



Port Williams Secondary Planning Strategy: Strategic Direction

The Port Williams Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) Committee invites all community members to share your knowledge and views about the future of Port Williams. With the support of Kings County, the SPS Committee has reviewed a variety of topics and drafted this document entitled the *Port Williams SPS: Strategic Direction*. This draft planning document is based on the best information available to the SPS Committee and is intended to form the foundation of the Secondary Planning Strategy.

Before moving forward, however, the SPS Committee is seeking community feedback to ensure the work completed so far is on the right track. This feedback will be used to refine broad planning goals and develop detailed regulations. Further feedback on the final draft will be sought in the future.

Please provide your feedback by:

- **Reviewing the goals and objectives contained in this draft planning document**
- **Learning more about the secondary planning process by visiting the Port Williams SPS webpage from the Village of Port Williams or Kings County websites.**

www.county.kings.ns.ca
www.portwilliams.com

- **Attending one of two community workshops being held in the Port Williams Community Centre auditorium:**

**Wednesday, February 4th, 2-4 pm, &
Thursday, February 5th, 7-9 pm**

(storm days are the following week, same weekday and time)

- **Submitting comments by email, fax or mail to:**

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Port Williams SPS: Strategic Directions

VISION STATEMENT

Port Williams of the future is a thriving Village where people of all ages and stages of life can flourish and where its distinctive character and spirit are respected and valued.

1. WATER AND SEWER SERVICES

The Growth Centre of Port Williams is serviced by central water and sewer services that are owned and maintained by the Village of Port Williams. The sewer treatment facility and water distribution system were initially built to accommodate both residents and large industrial users. As the large industrial users have closed, significant water and sewer servicing capacity has become available with which to accommodate urban growth and redevelopment. While new development would make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, urban growth and redevelopment should be managed in order to ensure water and sewer services are cost effective, environmentally sustainable, and provide a high level of service.

Goal:

To provide cost effective, environmentally sustainable and high quality central water and sewer services.

Objectives:

- To use existing infrastructure more cost effectively, thereby improving the economy of scale, while minimizing the construction of new infrastructure.
- To encourage the efficient use of water.
- To maintain ground water quality and quantity by reinforcing and building upon wellfield protection policies.
- To provide environmentally efficient sewer treatment services.
- To manage industrial loading on the sewer treatment facility.

2. TRANSPORTATION

Historically, the Growth Centre of Port Williams was strongly linked to the waterfront. Today, however, the community is primarily accessed by road. Heading south, Highway 358 provides access across the Cornwallis River and links Port Williams to the Coldbrook-Wolfville urban corridor and Highway 101. To the north, Highway 358 connects Port Williams to the Growth Centre of Canning, while Belcher Street provides a direct route west to towards the Growth Centre of North Kentville and the Town of Kentville.

Although roads and vehicles are integral for linking the Growth Centre of Port Williams to the surrounding area, the community is also pedestrian friendly in nature. As an historic village, the Growth Centre has retained a compact form, enabling residents to walk to community and commercial services. Sidewalks, located on main roads, provide safe pedestrian routes from one end of the Growth Centre to the other. Looking to the future, the Growth Centre of Port Williams should maintain and improve its transportation network by providing for a variety of safe transportation options, including measures to encourage walking, transit use, carpooling and biking.

Goal:

To provide a variety of vehicular and active transportation options.

Objectives:

- To support the design and management of a safe transportation network.
- To promote road network designs that improve vehicular traffic flow and reduce pressure on congested intersections.
- To maintain and improve pedestrian transportation routes and connectivity.
- To provide a bike friendly environment.
- To encourage carpooling and public transit services.

3. DRAINAGE

Storm water within in the Growth Centre of Port Williams generally drains south towards the Cornwallis River. Some roads contain underground storm water sewers while other roads direct storm water through ditches and culverts. Several watercourses and natural gullies also provide natural drainage corridors. The Cornwallis River is tidal, which means its water level fluctuates with the extreme tides found in the Minas Basin. High tides, combined with storm events, have caused flooding issues in the past as watercourses and drainage corridors become backed up. Drainage from new development should be coordinated with existing infrastructure, recognize the area's unique geography and improve the drainage network effectiveness in the long-term.

