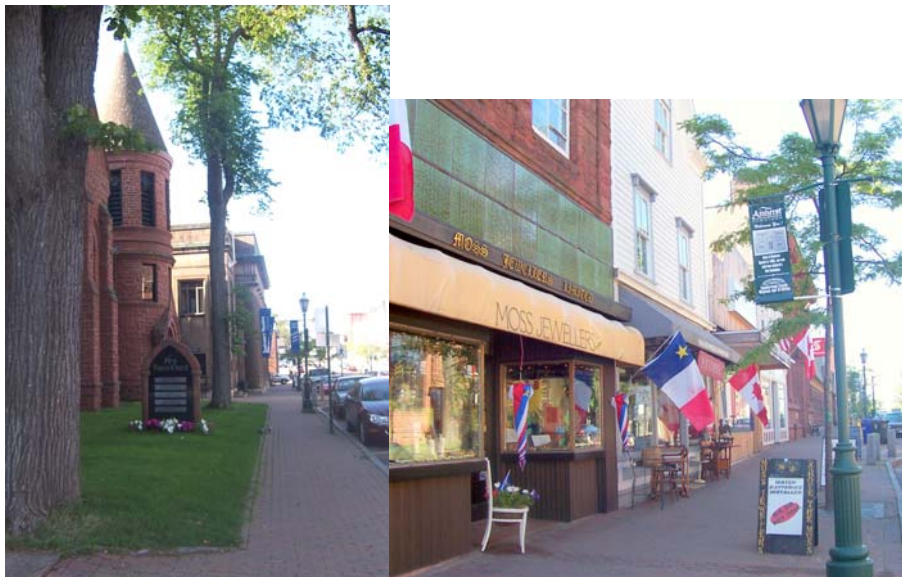


**Town of Amherst
Integrated Community Sustainability Plan
Submission Document**

September 16, 2009



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Preface

This document is the official submission by the Town of Amherst for the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan requirement of the Municipal Funding Agreement (MFA) signed by the Town and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. The MFA sets the terms and conditions of the federal government transfer of funds equivalent to a portion of the federal excise tax on gasoline.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to fulfill the obligation to submit an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan contained in the Municipal Funding Agreement outlined above. Further, this plan will summarize the interconnected environmental, social, cultural, and economic development objectives and policies contained within the Town of Amherst Municipal Planning Strategy and other relevant policy documents.

1.3 Basis

This document is based on the guidelines contained in the “Integrated Community Sustainability Plans – Municipal Funding Agreement for Nova Scotia” document prepared by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, September 2007.

Given the comprehensive nature of the Town’s current Municipal Planning Strategy it is the opinion of Amherst Town Council that this MPS satisfies the criteria to also be the official Integrated Community Sustainability Plan for the Town.

2.0 Development of the Town of Amherst MPS

2.1 Preparation of the Municipal Planning Strategy

The MPS was developed by the Town of Amherst Planning Advisory Committee with the support of the Planning and Development Department along with various other Town resources where appropriate. The document was prepared in 2004 / 2005 and was officially approved by the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations in August of 2005. The development of the MPS was conducted in four phases:

Phase 1 Development of Vision and Goals with Public Input

Phase 2 Preparation of Background Information

Phase 3 Development of Draft Document

Phase 4 Public Input and Council Consideration for Adoption

2.2 Purpose of the Municipal Planning Strategy

As stated in the MPS, “The Town of Amherst Municipal Planning Strategy establishes the broad framework and policy guidance to manage future growth and development within the Town. The Strategy should be used as a guide when making major decisions on the provision of municipal services or the use of land within the Town.”

2.3 Public Consultation

At the outset of the development of the MPS, the Planning Advisory Committee decided that public input would drive the process. Therefore, the first action of the Committee was to obtain public input. Included in the public participation program was a general public meeting as well as meetings with specific stakeholder groups. In all cases the public was educated on the purpose of the MPS and were asked to provide input on their vision for Amherst as well as specific issues within the Town they wanted to see addressed in the policies of the final document. Stakeholder groups included, but were not limited to:

- Elementary school children
- Junior high school children
- Major landowners
- Business owners
- Local service groups
- Local business associations
- Elected Representatives
- Local Community Economic Development Association

Once a draft of the municipal planning strategy was developed based on the input of the above groups they, along with the general public, were invited to an open house to view the document and provide further input.

A final public consultation was conducted in the form of an official public hearing as required by the Municipal Government Act prior to the adoption of the MPS.

2.4 Further Public Consultations

In conjunction with amendments to the MPS since its initial adoption, public participation sessions were held and public hearings conducted on the following matters:

- Policies to permit long term care facilities by development agreement, and
- Policies to permit limited ground floor residential opportunities within the Downtown Commercial zone by development agreement

2.5 Integration of Sustainability Principals

Sustainability principals are not stand alone issues. All facets of municipal operations impact our sustainability, and sustainability impacts all aspects of municipal operations. Therefore, sustainability principals have been integrated throughout the entire Municipal Planning Strategy. They are evident in the Vision Statement, Goals, Objects and Individual Policies of the various strategy elements of the Plan.

