

INTER-MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY SECONDARY PLANNING STRATEGY

Town of Pictou



PREFACE

This document is the Secondary Planning Strategy (“SPS”) for the Town of Pictou, and forms part of the Inter-Municipal Planning Strategy (“IPS”) for the Pictou County Towns of Pictou, Stellarton, and Trenton (“Towns”). The Town of Pictou is one of three secondary planning areas in Pictou County that is encompassed by the IPS, which is adopted pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*, SNS 1998, c 18 (MGA).

Each municipal unit adopts an SPS to address land use and land development matters specific to its jurisdiction. The three SPSs may be amended from time to time by the parent municipal unit.

This SPS is intended to add to and not to conflict with or subtract from, the requirements contained in valid Federal and Provincial laws and regulations in force from time to time and shall be interpreted accordingly.

Any capitalized word herein is defined in the other Planning Documents.

CERTIFICATION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

Date of First Reading: June 22, 2024

Date of advertisement of Notice of Intent to Consider: July 24 and August 21, 2024

Date of Second Reading: September 23, 2024

Date of advertisement of Passage of By-Law: October 2, 2024

Date of mailing to Minister a certified copy of By-Law: July 11, 2025

I certify that the following SECONDARY PLANNING STRATEGY was duly adopted by Pictou Town Council at duly called meetings and was published as indicated above.

Chief Administrative Officer

Office Consolidations include Ministerial Amendments to the original and will be revised from time to time as required by future amendments. Office Consolidations are prepared for ease of reference only; refer to original documents for accuracy, available at the Town Office.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DA	Development Agreement
GFLUM	Generalized Future Land Use Map
IPS	Inter-Municipal Planning Strategy
LUB	Land Use By-Law
MGA	Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia
SPA	Site Plan Approval
SPS	Secondary Planning Strategy
WS	Water Supply Zone
W	Waterfront Zone

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The IPS provides a high-level planning framework to manage future growth and change in the Towns and provides policy guidance on sustainable land use and land development issues.

The IPS is to be collectively reviewed every five years and amended as required. An SPS states policy positions on land use and land development matters specific to a Town.

The Goals, Objectives and Policies of the IPS also apply to this SPS.

1.2 Background

This section is for information purposes only and does not form part of SPS policy for the Town of Pictou.

The Town of Pictou is located in Pictou County, in Northeastern Nova Scotia, and is situated on the north side of Pictou Harbour, near the confluence of the East, West, and Middle Rivers of Pictou County. It is surrounded on the north, east and west by the Municipality of Pictou County.

Pictou has 3,107 residents, with a median age of 53.2, compared to the national median age of 41.6, and of Nova Scotia at 45.6.

The Town has approximately 2,060 acres (833 hectares) of land, 677 acres of which are developed with urban services.

The history of Pictou began in 1773 with the arrival of a group of Scottish settlers aboard the ship Hector, thus emerging the “Birthplace of New Scotland”. The Town was established along the waterfront with later residential development comprising large older homes and tree-lined streets. The core commercial area is centered near the waterfront on Front, Church and Water Streets. Industrial lands are situated at both the waterfront and Browns Point areas.

Major growth periods included the late 1800s when the Town became a centre for education, shipbuilding and fisheries. During the war years, Pictou was an important port with prominent shipbuilding, fishing and harbour facilities. In the 1980s, the downtown core and waterfront area underwent a multi-million-dollar renovation.

2.0 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Background

Pictou contains a downtown commercial core with banks, retail and service businesses and public services that attract a regular influx of people. A highway commercial area also serves Pictou and Pictou west. This highway development emerged along Weaver and West River Road with the realignment of the Rotary construction in the 1970s. An industrial park, located off Haliburton Road, has also attracted a number of light industrial businesses. Several home-based occupations are found throughout the community.

In the future, Pictou should maintain and expand its role as a commercial centre for Pictou west. This can be accomplished by new development in the highway commercial and industrial areas. Additionally, through the introduction of higher density residential development in the downtown and waterfront areas, existing business should realize improved market conditions. A variety of commercial uses should be welcomed, with measures taken to control and differentiate development between the downtown and highway commercial areas. Efforts should also be made to increase traffic to the downtown area.

