingly globalized world, some of the biggest opportunities are in industries that depend on a sense of place. Local manufacturing and “cottage industries” founded in local culture, practices, and materials provide differentiation from goods that could just as easily be manufactured in some far-flung corner of the world. Additionally, the natural environment and culture of Queens have historically been, and will continue to be, an important draw for tourism.

Ironically, the other potential opportunities in a globalized world relate to those industries that are “placeless”. With modern communication methods and e-commerce, many smaller businesses can be operated anywhere with a good internet connection. Attracting the people who run these businesses depends on providing complete communities, the necessary infrastructure, and a quality of life that outcompetes other potential locations.

4.7.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region’s Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about economic development:

- Allow for a variety of scales of business and industry within the Region, including appropriately-scaled home-based businesses.
- Encourage new commercial and industrial growth to locate in areas that will not place undue strain on existing municipal facilities, infrastructure, and financial resources.
- Reduce the impact of commercial businesses and industries on the natural environment and on the quality of life within neighbourhoods.
- Increase the focus on, and promotion of, the Region’s natural resources and clean environmental lifestyle as a means to increase local tourism and attract new residents.
- Accommodate value-added opportunities that can build upon the Region’s resource-based industries.
- Promote new emerging sources of economic growth that fulfill the wants and needs of residents.
- Encourage traditional downtown main street commercial development, as well as villages, settlements, and cross-roads as hubs of commercial activity.
- Enable and encourage commercial uses that provide supplies and services on a local scale, particularly in areas outside of Liverpool.

4.7.3 Internet

A reliable, high-speed internet connection is, for the majority of businesses, fundamental infrastructure for participating in the modern economy. The rural areas of Queens, like much of rural Canada, are lacking in this essential infrastructure. In 2018, the Region undertook efforts with other South Shore municipalities to map connection speeds and identify priority areas for infrastructure investments. The Region also coordinated a project to develop a high-speed internet “backbone” to the communities of Greenfield and Middlefield.

In an effort to address the issue, Council approved multi-year funding, and has developed plans, in collaboration with Bell Canada, to provide fiber-based internet service to almost the entire Municipality. These plans will be delivered in three main phases:

- Phase 1 is complete as of March 2021
- Phase 2 is intended to complete between August-October of 2021
- Phase 3 is estimated to complete before the end of 2023.

The overwhelming majority of dwellings and commercial premises in the county are contained within scope for Phases 1 and 2.

4.7.4 Craft Manufacturing

The Region of Queens has an economic specialization in various manufacturing and craft/trade-based industries. While the prospect of a new significant employer requiring these skills arriving at the doorstep is limited, technological advances in distributed manufacturing, logistics, telecommunications, and e-commerce are lowering the barriers to entry and enabling individuals to form smaller manufacturing businesses that principally sell to the world via the internet.

These opportunities are scaled well to rural areas and match with the traditional values of self-sufficiency, inventiveness, commitment to community, sense of place, and entrepreneurialism. They will also challenge traditional definitions of commercial and industrial use in development regulations, as well as the scale of associated negative impacts that regulations are meant to mitigate.

Policy 4-48: Council may permit contained, low-impact manufacturing activities at a limited scale within Land Use Bylaw zones that permit commercial uses.

4.7.5 Agriculture

The Region of Queens has very little “prime” agricultural land (Class 2, 3, or active 4 soils) that would register as important on a provincial scale. Indeed, Queens County has the smallest amount of arable land of any county in Nova Scotia. However, the agricultural activity that does occur within the Region is important to the economy and culture of Queens, particularly the areas around Greenfield and Caledonia.

Not all forms of agriculture require high-quality agricultural lands. Blueberries tend to thrive on marginal lands in Nova Scotia, and such lands can also be useful for livestock pasturing. Some lands may, due to localized climates, have agricultural value beyond what is suggested by their soil classification. Much of the agricultural activity in Queens actually takes place in and around Caledonia on lands not defined by the Province as “agricultural lands”. As a result, Council intends to permit crop-based agricultural uses in a wide variety of areas, and may in the future consider identifying and protecting agricultural lands based on factors beyond just soil classification. Additionally, Council recognizes that related activities such as crop processing and farm tourism (u-picks, etc.) are important for the support of agriculture, and intends to permit them wherever crop-based agriculture is permitted.

Livestock-based agriculture also has an important role in the economy, culture, and food security of Queens. However, these uses have the potential for impacts, particularly related to the smell and risk of pollution from manure storage. Council intends to permit livestock operations in hamlets and rural areas, with regulations and limits on the scope of such operations as appropriate to each area.

Policy 4-49: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit crop-based agricultural activities and supportive activities in all rural and hamlet zones except the Lakeshore Residential Zone and Lakeshore Limited Development Zone.

Policy 4-50: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit farm markets in all rural and commercially-oriented zones.

Policy 4-51: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit the small-scale keeping of fowl and rabbits with controls on enclosures, the keeping of roosters, and slaughtering of animals.

Policy 4-52: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit household scale livestock operations in the General Residential Zone, hamlets, and the rural development area, subject to requirements to limit the impact of odours and noise on nearby properties, and manure storage on nearby properties and watercourses.

Policy 4-53: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit intensive livestock operations in the Inland Rural Zone, subject to requirements to limit the impact of manure storage on nearby properties and watercourses.

4.7.6 Fishing and Marine Uses

The coastal communities of Queens have strong ties to the sea and to fishing industries. Indeed, many of these communities were established as fishing villages, and fishing and related processing continue to be important local economic and cultural activities. Recreational and Small Craft harbours are located throughout Queens, including Port Medway, West Berlin, Brooklyn, Liverpool, Moose Harbour, Hunts Point, and central Port Mouton.

Council believes these facilities and the activities they support are important fixtures within the coastal communities of Queens. Council encourages ongoing operation and reinvestment in them, particularly from the Federal Government.

Council will recognize these facilities and related on-shore activities, such as processing, through the creation of the Fishing and Marine Zone.

Policy 4-54: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Fishing and Marine Zone. This zone is intended to recognize and accommodate fishing and marine uses such as, but not limited to, marinas, wharves, boat storage, and processing operations.

4.7.7 Home-based Businesses

Home-based businesses provide an opportunity for homeowners to start a business with low overhead, to work from home if they have mobility issues or other challenges leaving home, and to serve surrounding areas where dedicated commercial properties may not be viable or permitted. At the same time, home-based businesses can create some neighbourhood impacts (e.g. additional traffic), and also compete with established commercial areas.

In 2016 the Province amended the Building Code Regulations to exempt home-based businesses under 25% of the home area and 50 square metres from certain requirements, such as the requirement to have a barrier-free customer washroom. This has made it much more affordable for home-based businesses that meet these criteria.

Council is supportive of entrepreneurialism and the establishment of home-based businesses, but is also aware of the potential impacts of such businesses. As a result, Council has elected to take a tiered approach to home-based businesses. Smaller, more limited, home-based businesses will be permitted in most locations where residential uses are permitted. Larger, more expansive, home-based businesses will be permitted in the rural areas that have traditionally featured a blending of residential uses with other uses, and where the previous Land Use Bylaw permitted a wide range of commercial uses with few controls.

Policy 4-55: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit two levels of home-based businesses.

Policy 4-56: Level 1 home-based businesses shall be very limited in scope and permitted uses to align with the character of established residential neighbourhoods.

Policy 4-57: Level 2 home-based businesses shall be permitted to be larger in size, contain an expanded list of permitted uses, and utilize outdoor storage and display. Level 2 home-based businesses shall be permitted in the Hamlet Core Zone, Rural Commercial Zone, Inland Rural Zone, and Coastal Rural Zone.

4.7.8 Signage

Signage is important for identifying points-of-interest, and is particularly important to businesses owners hoping to draw customers.

However, unrestricted signage development can lead to over-competition for the viewer's attention and actually reduce the effectiveness of signs. Additionally, an overabundance of signage can have a negative effect on the aesthetics of communities.

Council recognizes that the permitting process for signage can be a burden on businesses, and also that the potential impacts of signage are likely to be greatest in areas with higher levels of business activities, such as the urban serviced areas and hamlets. As a result, Council intends to limit the majority of signage regulations to these areas.

Policy 4-58: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish signage regulations to promote safe and well-maintained signs in all zones.

Policy 4-59: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish detailed regulations for the size, number, and types of signs in the urban serviced areas and hamlets.

4.7.9 Accommodations

Accommodations for the travelling public are important for supporting the local economy, whether through tourism or visitors on business travel. Queens features larger hotels within the Liverpool area and a diverse mix of rental cottages, B&Bs, inns, motels, and resorts throughout the rest of the municipality. Council will continue to support such uses in appropriate locations.

One of the recent shifts in the accommodations industry is the rise of short-term rentals (homes or rooms within a home rented out for fewer than 30 days at a time). While private cottage rentals and the like have always been a part of the Queens accommodations landscape, the popularity of online listing platforms has led to a steep increase in the number of short-term rentals.

These accommodations allow homeowners to gain an additional source of income and also help create accommodations options in smaller communities that might not have the volume of business to support traditional accommodations options. However, there is a risk that the income potential of short-term rentals takes housing out of the long-term rental market, and the mixing of accommodations with residential neighbourhoods can cause concerns about community character. Council intends to permit short-term rentals to a limited degree.

Policy 4-60: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit bed and breakfast operations in any zone that permits residential uses.

Policy 4-61: Council may, through each zone of the Land Use Bylaw, establish thresholds for bed and breakfast size by which approval will only be considered by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

Policy 4-62: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit accommodations in zones that permit commercial uses as a primary intent of the zone.

Policy 4-63: Council may, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit short-term rentals with controls to limit their scope and impact on housing supply and neighbourhood character.

4.7.10 Highway Commercial Development

Highway interchanges provide easy access to regional transportation networks, and the lands adjacent to them are highly visible and accessible to travelers. This makes them attractive locations for commercial businesses and for uses that benefit from easy access to the highway. However, there are a limited number of accesses to the 103 in Queens, and Council believes they should be prioritized for businesses that serve the traveling public, or uses that depend on quick travel times, such as emergency services.

Policy 4-64: Council shall establish the Highway Commercial Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone shall be intended to permit at highway interchanges a limited range of uses that serve the travelling public or depend on fast highway access for effective operation.

4.8 Recreation and Open Space

4.8.1 Context

The expansive natural areas, multitude of inland waterbodies, and extensive marine coastline of Queens provide valued opportunities for recreation. Queen's is particularly fortunate to host Kejimkujik Seaside Adjunct; a portion of Kejimkujik National Park; and various wilderness areas, provincial parks, nature reserves, and municipal parks and open spaces. These areas help protect important natural features while facilitating a spectrum of active and passive recreation. The Region also provides a variety of recreation infrastructure, such as playgrounds and ball fields, throughout the municipality.