2.6 Vision Statement Resulting From Public Consultations

A Future Vision for Amherst

In the year 2020 Amherst will be a prosperous community, one in which all residents will be able to fulfill their individual career aspirations. Amherst will be a town that proudly projects its role as the centre of retail and commercial trade in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia and Westmoreland County, New Brunswick. Amherst will grow to be an economically self sustaining community, while at the same time maintaining its existing small town charm and ambiance.

Population growth within the town will be moderate. The population itself will be slightly older as the existing baby boom generation continues to age. However, through its high quality of life, employment opportunities and cultural amenities, Amherst will retain its younger generation as they enter the workforce; as well, younger professional families will be attracted to live in the Town. As such, housing developments and recreational opportunities will reflect the needs and the age diversity of our community.

Amherst will be a safe community where residents of all ages feel comfortable at all times. Amherstonians will proudly reflect “Maritime hospitality and friendliness”.

Amherst will have quality municipal ‘social services’. The town will strive to continually update and upgrade our social, recreational and cultural services, and will collaborate, where and when appropriate, with other stakeholders to support regional municipal services.

Amherstonians will be custodians of the local environment. Our waterways will be clean, our air pure and our waste minimized. Our streets will be lined with trees and our parks clean and green. Our public open spaces will be linked together by a walking trail system which will promote recreation, a healthy lifestyle and environmental sustainability.

Amherst's residential areas will be its most significant built asset. Older areas of town will proudly maintain their heritage architecture, and will receive timely infrastructure upgrades to maintain the existing high quality living environment. Newer areas of town will be well planned communities providing a diversity of housing types for all income levels. New subdivisions will include excellent infrastructure, and will be connected to our first class parks system.

The town's commercial areas will be vibrant and prosperous, offering a full array of products and services to town residents and visitors alike. The downtown area will be the focus of specialty retail, new office and government employment. It will be well accessible by vehicle and at the same time pedestrian friendly. The downtown will host various community events and as such it will be the cultural focus of the community.

The Downtown core will be complimented by the South Albion / Robert Angus Drive commercial – retail area. This area will be a regional scale full service shopping destination. It will be vehicular oriented with safe and efficient pedestrian links to the residential areas of the Town.

The Amherst and Area Industrial Park will see significant new business activity and will undergo a complete expansion, opening up new areas for industrial development. Such development will be clean and environmentally friendly and focused on exporting Amherst made products to the rest of the world.

The town corporate will be well managed, providing quality leadership and cost effective services to residents and business. Our citizens will take the initiative to ensure that we define our own destiny.

In the year 2020 Amherst will be a prosperous, progressive town, one in which all residents can achieve their lifelong goals. Like today, in the year 2020, Amherstonians will be proud to call Amherst home.

2.7 Specific Goals Resulting From Public Consultations

Provincial Context

1. To have a significant positive impact on the Provincial economy.
2. To be one of a number of significant growth centers in the province.
3. To capitalize on the significant tourism potential of being the first town on the Trans Canada Highway in Nova Scotia.
4. To strengthen the Town's role as a leader in the provision of efficient municipal services in N.S.

Regional Context

5. To strengthen the town's role as the centre of commercial and retail trade in Cumberland County.
6. To capture a greater share of the regional housing market.
7. To strengthen the town's role as the social, cultural and recreational centre of Cumberland County.

Economic Context

8. To continually improve and diversify the town's economy.

Physical Context

9. To support a healthy natural environment, at a local and regional level, through the cooperative stewardship of shared resources.
10. To provide diversified physical recreational facilities to the residents of the Town.
11. To provide adequate and efficient municipal services which will sustain existing development as well as facilitate new development.
12. To provide a safe, efficient and diversified transportation system.
13. To facilitate a mix of quality housing types which reflect the diversified needs, income levels, ages and lifestyles of Town residents.
14. To ensure an adequate supply of quality land exists for all land uses.
15. To encourage and facilitate a vibrant and diversified downtown core.
16. To encourage and facilitate the preservation of the historical integrity of the built environment.

Social Context

17. To provide a safe, clean living environment for the residents of the Town.
18. To provide adequate quality outdoor gathering places for public functions.

3.0 Sustainability Principals

3.1 Introduction to Sustainability Principals

As indicated in the Municipal Funding Agreement the four pillars of sustainability are environmental, social, economic and cultural.

The Town of Amherst Municipal Planning Strategy addresses these four pillars through its various strategy elements. The MPS is divided into a number of Strategy Elements, including:

- General Land Use and Development
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Municipal Services
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Environment

Sustainability principals can be found in the objectives and polices of each of these strategy elements. Therefore, the sustainability principals (objectives and policies) of each strategy element will be listed here separately. Further, it is not the intention to detail how each objective and / or policy relates to the four pillars of sustainability as generally this relationship is rather straight forward and self explanatory.

