




Port Hawkesbury: Concept Development Plan

DESTINATION REEVES STREET

FINAL REPORT
JULY 2015

Strait Area Chamber of Commerce

 **EKISTICS PLANNING & DESIGN**

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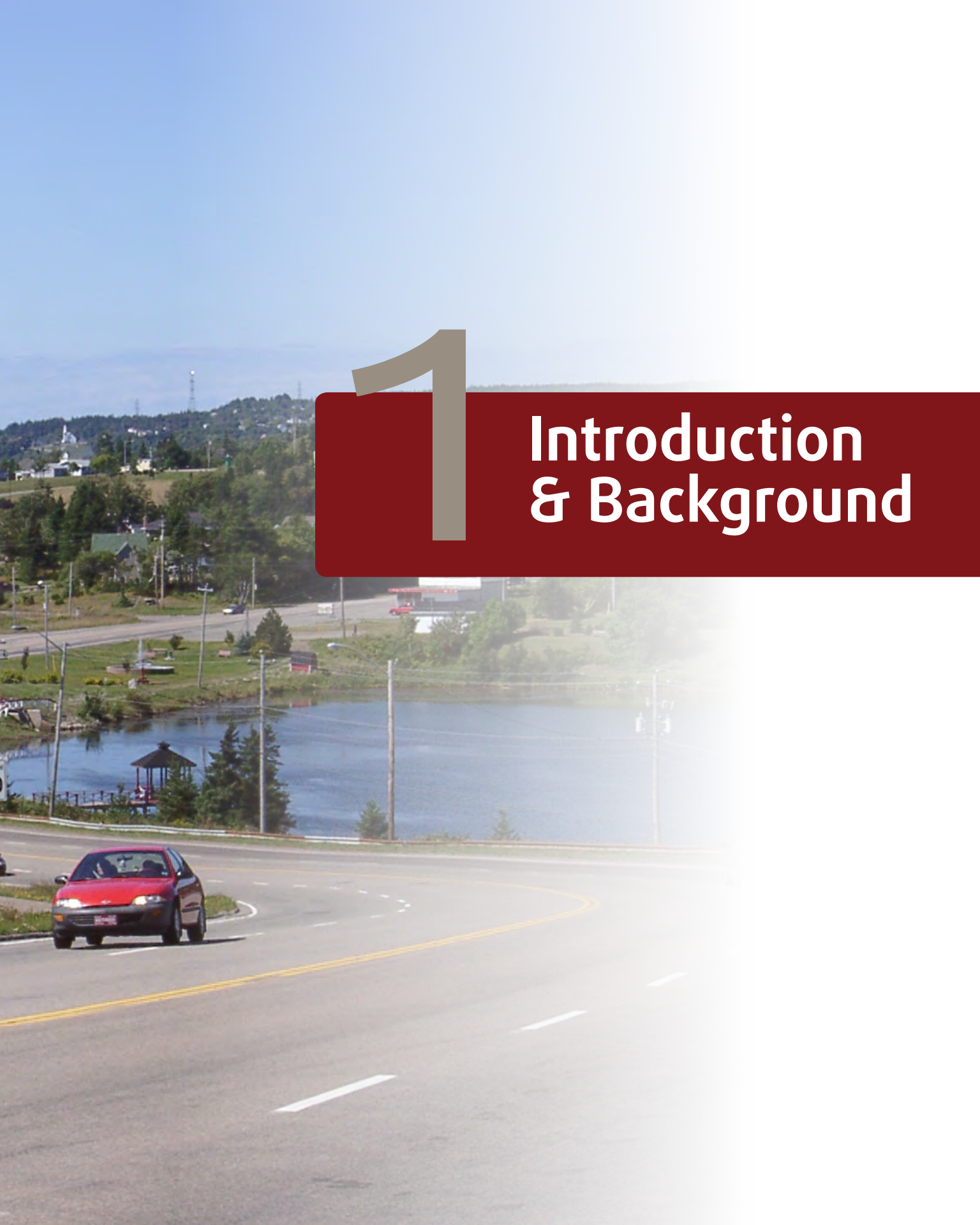
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Introduction & Background



01: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Project

During the summer of 2014, the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce and Town of Port Hawkesbury issued a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) to prepare a Conceptual Development Plan for Port Hawkesbury that focused on the future of Reeves Street; the main commercial corridor through the Town. This conceptual development plan comes on the heels of the Reeves Street Safety Study (WSP, 2014) that outlined safety recommendations and transportation improvements to the Reeves Street corridor, and it builds on previous studies including the Reeves and Granville Streetscape Study (Ekistics, 2004), and the Imagine 2030 (Solutions Inc & Ekistics, 2011).

This plan has been designed as a comprehensive yet simple go forward strategy for improving the Reeves Street corridor; from the public street right-of-way and public open spaces along the corridor to the privately owned lands that abut the corridor. The plan aims to:

- › Improve the economic development potential of the corridor, encouraging more businesses and additional mixed use developments for new residents
- › Enhance the aesthetics and character of the street and the developments that front it
- › Encourage façade improvements for existing businesses

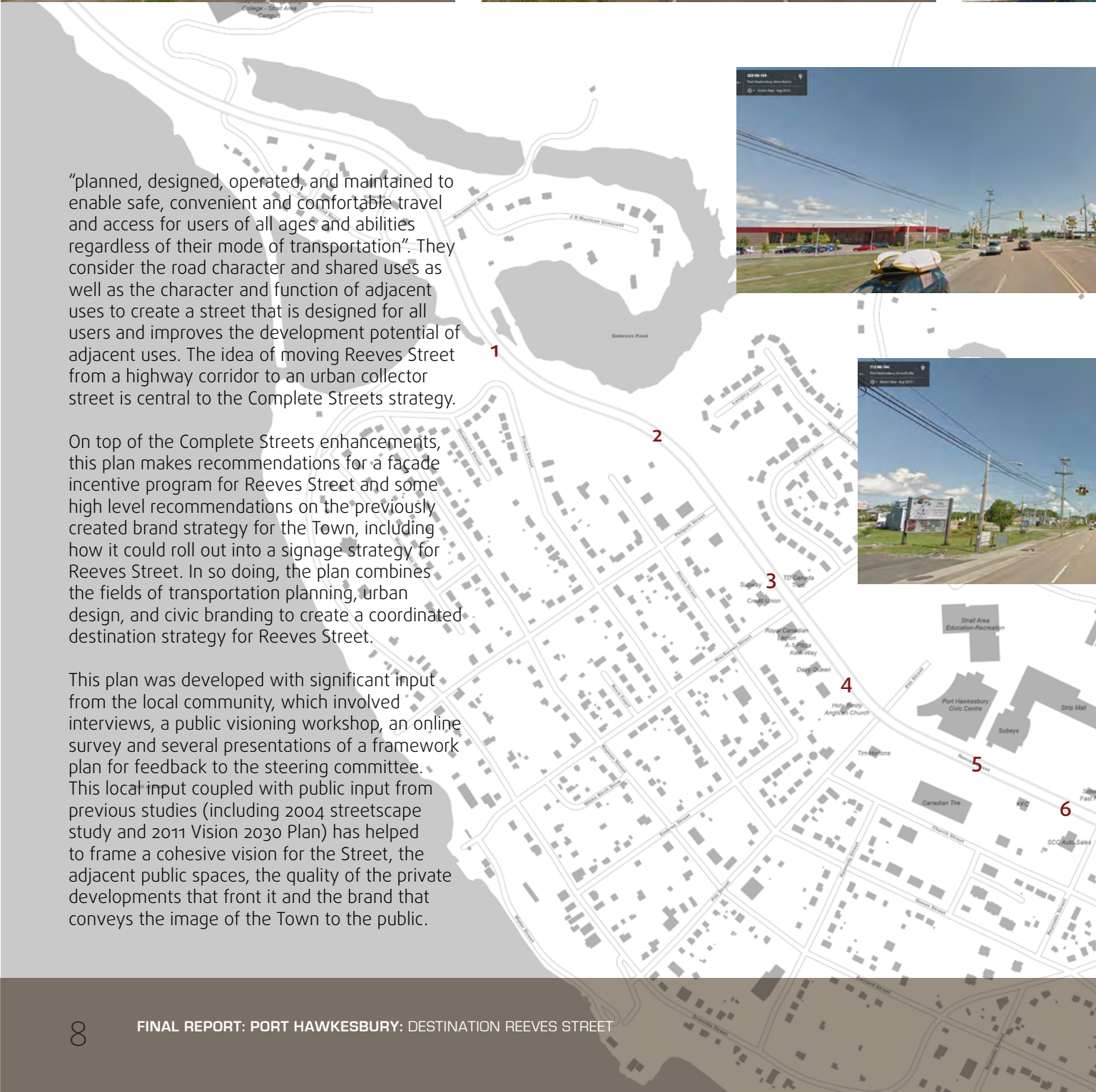
- › Improve the safety and functionality of the road network for cars, cyclists and pedestrians
- › Improve the quality of future developments on Reeves Street.
- › Improve the tourism draw potential of Reeves Street and surrounding areas.

The timing of the plan is important for the Town. With discussions of an eventual highway bypass around the Town (no firm dates are set for the initiative), the impact of reduced traffic has both positive and negative impacts for businesses on Reeves Street. A strategy like this one takes years to implement, so work needs to begin immediately to improve Reeves Street's destination appeal. These will include incorporating multi-family housing and mixed use development on the corridor, improving parks and open space for new and existing residents, ensuring future development form encourages a walkable community, creating better connections to the waterfront and other signature Town spaces, improving the façades of existing businesses, better integrating the NSCC campus into the downtown, expanding the network of trails and natural areas in the Town and improving the Town's brand and signage to encourage more tourism traffic. This study presents a framework for capitalizing on improvements over time to increase the street's destination appeal for residents, businesses and tourists.

The foundation of this plan leverages a new movement called Complete Streets, and as such, is one of the first Complete Streets plans in Atlantic Canada. Complete Streets are

DESTINATION REEVES STREET





“planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation”. They consider the road character and shared uses as well as the character and function of adjacent uses to create a street that is designed for all users and improves the development potential of adjacent uses. The idea of moving Reeves Street from a highway corridor to an urban collector street is central to the Complete Streets strategy.

On top of the Complete Streets enhancements, this plan makes recommendations for a façade incentive program for Reeves Street and some high level recommendations on the previously created brand strategy for the Town, including how it could roll out into a signage strategy for Reeves Street. In so doing, the plan combines the fields of transportation planning, urban design, and civic branding to create a coordinated destination strategy for Reeves Street.

This plan was developed with significant input from the local community, which involved interviews, a public visioning workshop, an online survey and several presentations of a framework plan for feedback to the steering committee. This local input coupled with public input from previous studies (including 2004 streetscape study and 2011 Vision 2030 Plan) has helped to frame a cohesive vision for the Street, the adjacent public spaces, the quality of the private developments that front it and the brand that conveys the image of the Town to the public.

DESTINATION REEVES STREET

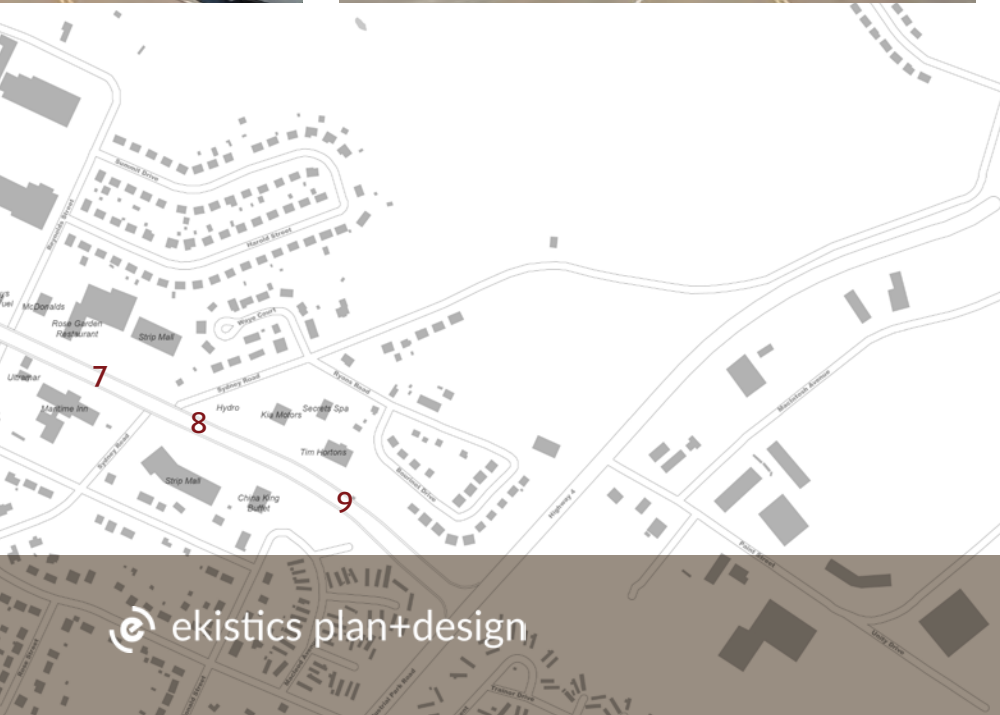
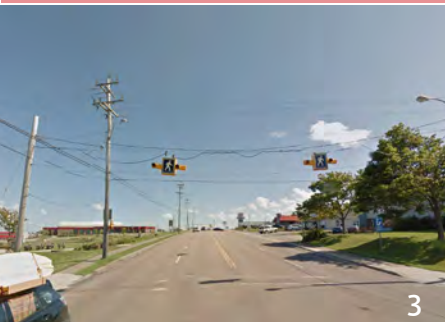


Figure 1.1
Reeves Street Existing Conditions

1.2 History of the Community

Port Hawkesbury has a rich history of growth, industrial expansion, innovation and steadfastness. This history of remaking itself over time to capitalize on the latest employment and commerce trends is a hallmark of the Town's ingenuity. In the future, the NSCC campus, its students, tourism and growth in the creative economy will help fuel the Town's growth; in addition to the town's existing industrial economic base. The Understanding the town's history is central to shaping its future.

Originally named Ship Harbour, after the harbour on which it is located, the community built ships for timber export in the mid-19th century, and was an important fish processing location. The name of the town changed to Port Hawkesbury in 1860 to honour the British Baron of the same name, who presided over the Committee for Trade and Plantations in the 18th century. Port Hawkesbury's original settlers were Scottish, followed by French and Irish. Loyalist settlers later arrived from the United States. The town incorporated in 1889, making it one of oldest towns in Nova Scotia.

As an important access point via ferry, Port Hawkesbury anecdotally came to be known as the Front Porch of Cape Breton. The Canso Causeway, built in 1955

at nearby Port Hastings, led to the loss of the ferry terminus and railway centre. However, it also resulted in the ice free, deep-water port facilities, enabling industrial development to establish and become an important figure in the region's economy. At nearby Point Tupper, its industrial generating station, deep-water port and docks/jetty's, and ample industrial land have seen large scale industries come and go over time. The shuttering of the NewPage mill in 2011, created a scare for over 1000 direct jobs in and around Port Hawkesbury; however, in 2012 the mill was sold to Pacific West Commercial Corporation, which restarted production, and today creates over 1,100 Full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs while generating \$24 million in direct labour annually. The wax and wane of industry over time underscores the need for diversifying the economic base of the Town. But, its strategic location, ample industrial land base, its power plant, and its ice-free deep-water port offer significant industrial advantages for future industries.

Recent History

Port Hawkesbury received Canada-wide recognition in 1960's as a planned showcase for large scale industrial development, with federal and provincial funding. This created a boom-town atmosphere with the addition of a pulp mill, the Gulf Oil refinery, a Nova Scotia Power station and the Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. Heavy Water Plant in adjacent Richmond County, and maintained



Figure 1.2
Aerial Photo of Civic Centre - 1937



Port Hawkesbury as a key location for residential settlement and the services needed to support industry. The construction of Reeves Street as a Provincial Highway to service these industries drew the town focal point away from the public wharf and Granville Street as Reeves Street became the primary commercial and service corridor at the edge of town. Reeves Street originally skirted the northeastern fringes of town, but in recent years, development has leapfrogged the street and continued on to the north. Recent discussion of a bypass highway to the north of Reeves Street will improve traffic safety on the street, without significantly reducing regional destination traffic. It will, however, impact future tourism traffic through the Town as it did in Antigonish when the highway bypassed the Town in 2012. This underscores the need for a destination strategy for Reeves Street long in advance of a bypass.

The NSCC educates over 25,000 students per year across Nova Scotia and its students add \$1.4 billion (3.7% GDP) to the Provincial Economy. NSCC employs over 1600 full-time equivalent employees with a payroll of \$141 million and another \$62 million to support day-to-day spending. The Strait Area Campus in Port Hawkesbury has over 700 students, and 120 employees and is home to the Nautical Institute. Extrapolating from the Provincial figures, the Strait Area Campus students contribute over \$40 million to the local economy, \$4 million in salaries, and \$1.7 million in direct spending. There are no residences on campus and most students live in rentals in Town.

► **Figure 1.3 - 1.7**
 (Top Left) Paving Town of Port Hawkesbury - 1933
 (Top Right) Port Hawkesbury Inverness Co. - N.A.
 (Bottom Left) Port Hawkesbury Ferry Wharf - 1949
 (Bottom Right) Port Hawkesbury Aerial - 1982







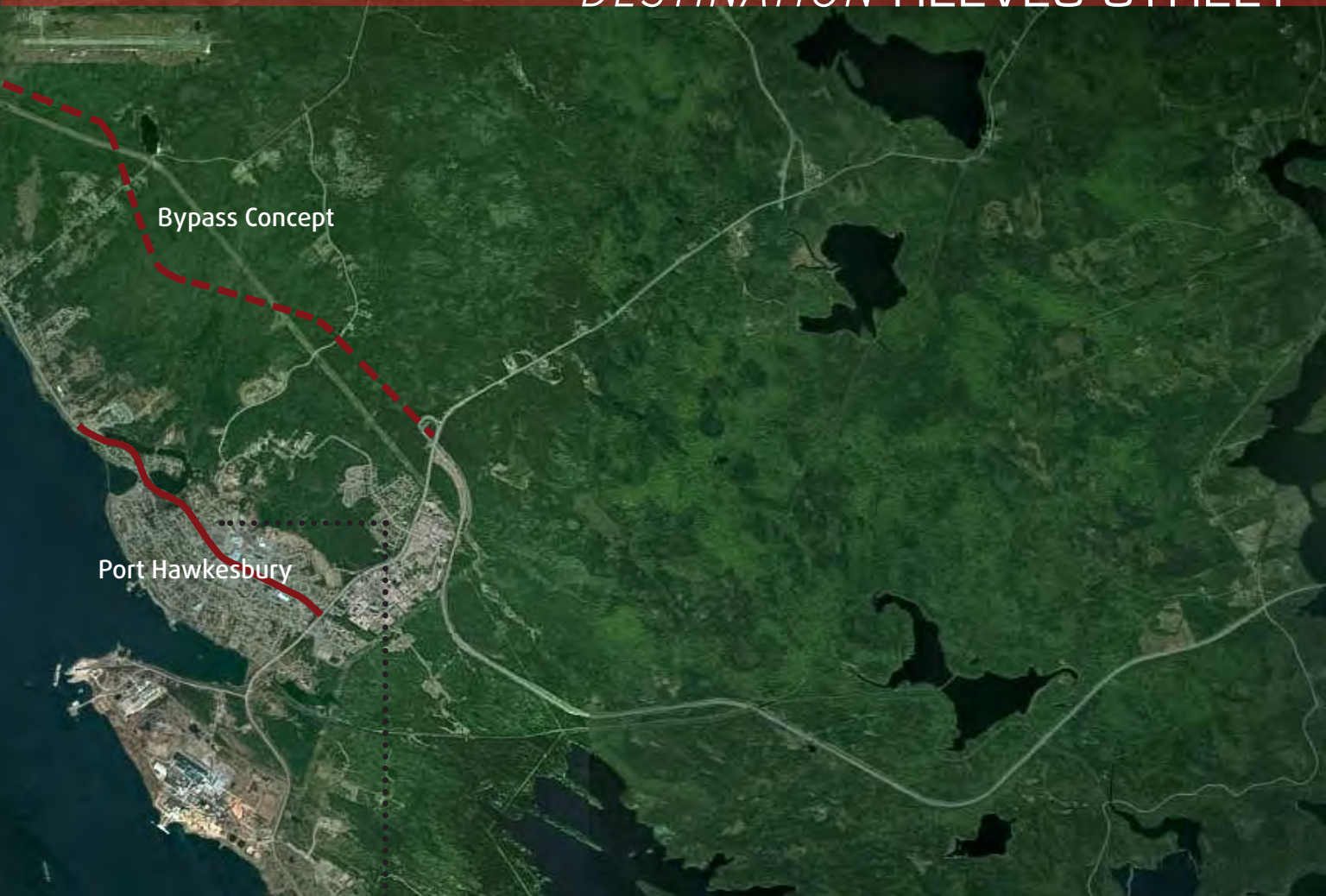
1.3 Street Context

Port Hawkesbury's strong industrial base has positioned the Town as the regional service centre for the Strait of Canso area and western Cape Breton Island. As stated in their Municipal Planning Strategy, Port Hawkesbury will continue its role as a vibrant regional centre for the entire Strait of Canso area. The Town's excellent commercial, recreational and educational facilities will continue to draw visitors into the community, and make the Town an attractive place to live for residents. As the site for the majority of commercial and institutional organizations and industry support, Reeves Street plays a large role in Port Hawkesbury's ability to act as the regional centre offering these necessary facilities to draw visitors and residents.