A sustainable approach to recreation and open space depends on strategically acquiring new lands, investing in existing lands and facilities, and carefully managing these assets to both effectively meet the needs of users and avoid damaging and degrading the natural features that define these spaces.

Looking to the future, the residents of Queens are particularly interested in preserving public access to the coast and inland waterbodies and, where possible, actually gaining new and enhanced access to these features.

4.8.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about recreation and open space:

- Preserve and protect natural open spaces and the coast
- Promote a healthy lifestyle for all residents of the Region
- Acquire and develop quality recreational lands in line with an overall recreation and open space strategy
- Develop and maintain the multi-use trail network
- Protect and acquire public access to freshwater and coastal shorelines
- Provide diverse recreational opportunities that meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities

4.8.3 Open Space Dedication

One of the primary ways municipalities in Nova Scotia develop public recreation lands is through the subdivision process. The *Municipal Government Act* allows Council's Subdivision Bylaw to require subdividers to transfer up to five percent of the land area (or equivalent value as cash-in-lieu) to the municipality for open space (parkland) purposes. This can be increased to ten percent if the Municipal Planning Strategy includes this requirement and the rationale for including it.

Over the years and through this mechanism the Region has acquired open space in various areas. One challenge, however, is that acquired lands are not always located where they are most needed, and developing them to a usable standard requires municipal resources. Council feels that a strategic approach is needed to guide where public open space lands are acquired, whether through the subdivision process or through direct municipal purchase of the lands. In the meantime, Council will generally prioritize the dedication of cash-in-lieu to help support the improvement of existing open space lands.

Policy 4-65: Council shall, through the Subdivision Bylaw, require a public open space dedication of five percent.

Policy 4-66: Further to Policy 4-65, Council shall require the dedication to be cash-in-lieu except where the dedication is land that:

- (a) conforms to an adopted municipal open space plan;
or
- (b) provides usable public access from a public road to a lake, river, or marine coastline.

Policy 4-67: Council may, through the Subdivision Bylaw, exempt classes of subdivision from municipal open space dedication. Such exemptions may include, but are not limited to, boundary adjustments, consolidations, subdivisions for municipal purposes, utility subdivisions, and subdivisions creating a total of three or fewer lots from an area of land.

4.8.4 Recreation and Open Space Zone

Recreational uses are generally appropriate in a wide variety of zones and can simply be placed in the same zone as surrounding lands. However, there are some lands that, due to ownership or other legal or legislative mechanisms, will always be intended for recreational or open space purposes and where Council wishes to clearly communicate the intent of these lands.

Policy 4-68: Council shall, in the Land Use Bylaw, establish the Recreation and Open Space Zone and apply it to lands intended to be preserved for recreation and open space uses. Zone standards shall be established to provide ample land to accommodate a wide range of recreational uses.

4.8.5 Parks and Playgrounds

Parks and playgrounds are important amenities for communities of all types, providing opportunities for recreation and reflection. They can also provide important greenspace in otherwise developed areas. While many of the parks and playgrounds in the Region are zoned Recreation and Open Space, Council recognizes that it would be onerous to require an amendment to the zoning map to establish new parks and playgrounds in areas zoned for other uses.

Policy 4-69: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit parks and playground uses in all zones except the Watershed Zone and the Fishing and Marine Zone.

4.8.6 Recreational Vehicles

Recreational vehicles, also known as travel trailers, fifth-wheels, caravans, campers, motorhomes, and a variety of other terms, are a popular form of vacation accommodations. They can also be used in lieu of a cabin or cottage on seasonal properties. Individually, these vehicles are typically lower impact in terms of land use and Council does not wish to be overly onerous on their use. However, if multiple recreational vehicles are located on a lot the use becomes a campground. Additionally, if a recreational vehicle becomes a permanent or semi-permanent fixture on a lot, the need arises to consider the impact on neighbouring properties.

Policy 4-70: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish standards for regulating the use of land to accommodate and minimize the impact of permanent and semi-permanent recreational vehicles.

4.8.7 Racing Tracks

The racing of vehicles and animals is a recreational activity undertaken on a variety of scales throughout Canada and indeed in Queens, with an existing facility located at Exit 20A. Depending on the scale of these activities, there can be significant impacts on neighbouring land uses from noise, dust, and the large areas potentially required for parking and the facility itself. Council, therefore, intends to only consider new racing facilities and expansions to existing facilities by development agreement.

Policy 4-71: Council shall consider the approval or expansion of vehicle and animal racing tracks only by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

4.9 Culture and Heritage

4.9.1 Context

The abundance of buildings and sites of historic significance, as well as the various festivals and fairs celebrating our heritage, make it very obvious the important role that heritage plays in the lives and current-day culture of Queens' residents. These historic resources provide us with a clearer understanding of the Region's cultural diversity and how our way of life has evolved. The strength of the tourism industry is also positively influenced by the historic characteristics, vibrant arts community, and charm of the area.

The Mi'kmaq are known to have lived and travelled throughout the Region for thousands of years. Several pre-contact sites have been found in Queens, which provide us with a better understanding of First Nations people and their history. Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site currently has one of the best-known sites in Nova Scotia. As well, an archaeological study completed on the Mersey River in 2005 revealed one of the largest sites to be discovered in the province. Today, Acadia First Nation continues to explore new options within the Region for promoting this rich heritage.

Council recognizes the significance of what heritage and culture mean as a reflection of ourselves, and of the opportunity to share our rich heritage to attract travelers to our area. Council intends to build upon this local strength by protecting and enhancing heritage assets, and by working with community groups to support a flourishing arts and culture industry.

4.9.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about heritage and culture:

- Support and promote the arts at all scales
- Designate important heritage buildings and landscapes, and encourage their preservation and enhancement
- Build on and promote tourism opportunities that relate to our rich history and culture
- Provide incentives for reinvestment in historic buildings

4.9.3 Heritage Properties

As of 2020, The National Historic Register lists 14 registered heritage properties within the Region. There are likely many more properties in Queens with architectural features or connections to important people or social and cultural events that would justify a heritage designation, or that simply contribute to the overall historic context of Queens.

Owning a heritage property is often a point of pride. It can also be a financial burden on property owners to maintain such properties to heritage standards. Council believes planning policies should help encourage reinvestment in existing registered heritage properties and should spark desire from property owners to seek new registration for other properties with heritage value.

Policy 4-72: Council shall provide incentives for reinvestment in registered heritage buildings by relaxing Land Use Bylaw requirements for a range of uses on or in registered heritage properties and buildings.

4.9.4 Arts and Cultural Uses

Queens is home to a strong arts and cultural community, from small private studios to the renowned Astor Theatre in Liverpool. Council believes it is important to enable arts and cultural uses to establish in a wide range of areas and at different scales. As a result, the Land Use Bylaw will generally be accommodating of arts and cultural uses.

Beyond this, it is difficult for land use planning to provide direct support to the arts. However, the Province has recently amended the *Municipal Government Act* to enable density bonusing throughout Nova Scotia. This tool, currently used in Halifax Regional Municipality, allows developers to request larger development projects if they include a public benefit. Council is interested in exploring the use of this tool to encourage investment in the arts in Queens, but also understands that successful implementation will depend on a fair and transparent process. Council intends to utilize density bonusing only following detailed study to develop an effective and fair bonusing program.

Policy 4-73: Council shall through the Land Use Bylaw, permit art gallery sales, craft workshops, and the teaching of students in activities such as dance and music as home-based businesses.

Policy 4-74: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit cultural uses such as, but not limited to, theatres and museums, in a wide variety of zones that prioritize commercial or public uses.

Policy 4-75: Council may, following detailed study to develop a fair and transparent process, implement a density bonusing program where the development of public art or the provision of public performance space is accepted as a public benefit.

4.9.5 Cemeteries

The communities of Queens feature a large number of cemeteries. To many people they are important places for reflection and respect. They are also an important historical record of Queens' past. Indeed, the Old Port Medway Cemetery, Zion United Cemetery, and Old Common Burial Ground are registered heritage sites.

Many cemeteries were developed prior to land use controls. Where new cemeteries are developed, they tend to have different land requirements and impacts than other uses, with low daily traffic in relation to the area of land.

Council recognizes the importance of cemeteries to the culture and heritage of Queens, and the need for flexibility in regulating them.

Policy 4-76: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit new cemeteries in most zones except those where the larger cleared areas required for a cemetery could raise environmental concerns or displace limited lands reserved for other purposes.

Policy 4-77: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, implement lot size and frontage requirements specific to cemeteries.

4.10 Community Uses

4.10.1 Context

Community uses have long contributed to the health and identity of communities throughout the Region of Queens Municipality. Often centrally located, community uses such as schools, community centres, and medical facilities provide essential services to both the urban and rural areas of the Region.

Many of the Region's larger community uses are located in the urban development areas, including Queens General Hospital and Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment.

The majority of community uses in the hamlets and rural development areas are community centres, places of worship, and fire halls, which act as social hubs in communities throughout the rural areas.

4.10.2 Sustainable Planning Values

In order to achieve the Region's Vision and Goals and build a sustainable future, Council has articulated the following sustainable planning values to help shape policies about community uses:

- Support the continued successful operation of existing community uses
- Provide for the establishment of future community uses throughout Queens
- Enable the adaptive reuse of former community properties and buildings

4.10.3 Community and Institutions Zone

Community uses are central components in most communities throughout the Region. In recognizing the important role that these uses play in enhancing the quality of life for residents, Council wants to ensure that future development of these uses is permitted.

Policy 4-78: Council shall establish the Community and Institutions Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to identify and permit a wide range of community uses, with flexible zone standards to accommodate the varying needs of different types of institutional uses.

Policy 4-79: Council shall consider the approval of correctional facilities, as well as residential facilities licensed by Corrections Canada or Nova Scotia Corrections (or successor bodies), in the Community and Institutions Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

4.10.4 Community Uses in Other Zones

The Community and Institutions Zone is intended to be the “catchall” zone for identifying and enabling community uses. However, there are various community uses, such as schools or community halls, that are appropriate in a wide range of communities with little undue impact on neighbouring uses. There are larger community uses, such as large recreation centres, that are not out of place in commercial areas.

Council recognizes that these community uses are appropriate and essential to the character and function of communities in Queens, and does not wish to establish unnecessary barriers—such as the requirement for a rezoning—to the development of these uses. Council also recognizes that some community uses, such as old places of worship or schools, are attractive for conversion to other uses and likewise does not wish to establish unnecessary barriers to their conversion.