The sustainability principals of each strategy element are inter-related with those contained in all other strategy elements. Sustainability principals within the residential section of the plan are dependant upon those in the transportation and municipal services sections of the plan and vice versa. Furthermore, in order to get a true appreciation of how the MPS incorporates and integrates the various sustainability principals, one must become familiar with the unique geographic structure of the Town and the various built resources within.



Children’s Accessible Playground, Beacon Street

3.2 Sustainability Principals

In this section, only those objectives and policies that directly pertain to one or more of the four pillars of sustainability will be referenced. For details on all objectives and polices, please refer to the official Municipal Planning Strategy.

3.2.1 General Land Use and Development

Objectives

A - To facilitate the efficient growth and development of the town

Policies

- Efficient Development* **GP-4** It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that growth and development within the Town is efficient and cost effective by:

 - (a) facilitating the contiguous expansion of the built up areas of the Town;
 - (b) limiting development in un-serviced areas of the Town;
 - (c) concentrating new development in adequately serviced and properly planned areas;
 - (d) encouraging and facilitating infill development on underutilized properties within the built up area of town.

- Facilitate Development* **GP-5** It shall be the intention of Council to facilitate the future development of the Town by making necessary improvements to the Town’s infrastructure in conjunction with, or advance of future development.

3.2.2 Residential

Objectives

- (b) To ensure that the design and development of residential areas provides for a quality living environment;
- (c) To encourage residential infill development on appropriate under-utilized lands;
- (d) To ensure that future residential development occurs in suitable locations with adequate water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, transportation and recreational services available;
- (e) To ensure that specific residential development is not premature by means of servicing, transportation, schools, recreational facilities and the like;
- (g) To encourage the conservation, retention and improvement of the existing housing stock;
- (h) To encourage the conservation, retention and improvement of the historically and / or architecturally significant residential buildings and streetscapes.



Incremental Residential Development

Policies

<i>Housing Mix</i>	RP-8 It shall be the intention of Council to encourage a mix of housing densities in all residential areas of town to encourage a mix of housing types and income groups in all residential areas.
<i>Medium and High Density By Development Agreement</i>	RP-9 Within the Residential Designation, it shall be the intention of Council to ensure medium and high density residential development occur in a manner compatible with a low density residential neighbourhood. Specifically, Council shall require that all residential developments greater than 4 dwelling units per property, be subject to a Development Agreement. In negotiating such an agreement Council shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure that the structure is located on the lot in such a manner as to limit potential impacts on surrounding low density residential developments; (b) ensure that the development provides sufficient on-site parking, and appropriate access to, and egress from the street; (c) ensure that the location of parking facilities does not dominate the surrounding area, including the utilization of vegetation and fences to mitigate the aesthetic impacts of parking lots; (d) ensure that any on site outdoor lighting does not negatively impact the surrounding properties; (e) ensure that any signage on the property is sympathetic to the surrounding residential properties; (f) require the use of vegetation to improve the aesthetic quality of the development; (g) ensure that the architecture of the building is sympathetic to any existing development in the surrounding area.
<i>Neighbourhood Stabilization</i>	RP-10 It shall be the intention of Council to provide for the stabilization of existing residential neighborhoods by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) encouraging the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock; (b) discouraging the encroachment of non-compatible land uses; (c) avoiding ‘spot zoning’ amendments to the Land Use Bylaw; (d) encouraging the re-location of existing non-compatible land uses; (e) enforcing the “Dangerous and Unsightly Premises” section of the MGA.
<i>Affordable Housing</i>	RP-11 It shall be the intention of Council to encourage and promote the provision of affordable housing units within all residential areas of the Town by:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) encouraging a mix of housing types and densities; (b) permitting secondary apartments in all dwelling units; (c) permitting a secondary residential structure (Garden Suite) on a lot; (d) cooperating with Federal and Provincial Governments to facilitate affordable housing within the Town.
<i>Residential Area Design</i>	<p>RP-12 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that new residential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) provide for the efficient use of land; (b) provide for the efficient and economic extension of existing water, storm sewer and sanitary sewer systems and other utilities; (c) incorporates a hierarchy of streets that efficiently and safely accommodates traffic flows and proper access to other areas of Town; (d) provides for the efficient and safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists; (e) minimizes adverse effects on the environment; (f) provides for parks and other community uses in safe and central locations.
<i>Garden Suites</i>	<p>RP-14 It shall be the intention of Council to permit Garden Suites in all Residential areas by Development Agreement. In negotiating such an agreement Council shall have regard for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the garden suite be secondary to the main dwelling on the lot; (b) water and sewer services be provided independent from the main dwelling; (c) two off street parking spaces be provided on the property; (d) the garden suite be a minimum of 1.2 metres from the side property lines; (e) the garden suite be a minimum of 6 metres from the rear property line; (f) the garden suite be a minimum of 1.2 metres from the main dwelling; (g) the garden suite not be located in the front yard of the property; (h) no home occupation, group home, boarding house, day care or other such secondary use be permitted on the property; (i) the development agreement be discharged should the garden suite be removed from the property.
<i>Home Occupations</i>	<p>RP-15 It shall be the intention of Council to permit Home Occupations in all residential areas and shall prescribe regulations in the Land Use Bylaw that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure the use in secondary to the main residential use on the lot; (b) ensure that the type of home occupation is compatible with residential neighborhoods; (c) specifically regulate such things as floor area, number of