Over the last decade, the Province has developed conceptual alignment options for a new highway bypass around Port Hawkesbury from Port Hastings that would serve to connect

Trans-Canada Highway 105 with the provincial Highway 104 further north of the Town. A similar strategy was recently completed through Antigonish moving the TCH from the old #4 Highway to a dedicated Highway 104. While there is no certain timeline for this new highway alignment, in 2014, NSTIR commissioned a Reeves Street safety study to look at possible safety changes for a 2.5km section of Reeves Street. The study was designed to assess improvements using current traffic volumes, not considering the changes that may eventually result from a 104 bypass. The safety study recommended some intersection improvements, the need to integrate active transportation (using both a multi-use trail and onstreet cycling lanes), and the possibility for road dieting (reducing from 4 lanes to a 3 lane shared turning centre-lane).

While the safety study recommends detailed road changes for Reeves Street, this Completes Streets study builds on the recommendations of the safety study to maximize the visual



impact of streetscape changes, improve the pedestrian experience, and outline the most desirable future for the bordering properties on its fringes. If and when the bypass goes through, the recommended changes to Reeves Street will have even more significance as trucks and traffic not destined for Port Hawkesbury are removed from the Street. At that point it will be important that Reeves Street shed its 4-lane highway profile for a more urban collector road profile.

Changing the street cross section of Reeves street is just one part of the puzzle in improving the quality of the commercial experience. This study also looks at the need for open space improvements (parks, trails, gateways), infill redevelopment improvements, façade improvements and branding and identity improvements. The development of Reeves Street as a Complete Street aligns with both the present and future goals of Port Hawkesbury and Reeves Street while simultaneously addressing existing safety concerns due to truck traffic along the street.

Economic Impact of the Bypass

In 2004, prior to the TCH bypassing Antigonish, the Province studied the probable impacts of the bypass on the Town businesses (2006, Economic Impacts of Highway Bypass Development on Communities) and suggested that, based on previous studies for towns of the same scale:

- › The construction of a bypass has either no effect or a modest negative effect on the community;
- › The opening of a bypass route reduces aggregate retail sales, but does not have a significant effect on retail employment,

total employment or population levels;

- › The bypass is more likely to encourage total employment growth if the bypass has partial access control, and is located close to the downtown sector;
- › The presence of a bypass influences the business mix in the downtown area; and
- › Many of the government officials, media representatives and business people agreed that the bypass promoted growth and improved quality of life.

There have been no subsequent studies of the economic impact after the highways opening in 2012, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that smaller highway related retail has suffered and some have relocated, but all in all, there have been negligible impacts from the highway relocation. The Town did create a Gateway Strategy (Ekistics 2011) prior to the change over, and the signage strategy has gone a long way to encouraging those that don't know what the Town has to offer to come into the Town. NSTIR worked closely with the community to implement their vision for signage and it looks to have paid off.

The anticipated impacts on Port Hawkesbury, and in particular Reeves Street, from a future bypass would likely be similar to Antigonish. We might expect:

- › Little commercial impact on the street because the regional service nature of the Town wouldn't change.
- › Improved road safety with significant reductions in truck traffic.
- › Reduced tourism traffic unless signage, and destination tourism events are improved
- › Improved opportunities for multi-unit housing and mixed use development on Reeves Street as a result of reduced trucks and more local traffic



▲ Figure 1.8
Birdseye View looking northwest along Reeves Street

1.4 Town Demographics:

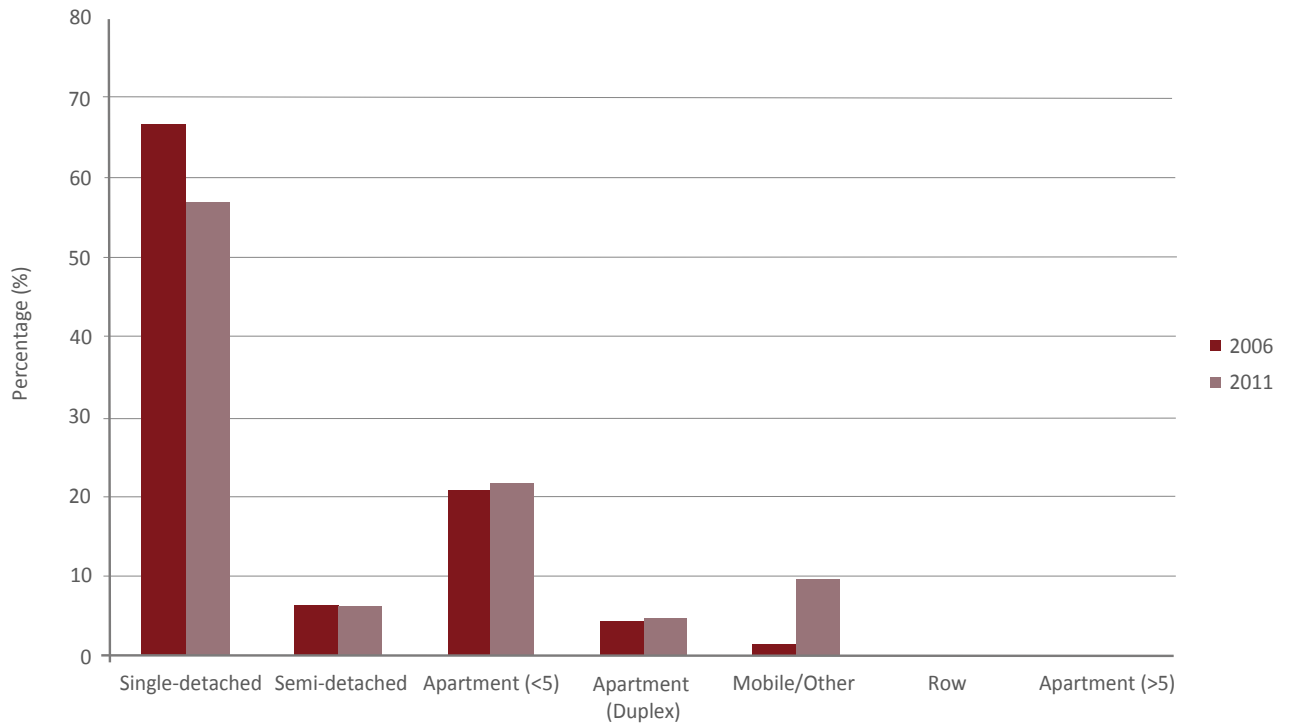
Demographics can offer insight into a place, creating a snapshot of the people and composition of the town. Demographic trends, on the other hand, present the changes over time, which result from changing economic development trends.

As Port Hawkesbury developed into the business and professional hub of the Strait of Canso area, the presence of the mill, the harbour, the railway and airport have supported many of the jobs in the region. These industries offer employment opportunities for residents and neighbouring communities. This is confirmed through census tabulations, as the main industries in the community for the last 4 census periods have been retail and manufacturing.

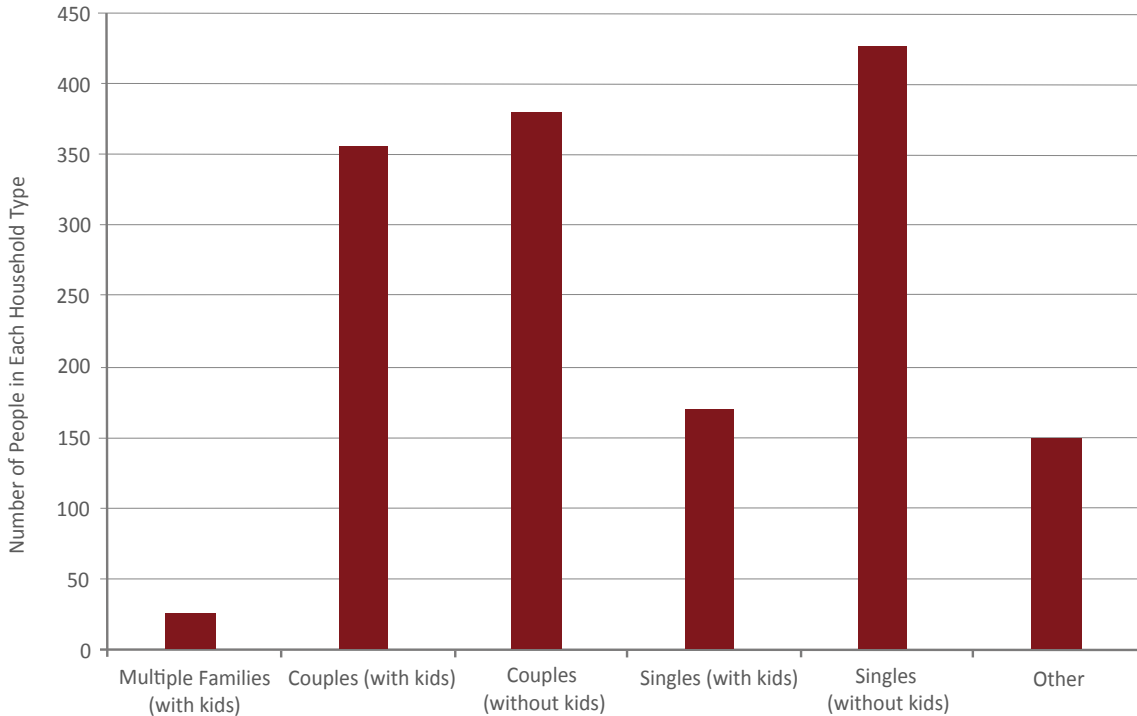
Changes in the industrial economy of Port Hawkesbury have been reflected in changes to the population of the Town and region. Since 1991 there has been a decline of, on-average, 150 people every 5 years. Residents, especially youth, have been leaving for better employment opportunities in Western Canada. Some work temporarily in western Canada and return to their homes in Port Hawkesbury at different times of the year. With the most recent 2015 decline in oil prices, many of the jobs out west are being eliminated and there are fears this will directly impact housing and employment in Port Hawkesbury.

As with most rural communities in Nova Scotia, Port Hawkesbury's population is trending towards an aging population with more than 30% over the age of 55. Of the 1500 households, majority are single without children, followed closely by couples without children. This lack of child





▲ Figure 1.9
Housing Trends from 2006 - 2011

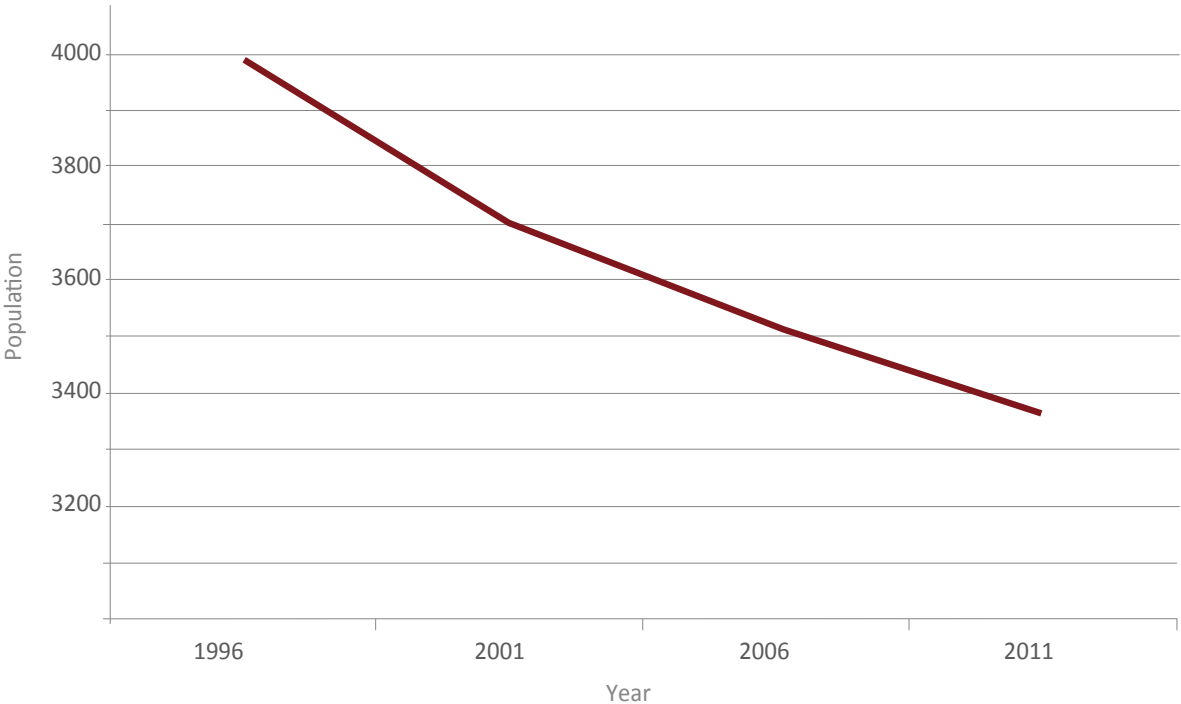


▲ Figure 1.10
Household Characteristics

households in conjunction with the trend of youth moving out west for jobs will severely impact the economic viability of the town if opportunities to attract youth to stay in Port Hawkesbury are not realized. Currently Port Hawkesbury is at an advantage to attract youth with the occurrence of NSCC Strait Campus within Town.

As Reeves Street transitions from a highway commercial to an urban collector corridor the addition of multi-family housing and mixed use

development will bring people into the area and encourage the inclusion of main street characteristics. Since the 2006 census, housing trends in the region have shown a decrease in single-family homes and an increase in multi-units such as semi-detached housing, duplexes and apartments under 5 storeys. This trend in conjunction with the need for affordable housing for NSCC students supports a shift in development from detached homes to multi-family units