Policy 4-80: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, permit community uses in zones other than the Community and Institutions Zone, with the permitted type of community uses tailored to the intent of each zone.

Chapter 4 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

5 DESIGNATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Land use designations are broad categories for identifying the intended use of land. They establish the spatial framework for achieving the vision and objectives of this Plan. Sometimes a land use designation reflects the current situation on the ground, such as an established residential neighbourhood designated as “Serviced Residential”. In other situations, a land use designation identifies, broadly, the future plans for that land. An example would be undeveloped forested lands designated as “Serviced Commercial”.

These designations then have specific policies in this Plan and zones in the Land Use Bylaw that control development to carry out the intent of each designation. This chapter establishes the land use designations and the specific policies for each designation.

5.2 Serviced Residential Designation

5.2.1 Serviced Residential Designation

The communities of Liverpool, Milton, Brooklyn, and Caledonia feature “urban” residential neighbourhoods at a variety of densities. They are characterized by central services, smaller lot sizes, and often the presence of sidewalks and neighbourhood parks. While the primary character of these areas is residential, many also have community uses such as schools or places of worship, and some may feature neighbourhood commercial-types uses, such as corner stores.

There are many areas, particularly in Brooklyn and the western end of Liverpool, that are undeveloped but are readily serviced and appropriately located for residential expansion. These areas have been included in the Serviced Residential Designation and zoned appropriately.

Policy 5-1: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as “Serviced Residential” lands within the Urban Service Area intended to give priority to residential development.

Policy 5-2: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Serviced Residential Designation:

- (a) Community and Institutions Zone
- (b) Conservation Zone
- (c) General Residential Zone
- (d) Land Lease Residential Zone
- (e) Lower Density Residential Zone
- (f) Multiple Unit Residential Zone
- (g) Recreation and Open Space Zone
- (h) Residential Commercial Zone

5.2.2 Lower Density Residential Zone

The core areas of Liverpool feature established residential neighbourhoods, the most central of which follow the traditional grid pattern of early British town planning. These are surrounded by a ring of post-war housing on smaller lots, and finally by newer subdivisions on larger lots and winding streets. Within this core there is little in the way of large areas of vacant land, and most properties have existing direct access to roads and services. The existing development form is lower in density, with many detached and two-unit homes, as well as a number of internal conversions in older, larger homes.

The majority of new development in this area will consist of infill development on this existing infrastructure, rather than the creation of new subdivisions with new infrastructure.

Policy 5-3: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish the Lower Density Residential Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate lower-density residential development in the established neighbourhoods of Liverpool.

Policy 5-4: The Lower Density Residential Zone shall permit lower-density residential uses and associated community-type uses. Zone standards shall be flexible to promote infill development.

Policy 5-5: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Lower Density Residential Zone to the lower-density residential neighbourhoods in the core of Liverpool.

5.2.3 General Residential Zone

The neighbourhoods outside the core of Liverpool and in the other urban serviced areas feature a broader mix of housing types, while still maintaining a relatively compact, but lower-density form of development. These areas also contain a number of large lots that would be suitable for future subdivision and housing development.

The General Residential Zone encompasses these areas to accommodate existing development forms; promote infill development; and enable and encourage the development of compact, walkable neighbourhoods on currently-undeveloped lands.

In the past, Council has received requests to permit a few different commercial-type uses in the General Residential Zone, particularly near the edges of the urban serviced areas where the landscape becomes more rural in nature. Council intends to preserve the ability to consider these uses, as well as expansions to such uses that have developed in the past, through the oversight of the development agreement process.

Policy 5-6: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish the General Residential Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate a broad mix of lower-density residential development in the various serviced residential communities in Queens.

Policy 5-7: The General Residential Zone shall permit lower-density residential uses, mobile homes, smaller groupings of row houses, and associated community-type uses. Zone standards shall be flexible to promote infill development in established neighbourhoods and efficient, walkable communities where new subdivisions occur.

Policy 5-8: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the General Residential Zone to the lower-density serviced residential neighbourhoods outside the core of Liverpool.

Policy 5-9: Council shall consider proposals for animal shelters, kennels, automobile repair shops, self storage facilities, and funeral homes on lots larger than 10,000 square metres in the General Residential Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.2.4 Multiple Unit Residential Zone

Queens has, traditionally, seen little in the way of purpose-built (as opposed to conversions of existing structures) multi-unit residential development. However, this form of housing has grown in popularity throughout much of Nova Scotia. Purpose-built multi-unit residential can fill many housing needs, including seniors looking to downsize into a low-maintenance home, young professionals looking for affordable accommodations near to services, and seasonal tourism and service industry staff. Larger multi-unit facilities may also take the form of licensed nursing homes or other such residential care facilities.

In past planning documents, multi-unit zoning was typically only applied to existing multi-unit buildings; any new proposals were required to apply for an amendment to the zoning map, a process that can take many months and is risky for the proponent. This created barriers to the development of this form of housing. However, it did little to ensure the quality of multi-unit residential development or manage potential impacts; once the zoning amendment was granted the development could proceed as long as it complied with zone requirements.

Council believes multi-unit developments are important to a sustainable future for Queens, in which all residents can find housing that suits their needs. As a result, Council has taken the effort of “pre-zoning” lands for multi-unit residential development. These are typically undeveloped or underdeveloped lands near to services, transportation connections, and/or community uses. Council has also implemented the use of “site plan approval” for larger residential developments. This approach to permitting streamlines the process (compared to zoning amendments), but actually allows finer-grained, site-specific control of building design.

Outside of these areas identified for “pre-zoning” Council will continue to consider proposals for multi-unit residential development through the zoning map amendment process. Indeed, Council is supportive of such efforts and encourages such requests as a means to increase housing options in existing serviced communities, subject to a full evaluation of potential impacts through the public process of such amendments.

Policy 5-10: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish the Multiple Unit Residential Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate multi-unit residential developments in the urban serviced areas.

Policy 5-11: The Multiple Unit Residential Zone shall permit a wide range of residential uses, from single units up to multi-unit dwellings. Residential community uses, such as nursing homes and residential care facilities, shall also be permitted. Larger residential uses shall only be permitted by site plan approval, with evaluation conditions to effectively integrate the site and buildings into the surrounding neighbourhood and community.

Policy 5-12: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Multiple Unit Residential Zone to existing multi-unit dwellings and to undeveloped or underdeveloped sites near to amenities and transportation connections.

5.2.5 Residential Commercial Zone

The bulk of commercial activity in Queens occurs in established commercial areas, such as downtown Liverpool or Caledonia. However, Council recognizes that small-scale commercial activities, such as the traditional corner store, are an important part of the urban residential fabric in Queens. These neighbourhood commercial uses allow for “complete communities” in which it is possible to access basic supplies within an easy walking distance or short drive.

Policy 5-13: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish the Residential Commercial Zone. This zone is intended to recognize small commercial businesses serving the local neighbourhood, and to enable Council to accommodate new establishments in the future.

Policy 5-14: The Residential Commercial Zone shall permit residential uses similar to the General Residential Zone, as well as convenience stores. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the General Residential Zone, except for lot sizes related to convenience stores, which shall be more stringent to reflect the commercial nature of this use.

Policy 5-15: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Residential Commercial Zone to existing convenience stores in serviced residential areas.

5.2.6 Boarding Houses

Boarding houses play an important role in providing affordable, small scale, and/or shorter-term housing options in Queens. While this use can generally be accommodated into existing neighbourhood fabrics with little trouble, the higher population density and lack of established relationships among tenants means there are some additional considerations for their development (e.g. the potential for additional parking requirements, solid waste sorting areas, etc.). Council will therefore only consider boarding houses or larger boarding houses by development agreement in certain serviced residential zones.

Policy 5-16: Council may, through each serviced residential zone of the Land Use Bylaw, establish thresholds for boarding house size by which approval will only be considered by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.2.7 Rezoning

There may be times that Council sees a need to adjust the boundaries of zones within the Serviced Residential Designation. In such situations, Council may entertain amending the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5-17: Council shall consider proposals to rezone lands in the Serviced Residential Designation to any other zone permitted in that designation, as identified by Policy 5-2. Council shall not approve such a rezoning unless Council is satisfied:

- (a) the proposed change is not prohibited by any other policy in this Plan;
- (b) the purpose of the proposed zone, as described in the respective policy creating that zone, is consistent with the location and characteristics of the lands and with the proposed use of the lands; and
- (c) the proposal meets the general criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw, set out in Policy 6-21.

5.3 Serviced Commercial Designation

5.3.1 Serviced Commercial Designation

The centrally-serviced communities in Queens are also the commercial hubs for their respective areas.

Caledonia is the primary destination in North Queens for groceries, building supplies, and a number of other day-to-day needs. Highway 3 in Brooklyn and the northern portion of Liverpool provides large-format retail and services, while downtown Liverpool provides a traditional “Main Street” with an eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, and professional services. The intersection of Bridge Street and Highway 8 in Milton currently hosts a handful of small businesses, and is well suited for additional commercial growth in the future.

These areas provide for the day-to-day needs of residents and visitors alike, and are natural places for similar types of businesses in the future. Council intends for these areas to enable and prioritize commercial development.

Policy 5-18: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as “Serviced Commercial” lands within the Urban Service Area intended to give priority to commercial development.

Policy 5-19: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Serviced Commercial Designation:

- (a) Business Park Zone
- (b) Community and Institutions Zone
- (c) Conservation Zone
- (d) Downtown Commercial Zone
- (e) General Commercial Zone
- (f) Highway Commercial Zone
- (g) Land Lease Residential Zone
- (h) Liverpool Waterfront Zone
- (i) Mixed-use Zone
- (j) Recreation and Open Space Zone

5.3.2 Downtown Commercial Zone

Downtowns were long the heart of many communities in Queens. Many of them developed during a time before the automobile, modern financial instruments, and modern construction methods and, as a result, feature smaller buildings, packed closely together and located close to the street.

Along with the growth of commercial plazas, shopping centres, and large-format retail came a decline in downtowns. However, recent decades have seen somewhat of a renaissance in these areas; the smaller commercial spaces are a good fit for independent businesses and the fine-grained streetscapes are attractive to people looking for slower-paced shopping experiences.

Downtown Liverpool features the largest and most complete “main street” in Queens, appropriately located on Main Street and its side streets. It is defined by a mix of both older Victorian and Georgian buildings and modern buildings.