	employees, hours of operation, accessory buildings, parking, exterior alterations, outdoor storage, signage, and obnoxious uses.
<i>Residential Day Cares</i>	<p>RP-17 It shall be the intention of Council to permit Residential Day Care Operations in all residential areas and shall prescribe regulations in the Land Use Bylaw that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure the use in secondary to the main residential use on the lot; (b) ensure the use is compatible with residential neighborhoods.
<i>Local Commercial Centres</i>	<p>RP-18 It shall be the intention of Council to provide convenient local commercial centres in all residential areas of town. Council shall, in the Land Use Bylaw create the Local Commercial Centre Zone and apply the zone to all existing local convenience stores, or other property Council feels should be so zoned in order to provide a local commercial convenience function to the surrounding area. The Local Commercial Centre Zone shall contain regulations to ensure that the use of the property does not pose a negative impact on the local neighbourhood by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) permitting uses that mainly serve the local area such as retail, daycares, take out restaurants or other similar uses; (b) the utilization of vegetation to improve the aesthetic quality of the development; (c) ensuring that adequate parking facilities are provided on site; (d) not permitting a drive-thru component to the development. <p>It shall further be the intention of Council not to rezone any property in town to the Local Commercial Centre Zone as of the date of the passing of this bylaw.</p>

3.2.3 Commercial

Objectives

- (c) To foster the development of the Downtown commercial core as the focus of specialty retail, new office, government employment and cultural amenities;
- (e) To ensure that commercial development is adequately serviced with various transportation facilities, including parking facilities;
- (f) To encourage the conservation, retention and improvement of the historically and / or architecturally significant commercial buildings and streetscapes.

Policies

<i>Commercial Area Aesthetics</i>	<p>CP-7 It shall be the intention of Council to promote a high degree of aesthetics in all commercial areas. Provisions within the Land Use Bylaw for various commercial zones will include measures to regulate the following items to a degree appropriate to each zone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) signage; (b) landscaping; (c) location of buildings on a lot; (d) setbacks and yards; (e) parking and access and egress from a street.
<i>Office Development</i>	<p>CP-8 It shall be the intention of Council that the downtown core be the primary focus of new office development. The Land Use Bylaw will contain provisions to encourage new office development to locate in the Downtown Commercial zone.</p>
<i>Downtown and Uptown cooperation</i>	<p>CP-9 It shall be the intention of Council, to encourage cooperation between the downtown and uptown commercial areas so as to allow each area to benefit the other and work together to enhance the overall commercial viability of the entire town.</p>
<i>Downtown Development by Development Agreement (Heritage)</i>	<p>CP-10 It shall be the intention of Council to consider applications for new commercial development within the Downtown Commercial zone which shares a property line more or less perpendicular to the street with a heritage property designated under any relevant legislation by development agreement.</p> <p>In negotiating such a development agreement, Council shall ensure that:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the facades of any proposed development are architecturally sympathetic to the next door heritage property; (b) that the ground floor of the proposed development be designed to promote pedestrian convenience and interest.
<i>Downtown Development by Development Agreement (Area)</i>	<p>CP-11 It shall be the intention of Council to consider applications for new commercial development within the Downtown Commercial zone which has a ground floor area in excess of 1,500 square metres by development agreement.</p> <p>In negotiating such a development agreement, Council shall ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the ground floor of the proposed development be designed to promote pedestrian convenience and interest; (b) any parking facilities provided on the site be designed and located to promote pedestrian convenience and interest, and generally be at the back of the property; (c) the location, height, bulk and design of the building takes into account the surrounding streetscape and building designs.
<i>DA Automobile Uses in Downtown Commercial Zone</i>	<p>CP-13 Within the Downtown Commercial zone , it shall be the intention of Council to require that all motor vehicle related uses, including, but not limited to, motor vehicle repair, sales and fueling stations, as well as any drive thru establishment, be subject to a Development Agreement. In negotiating such an agreement Council shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure that the development provides sufficient on-site parking, and appropriate access to, and egress from the street; (b) ensure that the location of parking facilities does not dominate the surrounding area, including the utilization of vegetation and fences to mitigate the aesthetic impacts of parking lots; (c) ensure that any on site outdoor lighting does not negatively impact the surrounding properties; (d) require the use of vegetation to improve the aesthetic quality of the development.
<i>Site Plan Sidewalk Patios in Downtown Commercial Zone</i>	<p>CP-14 Within the Downtown Commercial zone , it shall be the intention of Council to require that all sidewalk patios, be subject to a Site Plan Agreement. In negotiating such an agreement the Development Officer shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure that the patio area does not extend beyond the frontage of the associated building; (b) ensure that an area at least 1.2 metres in width shall be maintained to permit the unhindered passage of pedestrians; (c) ensure that the sidewalk patio is not installed prior to May 1st and removed no later than October 31st each year; (d) ensure that the owner / occupant keep and maintain the allocated