2.2 Objectives

- 2.2.1 Implement a signage and way-finding program to attract more highway traffic to the Downtown, Waterfront, and Highway Commercial areas.
- 2.2.2 Control and differentiate types of commercial development located in the Downtown, Waterfront, and Highway Commercial areas.
- 2.2.3 Traffic realignment and extension of municipal services to the Rotary area to encourage highway development.
- 2.2.4 Increase and improve pedestrian traffic within and between the Highway, Downtown Commercial and Waterfront areas.
- 2.2.5 Diversify Downtown and Waterfront areas by allowing complementary light manufacturing and wholesaling.
- 2.2.6 Encourage a micro-economy within the Downtown and Waterfront areas through higher density residential housing.
- 2.2.7 Encourage private sector initiatives that lead to year-round economic activity within the Downtown and Waterfront areas.

2.3 [Policies](#)

Policy C-1

Engage the private sector in the development and installation of a signage and way-finding program.

Policy C-2

Land use controls shall involve approvals issued under DA, SPA, or under as-of-right development.

Policy C-3

Engage professional traffic engineering to match road realignment requirements, with the objective of maximizing commercial land use opportunities, in addition to the design and construction of pedestrian and cycling-friendly routes.

Policy C-4

Allow through DA and SPA Wholesale Establishments and Light Industry within the Downtown Core Designation.

Policy C-5

Enable through DA and SPA higher density living within portions of the Downtown Commercial Designation core as referenced on the GFLUM.

3.0 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Background

The industrial presence in Pictou is multi-faceted, occurring in close proximity to other sectors. The Pictou Shipyard, which was integral to the shipping industry in the mid-1900s, is a diversified operation that includes modular work for the oil and gas sector as well as marine-related construction, maintenance, and decommissioning. Pier C is the only active shipping terminal in Pictou County servicing local industry in receiving and shipping. The industrial park contains a number of active businesses and retains growth opportunity. Future expansion should be coordinated through a development concept design and servicing master plan.

Trucking still is an issue as road networks were developed long before standards were put into place. This creates difficulty for long-load trucking to navigate the community.

3.2 Objectives

- 3.2.1 Planned expansion of municipal servicing within the industrial park.
- 3.2.2 Encouragement of industrial activity in a multi-sector environment.
- 3.2.3 Review of supporting infrastructure, i.e. roads, water, and wastewater.
- 3.2.4 Explore formalizing and developing a suitable trucking route for long loads (windmill blades) and to reduce wear and tear on Town streets.

3.3 Policies

Policy M-1

Have professionals design a phased development of industrial lands located in the Browns Point area.

Policy M-2

Land use controls shall involve approvals issued under DA, SPA, or as-of-right development.

Policy M-3

Minimize the effects of industrial water use on other customers of the Water Utility.

4.0 PARKS AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Background

There are a number of public parks and recreation facilities owned by the Town of Pictou. Broidy Park, adjacent to Pictou Academy, is the largest public park and contains a playground, all-wheels park, tennis courts and other park amenities. Soccer and baseball fields are also located in this area. Other sports fields and two smaller neighbourhood parks are sited at five locations throughout the Town. A paved and gravel surface trail, which is part of the Trans Canada Trail System, is also owned and maintained by the Town. A number of sidewalks, trails systems, and “share-the-road” designations contribute to an active transportation system. Future parks are being developed in the Victory Heights area to celebrate Pictou’s contributions during World War II. This park will utilize artifacts that were relocated from Veteran’s Park in the roundabout area. A new ballfield is being constructed next to McCulloch Education Centre (Pictou Elementary). This is to cluster sports facilities, by utilizing space in close proximity to the soccer field.

Certain land areas currently retaining sports fields may better suit residential or commercial uses. Recreation infrastructure should be strategically located to maximize use. Clustering of recreational facilities or locations based on complementary land uses should also be considered. To enhance active transportation, expansion and upgrades to sidewalks should be strategic and linked through a comprehensive network (see Policy T-8 of the IPS).

4.2 Objectives

- 4.2.1 Increase facility and park usage through community partnerships.
- 4.2.2 Enhance existing assets such as the waterfront and Jitney Trail.
- 4.2.3 Expand Active Transportation connections between residential areas and public facilities in the northern portion of the town.
- 4.2.4 Develop a multi-phased asset management plan for recreational facilities.

4.3 Policies

Policy P-1

Study and consult on the location of recreation structures and areas, based on land usage, existing facilities, programming requirements, populations and other relevant factors.

Policy P-2

Planning of new recreational facilities and spaces will align with the new Active Transportation Plan and Physical Activity Strategy identified priorities.