Other downtowns in Queens do not feature the same critical mass and density of commercial buildings, having lost them to redevelopment over the years or never developing them in the first place. However, Council is supportive of establishing a denser commercial core within Caledonia, Milton, and Brooklyn; if demand warranted such an approach in the future, Council could consider applying the Downtown Commercial Zone to these communities.

Policy 5-20: Council shall establish the Downtown Commercial Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to enable and promote fine-grained, walkable downtown areas reflective of a traditional “main street”.

Policy 5-21: The Downtown Commercial Zone shall permit a range of commercial and community uses of a scale and type appropriate to a downtown context. Automobile-related uses shall be prohibited, with the exception of parking lots designed to minimize their impact on the pedestrian experience. Residential uses shall be permitted, but shall only be located in buildings with commercial uses and shall be secondary to the commercial storefront.

Policy 5-22: Land Use Bylaw zone standards for the Downtown Commercial Zone shall be very flexible to promote a dense, fine-grained, walkable streetscape, with small minimum lot sizes and limited or no minimum setbacks.

Policy 5-23: Uses in the Downtown Commercial Zone shall be exempt from meeting the Land Use Bylaw requirements for the minimum number of automobile parking spaces.

Policy 5-24: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Downtown Commercial Zone to downtown Liverpool, and may apply the Downtown Commercial Zone to other communities' downtowns as they develop in the future.

5.3.3 General Commercial Zone

Modern commercial trends have led to larger commercial uses, such as full-service grocery stores, that cannot be accommodated within the downtown context. Additionally, there are a number of types of businesses that require a larger land area, or are otherwise of a nature that is not appropriate to the fine-grained character of downtown. Such uses would include gas stations, drive-through restaurants, and automobile sales, among others.

Traditionally, these general commercial areas have taken an automobile-centred approach to site design and layout, with little thought to safe and convenient access for pedestrians or cyclists. This includes large setbacks from the street, expansive parking lots, and a lack of sidewalks or other pedestrian connections. Council is also concerned about the aesthetic qualities of these areas, particularly because many of them are located along main roads into Queens' communities and act as a visitor's first impression of the area.

Policy 5-25: Council shall, in the Land Use Bylaw, establish the General Commercial Zone. This zone is intended to enable and accommodate a wide range of commercial services.

Policy 5-26: The General Commercial Zone shall permit a wide range of commercial and institutional uses at a variety of scales. Residential uses shall be permitted, but shall only be located in buildings with commercial uses and shall be secondary to the commercial storefront. Zone standards shall be reflective of the larger nature of the commercial uses permitted in this zone.

Policy 5-27: New main commercial buildings in the General Commercial Zone shall only be permitted by site plan approval, with criteria aimed at improving aesthetics and walkability in these areas.

Policy 5-28: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the General Commercial Zone to areas intended for a wide range of commercial uses.

Policy 5-29: Council shall consider proposals for automobile body shops and recycling depots in the General Commercial Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.3.4 Liverpool Waterfront Zone

Liverpool's waterfront provides important public access to the Mersey River and is located immediately next to the busy downtown. Privateer Park hugs the actual waterfrontage, and provides a visitor centre, green space, picnic facilities, and a playground. As of 2021, large surface parking lots cover most of the land on the other side of Henry Hensey Drive.

While the waterfront is a cherished public space, it is also at risk from sea level rise due to its low elevation. In 2019 the Municipality commissioned the *Liverpool Coastal Flooding Mitigation Study* to review the extent of the risk, and provide options for engineering approaches to mitigate this risk. The Region also undertook the *Liverpool Waterfront Redevelopment Plan* study to explore urban design and public space options for this area.

Council recognizes that Liverpool's waterfront is an attractive location for recreation and for new commercial and residential uses. Importantly, Council believes that such uses should contribute to a lively and active waterfront. Council also recognizes the challenges posed by climate change and sea level rise for this particular area of Queens. The Liverpool Waterfront Zone reflects the special context of this area.

Policy 5-30: Council shall establish the Liverpool Waterfront Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to guide the development of the Liverpool Waterfront in a manner that enhances the quality of public and private spaces, while being mindful of, and adapting to, the risks of sea level rise.

Policy 5-31: The Liverpool Waterfront Zone shall permit a range of commercial, institutional, and higher density residential uses. Commercial uses shall be those that serve a higher volume of pedestrian traffic and that encourage lively streetscapes adjacent to their operations.

Policy 5-32: Land Use Bylaw zone standards for the Liverpool Waterfront Zone shall be flexible to promote a dense, fine-grained, walkable streetscape, with small minimum lot sizes and limited minimum setbacks.

Policy 5-33: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Liverpool Waterfront Zone to the Liverpool waterfront and adjacent areas, excepting those areas specifically set aside for parks uses.

5.3.5 Mixed-use Zone

There are many areas within Queens' serviced communities where the line is blurred between commercial and residential uses. This often occurs at the boundary between commercial and residential areas, or in communities that developed a traditional mix of uses long before land use planning was ever implemented. There are also areas that are currently residential in nature, but could reasonably shift to commercial in the future if the appropriate demand ever occurs.

Council believes all of these areas do not neatly fit in a purely residential zone or a purely commercial zone, and to put them in one would conflict with the very nature of these places. The Mixed-use Zone provides the transition between these two options.

Policy 5-34: Council shall establish the Mixed-use Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to recognize existing areas with a mix of residential and commercial uses, provide a transition between residential and commercial areas, and accommodate the future shift of some predominantly-residential areas to a more commercial nature.

Policy 5-35: The Mixed-use Zone shall permit a range of residential uses, and a limited range of lower-impact commercial and institutional uses. Proposals for multi-unit dwellings, grouped dwellings, and large boarding houses in the Mixed-use Zone shall only be considered by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4

Policy 5-36: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Mixed-use Zone to lands intended to feature a mix of residential and commercial uses.

5.3.6 Rezoning

There may be times that Council sees a need to adjust the boundaries of zones within the Serviced Commercial Designation, particularly at the edges of commercial areas. In such situations, Council may entertain amending the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5-37: Council shall consider proposals to rezone lands in the Serviced Commercial Designation to any other zone permitted in that designation, as identified by Policy 5-19. Council shall not approve such a rezoning unless Council is satisfied:

- (a) the proposed change is not prohibited by any other policy in this Plan;
- (b) the purpose of the proposed zone, as described in the respective policy creating that zone, is consistent with the location and characteristics of the lands and with the proposed use of the lands; and
- (c) the proposal meets the general criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw, set out in Policy 6-21.

5.4 Hamlet Designation

5.4.1 Hamlets

The urban serviced areas are the largest communities in Queens and contain many of the employment opportunities and services in the municipality. However, there are communities located throughout Queens characterized by a denser, semi-urban, often walkable development form; community facilities; and businesses that serve the local area and the travelling public. These hamlets are the hubs for their respective corners of the municipality. Many hamlets also feature fishing wharves, saw mills, or other such facilities serving resource-based industries.

Specific hamlet communities and broad hamlet policies are identified in more detail in Subsection 4.2.3.

Policy 5-38: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as “Hamlet” lands classified on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, as hamlet.

Policy 5-39: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Hamlet Designation:

- (a) Community and Institutions Zone
- (b) Conservation Zone
- (c) Fishing and Marine Zone
- (d) Hamlet Core Zone
- (e) Hamlet Residential Zone
- (f) Land Lease Residential Zone
- (g) Recreation and Open Space Zone

5.4.2 Hamlet Residential Zone

While hamlets provide many of the services and amenities for surrounding areas they are, by land area, primarily residential. This residential character is predominately lower in density and building scale, though in recent years some communities have seen the development of small multi-unit buildings, typically located near to beaches.

The hamlets of Queens have close historic ties to resource-based industries and a rural way of life, and many still feature these industries today. As a result, home businesses are common and activities such as small-scale agriculture and the keeping of livestock are valued and welcomed parts of the community fabric.

Policy 5-40: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Hamlet Residential Zone. This zone is intended to promote the lower density residential neighbourhoods in hamlets, with some limited opportunities for intensification and diversification of residential opportunities.

Policy 5-41: The Hamlet Residential Zone shall permit lower density residential uses and very small multi-unit and grouped dwellings, along with traditional rural home uses. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the semi-rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-42: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Hamlet Residential Zone to the residential areas outside the core of hamlets.

5.4.3 Hamlet Core Zone

As local service areas, hamlets provide a number of commercial services and community facilities that support surrounding communities. Many hamlets are also located near to beaches, cottage areas, or other attractive natural features and therefore host a variety of accommodations and other tourism uses. The core areas of these hamlets provide both the amenities and the opportunities for easy social connection that are essential to the sustainability of communities in Queens.

The core areas of hamlets are unique within the rural Queens context in that many of them feature a compact, walkable development pattern. Smaller lot sizes and buildings located closer to the street contribute to a “village” feel. These core areas also host a traditional mix of uses, with homes located immediately adjacent to small businesses such as restaurants, cafes, and small service businesses.

The cores of hamlets in Queens serve a variety of functions to different people. They are places to live full-time and raise a family, temporary homes during seasonal employment, locations for a vacation property, and a destination in which to downsize and retire. As a result, hamlets require a somewhat diverse supply of housing options. However, hamlets also feature a predominantly lower-density, semi-rural “feel”. Moderate-density housing options must be carefully designed to appropriately integrate into this context, with attention paid to building massing and orientation, landscape design, and building aesthetics. As a result, smaller multi-unit and grouped dwellings will be subject to the site plan approval process, while mid-sized developments and larger boarding houses will only be considered by development agreement.

There are a number of commercial-type uses that could provide important services in the cores of Queens’ hamlets but, if poorly designed, risk clashing with the character of the hamlet communities. Council, therefore, will only consider such uses with the additional oversight provided by the development agreement process.

Policy 5-43: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Hamlet Core Zone. This zone is intended to enable and promote a “village” centre in hamlets, providing a service and cultural hub for surrounding communities.

Policy 5-44: The Hamlet Core Zone shall permit lower density residential uses and small multi-unit and grouped dwellings, along with a variety of small commercial and service uses. Zone standards shall promote a compact, walkable core area for hamlets.

Policy 5-45: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Hamlet Core Zone to the core areas of hamlets.