▲ Figure 1.11
Changes in Population

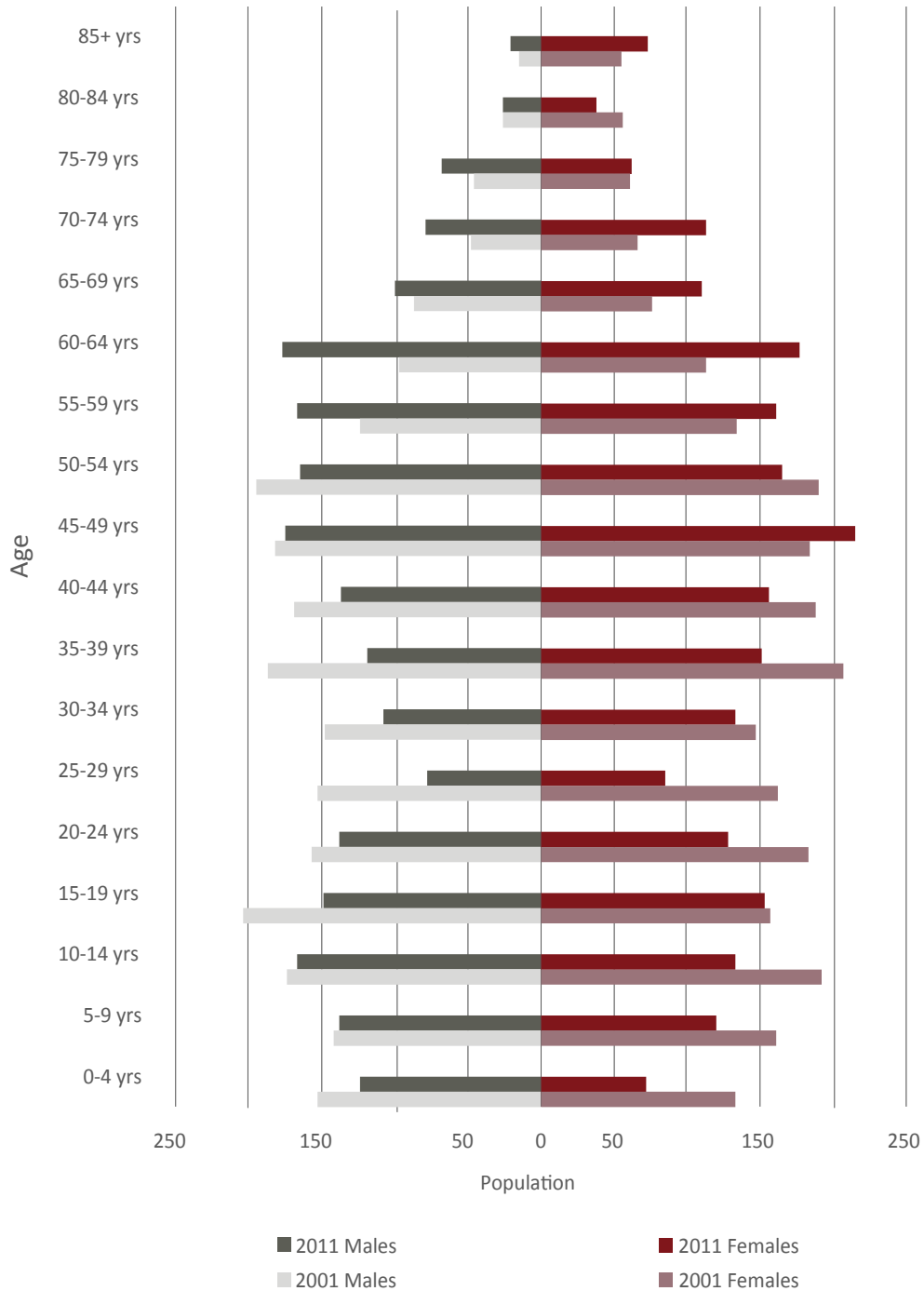


Figure 1.12
Population by Age

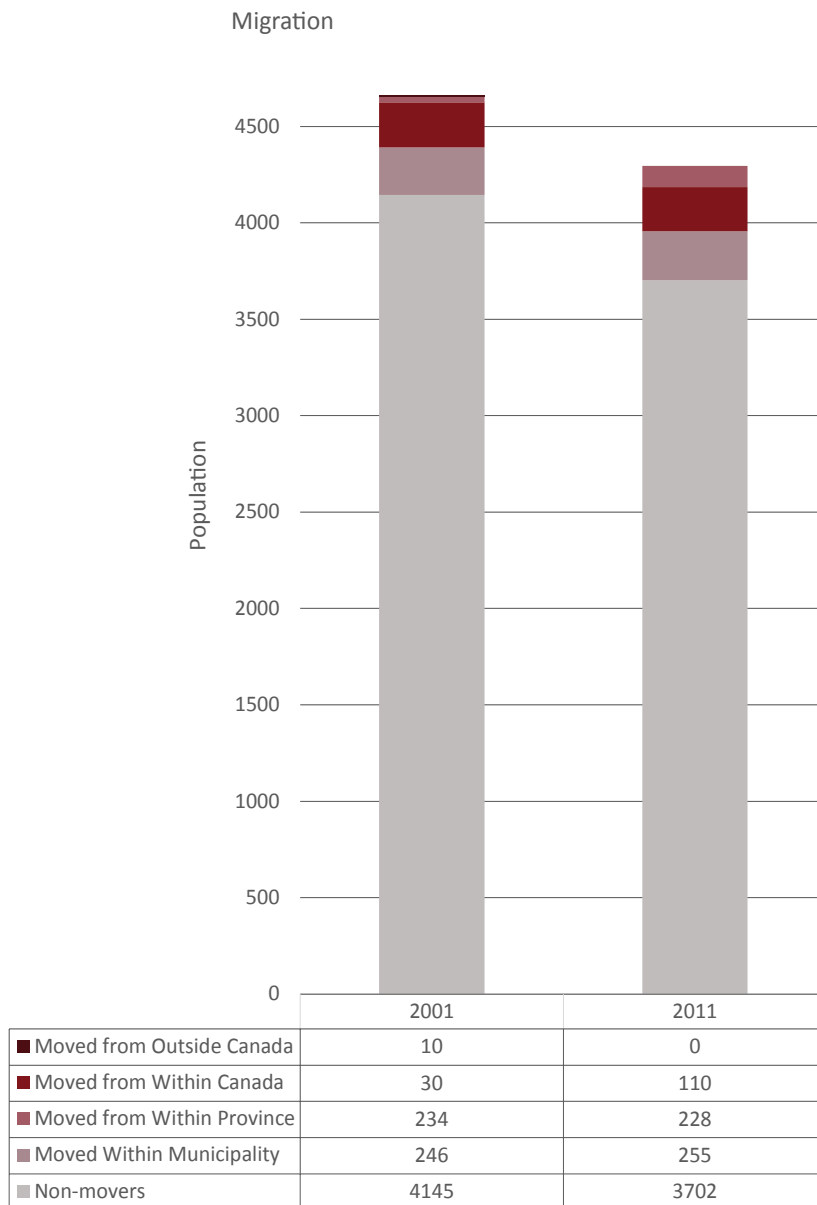


1.5 2010 Visitor Exit Survey

Every 5 years the Province undertakes a visitor exit survey. The 2015 VES is due late next year. In the meantime, the 2010 data provides some useful visitor profile information on the Cape Breton tourist. This data is essential in understanding how to position Reeves Street for future tourist traffic and services.

- 19% of the 1.95 million visitors to NS visited Cape Breton (370,000 visitors)
- Tourism brought in \$251 million in 2010 (avg. \$678 per person)
- Most tourists to Cape Breton come from Atlantic Canada (29%), Ontario (28%), Western Canada (13%), US (18%), Quebec (6%), Overseas (8%).
- 47% come as a couple, 13% come alone, 27% come with families,
- The average length of stay was 8.2 nights. Those travelling by RV (8.7 nights), those travelling by car (6.4nights), Business travellers (4.6 nights)
- 50% of visitors visited a museum or historic site (compared with 25% of all NS visitors), 22% saw a live music performance (compared with 13% for all NS visitors), 34% went hiking (compared with 16% for all NS visitors), 38% went coastal sight seeing (compared with 17% of all NS visitors).
- Those who included Cape Breton in their trip were more than twice as likely as all visitors to Nova Scotia to be first time visitors to the province (29% Cape Breton vs 13% NS).
- Three-quarters of visitors to Cape Breton visited the province between June and September. 29% visited in the month of August.
- Three in ten visitors including Cape Breton in their trip were aged 55 to 64 years, followed by 45 to 54 (26%), 35 to 44 (15%), and 25 to 34 (14%). One in ten Cape Breton visitors were over the age of 65, and four percent were under the age of 25.
- Just over one-half of Cape Breton visitors have completed a university education, while two in ten have completed college.
- 93% of visitors prefer English with 6% preferring French.

These results provide a good profile of the Cape Breton visitor and have implications for how to attract and retain tourism traffic in Port Hawkesbury.

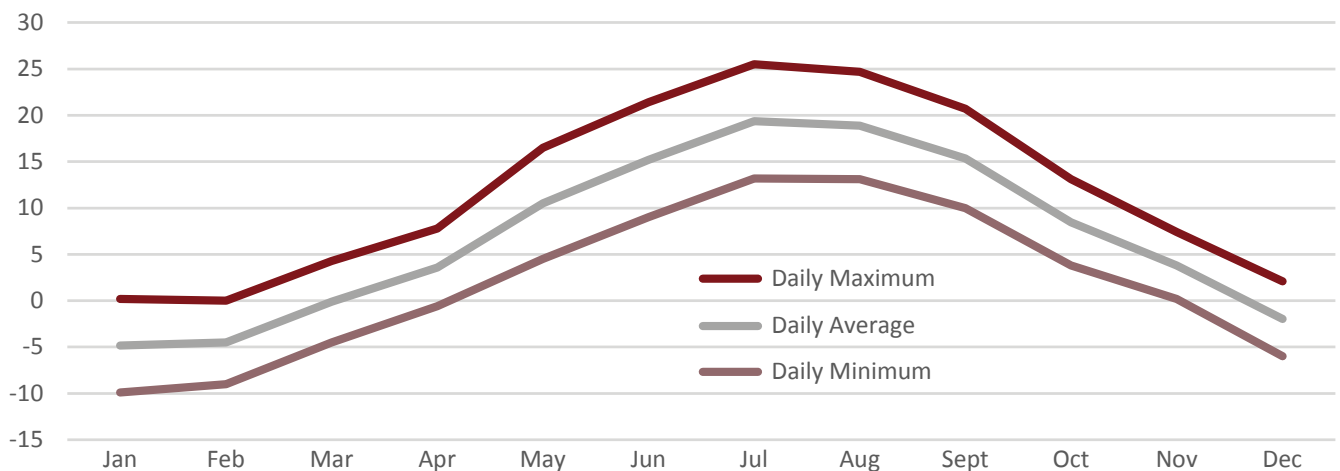


▲ Figure 1.13
Visitor Exit Survey

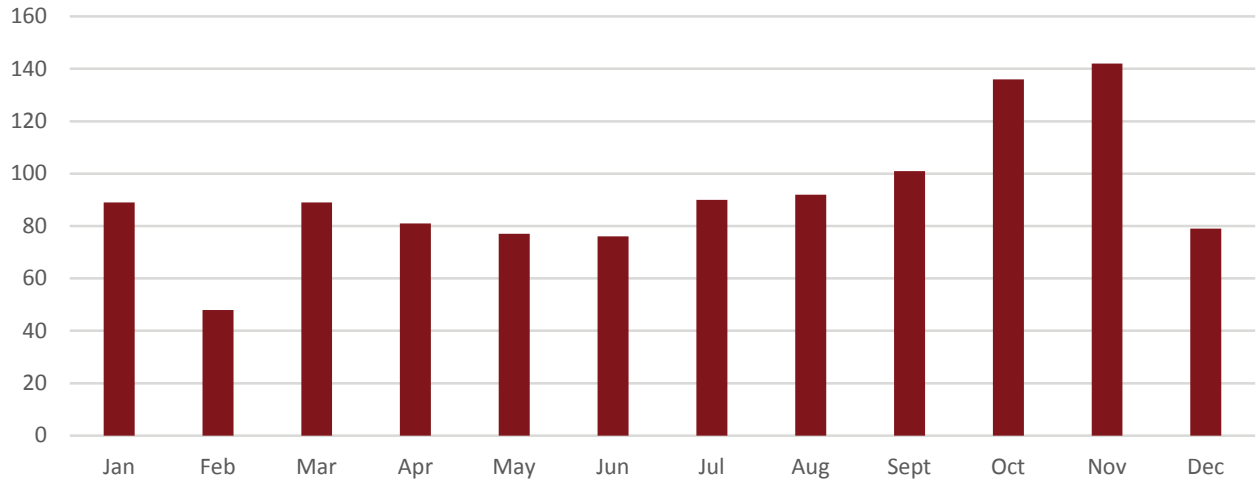
1.6 Climate

Weather conditions are an important determiner for a Complete Streets strategy. Cold sub-zero temperatures in Cape Breton are amplified in coastal communities and these impacts are particularly pronounced on western coastal areas where the prevailing westerly winter winds can cause frequent wind chills off the water impacting pedestrians and road conditions. The introduction of an on-street bike lane provides additional snow storage in the winter improving conditions for vehicles and pedestrians that might otherwise make the sidewalks impassable due to snow storage. These same extreme winter conditions cause havoc on steep streets like the northern end of Reeves Street. The two lanes on the steep entry road are beneficial during rain and winter snowfalls offering safe passing.

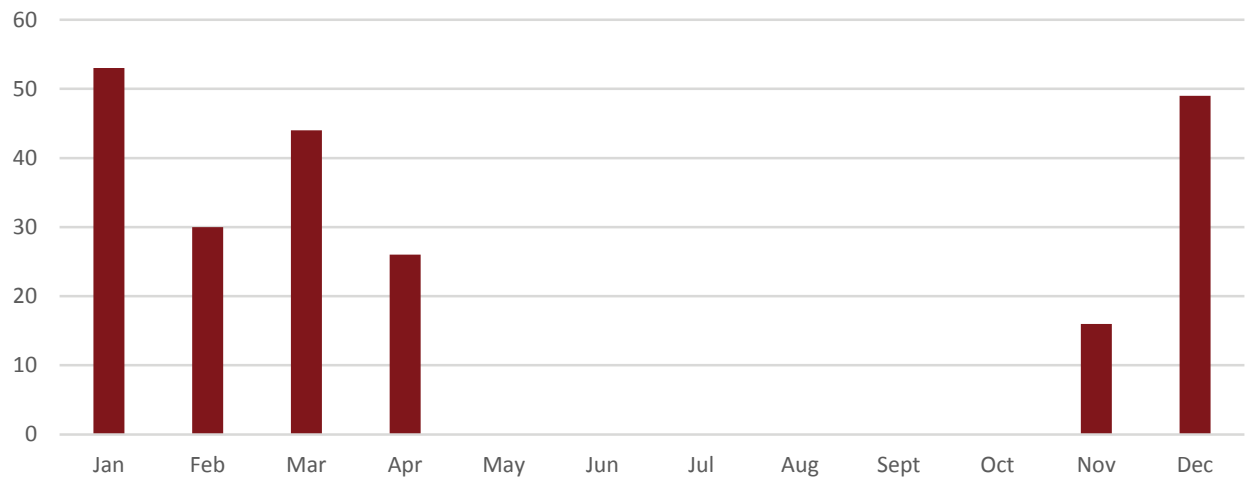
Wind speed in the town ranges from six to nine metres/second, and there is an average of 15 days of precipitation each month. These are important considerations in the design of outdoor space. Thoughtful design which considers prevailing winds coming off the Strait of Canso can create spaces that are comfortable year round, supporting Port Hawkesbury's active community. Street trees have a significant impact in both the summer and winter by reducing wind speeds, providing shade and cover, reducing airborne pollutants, and generally improving the microclimate of the Reeves Street corridor. An urban forest program for the Town would be a beneficial addition to the Reeves Street aesthetic as well.



▲ Figure 1.14
Average Temperature (Celsius)



▲ Figure 1.15
Average Total Rainfall (mm)



▲ Figure 1.16
Average Total Snowfall (cm)

1.7 Past Studies

In the last decade, the Town of Port Hawkesbury has completed a collection of planning and design studies for the Town, and Reeves Street in particular. All these studies have a high bearing on this Complete Streets report. The summary below outlines a high level overview of the findings of each report.

Strategic Plan – Port Hastings and Port Hawkesbury (2002)

The Strategic Plan was developed by EDM in 2002 for the towns of Port Hastings and Port Hawkesbury. It outlined a vision for each town in conjunction with the overall vision for the region. The visions were built upon by recommendations for both short term and long term improvements, looking both specifically at necessary town improvements and improvements that would require a joined effort by both towns. These recommendations were supported through extensive analysis and inventories of the communities and the socio-economic of the region that would shape the implementation of these recommendations. This analysis also consisted of community consultations, including public workshops and surveys. Recommendations included some of the following:

- › Recommendations to improve Reeves Street to make it the main street of town
- › Suggestions of programs that can be implemented to draw people to the waterfront and overall attract people to town
- › Trail improvement recommendations and opportunity for partnership with NSCC
- › Lobbying for highway improvements that would benefit the region as a whole
- › Working together to coordinate programming and activities, noting the

50th anniversary of the Canso Causeway

- › Develop street standards and unified signage for the region
- › Waterfront trail linking the two communities

This report not only focused on the “what” of development, but it detailed suggestions for implementation and necessary players. It listed who was the principle organization addressing the improvement and any notes that would impact the go ahead of the changes. This includes cost estimates and required adjustments to the local Municipal Planning Strategy

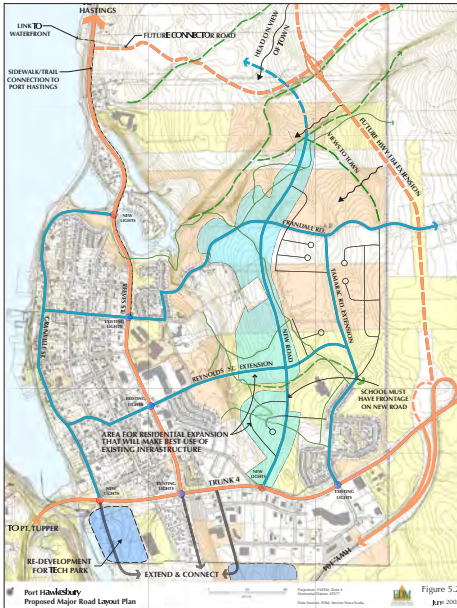
Reeves and Granville Streetscape Study (2004)

This study was commissioned by the Town of Port Hawkesbury to find creative ways to improve the quality of, and activity on, Reeves Street (the existing commercial strip) and Granville Street (the traditional downtown street).

The main project goals were:

1. Create a unique, distinct memorable streetscape;
2. Find a way to connect the town’s two centres, Reeves and Granville Streets;
3. Stimulate growth of retail and protect and enhance cultural identity;
4. Improve wayfinding and civic identity;
5. Improve the pedestrian appeal/usability of the street;
6. Reduce maintenance problems on the street;
7. Look for opportunities to make Reeves Street and Granville Street destinations

Ekistics Planning and Design composed a report that made recommendations



▲ Figure 1.17
Strategic Plan - Port Hastings and Port Hawkesbury
(2002)

including residential development west of the Civic Centre; creation of a pedestrian connection between the Civic Centre and the rear portion of the Causeway Shopping Centre; street-fronting retail; pedestrian and active transportation (AT) oriented streetscaping; and a network of 'pocket-parks' and green spaces.

Community Economic Development
Conceptual Planning for the Town of
Port Hawkesbury (2011)

Ekistics took part in the development of a high-level conceptual plan as part of the ongoing implementation of the 2011 report *Imagine2030*. This report identifies, among other things, commercial signage development and controls, commercial property development and controls, and connections to key assets in the immediate surrounding area.

Reeves Street area recommendations again included: residential development west of the Civic Centre; creation of a pedestrian connection between the Civic Centre



▲ Figure 1.18
Reeves and Granville Streetscape Study (2004)

and the rear portion of the Causeway Shopping Centre; street-fronting retail; pedestrian and active transportation oriented streetscaping; and a network of ‘pocket-parks’ and green spaces. This report also recommended a reconfiguration of the Macquarrie Drive Extension to better facilitate the redevelopment of the outdoor and indoor recreational facilities currently taking place in that area.

Reeves Street Safety Study (2014)

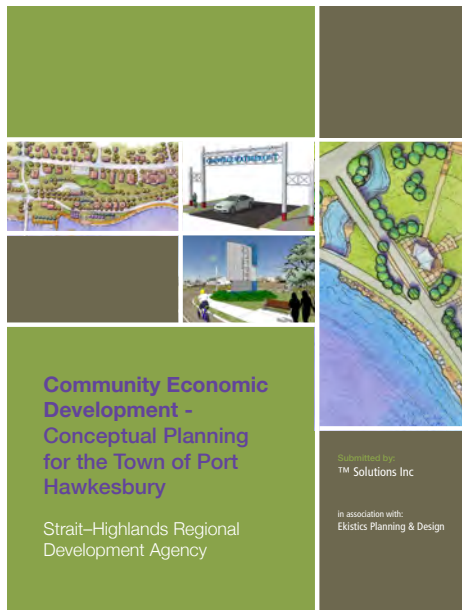
Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and the Town of Port Hawkesbury commissioned WSP Canada Inc. to complete a study to identify safety concerns and to recommend cost effective improvements to provide acceptable levels of safety while considering the public and the heavy traffic along this street. The report makes recommendations such as reducing and managing traffic conflict points, improving active transportation connectivity and adding AT infrastructure to make active modes of transportation more appealing.

NSCC - Port Hawkesbury Connection Analysis (2014)

Ekistics Planning & Design assessed options connecting the NSCC Strait Area Campus and the Reeves Street commercial core with an improved active transportation corridor. Different alternatives that compared ease of walking, safety, enjoyable scenery and efficiency were analyzed and weighted against each other. Public consultations were completed to better understand the different needs and uses of the students, business owners and residents that were commuting between the two main locations. Also completed as part of this study were implementation recommendations for each trail alternative. These recommendations were completed in the form of a trail manual discussing materials, form, cost, potential partners and long term maintenance.

Strait Forward Supply Chain Analysis and Business Opportunities Study (2014)

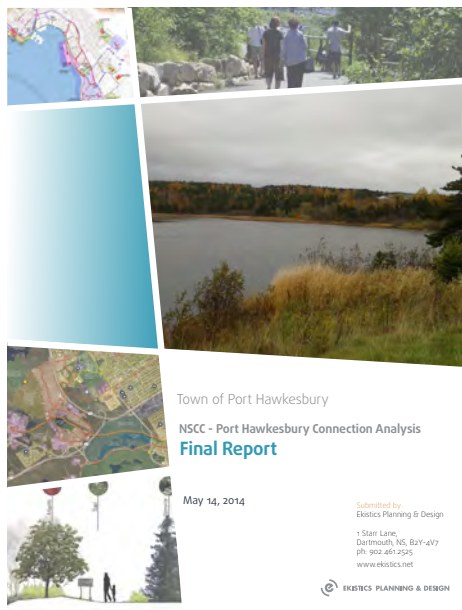
This economic development report highlights the potential in enhancing inter-industry links and focusing on strategic sectors with growth potential. These sectors include manufacturing, technology, biotechnology, transportation/distribution, energy, education and training, port and marine-oriented industries. The consultations, research and analysis of this study resulted in identification of specific supply chain and value added opportunities that can be pursued by strait area businesses, including processing and distribution of some by-products and waste streams. These opportunities were broken down into two categories to focus on their specific implementation needs. These two categories were: 1) opportunities that are already proceeding with proponents in place and, 2) opportunities requiring leadership or additional proponents in order to move forward.