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| | <p>portion of the sidewalk in a clean and sanitary state;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(e) ensure that all other relevant Town Bylaws are satisfied;(f) obtain input and comment from the Town Engineer and Traffic Authority where appropriate. |
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Downtown Amherst

3.2.4 Industrial

Objectives

- (a) To facilitate industrial development within the town to diversify our economy and ensure that the employment requirements of Town residents are satisfied within the Town;
 - (b) To facilitate the continued development of the Amherst Industrial Park, in a manner compatible with the surrounding area;
 - (c) To set aside future industrial lands to satisfy the anticipated industrial requirements for the 20 year planning horizon;
 - (d) To concentrate all industrial development in adequately planned and serviced industrial areas.
-



Amherst Industrial Park

INDUSTRIAL POLICIES

<p><i>Industrial Park Zone</i></p>	<p>IP-3 It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use Bylaw an Industrial Park zone. This zone shall be applied to all lands owned by the Amherst and Area Industrial Park. This zone will permit a range of industrial uses appropriate to a fully serviced, modern industrial park area. Specifically, no heavy, polluting industry will be permitted within the Industrial Park Zone.</p> <p>It shall further be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use Bylaw provisions to regulate signage, setbacks, building height and bulk, parking, landscaping within the Industrial Park zone.</p>
<p><i>Expanded Industrial Park</i></p>	<p>IP-5 It shall be the intention of Council, in partnership with industry and other levels of government, to extend water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer, and to re-construct Race Track Road to industrial park standards.</p>
<p><i>Expanded Industrial Park South of TCH</i></p>	<p>IP-6 It shall be the intention of Council, in partnership with local land owners and other levels government, to secure a road access to the area of the Amherst and Area Industrial Park on the south side of the Trans-Canada Highway. It shall further be the intention of Council to provide municipal water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer to this area when the land is required for industrial development.</p>

3.2.5 Municipal Services

Objectives

- (a) To require and facilitate logical, timely, and efficient extensions of all piped municipal services to un-serviced areas of town;
 - (b) To work towards the eventual collection and treatment of all town sewage;
 - (c) To continue to ensure the long term viability of the town's municipal water supply and distribution system;
 - (d) To ensure that a long term capital works program is in place to address the timely upgrading and replacement of the existing town water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer systems;
 - (e) To ensure an efficient solid waste collection system is in place.
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Approximate area of the location of the new sewage treatment plant on the Amherst Marsh

Polices

<i>Service Extensions</i>	MS-1 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that new development be located on incremental extensions of existing services, and that such existing services can handle the additional capacity generated by the new development.
<i>Service Capacity</i>	MS-2 It shall be the intention of Council to require that new municipal water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer services be built to a capacity capable of providing service to undeveloped lands beyond the immediate development area, when the development of such an area is dependant upon use of said services. It shall further be in the intention of Council to pay the incremental cost of such excess capacity and to recoup such costs upon development of the undeveloped lands outside the immediate development.
<i>Capital Works Program</i>	MS-5 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that a long term capital works program is established and updated in order to ensure a plan is in place to improve and maintain the towns municipal services infrastructure.
<i>Sewage Treatment Plant</i>	MS-6 It shall be the intention of Council to work towards the development of a sewage treatment plant to be located on the Town owned property on the marsh as indicated on Map 2
<i>Municipal Water Supply</i>	MS-7 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to take the lead role in the protection of the long term viability of the North Tyndal Wellfield.
<i>MWS Cooperation</i>	MS-8 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to cooperate with the Municipality of the County of Cumberland regarding the protection of the North Tyndal Wellfield where appropriate.
<i>MWS Land Acquisition</i>	MS-9 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to acquire land within the North Tyndal wellfield as ownership opportunities present themselves.
<i>Backup MWS</i>	MS-10 It shall be the intention of Council to secure and protect an appropriate short term backup water supply(s) in the event that transmission from the North Tyndal Wellfield is interrupted or the supply compromised.
<i>In-fill Development</i>	MS-11 It shall be the intention of Council to encourage and facilitate the development of vacant land located on existing municipal services in order to make more efficient use of such services.

<i>Fire Flows</i>	MS-13 It shall be the intention of Council to require that all new development be located within 150 metres of a fire hydrant.
<i>Unserviced Development</i>	MS-14 It shall be the intention of Council to limit unserviced development within the town; specifically, no development should be permitted north of Victoria Street and east of Willow Street until municipal sanitary sewer services can be provided.