Policy 5-46: Council shall consider proposals for mid-sized multi-unit and grouped dwellings and larger boarding houses in the Hamlet Core Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

Policy 5-47: Council shall consider proposals for animal shelters, kennels, automobile repair, automobile sales, automobile service, and recycling depots on lots larger than 10,000 square metres in the Hamlet Core Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.4.4 Rezoning

There may be times that Council sees a need to adjust the boundaries of zones within the Hamlet Designation. In such situations, Council may entertain amending the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5-48: Council shall consider proposals to rezone lands in the Hamlet Designation to any other zone permitted in that designation, as identified by Policy 5-39. Council shall not approve such a rezoning unless Council is satisfied:

- (a) the proposed change is not prohibited by any other policy in this Plan;
- (b) the purpose of the proposed zone, as described in the respective policy creating that zone, is consistent with the location and characteristics of the lands and with the proposed use of the lands; and
- (c) the proposal meets the general criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw, set out in Policy 6-21.

5.5 Rural Designation

5.5.1 Rural Designation

The vast majority of land area in Queens is rural. From dramatic coastal vistas to expansive inland forests and networks of lakes and rivers, the character of Queens is very much defined by these areas.

Development in Queens' rural areas is largely characterized by resource-based activities, low density residential development along the coast and major transportation routes, and seasonal and recreational (along with some permanent) residential development clustered around the lakes. Commercial activity is generally very low, limited to home businesses, local restaurants, or small stores offering basic necessities.

The Rural Designation provides the planning framework for guiding development in these rural areas.

Policy 5-49: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as "Rural" lands within the rural development area not designated for other purposes.

Policy 5-50: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Rural Designation:

- (a) Coastal Rural Zone
- (b) Community and Institutions Zone
- (c) Conservation Zone
- (d) Fishing and Marine Zone
- (e) Highway Commercial Zone
- (f) Inland Rural Zone
- (g) Land Lease Residential Zone
- (h) Recreation and Open Space Zone
- (i) Resort Zone
- (j) Rural Commercial Zone
- (k) Lakeshore Limited Development Zone
- (l) Lakeshore Residential Zone

5.5.2 Grouped Dwellings in Rural Zones

Grouped dwellings are a form of residential development in which multiple residential buildings are located on one lot. The development can be owned by one landowner with residential units rented out to individual households, or the land can be owned in common through mechanisms such as condominiums or cooperative housing trusts. In rural areas, this approach to residential development allows for the creation of semi-public services (shared septic systems, shared wells, share amenities, shared “roads”, etc.) while at the same time implementing an ownership structure that assigns responsibility for the long-term, sustainable upkeep of these services.

Grouped dwellings could, for example, be used to create cottage developments around lakes or “resort villages” in areas near to traditional resorts. Grouped dwellings can also allow for clustered housing development, in which the average density of the development is similar to a traditional subdivision, but houses are clustered closer together to leave much of the land undisturbed for recreation or conservation purposes. Council intends to allow this form of housing development in rural areas by development agreement.

Policy 5-51: Council shall consider grouped dwelling developments in the Inland Rural Zone, Coastal Rural Zone, Lakeshore Residential Zone, Resort Zone, and Rural Commercial Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4 and the implementation of a servicing plan to ensure shared services, such as septic and internal driveways, do not become the maintenance responsibility of the Municipality.

5.5.3 Inland Rural Zone

The bulk of the land area within Queens encompasses expansive forests with little development. Development, where it does occur, is typically located along major roads, such as Route 8, or in seasonal areas around the lakes. Much of this landscape has been logged multiple times over the centuries, supporting the forestry industry in Queens. Today, these areas are a mixture of active forestry, some agriculture, and wide variety of parks and protected areas.

The inland rural areas of Queens are very much “working landscapes”, where active resource activities are a common and expected occurrence.

Policy 5-52: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Inland Rural Zone. This zone is intended to support a “working landscape” of resource-based activities, wilderness recreation, and limited development along existing transportation routes.

Policy 5-53: The Inland Rural Zone shall permit lower density residential uses and very small multi-unit dwellings, along with a variety of community and rural resource uses, including more intensive resource uses such as intensive livestock operations (with appropriate controls to minimize impacts). Zone standards shall be in keeping with the rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-54: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, generally apply the Inland Rural Zone to rural areas north of Route 3 / Highway 103, with adjustments for areas south of these features that are located a significant distance from the coast.

5.5.4 Coastal Rural Zone

Queens features approximately 343 kilometres of coastline (including islands), and much of the rural development in the municipality is located within a few hundred metres of this coastline. These areas feature a unique blend of traditional resource-based communities and operations, tourism development, and homes of people who have moved to Queens to experience living on the coast.

As a result of this diverse mix, there is an especially strong requirement to balance the daily needs and expectations of a variety of interests, preserve the scenic rural quality of these areas, and protect one of the municipality’s most valuable assets: the coastal environment itself.

Policy 5-55: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Coastal Rural Zone. This zone is intended to preserve the coastal environment and scenic rural quality of the coast while accommodating a variety of rural and tourism activities.

Policy 5-56: The Coastal Rural Zone shall permit lower density residential uses and very small multi-unit dwellings, along with a variety of community and rural resource uses. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-57: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, generally apply the Coastal Rural Zone to rural areas between Route 3 / Highway 103 and the coast, with adjustments for areas a significant distance from the coast.

Policy 5-58: Council shall consider intensive livestock operations in the Coastal Rural Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.5.5 Lakeshore Zones

Rivers and lakes comprise over 37,000 hectares of area in Queens. Many of these lakes are located in western Queens and are only accessible by logging roads, if they are accessible at all. However, there are a number of lakes within eastern Queens—Molega and Ponhook being two notable examples—that are located near to the public road system. These lakes have, over the years, experienced significant residential development, primarily on private roads. While much of this development is for seasonal or recreational properties, these lakes also host many full-time residents. This past development has created two distinct landscapes around the lakes, consisting of established lakeshore communities and undeveloped lands that could potentially host future lakeshore communities.

The lakes are cherished features for their beauty and recreational value, and play an important role in Mi'kmaq heritage and culture. They also provide habitat to many of the Species at Risk that can be found in Queens. A sustainable future for Queens depends on both providing access so that these exceptional natural features may be experienced, and on protecting these features from overdevelopment that would threaten the very qualities that attract people in the first place.

Given their beauty and recreational value, the lakes of Queens are attractive locations for outdoor tourism-type developments such as fishing lodges or campgrounds. However, such developments can be larger in nature and risk impacting the quality of the lakes and the habitats they provide. As a result, Council will only consider such uses with the additional oversight provided by the development agreement process.

Policy 5-59: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Lakeshore Limited Development Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate existing residential communities around the lakes of Queens, while allowing for a limited degree of continued development in these areas.

Policy 5-60: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Lakeshore Residential Zone. This zone is intended to provide development opportunities around the accessible lakes in Queens, while limiting the density of development and scope of permitted uses so as to limit risks to the health of the lake environments.

Policy 5-61: The Lakeshore Limited Development Zone shall permit a very limited range of residential and recreational uses. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-62: The Lakeshore Residential Zone shall permit a limited range of residential and recreational uses. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-63: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Lakeshore Limited Development Zone to areas of land that were previously zoned Seasonal Residential (R7) in the 2009 planning documents. No new areas shall be zoned Lakeshore Limited Development without an amendment to this Plan.

Policy 5-64: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Lakeshore Residential Zone to areas within approximately 300 metres of lakes located near to transportation routes that are not already zoned Lakeshore Limited Development.

Policy 5-65: Council shall consider proposals for accommodations and campgrounds in the Lakeshore Residential Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.5.6 Resort Zone

Beautiful landscapes and access to the ocean make Queens an attractive location for vacation resorts and associated residential developments. As a result, resort activities have been a part of Queens' history, culture, and economy for over 100 years.

Such developments often break from traditional rural development by featuring higher development densities and an array of supportive amenities (such as restaurants and spas). Resort developments may also feature their own central services, such as shared wastewater disposal.

Policy 5-66: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Resort Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate resort developments, their unique mix of uses, and specific infrastructure requirements.

Policy 5-67: The Resort Zone shall permit residential and accommodations uses, as well as a range of supportive commercial, community, and recreational amenities. Zone standards shall generally be reflective of the rural nature of these areas, but may include standards for serviced lots for resort developments that provide central wastewater collection.

Policy 5-68: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Resort Zone to areas in the community of White Point and on Port Mouton Island.

Policy 5-69: Council shall consider proposals for Extended Care Facilities, Multi-unit Dwellings, Nursing Homes, and Residential Care Facilities in the Resort Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.5.7 Rural Commercial Zone

Generally, most commercial services in Queens are located in hamlets and the urban serviced areas. Council intends to promote this general arrangement. However, there are still situations in which commercial services are needed and appropriate in rural areas, including accommodations and restaurants near to attractive natural features, local commercial services for smaller communities, and services that support resource and recreational activities.

The Rural Commercial Zone provides the opportunity to develop these essential rural commercial services.

There are a number of more intensive commercial uses that could be appropriate to the Rural Commercial Zone but, if poorly designed, risk impacting surrounding uses. Council, therefore, will only consider such uses with the additional oversight provided by the development agreement process.

Policy 5-70: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Rural Commercial Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate a wide range of commercial services serving local communities, recreational sites, and resource industries.

Policy 5-71: The Rural Commercial Zone shall permit a wide range of smaller-scale commercial uses as well as the spread of residential and community uses permitted in rural residential zones. Zone standards shall be in keeping with the rural nature of these areas.

Policy 5-72: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Rural Commercial Zone to existing rural businesses.

Policy 5-73: Council shall consider proposals for animal shelters, kennels, automobile body shops, and recycling depots on lots larger than 10,000 square metres in the Rural Commercial Zone by development agreement, subject to the policies of Section 6.4.

5.5.8 Rezoning

There may be times that Council sees a need to adjust the boundaries of zones within the Rural Designation. In such situations, Council may entertain amending the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5-74: Council shall consider proposals to rezone lands in the Rural Designation to any other zone permitted in that designation, as identified by Policy 5-50. Council shall not approve such a rezoning unless Council is satisfied:

- (a) the proposed change is not prohibited by any other policy in this Plan;
- (b) the purpose of the proposed zone, as described in the respective policy creating that zone, is consistent with the location and characteristics of the lands and with the proposed use of the lands; and
- (c) the proposal meets the general criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw, set out in Policy 6-21.

5.6 Industrial Designation

5.6.1 Industrial Designation

Queens has a long history of processing activities related to resource industries—such as saw mills—as well as a variety of value-added manufacturing operations. While these industries have declined in scope in recent decades, they still remain an important part of Queens’ economy and culture.

In recent years the Province has been investing in improvements to the 100-series highways, including twinning the 103 to Hubbards, at the western end of Halifax County, and improvements to alignments, lane widths, and intersections between Hubbards and Port Joli. These upgrades improve travel times and safety between the South Shore and the major transportation links present in the Halifax area, raising the viability of sites in Queens for large business operations.