▲ Figure 1.19
Community Economic Development Conceptual Planning for the Town of Port Hawkesbury (2011)



▲ Figure 1.20
Reeves Street Safety Study (2014)



▲ Figure 1.21
NSCC - Port Hawkesbury Connection Analysis (2014)



▲ Figure 1.22
Strait Forward Supply Chain Analysis and Business Opportunities Study (2014)

1.8 Public Consultations

The consultants initiated a three-pronged approach to community consultation; involving stakeholder interviews, a public workshop and an online survey. Community members and businesses were encouraged to participate in the visioning process through either of the 3 approaches during the fall of 2014. The following are summaries of the outcomes of those sessions.

Workshop Results

The consulting team led a community workshop on October 14, 2014 in Port Hawkesbury where they worked with community members to identify opportunities and challenges related to future improvements along Reeves Street. The workshop was divided into two sections to reflect project goals. The first half of the session was dedicated to facilitating a discussion surrounding Port Hawkesbury's branding and identity. The second half of the session focused on discussions pertaining to streetscape improvements along the Reeves Street corridor and improvements to façades and public spaces along the street.

BRANDING

The Branding session of the public consultation aimed to uncover how Port

Hawkesbury residents saw themselves and how they wanted Port Hawkesbury to be perceived by visitors. To facilitate this discussion some of the following questions were asked, with the corresponding main points arising from that conversation.

1. For a visitor, Port Hawkesbury is:
 - › A hub of services and activities
 - › Industry
 - › Cape Breton's 'front porch'
 - › A Quick stop
2. For a resident, Port Hawkesbury is:
 - › Conveniently located, in close proximity services, and is overall well serviced,
 - › Safe and welcoming,
 - › Offers a high quality of life,
 - › Transient, with people moving often
3. For a business, Port Hawkesbury is:
 - › A transportation hub, where every road leads to Port Hawkesbury
 - › Regional services
 - › Connectivity to local resources and a larger market
 - › A supportive and active Chamber of Commerce



When asked what Port Hawkesbury could do better, some responses included becoming the finest harbour in the world, improving the recreational and cultural services that are offered in town, and conducting business better. Residents would like to see Port Hawkesbury become known for having an amazing Port, eco-tourism opportunities, and for being a well serviced centre with a welcoming Main Street making it a must stop in Cape Breton. Other opportunities the community felt could be built on included the growing recreation and commercial industries supported by the new Civic Centre, and the splash pad and playground, the trails around the community and the waterfront.

PLANNING

The second half of the public consultation was focused on the physical planning of Reeves Street with discussions surrounding the priorities for Reeves Street. The two groups formed by the present community members were each given a chance to discuss what they believed the Top Ten priorities for Reeves Street should be. There were many overlaps and synergy between the two groups, with both groups stating landscaping and beautification initiatives should be a first step. Also recurrently discussed were recommendations for improved signage and wayfinding, the addition of bike lanes and active transportation considerations, and stronger linkages between key destinations – such as between Reeves Street, Granville Street and the Waterfront.

Overall four major themes emerged through the public workshop.

1. **Port Hawkesbury is a service-hub.** Improved signage was identified by all participants as one of the primary challenges to promoting this existing identity and other assets of the community. The industrial image is viewed as a major barrier to attractiveness and welcoming sense for visitors and residents, and one of the barriers to attracting new business. A repeatedly identified strategy to improve the community feel was infilling opportunities on Reeves Street. Some ideas in the interim of development included patios within parking lots.

2. **Port Hawkesbury must attract business.** Increasing residential opportunities are recognized as mutually supportive to the town's ability to invite new businesses and new residents.

3. **Port Hawkesbury needs to improve the visibility of local assets.** The town must develop strategies to highlight what is available to do and see in town, as well as the businesses that uphold its reputation as a service-hub. Signage, wayfinding and infrastructure should direct people to important areas, particularly to the waterfront, expressing that Port Hawkesbury is a Port-City, and through the commercial core along Reeves Street. Short term ideas included a mobile Visitor Information Centre, as well as more permanent strategies and infrastructure.

4. **Port Hawkesbury is an active place.** Assets that must be highlighted include the recreation centre as well as the trails network. Traffic safety is seen as the number one barrier to increasing active mobility through the community. Additionally, the public realm needs to be improved with infrastructure such as street trees,

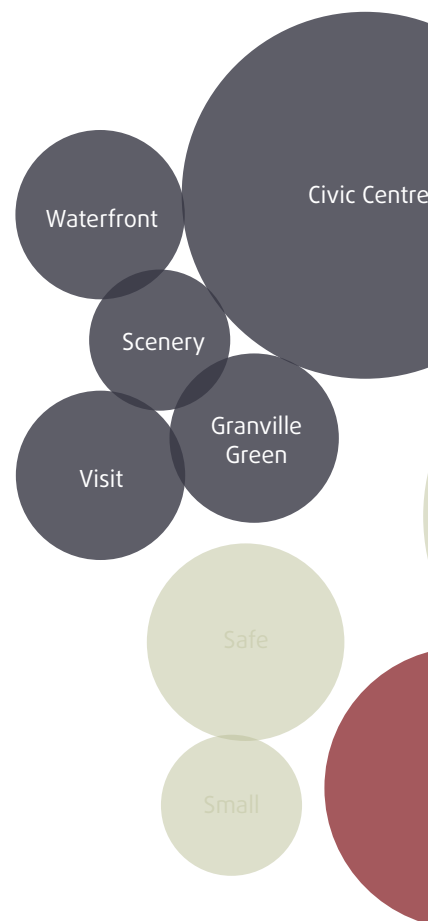
benches, bike lanes and gardens, with connections made to major assets such as the waterfront and the NSCC.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were completed through October and November of 2014, and brought forth a variety of issues and opportunities. Many interviews observed a decline in public and private investment, as well as a lack of community feel and lamented a sense of 'good enough' that they have observed in the town. There was a shared desire to see infill along Reeves Street as a measure to create more of an urban community atmosphere.

Stakeholders identified the town's industrial history as a major challenge when trying to create a positive image of the community in the minds of visitors. It was also believed to be a negative factor in the minds of residents. However, many stakeholders believed Port Hawkesbury's history as a major port and a prominent connection stop to the mainland is an important part of their community and should not be forgotten. They also embraced Port Hawkesbury's identity as the service centre for the region and would like to see improved signage and wayfinding to direct both residents and visitors to key destinations, and to improve the visibility of local businesses.

The active lifestyle available in Port Hawkesbury was a point repeated by all stakeholders. The available outdoor activities in trails, parks and open space as well as indoor facilities in the town were identified as important to the quality of life in the region. The quality and completeness of pedestrian and AT infrastructure was seen as a hindrance to an active lifestyle, as well as a strong sense of danger created by traffic speeds along Reeves Street. Stakeholders would like to see amenities along the street, such as benches, waste sorting receptacles and bicycle locks, as well as improved connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the NSCC and other key destinations in the community.



For...





► Figure 1.23
Diagram of Online Survey results

... Port Hawkesbury Is...

Online Survey Results

To reach an even greater cross-section of people, including summer residents of Port Hawkesbury, an online survey was launched the day of the interviews and workshop (Oct 14, 2014). This effort was very successful in reaching the broader community, as it has enabled Ekistics to incorporated feedback from more than 347 individuals. The questions were in line with the direction of the interviews and workshop, and the results of all methods of outreach consultation gathered similar feedback from the community.

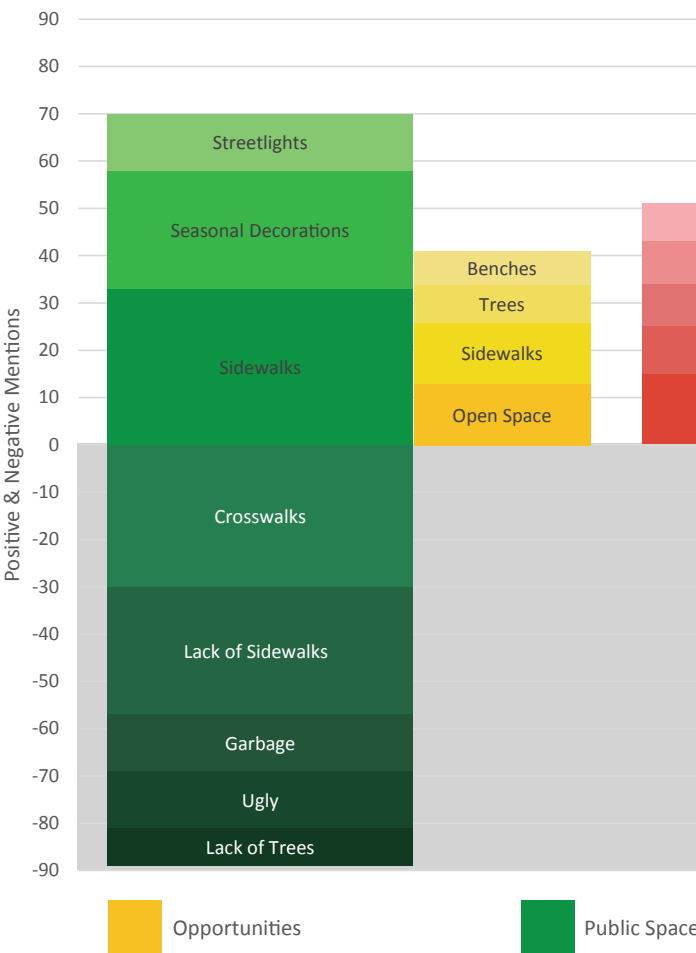
It quickly became apparent from the question “What is Port Hawkesbury for...Visitors, Residents and Businesses?” that Port Hawkesbury was a place built on its people. Residents and businesses alike focused on the people, the community, and (for businesses, customers and service) when describing what Port Hawkesbury was to

them. However, for visitors Port Hawkesbury was often described as a passing through location. To make Reeves Street, and Port Hawkesbury, successful, the community feeling that is so crucial to those who live there must be translated to those who are only visiting for a short time.

When asked what they liked about Reeves Street, participants recurrently stated sidewalks, flowers, and the businesses. However, when asked what they disliked, sidewalks made it to the top of the list again, along with traffic and crosswalks. Finally, when asked what they believed were opportunities for Reeves Street participants stated sidewalks, open space and the stores. This demonstrates a desire among the community to have a quality street and public space that is of the “Main Street” typology -an aesthetically pleasing street with lighting, benches and vegetation that has an abundance of businesses and is safe and pleasant for pedestrians to use to commute and spend time in. The most prominent



▲ Figure 1.24
Reeve Street “Opportunities”

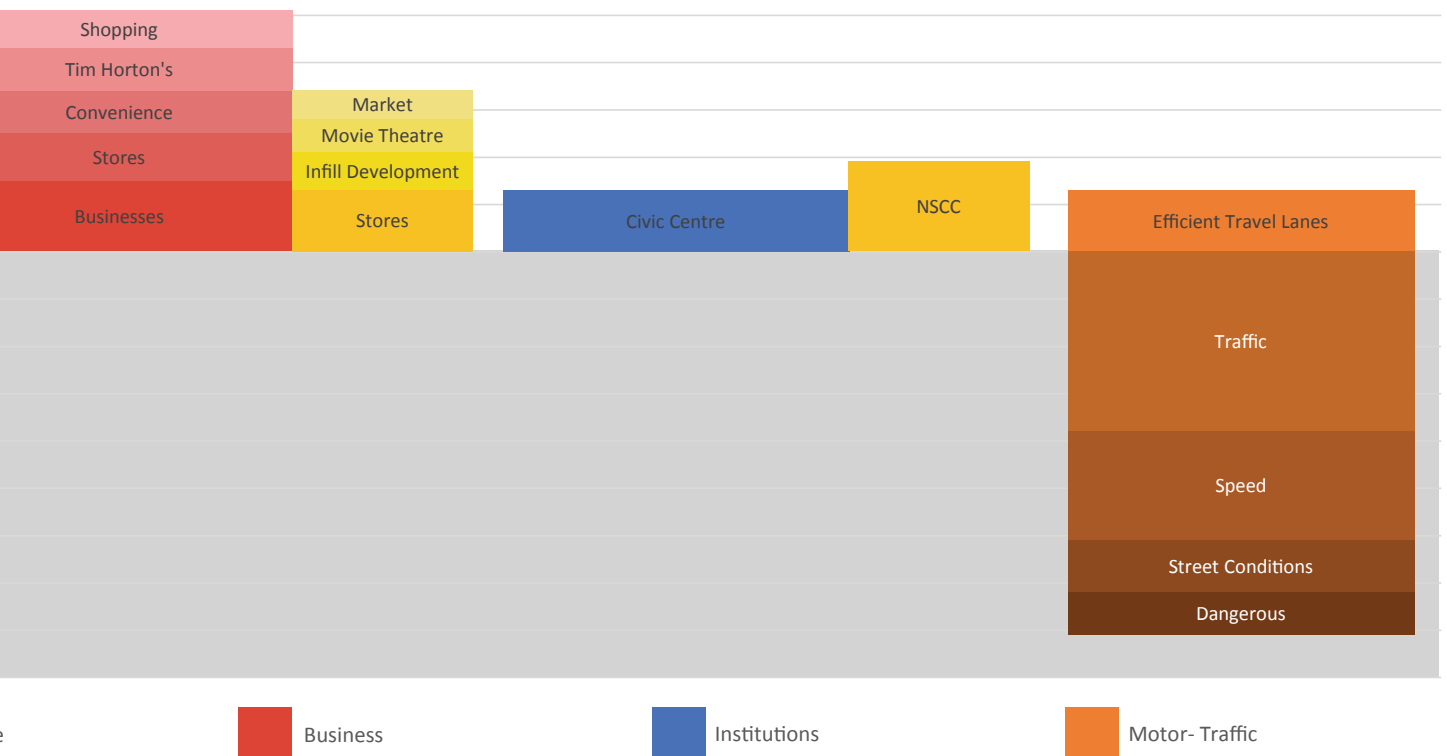


challenge that arose was the ability to enable people to access shops and services by active modes of transportation aiding in transforming the area into an enjoyable atmosphere for spending time outside of the motor-vehicle.

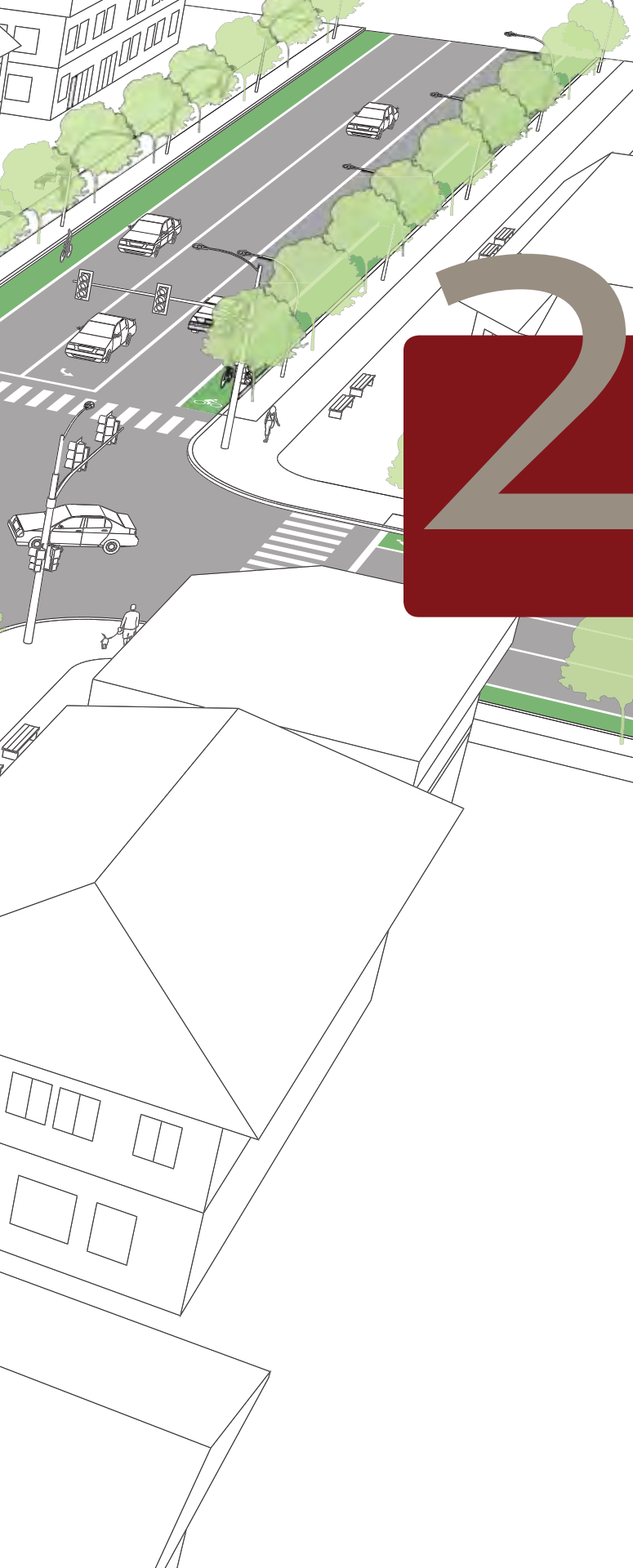
Business and recreational opportunities along the waterfront were featured highly by respondents. Consensus also formed around the opportunities surrounding the identity as a service hub. Economic and employment challenges were identified as the most significant hurdle to Port Hawkesbury achieving its full potential. This sense reinforces the need to invest in the community's strength as a place of business, enabling future investment in other elements of the town, such as the waterfront. If the identity as a service-hub is nurtured, this identity will support and enable other aspects of Port Hawkesbury that may be valued by other segments of the community.



▲ Figure 1.25
Reeve Street "Dislikes"







Reeves Street: A Complete Street

02: COMPLETE STREETS

The Reeves Street Safety Study provides recommendations for safety improvements to Reeves Street using today's traffic counts and data. The study recommends an approach for road dieting (moving from 4 lanes to 3 lanes in some areas), introduction of AT infrastructure, sidewalk improvements, access management improvements, and intersection improvements. Though somewhat counterintuitive, the move from a 4 lane cross section to a 3 lane cross section (with a shared centre turning lane) has been shown to provide the same road capacity but a much safer cross section (given Reeves Street's traffic volumes); and, at the same time, it provides space for AT infrastructure. The other benefit of the recommendations in the report is a distinct move from a 'highway' to an 'urban street'. This will have significant and visible impacts to the character of Reeves Street. The addition of the AT lanes connecting Reeves Street to the NSCC campus could be a significant driver of multi-unit student housing in the downtown. Since NSCC is a significant driver of the Port Hawkesbury economy (see chapter 1), any improvements that encourage connectivity to downtown is a welcome economic incentive. If and when the bypass is built, this change to an urban street will be an improvement to the areas tourism readiness.

Changes like those presented in the traffic safety study are not uncommon. Many Towns and cities are making similar changes to improve the character of their streets. These "Context Sensitive" transportation solutions are taking into account alternate modes of transportation, the character

of the area, and the safety implications for a wide variety of users (pedestrians, cyclists and cars). In recent years, many cities have moved to adopt a "Compete Streets" program. Complete Streets are streets thoughtfully designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of transportation. A Complete Street is safe, comfortable, and accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, mobility-impaired, and individual automobiles. All transportation modes are equally prioritized and no transportation alternative is an afterthought. The street network is designed and operated for all users, generally slowing vehicular traffic to ensure the safety of all modes while maintaining the throughput of the street network.

There is no one size fits all solution when creating Complete Streets. Site specific context and culture of a community must be taken into consideration to "complete" that street. Each individual street should be viewed as a puzzle; to be brought to completion the puzzle needs the unique piece which fits in that location. That being said, best practices and case studies give guidance and suggestions on elements which continually are found to improve a street. Street improvements need not always be cost intensive; there are many cost effective methods to build a Complete Street and to help improve street quality in the interim of complete street improvements.