Lions Park

3.2.6 Transportation

Objectives

- (a) **To establish and maintain an efficient system of public streets in order to facilitate traffic flow throughout the town.**
- (b) **To promote and facilitate pedestrian access to and within all new developments.**
- (c) **To provide an adequate supply of parking in the downtown commercial area.**

Policies

<i>Capital Works Program</i>	T-2 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that a long term capital works program is established and updated in order to ensure a plan is in place to improve and maintain the towns streets and transportation network.
<i>Sidewalks</i>	T-3 It shall be the intention of Council to improve pedestrian connections in the Town through the construction of new sidewalks, and the improvement of existing sidewalks, where and when appropriate.
<i>Barrier Free Access</i>	T-4 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that all aspects of the transportation system incorporate barrier free access where appropriate.
<i>Traffic Monitoring</i>	T-5 It shall be the intention of Council to develop a system to monitor traffic flow in order to recognize requirements for changes or upgrading throughout the system.
<i>Street Access Improvements</i>	T-7 It shall be the intention of Council to work with owners of property, particularly along South Albion Street, to improve the existing street access and appearance of the area.
<i>Pedestrian Access</i>	T-8 It shall be the intention of Council to require connecting pedestrian pathways from cul-de-sacs and other residential streets where appropriate or order to increase the safety and convenience of pedestrians.
<i>Parking</i>	T-9 It shall be the intention of Council to regulate requirements for parking in order to ensure that adequate, safe and efficient parking facilities are provided for all land uses.

<i>Downtown Parking</i>	T-10 It shall be the intention of Council to work with local property owners in order to provide safe, efficient and adequate parking facilities in the downtown commercial area.
<i>Snow Clearing</i>	T-11 It shall be the intention of Council to develop and maintain snow clearing policies in order to maximize the effectiveness of our snow clearing efforts, particularly in regards to emergency vehicle access.
<i>Street Reserves</i>	T-12 It shall be the policy of Council to illustrate the approximate locations of future street reserves in undeveloped areas of Town (Map 4). These street reserves represent an approximate location of future collector and arterial streets. Where such reserves are shown, a concept plan of subdivision will not be required by the Subdivision Bylaw.



New Sidewalk in Developing Commercial Area

3.2.7 Recreation

Objectives

- (a) To promote a healthy lifestyle for all town residents;
 - (b) To provide appropriate recreational and cultural facilities, which cater to a broad spectrum of interests and age groups;
 - (c) To ensure that sufficient public open space is provided in all areas of town to meet the year round recreational needs of all town residents;
 - (d) To establish a recreational trail system throughout the town;
 - (e) To ensure that high density residential developments have sufficient open space to provide some recreational opportunities to residents of such developments.
-



Current Renovations to the Amherst Stadium

RECREATION POLICIES

<i>Participation</i>	R-1 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that a variety of recreation programs and facilities are available to meet the diverse needs of Town residents.
<i>Schools</i>	R-3 It shall be the intention of Council to enter into an agreement with the Chignecto Regional School Board to ensure community access to school facilities when required for the delivery of a recreation program and they are not in direct use for school program purposes.
<i>Community Groups</i>	R-4 It shall be the intention of Council to help facilitate the delivery of recreational and cultural programs and activities by community organizations where those organizations are determined to be the best mode of service delivery and a defined benefit to the community can be recognized.
<i>Community Events</i>	R-7 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to facilitate and support major sporting and community events held within the town.
<i>Community Aesthetics</i>	R-8 It shall be the intention of Council to promote residents and businesses to beautify their properties in order to improve the general aesthetic appearance of the town
<i>Urban Gardens</i>	R-9 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to plant and maintain floral displays on prominent town owned property.
<i>Urban Forest</i>	R-10 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to maintain significant trees on town owned land and promote the retention / planting of trees on private property.
<i>Facility Priority</i>	R-11 It shall be the intention of Council to direct resources to the upgrading of existing facilities, rather than the development of new facilities.
<i>New Facilities</i>	R-12 It shall be the intention of Council to conduct a needs assessment prior to the development of any new recreational facility. Such an assessment shall include, but not be limited to an analysis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. demographics; b. potential market; c. revenue opportunities; d. service provision partnership opportunities;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. funding partnership opportunities; f. needs of target groups; and g. benefit to the overall community.
<i>Facility Maintenance</i>	R-13 It shall be the intention of Council to adopt a regular level of maintenance services for all town recreation facilities.
<i>Open Space Requirement</i>	R-16 It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that all newly developing residential areas of town be within reasonable access of public open space.
<i>Land Dedication at Subdivision</i>	<p>R-17 It shall be the intention of Council to require a public land dedication to be paid at the time of a residential subdivision. This requirement will be levied against all newly created residential lots capable of accommodating a dwelling.</p> <p>The required public land dedication shall be 5% of the area of land shown on the final plan of subdivision, exclusive of public streets and walkways.</p>
<i>Cash-in-lieu of Land</i>	R-18 It shall be the intention of Council to accept cash-in-lieu of land, where, in the opinion of Council, there is no land within the limits of the proposed subdivision desirable for public open space purposes or no additional recreation land is required in that neighbourhood.
<i>Land Outside Subdivision</i>	R-19 It shall be the intention of Council to accept land outside the area being subdivided, where, in the opinion of Council, there is no land within the limits of the proposed subdivision desirable for public open space purposes.
<i>Recreation Trail</i>	R-20 It shall be the intention of Council to acquire land for the development of a walking trail as illustrated on Map 5.
<i>High Density Open Space</i>	R-21 It shall be the intention of Council to require multiple unit residential properties to provide usable open space for use of residents on the site.