In many locations in Queens, communities were formed or flourished as a result of a single, large industrial operator. In these communities, the industrial use is a long-standing, welcomed neighbour and a core part of the community’s culture. At the same time, new industrial uses or an expansion of existing uses can raise concerns about impacts on neighbours, such as noise, smells, heavy-vehicle traffic, and pollution.

Looking towards a sustainable future, Council intends to accommodate existing industrial uses. Council also intends to provide a ready supply of appropriately-zoned land to direct new uses to areas where impacts on adjacent uses can be minimized.

Policy 5-75: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as “Industrial” lands intended to prioritize industrial uses.

Policy 5-76: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Hamlet Designation:

- (a) Business Park Zone
- (b) Community and Institutions Zone
- (c) Conservation Zone
- (d) Fishing and Marine Zone
- (e) Heavy Industrial Zone
- (f) Highway Commercial Zone
- (g) Recreation and Open Space Zone

5.6.2 Business Park Zone

There are many employment uses that require larger buildings and outdoor storage areas, road networks built for trucks, and access to suppliers or other supportive businesses. However, these uses do not necessarily have noise or odour impacts on surrounding areas, particularly in an era of modern manufacturing methods. There are also a number of larger, industry-specific retail or wholesale operations that do not require the drive-by traffic of a commercial area. These might include things like plumbing supply operations, specialty fittings or equipment, and more.

While these uses are important to the functioning of a sustainable local economy, they are not typically attractive and related truck traffic can be a hazard for other road users.

The Business Park Zone is intended to accommodate the types of uses that depend on larger areas of land and truck-related infrastructure, but do not necessarily have the heavy impacts of true industrial uses.

Council has chosen to be proactive in the siting of new business park uses, and in addition to zoning existing such uses has “pre-zoned” lands near to major transportation connections, where such uses will be directed.

Policy 5-77: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Business Park Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate larger but non-obnoxious commercial and industrial uses.

Policy 5-78: The Business Park Zone shall permit contained, non-obnoxious industrial uses; industry-specific retail sales; logistics and shipping uses; and related commercial activities. Zone standards shall be moderate to accommodate the larger nature of uses in this zone.

Policy 5-79: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Business Park Zone to existing business park uses and to areas intended to capture business park expansion.

5.6.3 Heavy Industrial Zone

Queens has a long history of intensive industrial operations, particularly tied to the forestry and utility industries. Many of these operations continue to operate while others, such as the former Bowater Mersey mill, have been repurposed for new opportunities.

These facilities are an important part of the Queens economy and way of life. Many such facilities are also essential to the modern amenities we all enjoy; roads cannot be built without processed aggregate and homes are difficult to build without processed lumber.

However, these are also the types of facilities with perhaps the largest potential for impact to the environment and to neighbouring uses. A heavy industrial use's impact on the land does not usually disappear once the use ceases. Waste stockpiles, chemical contamination, and infrastructure can persist long after a business closes, particularly for facilities that closed prior to modern environmental responsibility and cleanup laws. New uses, such as homes or commercial areas, should not be encouraged to locate in these areas until past activities are cleaned up.

Council intends to accommodate existing heavy industrial sites and identify known former sites through the application of the Heavy Industrial Zone. Council has also identified an area of former Bowater Mersey land in Brooklyn for possible future facilities if the need arises. Additional heavy industrial lands will only be considered through the due process of an amendment to the zoning map or, if necessary, an amendment to this Plan.

Policy 5-80: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, create the Heavy Industrial Zone. This zone is intended to accommodate and guide the development of uses with a potential for high impacts to the natural environment and neighbouring uses.

Policy 5-81: The Heavy Industrial Zone shall permit a wide range of high-impact land uses and accessory commercial uses (showroom retail sales of manufactured products, *etc.*). Zone standards shall be strict in order to minimize impacts on neighbouring uses.

Policy 5-82: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, initially apply the Heavy Industrial Zone to the lands of high-impact uses, existing or former, and to areas intended to capture industrial expansion.

5.6.4 Rezoning

There may be times that Council sees a need to adjust the boundaries of zones within the Industrial Designation. In such situations, Council may entertain amending the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw.

Policy 5-83: Council shall consider proposals to rezone lands in the Industrial Designation to any other zone permitted in that designation, as identified by Policy 5-76. Council shall not approve such a rezoning unless Council is satisfied:

- (a) the proposed change is not prohibited by any other policy in this Plan;
- (b) the purpose of the proposed zone, as described in the respective policy creating that zone, is consistent with the location and characteristics of the lands and with the proposed use of the lands;
- (c) if the proposed zone is Heavy Industrial, particular attention is paid to potential impacts on neighbouring uses and the environment; and
- (d) the proposal meets the general criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw, set out in Policy 6-21.

5.7 Conservation Designation

5.7.1 Conservation Designation

The varied landscapes of Queens are home to many natural features with important conservation value. These include large wetlands, sensitive coastal habitat, wilderness areas, beaches, and nature reserves, among others. While many of these features are protected by other legislation or by ownership, it is important to communicate the value these lands (and wet areas) have for a sustainable future in Queens. As a result, Council has established the Conservation Designation to apply to these areas.

Policy 5-84: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as “Conservation” lands with important conservation value such as, but not limited to, large wetlands, beaches, and designated protected areas.

Policy 5-85: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, permit the following zones within the Conservation Designation:

- (a) Conservation Zone

5.7.2 Conservation Zone

Council has created the Conservation Zone in order to implement the intent of the Conservation Designation. This zone will be very limited in the types of uses it permits, with the goal of minimizing disturbance and protecting these lands for generations to come.

Policy 5-86: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish the Conservation Zone. This zone is intended to protect important conservation lands from disturbance.

Policy 5-87: Uses permitted in the Conservation Zone shall be limited to low-impact recreational uses and to scientific research of the conservation lands.

Policy 5-88: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Conservation Zone to all lands within the Conservation Designation.

5.7.3 Rezoning

The Conservation Designation is intended to identify and protect, in perpetuity, lands with important conservation value. As a result, Council does not intend to zone these lands for any other type of use. Adjusting these boundaries should be considered a major undertaking requiring an amendment to this Plan.

Policy 5-89: Council shall not amend the map of the Land Use Bylaw to zone lands within the Conservation Designation as anything other than the Conservation Zone.

5.8 Watershed Designation

5.8.1 Watershed Designation

A clean source of drinking water is an essential component of healthy communities. Many residents within Queens source their water from on-site wells. However, Liverpool and parts of Brooklyn have a central water supply. They rely on Town Lake, to the southwest of Liverpool. The treatment plant is located adjacent to the lake, and provides water to a service area from a gravity-based head at a service pressure of 40 psi below an elevation of 30 metres.

The Region is in the fortunate position of owning the large majority of the land within the Town Lake Watershed. The public water supply is therefore primarily protected by the Town's ability to tightly control what happens on these lands. The Watershed Designation emphasizes this protection.

Policy 5-90: Council shall, on Schedule B, the Future Land Use Map, designate as Watershed all lands within the Town Lake watershed.

5.8.2 Watershed Zone

Policy 5-91: Council shall establish the Watershed Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. This zone is intended to protect the municipal water supply by restricting the type and intensity of land uses permitted.

Policy 5-92: Council shall, on the zoning map of the Land Use Bylaw, apply the Watershed Zone to all lands within the Watershed Designation.

5.8.3 Rezoning

In light of the importance of protecting the municipal water supply, Council believes that adjustments to reduce the area of the Watershed Zone should only occur in conjunction with a detailed review of water recharge areas and contamination risk, conducted by the appropriate professional. Such a study would occur in conjunction with an amendment to this Plan to redraw the extent of the Watershed Designation.

Policy 5-93: Council shall not amend the map of the Land Use Bylaw to zone lands within the Watershed Designation as anything other than the Watershed Zone.

Chapter 5 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

6 IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

6.1 Administration

6.1.1 Context

This Municipal Planning Strategy is a policy document that sets out the vision, goals, and policies for development and land use in the Region of Queens Municipality. This Plan and its associated Bylaws are enabled by, and are consistent with, Parts 8 and 9 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

6.1.2 Document Administration

This document and the Land Use Bylaw are structured for easy reference and to easily track changes over time. The text below outlines the structure for referencing differing elements of this Plan:

- 1 – Chapter
- 1.1 – Section
- 1.1.1 – Subsection
- 1.1.1 (a) – Clause
- 1.1.1 (a) (i) – Subclause

When amending this Plan or the text of the Land Use Bylaw, the Region will use the following practices:

- The date, general nature of the change, and reference file or project will be noted in the changelog at the end of each Chapter.
- Each record in the changelog will be given a reference number prefaced with the letters, “CHG”.
- Deleted text will be replaced with the text, “DELETED” and the reference number for the appropriate record in the changelog. Subsequent text will not be renumbered.
- Additions or substitutions will be bolded with the reference number for the appropriate record in the changelog following in brackets.
- If additions would normally require the renumbering of following text, the “highway interchange” system will instead be used. A capital letter will be added to the numbering to differentiate the new text from the previous numbering. For example, Subsection 1.1.2A would be used between Subsections 1.1.2 and 1.1.3.

6.1.3 Policy Statements

Policy statements of Council are separate from the above document structure and are denoted by the text, “POLICY #-#”. All contents of this Plan not contained within a Policy are considered preamble, and may be used to help interpret the intent of Policy statements if the statements are found to be ambiguous or unclear.

Policy 6-1: Official Council Policies are denoted in this Plan by the text, “POLICY #-#”, with the number signs replaced by the appropriate policy number.

6.1.4 Language

The policies of this Plan are written to be as clear and precise as possible. As a result, some words have specific, defined meanings.

Policy 6-2: In this Plan, the word “shall” takes the imperative, and indicates a duty to act. The word “may” takes the permissive, and indicates permission to act.

6.1.5 Effective Date

Policy 6-3: This Municipal Planning Strategy and implementing Land Use Bylaw shall come into effect on the date that a notice is published in a newspaper, circulating in the Municipality, informing the public that the planning documents are in effect.

6.2 Regional Cooperation

6.2.1 Consultation with Adjacent Municipalities

This Municipal Planning Strategy and its associated Bylaws apply only to lands within the Region of Queens Municipality. However, activities that occur within the Region have the potential to affect adjacent municipalities. This may be direct, such as the generation of traffic or trespass of noise or odours across borders. It may also be indirect, such as through effects on the market for various types of development in neighbouring areas.