Goal:

To provide an effective storm water drainage system that responds to Port Williams' unique geography

Objectives:

- To coordinate drainage management with Provincial and Municipal drainage infrastructure including dykes and Marsh Bodies.
- To ensure new development meets or exceeds appropriate drainage standards.
- To address long-term drainage issues such as flooding caused by extreme weather events.
- To protect natural drainage corridors from inappropriate development.

4. FLOODPLAINS

The Growth Centre of Port Williams is located adjacent to the Cornwallis River, a tidal river that rises and falls with the extreme tides observed in the Minas Basin. On an average day, the water in the Cornwallis River fluctuates approximately 14 metres (46 feet) between low and high tide. Both the north and south banks of the Cornwallis River are bounded by dykes that were constructed and later maintained by the Acadians, New England Planters and subsequent farmers. The dykes are currently maintained by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and local Marsh Bodies. Within the Growth Centre of Port Williams, the dykes enable agricultural activities on lands that would otherwise be salt water marsh. The dykes also protect inland areas from extreme high tides and storm surges. The Port Williams central waterfront, however, is not protected by dykes. In the spring of 1977, a storm surge event flooded the central waterfront and breached several nearby dykes.

In 2008, a Centre of Geographic Science (COGS) student completed a research project on storm surge events in Port Williams. The project used extremely accurate LIDAR and GPS technology to model the 1977 storm surge based on historical accounts and records. The model is able to predict the impact of storm events like the one observed in 1977 as well as predict the potential impact of even larger storm surges.

The storm surge model shows that the 1977 storm surge reached an approximate elevation of 8.6 metres above mean sea level. Dykes in the Port Williams area are generally 8.5 to 9 metres above mean level and, therefore, an 8.6 metre storm surge would rise above portions of the dyke. The elevation of the dykes is used by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture to designate protected Marshlands, as well as by the Municipality of the County of Kings to establish the Natural Environment District. The 1977 event, however, is not the worst on record. The Saxby Gale of 1869 is estimated to have reached approximately 10 metres above mean sea level. Moreover, sea level rise caused by global warming could further increase flood risks. These historical accounts, climate change predictions and storm surge modelling should be used to inform the public of flood risks and establish appropriate land use controls.

Goal:

To recognize flood risks and establish appropriate land use controls in flood prone areas.

Objectives:

- To consider the worst case storm surge and sea level rise scenarios when delineating flood prone areas and establishing land use controls.
- To establish appropriate land use controls in the flood prone portion of the waterfront to reduce risk of flood damage while still allowing responsible new development.
- To inform land owners of the potential flood and storm surge risks.
- To protect natural drainage corridors from development.
- To provide opportunities to use flood prone areas for uses that do not alter the land and are not at risk of flood damages, such as parks and parking lots.

5. WATERFRONT

Historically, the development of the Port Williams waterfront was strongly linked to the wharf and associated industrial activities. From the late 18th to mid 19th century, the wharf was the hub of the shipping industry in Kings County, which saw sailing vessels ship lumber, potatoes and apples to world markets. The shipping industry, however, has changed and the wharf has not been used since the 1970's. Today, the wharf has fallen into disrepair and the industrial nature of the waterfront is on the decline as large industrial uses have closed in recent years. These waterfront lands should be redeveloped into an active mixed-use waterfront destination, including pedestrian friendly public access to the water's edge. While it may not be feasible to restore the wharf, the importance of the shipping industry to the historic character of Port Williams should be commemorated and integrated into waterfront redevelopment plans.

Goal:

To encourage the redevelopment of waterfront lands into an active mixed-used destination that commemorates the history of the shipping industry and provides public access to the water's edge.

Objectives:

- To provide public access to the water's edge.
- To provide a pedestrian friendly environment.
- To encourage mixed-use developments that brings people to the waterfront all year round.
- To preserve historic buildings and (*ensure or encourage?*) new developments maintain a similar character.
- To commemorate the importance of the wharf and shipping industry.
- To provide adequate parking in the area, with the most accessible spaces prioritized according to special needs.
- To encourage the redevelopment of vacant industrial buildings and properties including the rehabilitation of any environmentally contaminated sites.

6. RECREATION

The Growth Centre of Port Williams contains a variety of public parks that are maintained by the Village of Port Williams. Newcombe Park, located adjacent to the Port Williams Elementary School is the largest public park and contains baseball and soccer fields. The fire pond located on Belcher Street is used for skating in the winter months. Planters Square subdivision contains a neighbourhood park and the Village land surrounding the wellheads are maintained as sports fields. In the future, these existing assets should be used more effectively. New strategically located lands should also be acquired to provide increased recreational opportunities that are linked through a trails network.