Walking Trail Between Willow and Donald Avenue

3.2.8 Environment

Objectives

- (i) To sustain or enhance the quality of the natural and manmade environment within the Town;
- (ii) To limit development within or on environmentally sensitive lands, particularly Dickey Brook;
- (iv) To promote a high degree of landscaping in all areas of town.

Policies

<i>Flood Plain Zone</i>	E-1 It shall be the intention of Council to include in the land use bylaw a Flood Plain zone. Such a zone shall be permitted in all land use designations and shall be applied to the flood plain of Dickey Brook. The flood plain zone will limit development to those uses which will not be negatively impacted by any potential flooding which may occur.
<i>Storm Water Management</i>	E-2 It shall be the intention of Council to include storm water management practices in the Subdivision Bylaw to ensure that new development does not increase the peak flows of the down stream portion of Dickey Brook.
<i>Dickey Brook Rehabilitation</i>	E-3 It shall be the intention of Council to work towards the environmental rehabilitation of Dickey Brook.
<i>Air Quality</i>	E-4 It shall be the intention of Council to discourage the development of industries which could have a potential to decrease the air quality of the area.
<i>Blair Lake</i>	E-5 It shall be the intention of Council to minimize sources of pollution within that portion of the Blair Lake Watershed, which lies within the Town boundary, through appropriate development and infrastructure requirements.
<i>Tree Strategy</i>	E-6 It shall be the intention of Council to undertake an annual tree planting program to offset the impact of probable future losses of trees to disease. It shall further be the intention of Council to give priority to the following areas in the tree planting program: Church Street , East Victoria Street , West Victoria Street , Willow Street (portions with curbs) , Amherst and Area Industrial

	Park Town parks and green areas
<i>Landscaping</i>	E-7 It shall be the intention of Council to encourage a high degree of landscaping in all developments within the Town.



Blair Lake

3.3 Future Sustainability Actions of the Municipal Planning Strategy

In addition to the polices listed in the previous section, there are a number of specific future actions which lead to sustainable outcomes, they are:

“IP-5 It shall be the intention of Council, in partnership with industry and other levels of government, to extend water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer, and to re-construct Race Track Road to industrial park standards.”

“IP-6 It shall be the intention of Council, in partnership with local land owners and other levels government, to secure a road access to the area of the Amherst and Area Industrial Park on the south side of the Trans-Canada Highway. It shall further be the intention of Council to provide municipal water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer to this area when the land is required for industrial development.”

These actions will result in further industrial development being concentrated within the urban core area of Amherst. This will reduce future urban sprawl and ensure employment opportunities are in close proximity to the local labor force.

MS-6 It shall be the intention of Council to work towards the development of a sewage treatment plant to be located on the Town owned property on the marsh.

Council has dedicated 100% of the money received from the first round of the Municipal Funding Agreement to the construction of this sewage treatment plant. This will result in 100% of Town sewage being treated to a ‘Secondary’ level. Construction is planned to commence in 2009.

MS-9 It shall be the intention of Council to continue to acquire land within the North Tyndal wellfield as ownership opportunities present themselves.

This action will result in increased land ownership within the Town’s water supply. Ownership offers the best level of protection possible for the water supply.

T-3 It shall be the intention of Council to work towards the construction of sidewalks on all arterial and collector streets where and when appropriate.

R-20 It shall be the intention of Council to acquire land for the development of a walking trail as illustrated on [MPS] Map 5.

These actions will result in a safer pedestrian environment, reduced reliance on automobile and improved health of residents through increased levels of physical fitness.

E-3 It shall be the intention of Council to work towards the environmental rehabilitation of Dickey Brook.

This action will improve water quality within and outside of the Town.

E-6 *It shall be the intention of Council to undertake an annual tree planting program to offset the impact of probable future losses of trees to disease. It shall further be the intention of Council to give priority to the following areas in the tree planting program: Church Street , East Victoria Street , West Victoria Street , Willow Street (portions with curbs) , Amherst and Area Industrial Park Town parks and green areas*

This action will result in an improved urban forest which will reduce heat within the urban core of the town, improve air quality, and add to the general aesthetic appeal and quality of life of the town and it's residents.



Robbs Ball Fields

4.0 Contributions to Sustainable Outcomes

4.1 Municipal Funding Agreement Project - Sewer Treatment Plant

Amherst Town Council has committed 100% of the money available from the first phase of the Municipal Funding Agreement to the construction of a new sewage treatment plant. This plant will treat 100% of the sewage generated within the Town. Construction of this plant is planned to commence in 2009.

This plant is to be constructed on the Amherst Marsh approximately two kilometers west of town. The outfall will be just downstream of an aboiteau on the LaPlanche River, about 3 kilometers from the Bay of Fundy.

This plant will have a primary treatment system provided by aerated lagoons and will utilize a man made 'natural' secondary treatment system via treatment wetlands to be designed and operated in consultation with Ducks Unlimited Canada.