Council believes that it is important to consider the input of adjacent municipalities when considering amendments to this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Policy 6-4: Council shall consult with adjacent municipalities when:

- (a) adopting a new Municipal Planning Strategy to replace this one; and
- (b) when considering amendments to this Municipal Planning Strategy that would affect lands abutting an adjacent municipality or municipalities.

6.3 Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw

6.3.1 Adoption

The land use policies in this Municipal Planning Strategy are implemented through a Land Use Bylaw. This Bylaw sets out zones, the permitted uses for each zone, development standards for each zone and/or for certain types of uses, and the uses and circumstances for development by development agreement and site plan approval. In doing this, the Bylaw reflects the policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy. Council approves the Land Use Bylaw at the same time this Plan is approved.

The Subdivision Bylaw is another tool used by Council to implement this Plan. It sets out the requirements and processes for such things as subdividing land, creating streets, and providing recreational lands.

The Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw are administered by a Development Officer appointed by the Region of Queens Municipality. The Development Officer is responsible for issuing development permits in accordance with the Bylaw.

Policy 6-5: Council shall adopt a Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw consistent with the intent of this Plan.

Policy 6-6: Council shall appoint one or more Development Officers to administer the Land Use Bylaw and the Subdivision Bylaw and to issue and deny permits under the terms of these Bylaws.

Policy 6-7: The Subdivision Bylaw shall:

- (a) apply to the whole of the Municipality;
- (b) ensure that any subdivision, with the exception of lots created using the variance provisions of Part 9 of the *Municipal Government Act*, conforms with the lot requirements contained in the Land Use Bylaw;
- (c) establish locations and standards for the development of public and private roads, central services, and other publicly owned infrastructure;
- (d) contain provisions intended to ensure that lots are suitable for onsite sewage disposal where there is no central sewer system;
- (e) contain provisions for dedicating land or an equivalent value for park, playground, and similar public purposes;
- (f) ensure the applicable requirements of the Provincial Subdivision Regulations are in effect; and
- (g) contain any other provisions needed to fulfill the intent of this Plan.

6.3.2 Variances

Section 235 of the *Municipal Government Act* gives the Development Officer the power to grant “variances” from the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw. The Act sets out the circumstances when such variances may be granted, the Land Use Bylaw provisions for which variances may be granted, and the process for granting such variances.

Policy 6-8: Council shall, in accordance with Section 235 of the *Municipal Government Act*, permit the Development Officer to vary:

- (a) the percentage of land that may be built upon;
- (b) the size or other requirements relating to setbacks;
- (c) lot frontage;
- (d) lot area;
- (e) location and number of parking spaces and loading spaces required;
- (f) ground area of a structure;
- (g) height of a structure;
- (h) floor area occupied by a home-based business; and/or
- (i) height and area of a sign.

6.3.3 Amending the Land Use Bylaw

Council recognizes it cannot foresee all possible types of development that might be acceptable in the municipality in general, or on a specific piece of land. As such, there will be times when the Land Use Bylaw needs to be amended to accommodate a new development trend or specific development proposal.

Council also recognizes that it is possible to inadvertently make mapping errors in preparing the maps that accompanying this Plan and the Land Use Bylaw. Such errors do not reflect the policies in this Plan and thus will be corrected by Bylaw amendments.

Policy 6-9: Council shall amend the text of the Land Use Bylaw if the proposed amendment meets the general criteria set out in Policy 6-21.

Policy 6-10: Council shall consider amendments to the map of the Land Use Bylaw when the proposed zoning change is not specifically prohibited within this Plan and at least one of the following three conditions is true:

- (a) the proposed zone is enabled by this Plan for use within the same designation;
- (b) a non-conforming use appears to have been created by an inadvertent administrative oversight in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw preparation process, resulting in a property being zoned inconsistent with stated policies in this Plan; or
- (c) notwithstanding the zones permitted within a designation, the land to be rezoned is under 5 hectares in area and is adjacent to a designation that permits the proposed zone. For clarity, land that abuts a right-of-way, such as a street, is considered to be adjacent to the designation on the other side of the right-of-way.

Policy 6-11: Council shall not amend the map of the Land Use Bylaw if the lot and existing buildings do not meet the requirements of the proposed zone.

Policy 6-12: Council shall not amend the map of the Land Use Bylaw unless Council is satisfied that:

- (a) the proposal meets any applicable zone placement criteria set out in policies, elsewhere in this Plan, applicable to the proposed zone; and
- (b) the proposed zone and the uses it permits meet the general criteria set out in Policy 6-21.

6.4 Development Agreements

6.4.1 Context

A development agreement is a written legal agreement between Council and a property owner. It “runs with the land”; hence, the terms of the agreement do not cease if the land is sold or if the property owner dies.

The development agreement is a mechanism through which Council can oversee the implementation of a development proposal that would not otherwise be permitted by the standards established in the applicable zone. This can allow a proposal to better fit the specific constraints or opportunities provided by a site.

A development agreement allows or limits the development to the use or types of uses actually proposed and outlined in the agreement. This allows Council to have a finer-grained level of control over the proposed development, and to implement specific measures to mitigate potential impacts. To change the development to another use that is not listed in the development agreement would require an amendment to the agreement, which would be evaluated against the policies in this Plan.

In accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the types of development that may be considered by a development agreement must be clearly identified in the Plan.

6.4.2 Adopting and Amending Development Agreements

Policy 6-13: Council shall consider entering into a new development agreement where such an agreement is enabled by policies elsewhere in this Plan. Where Council approves a development agreement, the development agreement shall:

- (a) specify the development, expansion, alteration, or change permitted;
- (b) specify the conditions under which the development may occur; and
- (c) set terms by which Council may amend or terminate and discharge the agreement.

Policy 6-14: Council shall not approve or amend a development agreement unless Council is satisfied the proposed agreement is consistent with the enabling policy and the general criteria set out in Policy 6-21.

Policy 6-15: Council may specify conditions in the development agreement to bring the proposal into alignment with the enabling policy and the general criteria set out in Policy 6-21. Such conditions may include, but are not limited to, controls regarding:

- (a) servicing;
- (b) the type, location, and orientation of structures;
- (c) the architectural design of structures, including, but not limited to, bulk, scale, height, roof shape, building and cladding materials, and the shape and size and placement of doors and windows;
- (d) the provision of open space and amenities;
- (e) the type, size, and location of signage;
- (f) the type and orientation of exterior lighting;
- (g) management of solid waste, compost, and recycling;
- (h) pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation;
- (i) connections to existing or planned pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular networks;
- (j) the location and number of bicycle and vehicular parking and loading spaces;
- (k) access for emergency vehicles;
- (l) the location and type of landscaping, including fences and other forms of screening;
- (m) stormwater management;
- (n) grading and erosion control;
- (o) the emission of noise, odour, light, liquids, gases, and dust;
- (p) the type of materials stored and/or sold on site;
- (q) hours of operation;
- (r) the phasing of development;
- (s) financial bonding for the construction and maintenance of components of the development, including, but not limited to, roads and landscaping;
- (t) mitigation measures for construction impacts;
- (u) time limits for the initiation and/or completion of development; and
- (v) all other matters enabled in Section 227 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

6.4.3 Legacy Development Agreements

There are a number of development agreements in Queens that were adopted prior to this Plan. These agreements are legal contracts that continue to remain in force subject to the terms outlined in the agreement. However, the policies under which these agreements were considered are often no longer in force, so evaluating any proposed amendments to these agreements can be challenging.

Council intends to conduct a comprehensive review of existing development agreements to determine if they can be discharged or possibly brought into alignment with this Plan. Pending this review, amendments to existing development agreements will be governed by the following policies:

Policy 6-16: Council shall consider non-substantive amendments to development agreements adopted prior to [adoption date], 2021 subject to the criteria for non-substantive amendments outlined in the particular development agreement and subject to Policy 6-21 of this Plan.

Policy 6-17: Council shall only consider substantive amendments to development agreements adopted prior to [adoption date], 2021 if the proposal is specifically enabled by, and is consistent with, a policy of this Plan.

6.4.4 Development Agreements Instead of Map Amendments

Occasionally a land owner will seek to rezone their land to permit a specific proposal that is a smaller scale or less intensive use than the full range of intensity and uses the proposed zone would allow. For example, a land owner may request a zone for a small multi-unit residential development, even though the proposed zone would permit a larger multi-unit development. However, once the zoning is approved there are no controls to limit development on the site to anything other than the maximum permitted by the zone. This can create a situation where the community is not concerned about the specific proposal, but is concerned about the potential for maximum development on the site. In such a situation, the land owner may voluntarily opt to use a development agreement to limit development rights to the scale and intensity of the specific proposal.

Policy 6-18: Council may enter into a development agreement for a specific proposal in lieu of amending the map of the Land Use Bylaw to accommodate that proposal. Council shall not approve the development agreement unless Council is satisfied that:

- (a) a zone exists that could accommodate the proposal and the placement of that zone on the proposed site would meet the requirements for amending the map of the Land Use Bylaw set out in Policy 6-10; and
- (b) the proposal is consistent with the general criteria set out in Policy 6-21.

6.5 Site Plan Agreements

6.5.1 Site Plan Agreements

Site plan approval is a development approval process in which applicants must meet an additional set of criteria set out in the Land Use Bylaw. Unlike standard development permitting, these criteria are not necessarily numerical in nature, and can involve a negotiation between the applicant and the Development Officer to determine compliance with these criteria. The final outcome of site plan approval is a site plan agreement. This tool is useful for approvals that might require an additional level of oversight or flexibility in the ways impacts on neighbours are reduced, but that do not necessarily need to go through the complex and time-consuming process required for a development agreement.

Policy 6-19: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, use site plan approval as the tool for reviewing developments that require some additional oversight or where there is benefit to providing flexibility in the ways land use controls are implemented.

Policy 6-20: Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, establish a notification area for site plan agreements of 30 metres in areas classified on Schedule A, the Community Classification map, as Urban Serviced Area and 60 metres elsewhere.

6.6 General Criteria

6.6.1 Amending the Land Use Bylaw & Adopting Development Agreements

Amendments to the Land Use Bylaw and the adoption of development agreements are processes that require careful thought. As such, Council has established a set of general criteria to consider when evaluating all Land Use Bylaw amendments and development agreement proposals.