Complete Streets can be implemented at all scales and sizes of communities, and can improve the atmosphere of a place from



a street located downtown to a street in the suburbs. Complete Streets generally contain strong urban design component to encourage interaction by the different transportation modes, people, and built environment.

2.1 Why Complete Streets?

Streets do more than get people from place to place; they create spaces for engagement and interaction. A well-functioning street moves people to their destinations safely, efficiently and with ease. They are not only a part of a journey but also a destination in themselves. Complete Streets can have positive effects on the general population's health, the economics of the area, and can play a role in addressing imbalances in social structure.

There is a link between Complete Streets and better general public health as Complete Streets with attractive active transportation alternatives create preventative health strategies. A street with multi-modal transportation modes which are well integrated with surrounding built form allow for an animated public realm. Design treatments to the surrounding form that are at a human scale and prioritize livability, encourage lingering in that space.

Complete Streets offer a range of benefits which can be cost-effective, and sustainable such as:

- › provide better/more transportation alternatives
- › improved safety
- › reduce traffic congestion
- › reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- › creates walkable communities
- › stimulate economic growth through increased shopping and property values

By designing streets to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians you make the streets safer by reducing the likeliness of vehicular conflicts and accidents. Additionally, more "eyes on the street" can reduce crime and improve the level of comfort people have on the street.

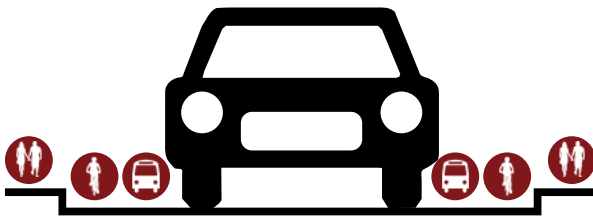
A comfortable, enjoyable street will bring people to the area, in turn bringing people into the shops and businesses in the area.

2.2 Moving Towards Complete Streets in Nova Scotia:

Complete Streets have been growing in popularity across the United States and Canada. Over the last four years, cities such as Calgary, Toronto, and Ottawa have begun producing Complete Street policies and supporting guideline manuals. Transport Canada has begun to encourage the implementation of Complete Streets through

the use of terminology and resources. At this moment no documentation has been completed in Nova Scotia addressing Complete Streets, however, future infrastructure funding programs could be geared to encourage more Complete Streets in Canada. The use of Complete Street terminology has been used increasingly in supporting studies for street development in the province of Nova Scotia; however it has yet to make its way into provincial policy documentation. The 2013 Report Low Posted Speed Limit Study submitted by Dillon Consulting for Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal touches on the desire for the creation of Complete Streets and the need to design road standards to reflect this variety of uses in order for the streets to be used safely by all. Terminology for Complete Streets should be holistically incorporated in policy documents at both a provincial and municipal level to facilitate the implementation of Complete Streets at a local level.

A variety of resources in addition to this document are available to guide the Town of Port Hawkesbury in the implementation of this conceptual development plan to create Complete Streets. The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) has created a document called Resolution Establishing a Complete Streets Policy for Nova Scotia Municipalities to guide municipal governments in the implementation of Complete Streets. This document outlines for municipalities what factors must be taken into consideration and elements that must be implemented in the creation of a Complete Street. The Ecology Action Centre has been active in the creation of toolkits and templates to promote the creation of active transportation and Complete Street policies in the province. Organizations such as Complete Streets for Canada (completestreetsforcanada.ca) offer resources for municipalities and consultants to aid in writing, designing and implementing Complete Street policies. Complete Streets has been gaining momentum in the Maritime, and The Town of Port Hawkesbury will be leading the way with the creation of Reeves Street as a Complete Street.



How streets were built in the 20th Century



How streets should be designed



2.3 Elements of a Complete Street:

There is no single formula for the creation of Complete Streets. Each street works within its own unique context which informs which design treatments and improvements are necessary to improve the functionality and safety of the street.

This document contains guidance on a range of street design treatments and provides flexibility to adapt the treatments to the diverse contexts of the different streets in Port Hawkesbury. Included in this section is an introduction to the different street treatments and the benefits that

the presence of each treatment brings to a street, as well as successful precedents for Complete Street elements. These elements can be utilized by designers and decision makers in Port Hawkesbury to develop Complete Streets, for Reeves Street and others.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are conduits for pedestrian movement and access, enhance connectivity, and promote walking. Sidewalks are unique in structure as they are not only corridors for movement but also public spaces for interaction and lingering. By connecting to building



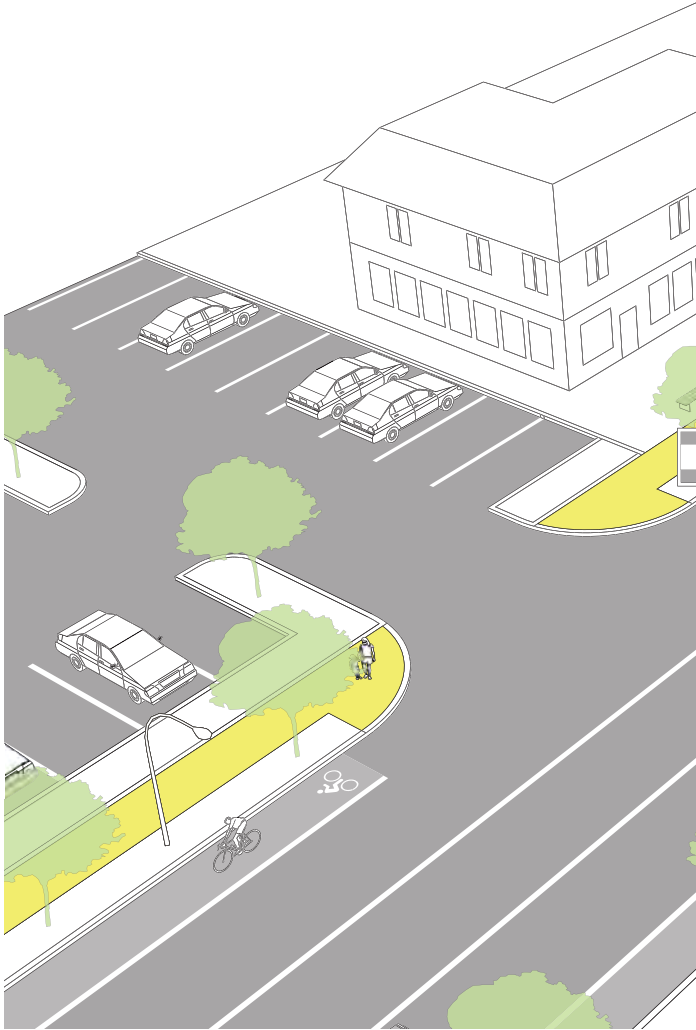
façades, sidewalks create the link between buildings and street life through physical proximity and the presence of spill-out activities. By encouraging walking and lingering, sidewalks are shown to improve general health and maximize social capital. As the expansion of roadways encouraged the use of automobiles, sidewalks became less prominent, especially in rural and newer subdivisions. Now through the implementation of Complete Streets, the expansion and attention to sidewalks can encourage pedestrians to walk and get out of the car.

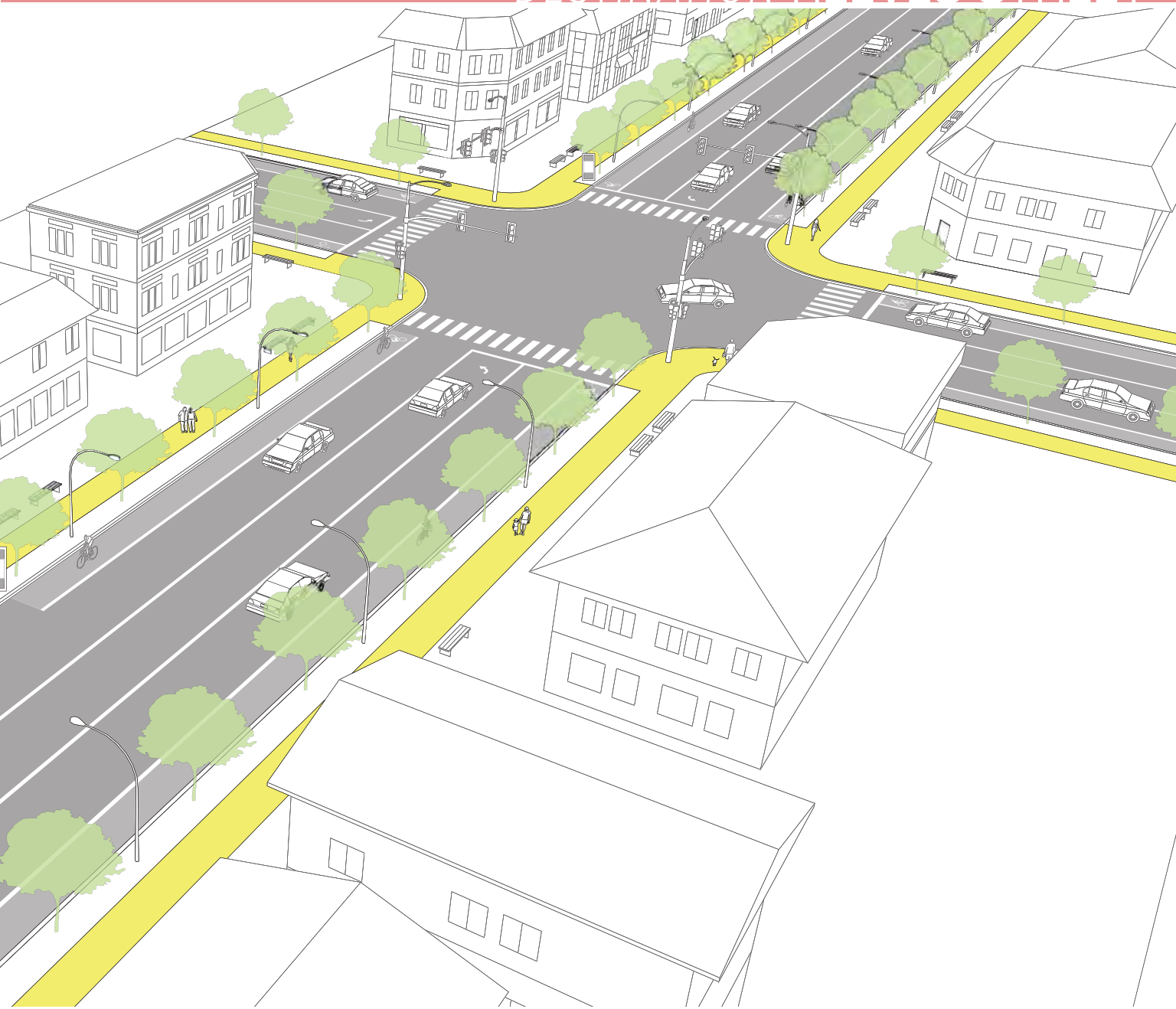
To create a walkable street, pedestrians must be given a clearly delineated, consistent zone that is safe from vehicles. Planters and street trees should be used to create a buffer between the sidewalk and road to enhance the pedestrian realm and the feeling of safety.

- A continuous sidewalk should be filled in on both sides along the entire length of Reeves Street
- Sidewalks should be wider in areas to encourage spill out activities from commercial entities or on sidewalks that see higher traffic use
- Sidewalks must be continuous across driveways and curb breaks

Like roads, sidewalks should be ‘designed’ to accommodate the pedestrian volumes

4' sidewalks	Absolute minimum sidewalk width for 1 person walking/wheelchairs
5' sidewalks	Preferred sidewalk width for 1 person. Tight for 2 persons
6' sidewalks	Preferred width for 2 persons walking
8' sidewalks	Preferred width for 3 people (2 people walking, 1 person passing)
12' sidewalks	Multi-use trail width for walking/cycling. Good width for high volume walkways





Street Trees

Street trees are crucial to great streets offering a variety of benefits ranging from physical to financial. By better defining the street edge, street trees play a role in decreasing the frequency of crashes and injuries. Street trees have been shown to improve the economic success of businesses located off the street. Trees also address stormwater management needs and create a greener, more aesthetically appealing street.

Boulevards are often cited as great streets due to the occurrence of street trees. They separate large streets into parallel urban realms by enclosing the pedestrian in an environment that is at a human scale and intimate, improving the atmosphere and comfort of the street for the pedestrian.

- › Trees should be native species that are tolerant to urban environmental factors such as salt and poor soil, among other stressors
- › Appropriate installation methods should be practiced to ensure the health and longevity of trees
- › To avoid soil compaction from foot traffic, trees should be planted with structural soils and drainage where the root ball is squeezed between the road and the sidewalk.
- › Street tree species should vary so that a future pest doesn't wipe out the entire street (like the American Elm)

In addition to street trees, vegetation is important in the creation of a comfortable pedestrian environment. Plants should be selected to ensure ease of maintenance for the town so that the benefits of the plants can be reaped consistently. Plantings can be used to announce entrances, define pathways and create comfortable open public spaces. The recommended species for Port Hawkesbury street trees include the following wind tolerant zone 5 species:

Red Maple	Acer Rubrum
Sugar Maple	Acer Saccharum
Manitoba Maple	Acer negundo
White Ash	Fraxinus americana
Green Ash	Fraxinus pennsylvanica
Pin Oak	Quercus macrocarpa
Red Oak	Quercus rubra
Basswood	Tilia americana
Little leaf Linden	Tilia corsdata
Waterer Laburnum	Laburnum Waterri
Silk Lilac	Syringa reticula

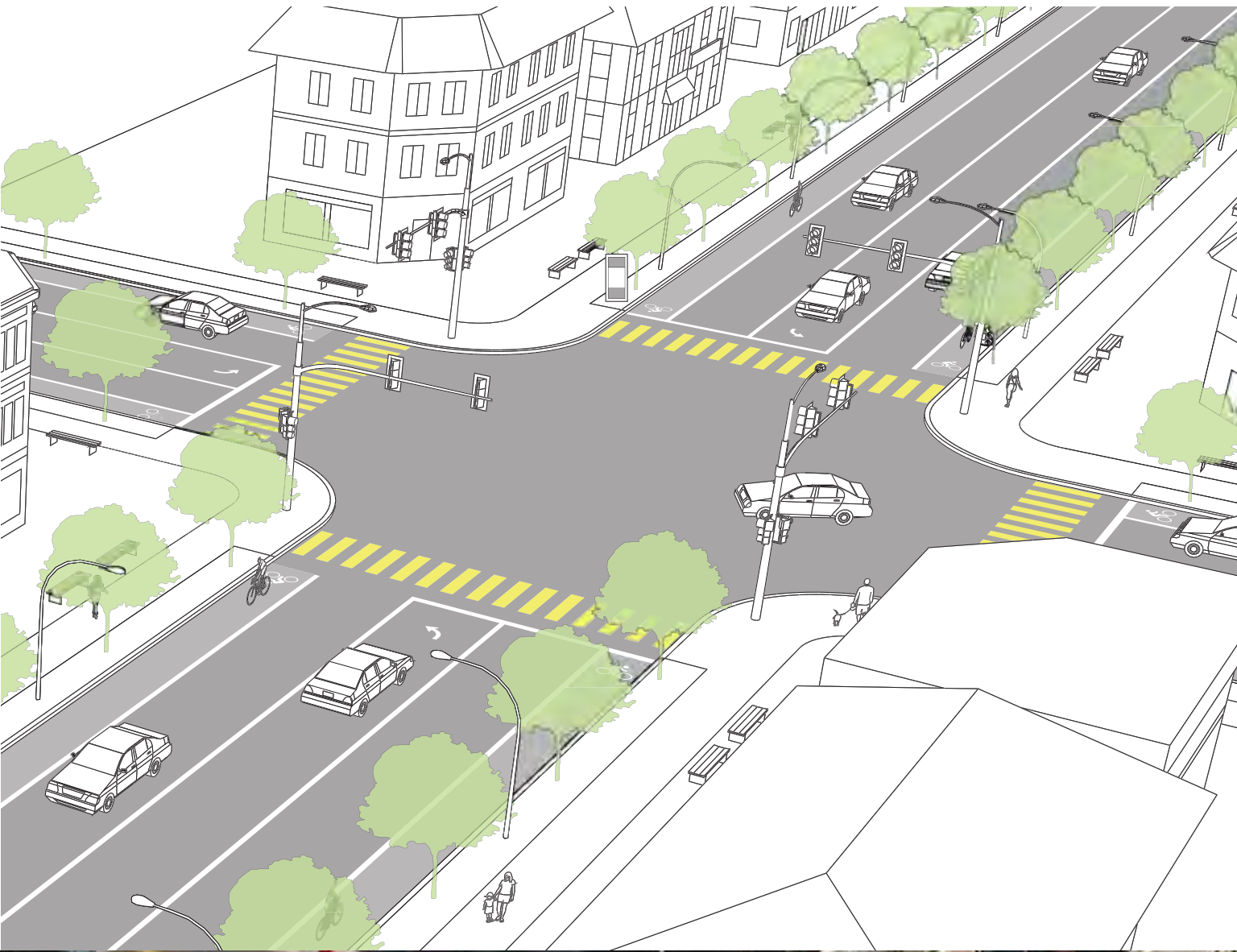


Crosswalks

Crosswalks are necessary to facilitate pedestrian connectivity in a safe manner. A lack of crosswalks creates an unsafe environment for both pedestrians and motorists, with an increased likeliness of pedestrians jay-walking to cross the road at unsafe locations and times. Additionally, a lack of crosswalks hinders pedestrian access and efficient mobility and deters them from walking along the road and further divides the street cross-section.

- › Crosswalks should be delineated at frequent, well thought out intervals along the length of Reeves Street.
- › Crosswalks should be textured or a contrasting material to delineate appropriate crossing locations for pedestrians and to slow-down motorists
- › Crosswalks should be appropriately scaled for the street cross section. Areas with faster traffic should consist of crosswalks with flashing lights. Street sections that are calmer may only need to be delineated through paint and/or texture.
- › mid-block cross walks should be avoided





Cycling Infrastructure

Cycling infrastructure creates a safe environment for both experienced and beginner cyclists to reach their destination through a transportation mode that improves health and decreases pollution. However, unlike sidewalks, which are still prominent in today's society, separated cycling infrastructure can be non-existent, especially outside of city cores. Cyclists are often expected to ride parallel with motorized vehicles, decreasing safety, which negatively influences cycling ridership. When cycling infrastructure is implemented, cycling ridership often increases. Additionally, cycling has been shown to be economically beneficial for businesses located in proximity to bike paths, with foot traffic and sales increasing.