Goal:

To develop and maintain a variety of parks and trails that provide diverse recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

- To use existing park and recreational assets to their maximum potential.
- To ensure recreational facilities meet the needs of all members of the community.
- To identify and develop new public parks in strategic locations that are safe and have broad community support (i.e waterfront park, behind community centre – to be shown on corresponding map)
- To develop an active transportation recreational trails network that recognizes traditional routes, provides access to natural green spaces and links the Growth Centre to surrounding trail systems.
- To foster Village, County and Provincial partnerships in acquiring, developing and maintaining parks and trails.

7. COMMERCIAL

The Growth Centre of Port Williams contains an established commercial core serving the Growth Centre and surrounding area. The industrial park located on Parkway Drive has also attracted a number of commercial businesses, and several home-based businesses are found throughout the community. In the future, the Growth Centre of Port Williams should maintain and expand its role as a commercial centre for the area, with new commercial developments directed to the commercial core and adjacent waterfront lands. A variety of commercial uses should be welcomed, including residential and light industrial mixed used proposals.

Goal:

To expand the Growth Centre's role as a commercial destination serving the immediate community, surrounding area and travelling public.

Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for a variety of commercial uses to locate in the Growth Centre.
- To direct new commercial development to an enlarged commercial core.
- To allow for commercial, residential and light industrial mixed use development proposals within the commercial core.

8. RESIDENTIAL

Initially clustered around the waterfront, the Growth Centre of Port Williams has grown to include a number of residential neighbourhoods. The majority of residents live in low density single unit dwellings, but there are also a significant number of multi-unit

buildings found along major roads and in central locations. The steady residential growth experienced in recent years is expected to continue as new residents are attracted to the community's character and urban services, as well as its proximity to the Wolfville-Coldbrook urban corridor and Highway 101. The Growth Centre should continue to welcome new residents, as well as accommodate the changing lifestyles of existing residents, by providing opportunities for a variety of new residential developments.

Goal:

To accommodate residential growth that meets the needs of residents from all stages and ages of life.

Objectives:

- To direct higher density developments to central locations.
- To direct lower density developments to the Growth Centre fringe.
- To encourage infill development on vacant and underused land.
- To provide opportunities for mixed use developments.
- To enable residents to age within the community by accommodating housing that is suitable for seniors.
- To provide a buffer between residential developments and intensive agricultural activities.

9. INDUSTRIAL

The industrial nature of Port Williams has undergone a transformation over the past number of years. The wharf, which was integral to shipping industry, has not been used since the early 1970's leading to the gradual closure of industrial uses located by the waterfront. Meanwhile, the industrial park that was developed in the early 1990's has grown to contain a number of active businesses. The industrial park, however, has not realized its full potential as a significant amount of land remains vacant. Still, the Growth Centre continues to host a variety of large industrial businesses, although not located in any one cluster. While Port Williams should continue to host industries that provide valuable employment opportunities, new industrial developments should be located in a way, and of a nature, to minimize potential environmental or land use conflict issues.

Goal:

To provide industrial development opportunities without negatively impacting the environment or other land uses.

Objectives:

- To provide a variety of light industrial development opportunities that are compatible with commercial and, in some cases, residential land uses.
- To discourage heavy industry from locating in the Growth Centre.
- To encourage the efficient use of existing industrial lands.

- To ensure new industrial developments do not place excessive demands on Village water and sewer infrastructure.
- To minimize risks to ground water resources by ensuring industrial development is consistent with wellfield protection measures.

10. INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Growth Centre of Port Williams contains a variety of institutional and community facilities serving the Growth Centre and surrounding area. These facilities are generally clustered in the centre of the community and within easy walking distance to each other and many residents. As the community grows and the population ages, demand for community services are expected to increase, especially services geared to seniors. Port Williams should build upon its role as a community service centre by encouraging new facilities to locate and expand within the Growth Centre.

Goal:

To encourage institutional and community facilities to locate and expand in the Growth Centre.

Objectives:

- To encourage new institutional and community facilities to locate in the Growth Centre, especially facilities geared to seniors.
- To direct institutional and community facilities to central locations.
- To encourage institutional and community facilities to locate nearby to existing community services and in locations that are accessible to pedestrians.