Policy 6-21: Council shall not amend the Land Use Bylaw or approve a development agreement unless Council is satisfied the proposal:

- (a) is consistent with the intent of this Municipal Planning Strategy;
- (b) does not conflict with any Municipal or Provincial programs, bylaws, or regulations in effect in the municipality;
- (c) is not premature or inappropriate due to:
 - (i) the ability of the Municipality to absorb public costs related to the proposal;
 - (ii) impacts on existing drinking water supplies, both private and public;
 - (iii) the adequacy of central water and sewage services or, where such services are not available, the suitability of the site to accommodate on-site water and sewage services;
 - (iv) the creation of excessive traffic hazards or congestion on road, cycling, and pedestrian networks within, adjacent to, or leading to the proposal;
 - (v) the adequacy of fire protection services and equipment;
 - (vi) the adequacy and proximity of schools and other community facilities;
 - (vii) the creation of a new, or worsening of a known, pollution problem in the area, including, but not limited to, soil erosion and siltation of watercourses;
 - (viii) site-specific climate change risks;

- (ix) the potential to create flooding or serious drainage issues, including within the proposal site and in nearby areas;
- (x) impacts on known habitat for species at risk;
- (xi) light pollution and impacts on dark sky views, especially in the vicinity of the Kejimikujik Dark-Sky Preserve;
- (xii) the suitability of the site in terms of grades, soil and geological conditions, the location of watercourses and wetlands, and proximity to utility rights-of-way; and
- (xiii) negative impacts on the viability of existing businesses in the surrounding community, including, but not limited to, the risk of land use conflicts that could place limits on existing operational procedures.

Policy 6-22: Council may, in addition to any other required information, require any or all of the following information, prepared by an appropriate qualified professional at the applicant's cost, and at a level sufficiently detailed to determine whether the criteria for amending the Land Use Bylaw or adopting a development agreement have been met:

- (a) a detailed site plan showing features such as, but not limited to:
 - (i) topography;
 - (ii) location and dimensions of existing and proposed property and/or unit lines;
 - (iii) location of zoning boundaries;
 - (iv) use, location, and dimensions of existing and proposed structures;
 - (v) existing and proposed watercourses and wetlands;
 - (vi) location of minimum coastal elevation;
 - (vii) location and dimensions of existing and proposed road, bicycle, and pedestrian networks;
 - (viii) location and dimensions of driveways, parking lots, and parking spaces;
 - (ix) type and amount of site clearing required, if any;
 - (x) location of buffers;

- (xi) location and dimensions of existing and proposed parks and recreation lands, whether public or private;
- (xii) location of utilities;
- (xiii) development densities;
- (b) elevation drawings of existing and proposed structures including, but not limited to, dimensions and exterior materials;
- (c) a site grading plan;
- (d) a landscaping plan;
- (e) a drainage and stormwater management plan;
- (f) a hydrological assessment to determine groundwater resource volumes, availability, quality, and sustainability pre- and post-development;
- (g) a traffic impact assessment that evaluates the ability of existing road, bicycle, and pedestrian networks to accommodate traffic generated by the proposed development;
- (h) a geotechnical study;
- (i) environmental studies, including, but not limited to, studies addressing Species at Risk, climate change, and environmental contamination;
- (j) a shadow study;
- (k) a wind study;
- (l) a vibration study; and
- (m) a noise study.

6.7 Notification

Policy 6-23: Where Council has given notice of its intent to adopt an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw that is not general in nature but is in direct response to a specific development proposal, or Council has given notice of its intent to adopt a development agreement, notification of the amendment or development agreement shall be served upon all assessed property owners as follows:

- (a) Within the Urban Serviced Area, as identified on Schedule 'A' of this Plan, notice shall be served on all properties that lie within 30 metres of the property that is subject to the proposed amendment or development agreement.

- (b) Within Hamlets or Rural Development Areas, as identified on Schedule 'A' of this Plan, notice shall be served on all properties that lie within 60 metres of the property that is subject to the proposed amendment or development agreement.

Policy 6-24: Notification of a development agreement or amendment to the Land Use Bylaw shall:

- (a) outline the proposed amendment or development agreement;
- (b) identify the property(s) subject to the proposed amendment or development agreement; and
- (c) state the time, date and place of a public hearing regarding the proposed amendment or development agreement.

6.8 Monitoring, Reviewing, and Updating this Plan

6.8.1 Plan Updates

Good plans are not set in stone. While every effort has been made to be thorough in the preparation of this Municipal Planning Strategy, things can change. The assumptions under which this plan was made, the technologies and land use issues of the day, and the values of community members will all change over time. This Plan must be monitored and periodically reviewed and updated to remain effective.

Policy 6-25: Council shall initiate a housekeeping review of this Plan at least once every two years from the completion of the previous review. The intent of this review is to identify errors, omissions, or ways to streamline the Plan; and to update Chapter 7, Investing in the Future.

Policy 6-26: Council shall initiate an interim review of this Plan at least once every five years from the completion of the previous review. The intent of this review is to identify emerging policy issues and gaps in the Plan, and adopt new or modified Plan policies to address these issues and gaps.

Policy 6-27: Council shall initiate a comprehensive review of this Plan within ten years of adopting this Plan. The intent of this review is to conduct extensive public consultation, review the Vision and Goals of the Plan, and update or replace components of the Plan as necessary to support the new Vision and Goals.

6.8.2 Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments

This Municipal Planning Strategy may be amended from time to time; it is not necessary to wait for a formal review. The amendment process involves such things as public participation, notification of adjacent municipalities and the Provincial Director of Planning, newspaper notices of the intention to amend, a public hearing, and the approval of the Province. The specific process is set out in the *Municipal Government Act*. Council may initiate an amendment arising from an internally-identified need, or from a request from a member of the public. However, Council is under no obligation to approve a Plan amendment unless the current Plan conflicts with the *Municipal Government Act*.

Policy 6-28: Council shall consider an amendment to this Municipal Planning Strategy when:

- (a) any policy intent is to be changed;
- (b) a zoning amendment is in conflict with this Plan and there are valid reasons for the amendment;
- (c) incorporation of a detailed secondary area strategy into this Plan is desired; or
- (d) when this Municipal Planning Strategy is inconsistent with Statements of Provincial Interest.

Policy 6-29: Council shall, when considering amendments to this Municipal Planning Strategy, have regard for any applicable “Sustainable Planning Values” identified in this Municipal Planning Strategy.

Chapter 6 Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change

7 INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

This Plan, and its supporting Land Use Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw, primarily deal with land use. However, the analysis and public consultation that happen as part of the process of developing a land use plan often identify various other programs, policies, and infrastructure that could support planning goals. This Chapter lists these identified initiatives. **This list is not intended as a detailed or mandatory work plan for the Region, but rather as an aspirational list to help direct the Region’s efforts over the coming years. Projects are not listed or ranked by any sort of priority.**

Project	Description / Rationale
Active Transportation Plan	Effective promotion of active transportation depends on taking a strategic approach to network design, amenities, wayfinding, and programs. An active transportation plan could provide the strategic priorities for Queens. These documents can also be used to seek provincial investment in active transportation infrastructure (such as paved shoulders during provincial road repaving).
Agricultural Lands Identification	Queens has very little land that would be classed as “agricultural” based on soil mapping. However, agriculture nonetheless exists and is an important component of the culture and local economy, particularly in North Queens. An agricultural lands identification project would seek to identify lands that have agricultural value based on factors other than soil classification alone and, if necessary, amend these planning documents to provide adequate protection to those lands.

Arts and Culture Plan	Queens has a strong arts and culture community and industry. An arts and culture plan could explore ways in which the Region could support the arts and culture community, and promote the industry to attract visitors and newcomers to the area.
Coastal Lands Monitoring Program	In Nova Scotia there is little data on site-specific erosion rates, which makes it difficult to set coastal development regulations that reflect the local context. A coastal lands monitoring program could, over a number of years, monitor erosion along the coast of Queens and develop annual average erosion rates.
Dark Sky Program	Queens is home to Kejimkujik, a recognized Dark Sky Preserve. Even outside of Kejimkujik, Queens features exceptional dark skies with limited impacts from light pollution. A dark sky program could help protect these dark skies by educating property owners about light pollution, and providing incentives for the use of lighting fixtures that minimize light pollution.

Density Bonus Study	The Province, in 2020, implemented amendments to the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> that allow municipalities throughout Nova Scotia to utilize density bonusing as a planning tool. However, successful use of this tool depends on a transparent system for establishing the value of development to be traded for public benefit, and a thoughtful administrative process for ensuring the public benefit is implemented. These frameworks should be established through a thorough density bonus study before using this tool.
Downtown Enhancement Program	Downtowns are the heart of urban communities in Queens, and they are often the areas visited by tourists. A downtown enhancement program could help identify priority areas for infrastructure investments (sidewalks, benches, lighting, plantings, and other amenities), as well as provide additional support for upgrades of store fronts.
Heritage Identification Plan	The Region is home to an abundance of heritage buildings and landscapes, but only 14 sites are formally registered as heritage properties. A heritage identification plan could help highlight potential candidates for registration, as well as additional incentives that could be offered for owners of registered heritage properties.

<p>Living Shorelines Policy and Program</p>	<p>The Municipality does not have regulatory control over shoreline armoring. However, the Municipality does own coastal infrastructure. A living shorelines policy could identify criteria for when natural methods of infrastructure protection would be used over traditional armoring. The Municipality could also help encourage private land owners to use “living shoreline” approaches through education and/or financial assistance.</p>
<p>Parks and Open Space Plan</p>	<p>The Region has ample parks and open space lands, but they are not always located in areas where they are useful, and many lands are undeveloped or underdeveloped. A parks and open space plan could provide strategic direction for the acquisition of new parks and open space lands—through subdivision, tax sale properties, or outright purchase—the sale of unneeded lands, and investment in existing lands.</p>

Review Existing Development Agreements	Over the years the Region entered development agreements to enable a variety of developments. These are legal contracts and do not automatically disappear when planning policies change. Some of these development agreements may no longer be relevant (e.g. the proposed development never materialized), or may be redundant with the approval of this Plan. A development agreement review would identify agreements that can be discharged, thereby streamlining administration and reducing the risk of future challenges from development agreements that were long forgotten.
Rural Internet Program	High-speed internet is nearing status as an essential service for modern life, and is a key component in attracting and retaining businesses. However, many areas of Queens lack reliable, high-speed internet. The Region has begun the process of rolling out rural internet in a series of three phases. Continuation and completion of this program will expand access to high-speed internet for these areas.
Short-term Rental Policy	Short-term rental accommodations are growing in popularity and visibility around the world. A short-term rental policy could explore, in more depth, the benefits and challenges of this industry and potential approaches to minimizing challenges, such as licensing programs.

SCHEDULES

Schedule 'A' - Community Classification Map

Schedule 'B' - Future Land Use Map

Schedules Changelog

Reference No.	Effective Date	File or Project	General Nature of Change