Cycling infrastructure often takes one of two forms depending on the surrounding

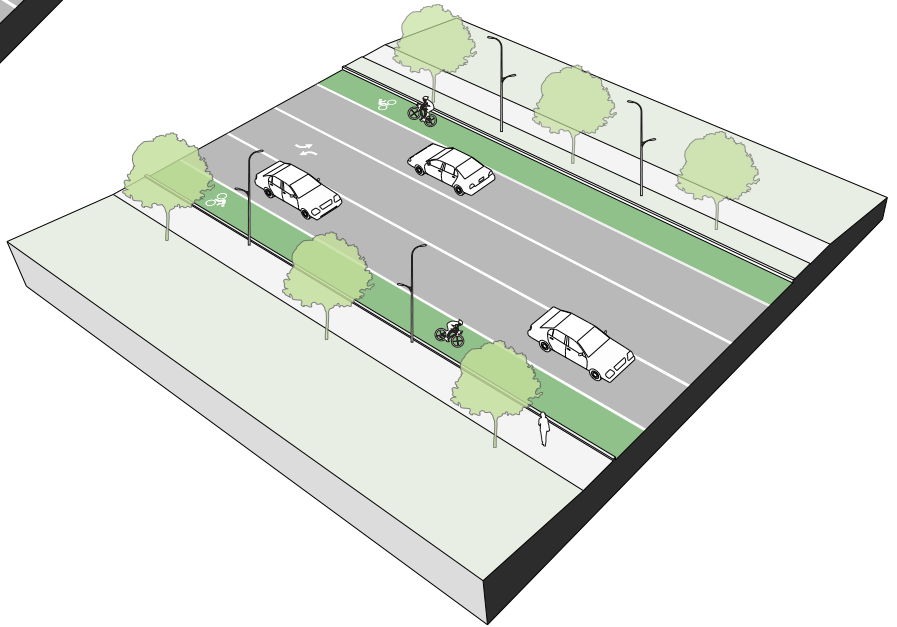
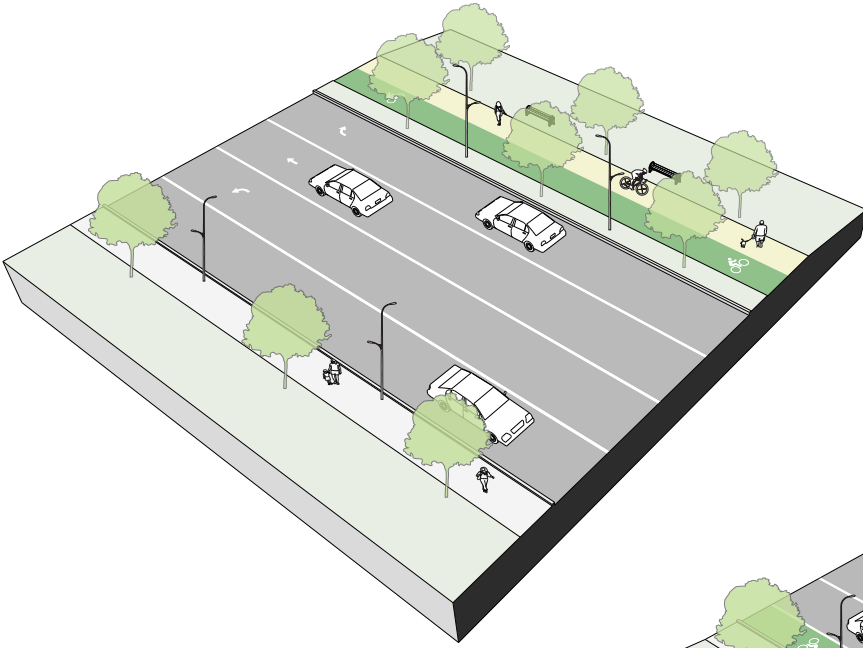
context of the ROW. One option is a multi-use trail. A multi-use trail should:

- Be located to one side of the ROW
- Be located separate from the road
- Wide enough for two directions of traffic to pass safely
- Can consist of any mode of active transportation including walking, cycling, skateboarding and rollerblading

The alternative form appropriate for cycling infrastructure along Reeves Street is bike lanes. Bike lanes should:

- Consist of single lanes on both sides of the ROW, heading in the direction of traffic
- Occur alongside the road, separate from pedestrian traffic on a multi-use trail





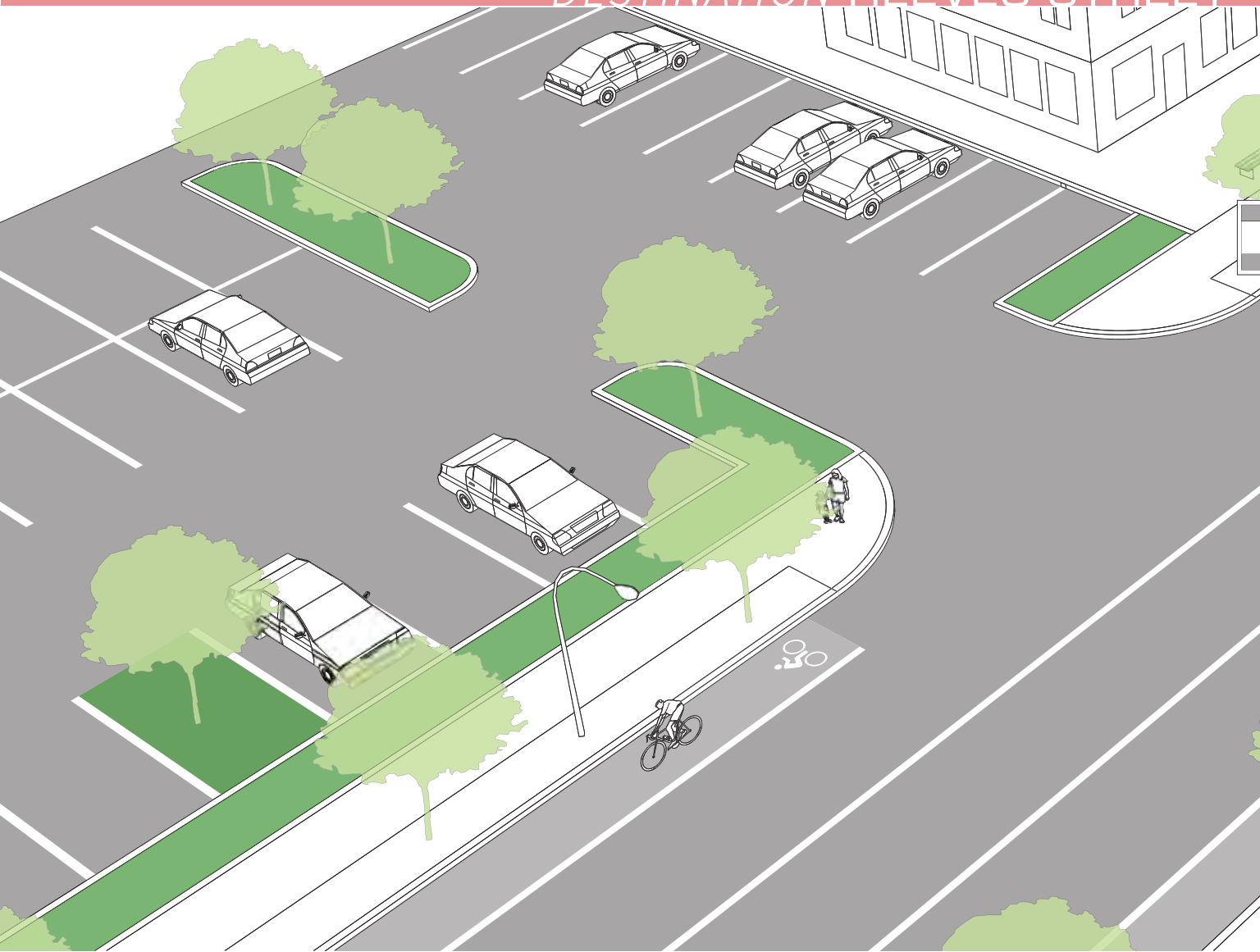
Off-Street Parking

Accommodating the vehicle involves not only movement but also includes parking. Complete Streets generally try to move away from surface parking lots and accommodate vehicles through on-street parking as it serves a double purpose of parking and traffic calming and creating a continuous built realm. However, when moving away from surface parking lots are not a feasible immediate action, intermediate action should be considered to create visual shields from parking and to mimic the intimacy created in the pedestrian environment from infill projects. Parking fronting onto a main street creates an unfriendly urban environment, especially for pedestrians. Parking lots enforce a streetscape that is dominated by asphalt and vehicles.

- › Minimizing curb cuts should be a priority to create a continuous urban

environment, reclaiming a unified sidewalk for pedestrians. This can be done by pairing and consolidating driveways into one and accessing parking lots from side streets.

- › Parking lots should be located off the street front, behind developments, when possible
- › Use vegetation to create buffers hiding parking lots from the street and pedestrians. Trees and vegetation should be used to minimize the visibility of asphalt
- › Clearly identify pedestrian zones within large parking lots to improve the safety and functionality
- › Parking lots can be utilized for spill out activities in the interim of new development to visually close the gap between commercial components and the sidewalk/streetscape



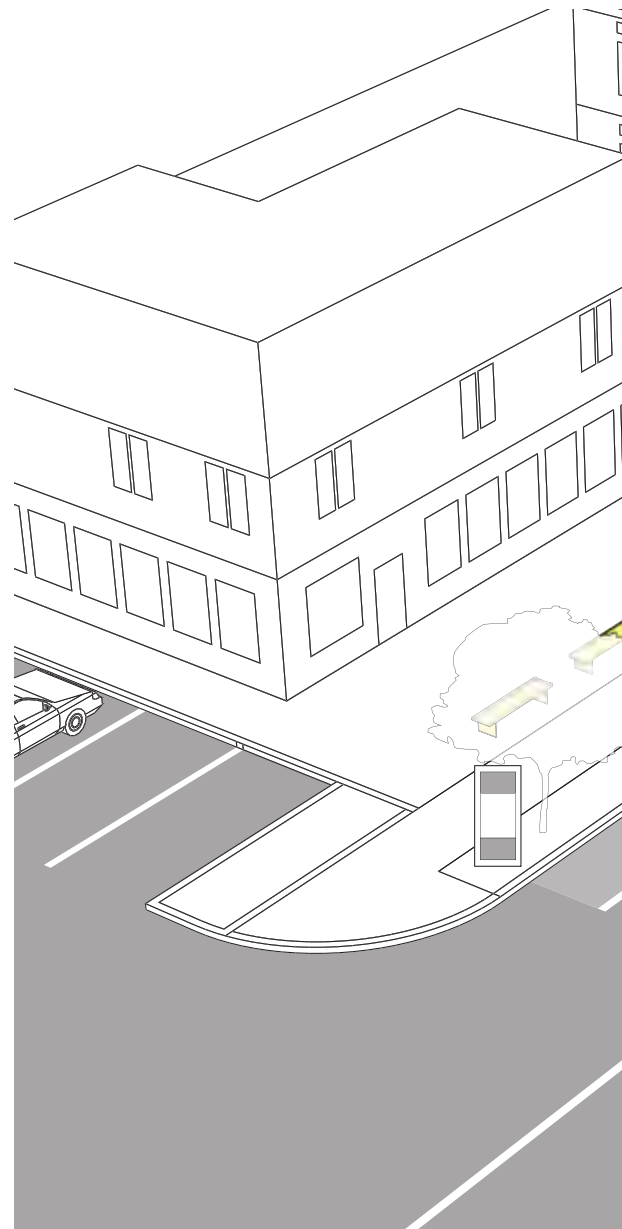
Street Lighting and Furniture

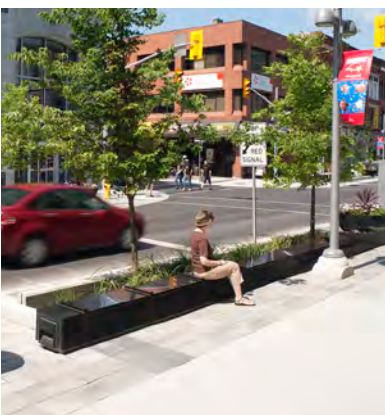
Street lighting and furniture are key elements in the creation of a sense of place and enjoyable atmosphere. Lighting is extremely important on a main street. It can extend the use of a space into the evenings when pedestrians and cyclists feel safe in the area at night. Lighting should be used to enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the street and standards should be in place to ensure uniformity informing a unique character for Reeves Street. Lighting can be used to create a comfortable atmosphere that encourages lingering along the street.

- › Select lighting scaled for pedestrians
- › A uniform standard should be implemented throughout the district
- › Lighting should be located along the street & adjacent to parks, public spaces, walkways, and commercial areas
- › Banners should be added to the light standards to enhance the character and atmosphere of the area. Banners can highlight the district or be seasonal in content
- › Lighting standards should be chosen for their low maintenance, resilience to climate, style and scale

Street furniture can be combined with lighting to enhance the atmosphere of the district. It should be of the same standard and style as lighting to enhance the unique character of the area. This would mean a uniform style for benches, waste bins, and bike racks throughout the area. Street furniture such as benches and trees create lingering zones, and encourage social interaction. Bike racks should be located along intervals to encourage active transportation as a feasible mode of transit

- › Select street furniture for its ease of maintenance and durability in the climate
- › Should be placed out of the way of emergency and maintenance vehicles such as snow plows
- › Bike racks should be installed at key nodes along Reeves Street to encourage the use of active transportation throughout the area.





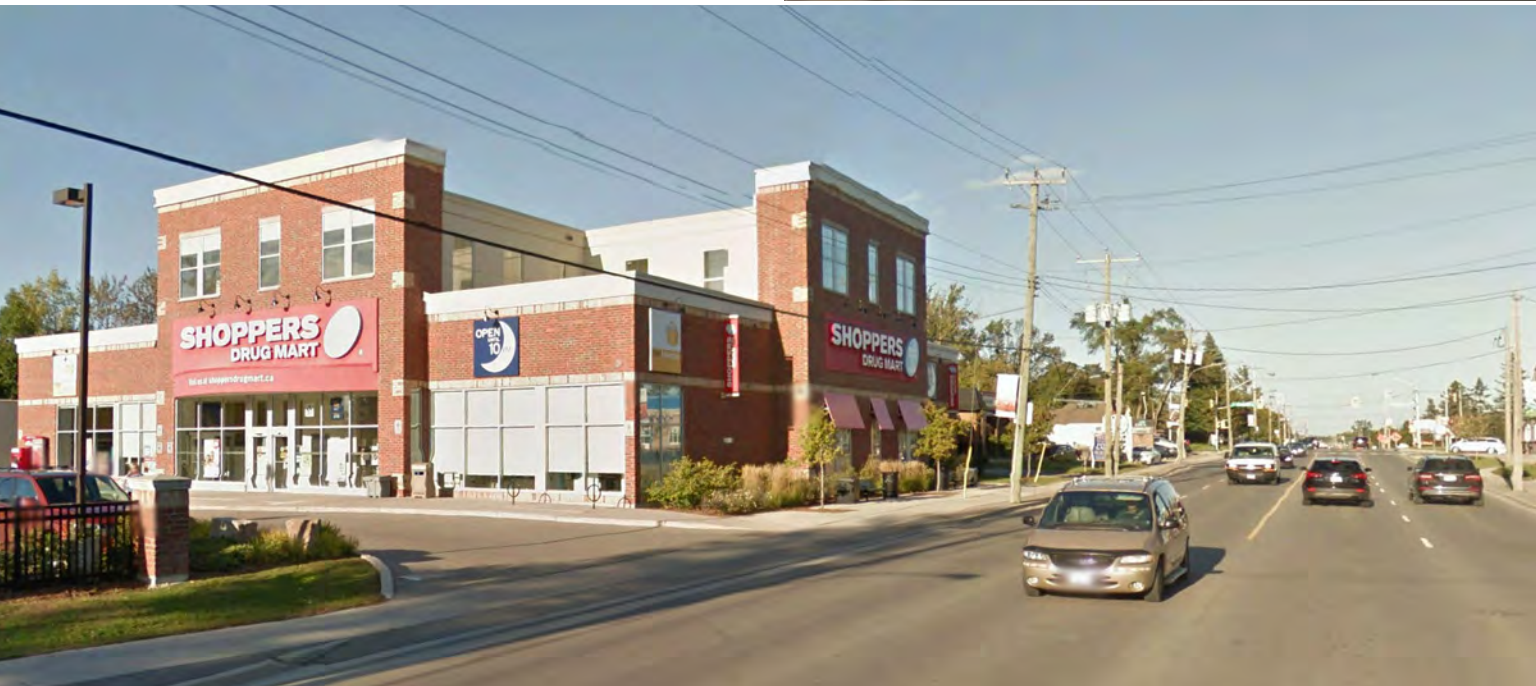
Signage and Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding are crucial to a well-functioning street. Signage should be directed at pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists; this involves signage at appropriate scales and locations. Street signage can serve a secondary purpose to wayfinding by adding to a unified streetscape and region through integration with selected lighting and street furniture styles.



Façades

Similarly to street furniture, façades affect the atmosphere of a street. Façades that are derelict, or have no interaction with the street create unpleasant streetscapes. This deters people from populating the area, which reduces feelings of safety. Façades should encourage a connection between the sidewalk and the building through spill out activities, animated shop windows, and different façade treatments, activating the street. Additionally, it is beneficial when façades are pulled up to the streetscape, and gaps are not created in the urban fabric by parking, lanes or empty lots. This could consist of infill and pad development closer to the pedestrian realm. By infilling parking parcels and empty lots, a continuous street edge is created. A better defined street edge will be more engaging for pedestrians and serve as a traffic calming technique.







2.4 Design Principles for Reeves Street

The following design principles were prepared to guide the Destination Reeves Street plan. Many of the principles were gleaned from the public workshop and online survey results, and some were gathered from downtown best practices research (filtered for Port Hawkesbury). The design principles can be distinguished between public realm principles (public owned land) and private realm principles (private owned land).

Public Realm Principles

1. Manage the transition of Reeves Street from a highway conduit through Town to an urban collector that treats the street as a destination (i.e. destination vs conduit)
2. Introduce a street tree program and a pedestrian scale lighting program for the street
3. Accommodate truck traffic but place equal importance on the pedestrian and cyclists.
4. Connect NSCC to the downtown, and the downtown to the waterfront using cycle lanes, multi-use trails and widened sidewalks. Make the community more walkable
5. Make the streets safer for automobiles and pedestrians
6. Make the streets more enjoyable for pedestrians
7. Connect neighbourhood parks and open spaces to the downtown.
8. Continue to invest in trails and trailheads around Town
9. Improve the quality of the recreation experiences near the downtown.
10. Create a gateway experience into Reeves Street on both ends of the street
11. Improve signage and wayfinding in the Town
12. Strengthen the Town's brand appeal
13. Strengthen the Town's event programs and promotions to increase tourism.

Private Realm Principles

1. Encourage mixed use development and more people living on Reeves Street.
2. Fill the 'missing teeth' on Reeves Street with more businesses and multi-unit housing.
3. Where possible, fill some of the large parking lots with street related development pads.
4. Bring future new buildings close to the sidewalk,
5. improving the pedestrian realm and improving the streetscape experience.
5. Invest in the façades of Reeves Street buildings
6. Use landscaping to screen large parking lots and improve the microclimate in the downtown
7. Cooperate on Reeves Street destination marketing



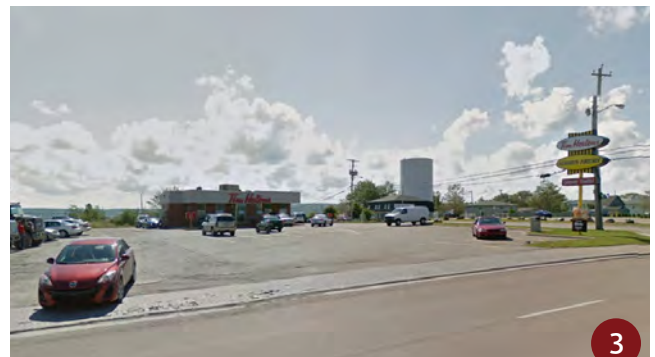
2.5 Opportunities & Constraints Framework

To inform the design process and understand the opportunities and constraints of the street, a series of maps were created illustrating the distribution and character of land use, mobility, green linkages, and strategic opportunities. This analysis demonstrates a need to rethink the Reeves Street corridor as a Complete Streets destination rather than a highway conduit.