This new facility will result in the removal of three million cubic metres per year of untreated wastewater from the receiving waters of the Bay of Fundy.

4.2 Policies and Provisions of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

There are many policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy that contribute to cleaner water, cleaner air and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. These policies have been listed in a previous section of this document. They will not be repeated here. Rather, a summary of the desired and expected outcomes of all of the relevant polices will be presented.

4.2.1 Cleaner Water

There are four main bodies of water which are within or in close proximity to the Town of Amherst; Dickey Brook, Blair Lake, LaPlanche River and the Bay of Fundy. The Town's MPS includes policies that speak to improve the quality of the water contained within each.

Regarding Dickey Brook, policies limit development within the floodplain, regulate storm water peak flows to the watercourse, and state that it shall be the intention of Council to work towards the environmental rehabilitation of Dickey Brook.

Regarding Blair Lake, policy states that it shall be the intention of Council to minimize sources of pollution within that portion of the Blair Lake Watershed, which lies within the Town boundary, through appropriate development and infrastructure requirements.

Regarding the LaPlanche River, Council had a policy requiring the collection of all sewer outfalls into the River. This was completed by the construction of the North Town Collector.

Regarding the Bay of Fundy, the completion of the Town's new sewer treatment plant will result in the treatment, to a secondary level, of three million cubic metres of sewage into this body of water.

4.2.2 Cleaner Air

Various policies of the MPS will result in cleaner air within and around the Town by restrictions on the location of heavy polluting industries within the industrial park, and the establishment of a tree retention and planting program within the town.

4.2.3 Reduced Greenhouse Gases

The very nature of the Municipal Planning Strategy will result in a reduced amount of greenhouse gases being produced within the Town. All policies directly or indirectly lead to greenhouse gas emission reductions by requiring efficient development, infill development, allowing for higher density redevelopment, encouraging the retention of the existing housing stock, the provision of parks, sidewalks and walking trails, and allowing home occupations and neighborhood daycare centres. Policies aimed at employment and retail growth reduce the amount of trips out of the community for services which were once not available within the town.

The above result is a community where commuting times are lessened and vehicular trips are reduced and replaced by active transportation opportunities which directly reduces vehicular greenhouse gas emissions.

The retention of the existing housing and other building stock reduces the need for new raw materials and their transportation. It is much more efficient for renovate existing than building new buildings.

Increased employment and retail growth has lead to a reduction in the number of day trips to other larger centres for services formally not offered in the area, leading to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

5.0 Statements of Provincial Interest

The Municipal Government Act includes the following five statements of Provincial Interest:

- Drinking Water
- Flood Risk Areas
- Agricultural Land
- Infrastructure
- Housing

As stated in the MGA, “These statements of Provincial interest recognize the importance of our land and water resources. The statements also address issues related to the future growth of our communities. They are intended to serve as guiding principles to help Provincial Government departments, municipalities and individuals in making decisions regarding land use. They are supportive of the principles of sustainable development on the following matters.”

5.1 Municipal Planning Strategy Consistent with Provincial Interest

5.1.1 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.

Technically, this statement does not apply to the Town of Amherst as the Town does not contain a flood plain designated under the Canada – Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program. However, the MPS does include provisions to regulate development within the Dickey Brook floodplain as well as regulations concerning storm water runoff into the Brook.

5.1.2 Drinking Water

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

The MPS contains many policies aimed at protecting the quality of the Town's municipal drinking water supply. They include such things as inter-municipal cooperation, purchase of property, and adoption of a land use bylaw. Furthermore, the recharge area is designated as a protected water supply under the Provincial Environment Act.



North Tyndal Well Field Protected Municipal Drinking Water Supply Area

5.1.3 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.

Technically, this statement does not apply to the Town of Amherst as the Town does not contain a flood plain designated under the Canada – Nova Scotia Flood Damage Reduction Program. However, the MPS does include provisions to regulate development within the Dickey Brook floodplain as well as regulations concerning storm water runoff into the Brook.

5.1.4 Agricultural Land

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

The MGA states, “Existing land-use patterns, economic conditions and the location and size of agricultural holdings means not all areas can be protected for food production, e.g., when agricultural land is located within an urban area”.

Given the limited amount of land within the urban area of the town of Amherst and our existing development patterns, the MPS allows for urban development on the existing agricultural land within the town.

Taken in a regional context, allowing urban development on fully serviced agricultural land adjacent to existing residential, commercial and industrial development encourages efficient urban growth and preserves agricultural lands farther from the regional urban core where these uses are more appropriate and sustainable.

5.1.5 Infrastructure

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

The MPS contains several policies which promote and require efficient use of municipal infrastructure. These range from promoting infill development and prohibiting on site sewage disposal systems, to requiring that all new developments be properly planned and integrated into the Town's water and sewer systems.

5.1.6 Housing

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

The MPS contains policies allowing and promoting many different housing types within the town. Policies promote infill development and allow for a range of housing types in all built up residential areas of the town.