5.0 WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES

5.1 Background

Pictou is serviced by central water and sewer that are owned and maintained by the Town. The source of water supply comprises eight wells located within two separate wellfields that cross municipal boundaries. Well water is in finite supply and is regulated through a withdrawal permit issued by Nova Scotia Environment. Therefore, the protection of the source of supply is an important aspect of land use control. The Town reduced its number of wells by eliminating low production or well that had influence of salt water. Recent upgrades have included the installation of a new wells, and centralized water treatment facility. Water meters are currently installed at all customer locations. Extensive main replacements and leak detection program have greatly reduced non-revenue water allowing the Town to focus on future expansion. (see Policy SW-2 of the IPS).

A wastewater treatment facility was built in 2010, which services the Town as well as 31 kilometres of collection/transmission piping situate in Pictou west. Currently within the Town, most surface water flows into a combined sanitary and stormwater collection system. Combined flows are conveyed to and processed by the treatment plant. Future plans are to divert surface water flows from the treatment plant. This process has been initiated through the installation of a stormwater trunk system that run east to west along Church, Denoon and Water Streets. This main trunk will be used as a collector line to which the upstream streets can attach.

5.2 Objectives

- 5.2.1 Regulate development through appropriate land use controls to protect water supply.
- 5.2.2 Minimize operational costs and environmental impact associated with stormwater.
- 5.2.3 Project sustainable water volumes, fire flows, and pressures for areas subject to development (addition of a well).

5.1 Policies

Policy WS-1

The lands designated on the GFLUM as Water Supply shall be zoned as Water Supply (WS) Zone. Permitted uses within the WS Zone shall include single detached dwellings, Passive Recreational uses, public utilities, telecommunication Towers, and non-intensive agricultural uses.

Policy WS-2

Develop a prioritized master plan to separate storm and sanitary water systems.

Policy WS-3

Refinement of hydraulic water modelling through additional study and updating of modelling software.

6.0 WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Background

The Pictou waterfront, once comprising wharves, shipyard and associated industrial activities, and factories, continues to be the hub of the shipping industry in Pictou County. The waterfront was developed in the 1980s to include tourism-related infrastructure and a mix of public amenities and services alongside traditional industry.

The Town of Pictou recently completed a Waterfront Masterplan. The goal of this plan is to provide direction to both staff and the community on this vision for connecting the community with the natural asset of Pictou Harbour. The vision is to enhance the already existing waterfront zone through the addition of infrastructure such as boardwalks, coastal protection measures, wharves, and breakwaters.

This area will further be refined by enhancing relationships with the artistic community, Pictou Landing First Nations and other community groups by exploring partnership opportunities.

The objective is to make Pictou the premier port in Nova Scotia along the Northumberland Strait that fulfills a gap within the Province's marine tourism and industrial plans, as defined by Build Nova Scotia.

Pictou's waterfront is also affected by climate change, and the potential for sea level rise that could affect both built development and natural environmental conditions. Areas of the waterfront should be designated for protection and possible mitigation to preserve this asset.

6.2 Objectives

- 6.1.1 Encourage mixed residential/Commercial Development within the historic character of the waterfront.
- 6.1.2 Promote a mix of commercial and light industrial uses that provide year-round employment.
- 6.1.3 Identify and implement opportunities to safely and sustainably interact with the natural environment specifically around Pictou Harbour, including the development of a plan to protect the shoreline from climate change and sea level rise.
- 6.1.4 Enhance relationships with Pictou Landing First Nations and the art community.

6.3 [Policies](#)

Policy W-1

Signs, building appearance, outdoor storage, and landscaping shall be subject to special requirements specified within the LUB.

Policy W-2

The lands designated on the GFLUM as Waterfront shall be zoned as Waterfront (W) Zone. Permitted uses within the W Zone are listed within the LUB.

Policy W-3

Land use controls shall involve approvals issued under DA, or SPA, relative to custom workshops, Hotels, mixed use residential/Commercial/Office uses and multi-unit residential uses in the Waterfront Designation.

Policy W-4

Enable mixed residential/Commercial Development under DA.

Policy W-5

Enable expansion of existing multi-unit residential development under DA.

Policy W-6

Allow new multi-unit residential development under DA.

Policy W-7

Development in the Waterfront Plan area is to be evaluated against the Vision and Guiding Principles for the Waterfront (Recommendation from the Pictou Waterfront Plan, pg 83 & 85)

Policy W-8

To adopt a set of design guidelines and a property improvement program for new development in the downtown and along the waterfront to ensure new development fits into the general form and character of the area (Waterfront Plan pg 83).

Policy W-9

It is Council's intention to develop a coastline protection plan, based on scientific and environmental analysis to identify those areas of the waterfront that require protection and/or mitigation measures. When such a plan is adopted, this planning strategy may be amended to administer the provisions of the plan.