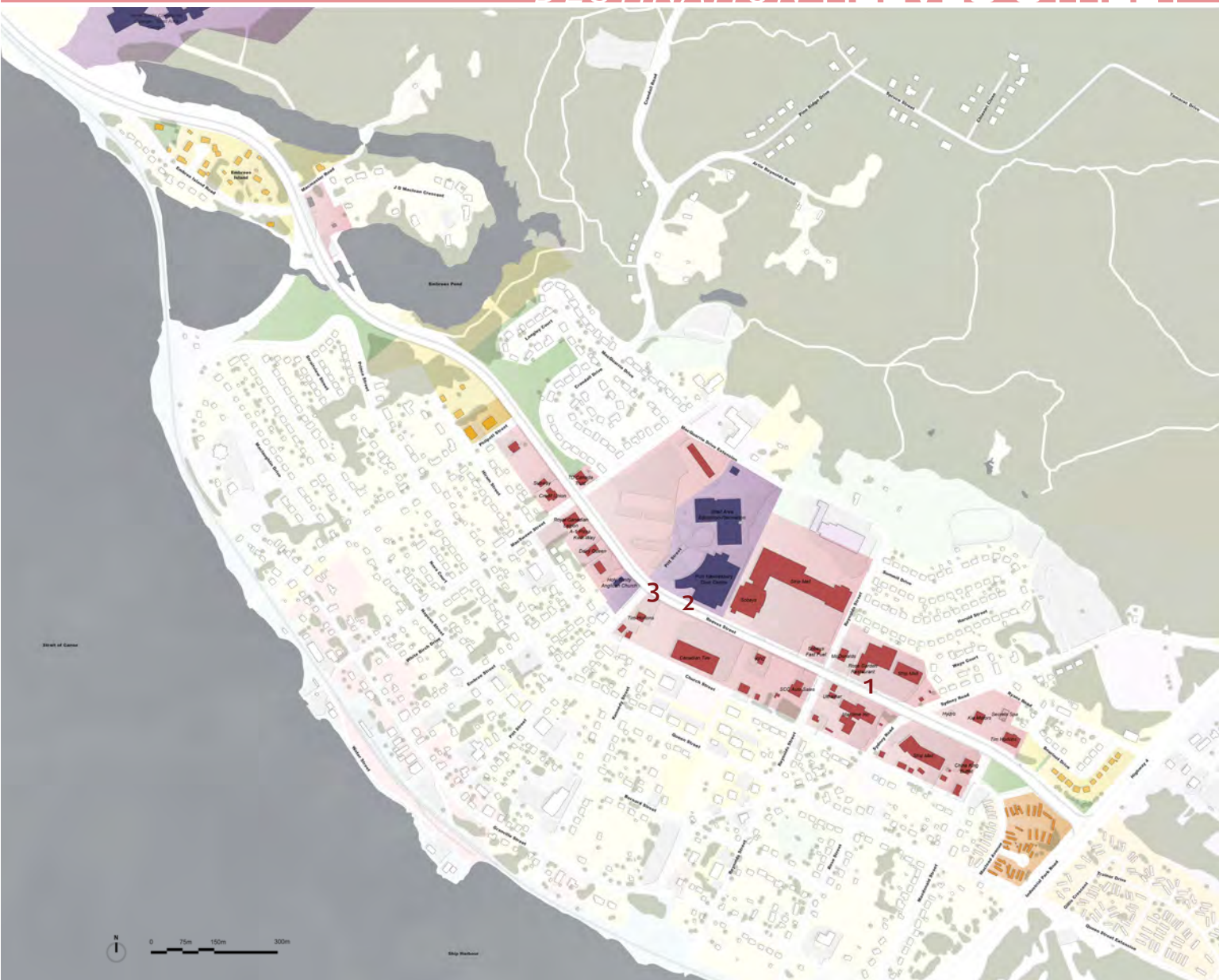
Land Use

Reeves Street is zoned as commercial with pockets of institutional, some single family & mobile home residential and multi-unit residential. Reeves Street commercial district is a mix of Big box retailing (Canadian Tire, Sobeys), strip malls, small commercial businesses, restaurants, hotels, car dealerships, gas bars, and some offices. In addition to the commercial activities that occur along the strip of the street, Reeves Street is home to the main institutional buildings such as the Civic Centre, the Strait Area Education-Recreation Centre and the Nova Scotia Community College. Significant green space in the form of open space and trail networks extend as green fingers off the street. The entirety of Reeves Street is supported by residential properties in close proximity. To the west end of Reeves Street, there are residential properties that could eventually be developed as commercial or mixed-use uses.

To the north, running parallel with Reeves Street there is a valley and stream network that feeds into Embrees Pond to the west. This stream network provides a great open space corridor only a half a kilometer from Reeves Street and creates a natural buffer between the 'old Town' and the new residential developments to the north.



DESTINATION REEVES STREET



- Commercial Highway
- Institutional
- Single Unit Residential
- Multiple Unit Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Open Space

From a land use perspective there are opportunities for multi-unit housing, mixed-use development, commercial infills, improved greenway connections, improved parks on Reeves Street, and commercial expansion to the west (though grades are more challenging).

Existing Mobility

There are significant opportunities for mobility improvements along Reeves Street. Currently there are frequent gaps in the sidewalk along the street from driveways, with the formal sidewalk disappearing at Philpott Street. The need to connect NSCC with downtown is a high priority for this plan, driving more student housing into the downtown and enhancing the connectivity of the community with NSCC. This connection should be a mix of multi-use trail and on street bicycle lanes. The connection between the waterfront and downtown is made by MacSween Street and Pitt Street, however, both street's sidewalks are very narrow and in relatively poor condition. These sidewalks should be widened to 5-6' width in the future to enhance walkability between the downtown and waterfront.

Additionally, the abundance of parking lots fronting onto the street breaks the pedestrian realm, increasing mobility hindrance and decreasing the safety of the street for all modes of transportation.









Potential Green Linkages

Reeves Street is surrounded by open space, with many green pockets scattered along the street and several trail connections from Reeves Street. There is a need for better signage and wayfinding in the downtown, continuing the elegant new signage created for the trailhead at Embrees Pond. The investment in MacQuarrie Park should be exposed by extending the



DESTINATION REEVES STREET







-  Existing Surface Parking
-  Building Frontage on Reeves Street
-  Existing Sidewalk
-  Existing Trail
-  Existing Signalized Intersection
-  Existing Pedestrian Crossing

park along the sidewalk of MacQuarrie Drive to Reeves Street. Ideally, with a multi-use trail (3.1m) like the one proposed between NSCC and MacSween Street. Strong green networks encourage biodiversity diversity within an urban fabric in addition to bolstering human physical and mental health. Similarly, the use of wide sidewalks, pedestrian scale street lighting, banners and street trees should link Reeves Street with the waterfront.

The creation of a continuous public realm that is consistent along the street and prominent spaces throughout Port Hawkesbury would be ideal. The linkages should be used to create strong connections between Reeves Street and these prominent spaces within Port Hawkesbury.





-  Existing Open Space
-  Potential Green Linkages
-  Existing Trail
-  Potential Trailhead

Key Development Opportunities

There are several large 'missing-teeth' on Reeves Street that would benefit from infill development. The large empty site between Town Hall and Reeves Street would be an ideal mixed use development site. There is significant potential for groundfloor retail with apartment or student residences above. Similarly, this area would be ideally suited to a seniors complex. At the western end of Reeves Street, the residential zoned land would eventually be ideal for commercial or mixed use if the road sightlines were improved. Along Reeves Street there are additional undeveloped properties that would benefit from infill. Any new infill should be street-related (building pulled up to the street with parking in the rear).



DESTINATION REEVES STREET



0 75m 150m 300m



Potential Infill



Existing Open Space



Existing Surface Parking

Opportunity Framework

By overlaying the different high level analysis maps, the large scale spatial opportunities and constraints surrounding Reeves Street become evident. At the smaller site scale, there are additional opportunities and constraints that are outlined in the following urban design chapter.



-  Potential Infill
-  Existing Open Space
-  Existing Surface Parking
-  Potential Green Parking Islands
-  Reeves Complete Street
-  Cycling/Pedestrian Oriented Streetscape
-  Intersection Improvements
-  Gateway Improvements





The 8-Big Moves for Reeves Street



03: REEVES 8-BIG MOVES

The 8-Big Moves for Reeves Destination Reeves Street is a strategy for improving the destination potential of Reeves Street. As outlined in previous chapters, there are several large scale strategies in moving from a conduit to a destination. These are the 8 Big-Moves for Reeves Street elaborated below:

1. **Reeves NSCC Greenway:** Connecting downtown with the NSCC campus through a multi-use trail. The idea is to make walking or cycling to the campus easy and fast.
2. **Reeves Gateways:** Improving the gateways to Reeves Street using signage and landscaping.
3. **Reeves Street Fingers:** Improving connections to other Port Hawkesbury 'destinations' like MacQuarrie Park and the waterfront.
4. **Reeves Complete Street:** Improving the safety and quality of the street through road dieting and complete streets design.

5. **Reeves Street Infilling:** Encouraging the infilling of undeveloped lots on Reeves Street. Creating site design standards for future infill sites to reduce the 'strip-commercial' feel of the street.
6. **Lot Development Standards:** Improving the individual private land sites by encouraging a program of landscaping and removing un-needed asphalt parking areas, and improving site landscaping.
7. **Reeves Façade Program:** Improving the quality of existing buildings on the street, starting with a façade enhancement program.
8. **Civic Branding:** Improving the civic brand wayfinding signage and honing the 'welcome'.

Strait of Canso

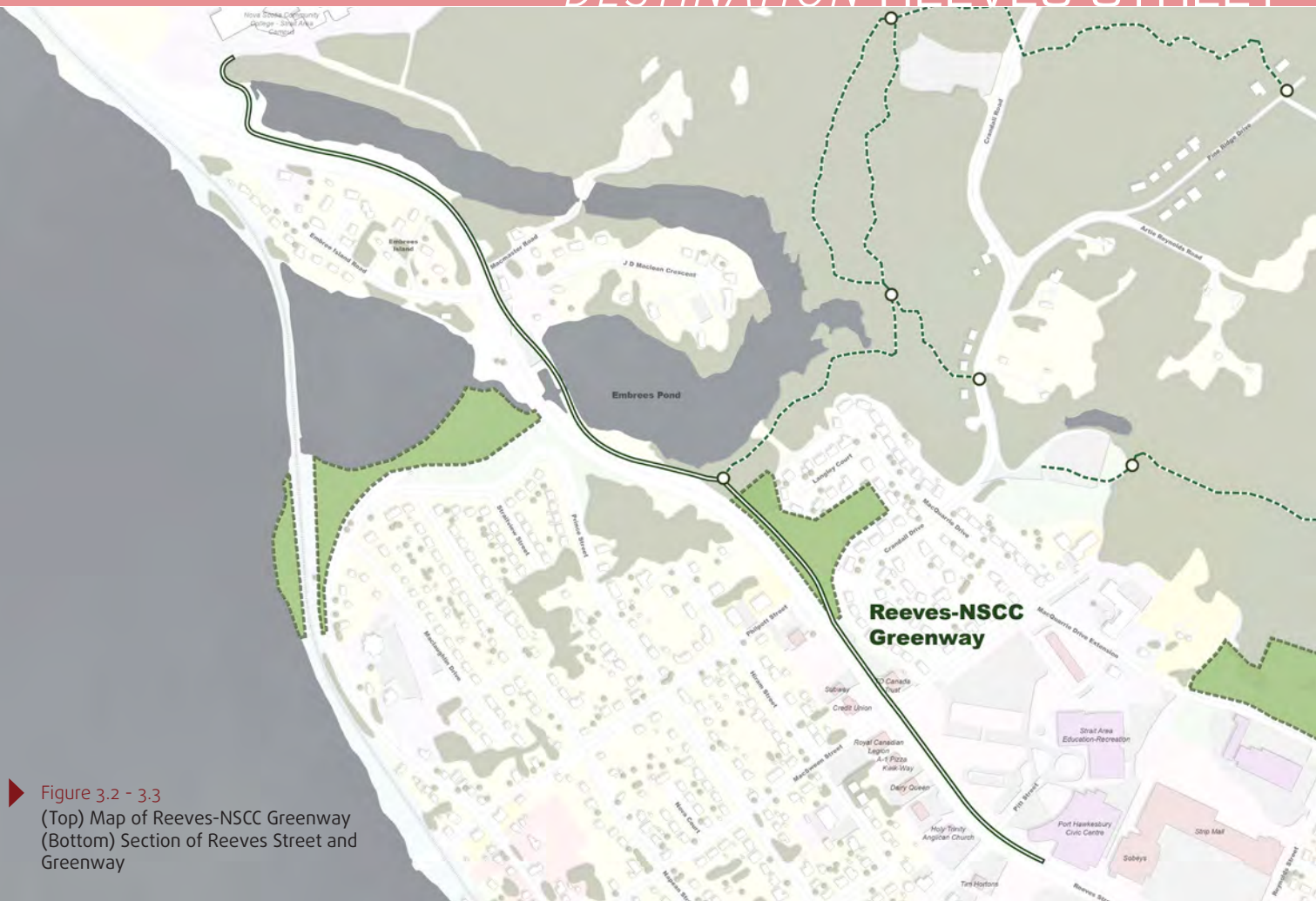


Figure 3.2 - 3.3
(Top) Map of Reeves-NSCC Greenway
(Bottom) Section of Reeves Street and Greenway

3.1 Reeves-NSCC Greenway

As outlined in chapter 1, economic benefit of the NSCC campus to Port Hawkesbury (and by extension, Reeves Street) is in the tens of millions of dollars per year. Making it easier for students and faculty to live and shop on Reeves Street will have direct and immediate economic impacts on the street.

In 2014, Ekistics was retained to undertake a "Pathways Study" to assess the routing options for a multi-use trail between the university and the downtown. The study included an online survey in which almost 200 respondents (students and staff) replied. Over 50% of the respondents shopped on Reeves Street daily and 34% shopped a few times a week. 60% of the students (36% of the faculty) walked to Reeves Street and 12% of students (10% of faculty) biked. When asked what factors discouraged walking between NSCC and downtown now,

almost all the respondents said it was too dangerous and there were no sidewalks. Only 20% said it was too far to walk. When asked if it were easier to walk or bike between NSCC and downtown, would they make the trip more frequently; 55% of the students (50% of the faculty) said "strongly yes" and 30% of the students (43% of the faculty) said "yes". Almost no-one said they wouldn't visit Reeves Street more often with a safer walking/cycling trail. These are very telling statistics and the responses illustrate the financial impact of building a multi-use trail between the campus and the downtown. Clearly, there will be positive economic spin-offs by linking the two.

The report assessed 2 options; the Red trail, a 2km long more rustic natural trail along the north side of Embrees Pond, and a Green Trail, a 1.7km multi-use trail along Reeves Street. While the more natural trail was the marginally cheaper of the two trails, the safer and more visible of the two trails was the Reeves Street multi-use



▼ Figure 3.1
Perspective of Greenway along
Reeves Street



trail. The Reeves Street trail offers no land ownership issues, easy maintenance, good visibility, good night lighting with lighting from Reeves Street, better connections to the waterfront, and a more direct connection to downtown.

The Destination Reeves Street study recommends the Reeves Street alignment for the multi-use trail. The trail should be designed as a 3.1 m wide asphalt surface from NSCC to Macsween Street. The trail should include light standards and banners where the cobrahead standards from Reeves Street do not provide adequate lighting. The Reeves Street lighting should generally provide safe light levels where the multi-use trail is proposed. There are several options for this trails alignment. One option outlined in the Safety study is to remove one of the westbound lanes (from 4 lanes to 3 lanes) with 2 lanes uphill, and one lane downhill. The other downhill lane would be turned into the multi-use trail complete with curb and gutter, 3-5' of grass and then a 3.1m trail using the existing asphalt. A second option is to keep all 4 lanes and build the





Phase 2



Phase 3

NSCC Greenway along the north side of the street. Fig 3.1 shows a 4 stage progression for the development of the greenway and redevelopment of the lands on the south side of Reeves Street.

The more northerly nature trail route along Embrees Pond would eventually be a good nature trail extending from MacQuarrie Park and the nature trails to NSCC. The

Port Hawkesbury Community Trails initiative includes over 10km of walking trails. There are still some land ownership issues that need to be resolved to link the Hemlock Trail to NSCC. The Town should work with land owners and NSCC to secure these easements.

► **Figure 3.4**
Reeves - NSCC Greenway Development
Conceptual Phasing



3.1 Reeves Gateways

The 2014 Reeves Street safety study proposed a roundabout at the westerly gateway to Reeves Street to resolve the safety issues at the intersections of Reeves Street and Embree Island Road, Granville Street and Macmaster Road. Of the 102 collisions from 2007-2012, 4 were at the Embree Island Road intersection, 1 was at the Macmaster Road intersection and 3 were at the Granville Road intersection. While this solution should effectively improve the safety of the intersections, it will come at significant cost. The roundabout option also removes 1 of the 2 bridges; these bridges are costly to maintain for the Town.

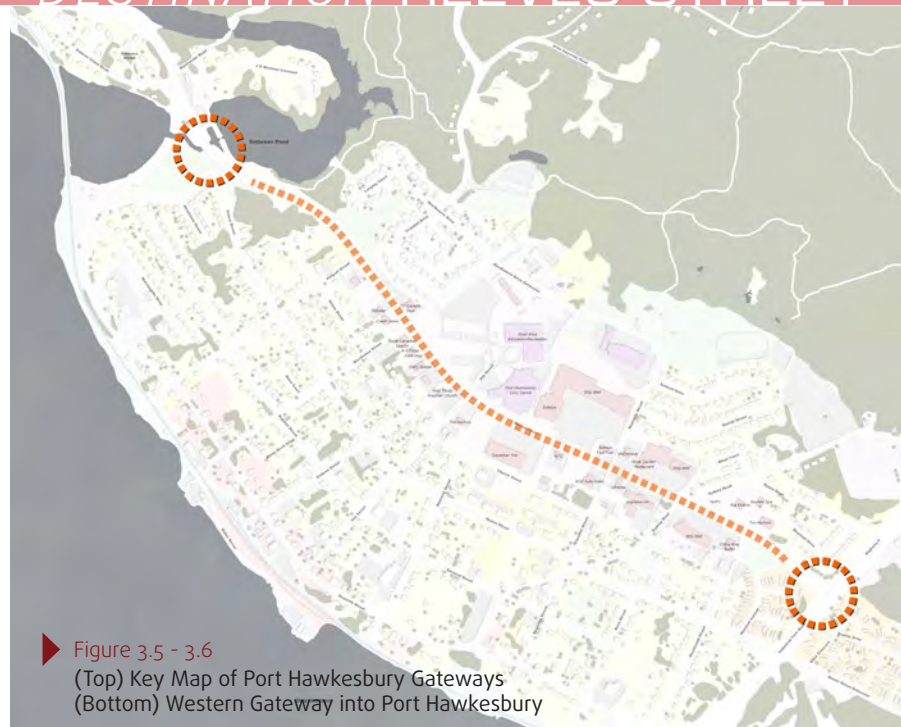
A second option, should the first prove to costly to undertake, is shown in figure 3.4 This plan shows Granville Street relocated to the south, eliminating the need for both bridges (for cars) and creating a safe intersection with a right turn lane from Reeves Street. The old Granville Street bridge would be designed as a gateway plaza with a pull-off, vehicle wayfinding, a commercial directory for Reeves Street



and a small landscaped plaza. Relocating Granville Street further south would free up significant additional land for a park on the Strait of Canso. There is some current limitations to the size of the Granville on the Green event on the waterfront. This proposed design intervention at Granville Street and Reeves Street could easily double the size of the event grounds for the Granville Green if they were relocated. The plan also shows the Granville slip lane turned into a pedestrian walkway.

At the intersection of Reeves Street and the new Granville Street alignment, the NSCC multi-use trail would connect across the intersection and along the waterfront effectively connecting the campus to the waterfront.

The park space near the old rail line could be a community garden, a waterfront space for students and residents and possibly a natural play playground. The possibility of connecting this trail under the rail tracks (under the rail bridge) to the more westerly interpretive park also exists. This park could be a significant tourist draw if it is developed correctly.



3.3 Reeves Street Fingers

Reeves Street is already a destination for traffic looking for commercial services. Part of making Reeves Street a tourist destination is increasing its pedestrian connectivity and visibility to other destinations in the community. The three big destinations are NSCC (covered in the NSCC Greenway above), MacQuarrie Park and nature park, the waterfront. The Reeves Street fingers projects would create 'green fingers' extending from Reeves Street into the MacQuarrie Park and 'Blue Fingers' from Reeves Street down to the waterfront. Increasing the walkability to these destinations will enhance Reeves Streets destination appeal.

MacQuarrie Park Green Fingers

MacQuarrie Park is becoming a major open space

destination for the community. The active recreation facilities include baseball field, a soccer field, a track, tennis courts, playground and splash pads. In 2010, Ekistics completed a master plan for the park which will guide the evolution of the park over time. To the north of MacQuarrie Park, the Embree River corridor provides the backbone for a unique natural open space experience with a number of themed trails extending over 10km through the wilderness areas. These trails are being developed and improved every year. In 2014, Form:Media prepared a signage and wayfinding program for the trails. These are the type of experiences that family and nature seeking tourists will come and spend time at. In the 2010 Visitor Exit Survey, most nature tourists are seeking waterfront trails and so connecting the Port Hawkesbury Community Trail system through to the proposed Strait of Canso Trail (shown in figure 3.7) is an important part of marketing the Port Hawkesbury Trail.



Figure 3.7
Blue & Green Fingers

Figure 3.8
Beech and Laburnum Urban Trails



Reeves Street needs to provide visible connections and wayfinding to these unique nature experiences. The NSCC Greenway is part of making this trail system more visible. However, MacQuarrie Street and MacSween Street offer visible connections to this important resource. These streets should have wider than normal sidewalks (6-8' wide), a double row of caliper sized street trees and special wayfinding signage that is visible and legible by cars on Reeves Street. The objective is to extend MacQuarrie Park all the way to Reeves Street increasing its legibility from the street and creating 'green fingers' into the park.

Waterfront Blue Fingers

Another significant destination for the community and tourists is the Port Hawkesbury Waterfront. The Reeves and Granville Streetscape Study (Ekistics, 2004) included plans for the waterfront expansion. What is vital as part of the Destination Reeves Street Study is that the walking connections from Reeves Street are visible and legible. Currently, the sidewalks on MacSween and Pitt Street are the best way to connect to the waterfront. These

very narrow sidewalks (3-4') are in very poor condition. It should be a priority of the Town to upgrade these sidewalks to at least 6' width and significantly increase the street tree plantings (using beech trees as explained below) to provide shade for walkers. Like MacQuarrie Park, there should be ample wayfinding and directional signage along these two blue routes.

Urban Trail Maps

The Port Hawkesbury Community Trail is a significant asset for the community. We would recommend that these trails be extended to include these additional urban trails as part of the overall network of trails through the community. The existing trails are themed after trees in the area (Maple Trail, Hemlock Trail, Spruce, Tamarack and Poplar Trail) and we would suggest that the new waterfront trail be called the Beech Trail (complete with Beech trees and a play-on for a waterfront beach) for MacSween and Laburnum Trail (using Waterer Laburnum Trees; again a play-on the waterfront). These additional urban trails (including the NSCC and Strait of Canso Trail) could almost double the length of the existing 10 km trail.

3.4 Reeves Complete Street

As described in Chapter 2, the Reeves Complete Street is another important part of making Reeves Street a better destination but also a safe transportation conduit for cars, trucks, cyclists and walkers.

Reeves Road Dieting

The WSP Safety Study (2014) made recommendations for road dieting from 4 lanes to 3 lanes from Granville Street to Highway 4. As was noted previously, from Reeves to MacSween, there could be a 3 or 4 lane cross section (depending on where the NSCC Greenway is located). From MacSween to Highway 4, the current 4 lane cross section would be changed to a 3-lane cross section with a middle shared turning lane and bike lanes on both sides of the street. The Town should implement a program of consolidating driveways to no more than 1 driveway per business. Wherever possible, this driveway should be reduced to 24' width. Exceptions should include gas bars and other properties over 150' of frontage that require two driveways to be functional. Reducing the number of driveways could mean introducing landscaped islands where shared central turning lanes are not required.



Figure 3.9 - 3.13

(Top) Key Map of Complete Street Perspectives
 (Middle Left) Location 1 Complete Street
 (Middle Right) Location 2 Complete Street
 (Bottom Left) Location 3 Complete Street
 (Bottom Right) Location 4 Complete Street





EXISTING
COMMERCIAL
DEVELOPMENT

SOBEYS

PARKETTE

ST

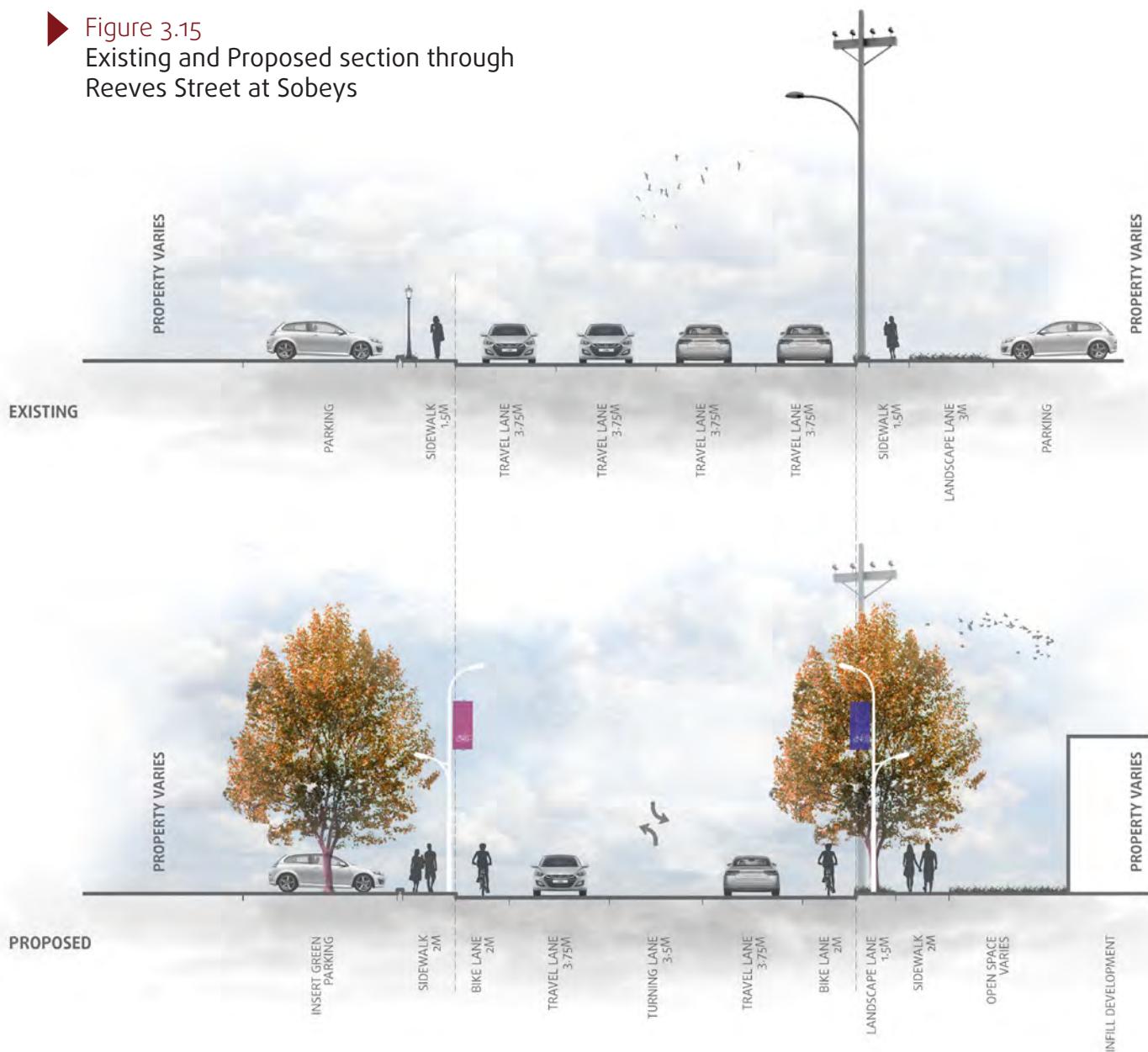
RETAIL
EXPANSION

REEVES

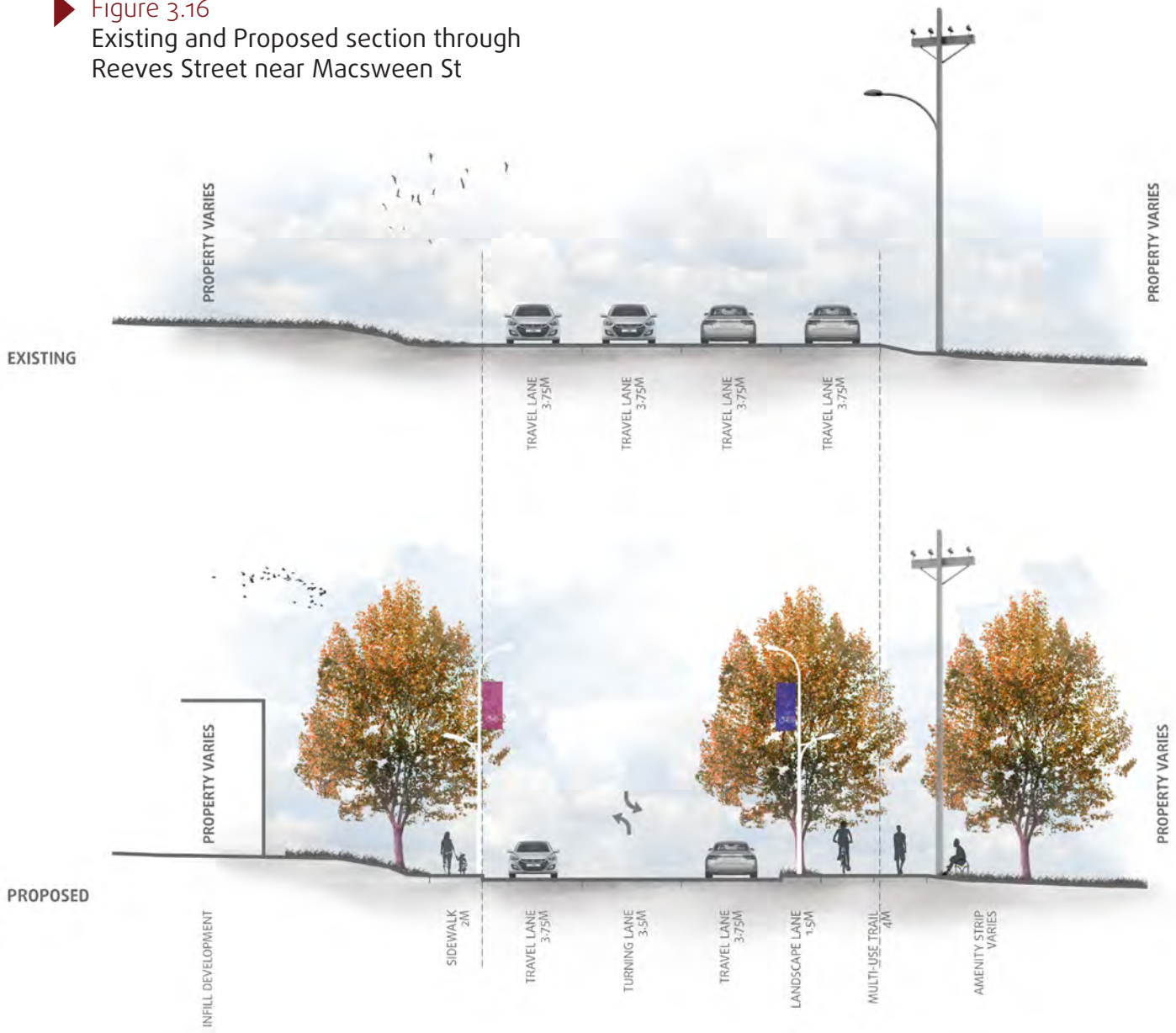
► Figure 3.14
Illustrative Plan of Town Centre



► **Figure 3.15**
Existing and Proposed section through
Reeves Street at Sobeys



► Figure 3.16
Existing and Proposed section through
Reeves Street near Macsween St





▲ Figure 3.17
Location 1: Existing Condition



▲ Figure 3.18
Phase 1: Street and Multi-Use Trail Implementation



▲ Figure 3.19
Phase 2: Street Tree Planting



▲ Figure 3.20
Phase 3: Gateway Landscape Improvements



▲ Figure 3.21
Location 2: Existing Condition



▲ Figure 3.22
Phase 1: Street and Multi-Use Trail Implementation



▲ Figure 3.23
Phase 2: Street Tree Planting and Sidewalk Improvements



▲ Figure 3.24
Phase 3: Main Street Identity and Infill Development



▲ Figure 3.25
Location 2: Existing Condition



▲ Figure 3.26
Phase 1: Street Improvement and Bike Lane Implementation



▲ Figure 3.27
Phase 2: Street Tree Planting and Sidewalk Improvements



▲ Figure 3.28
Phase 3: Main Street Identity and Parkette Development



▲ Figure 3.29
Location 4: Existing Condition



▲ Figure 3.30
Phase 1: Street Improvement and Bike Lane Implementation

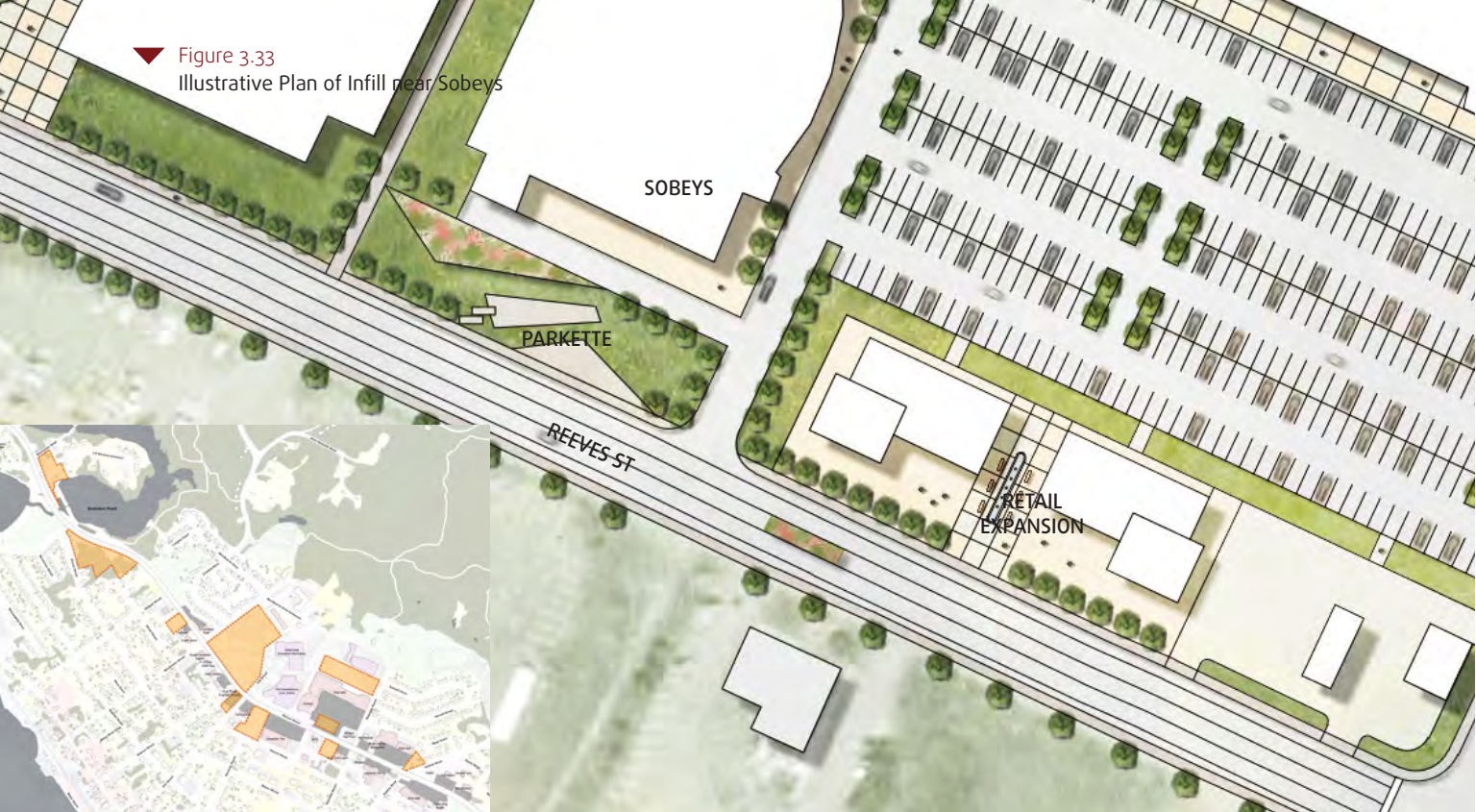


▲ Figure 3.31
Phase 2: Street Tree Planting and Sidewalk Improvements



▲ Figure 3.32
Phase 3: Main Street Identity and Landscape Islands

Figure 3.33
Illustrative Plan of Infill near Sobeys



3.5 Reeves Street Infilling

Several large parking lots or empty lots are areas that are ripe for small pad infilling. The Causeway Shopping Mall north of the gas bar is one area that could be an ideal infill. Ideally the infill would have some street related use like an outdoor café or plaza. The idea is to bring the shops closer to the walking pedestrians. South of Tim Horton's is another potential infill area.

The largest and most important infill is empty lot between MacSween and the Civic Centre. This is an area that could incorporate a multi-phased students housing or senior's development. If possible, the Reeves Street façade should have ground floor retail to keep the street active for the public. The grade change would support 3-4 stories on Reeves Street and a walk-out storey on the Pitt Street extension. The veteran's memorial should be expanded to include a large plaza out front.

The idea of a seniors or student housing

is an interesting discussion. Both are appropriate for the site and both are probably feasible from a development perspective. From a student housing perspective, micro-boutiques are popping up in campus towns across North America including new ones in Wolfville and Antigonish (<http://www.microboutiqueliving.com/>). The units are designed usually no more than 300 sq.ft. with a common lounge area. From a senior's active lifestyle perspective, the sites proximity to services on Reeves Street and park space at MacQuarrie Park and trails would be ideal selling features. There is ample room for 4-5 clusters. In order to define the developable land, the Pitt Street extension needs to be designed (not necessarily built). The street should be designed to service up to 150 units.

The Town should prepare a development expression of interest for this site(s) once the Pitt Street extension is designed. There should be a requirement for a ground floor retail component in each building fronting on Reeves Street of no less than 1/2 of the building frontage.



Figure 3.34
Pitt Street Extension and Potential Development







Reeves Parkettes

There are several small urban parkette locations along Reeves Street. The first is at the western gateway (figures 3.35-3.38). Ideally the Reeves Street Fingers would have small parkettes where MacQuarrie and MacSween meet Reeves Street. MacSween would include the expansion of the veteran's memorial plaza. There is a small area at the corner of MacQuarrie and Reeves (near the Needs) that could be turned into a small wayfinding plaza with some seating. There is also room on both sides of the Sydney Road (including the substation lands) that could be turned into small parkettes. Some simple landscaping, benches, signage and hardscape is all that is needed to clean up these important corner and enliven Reeves Street.



► **Figure 3.35 - 3.38**
 (Top right) Illustrative Plan of the Veterans Memorial Plaza
 (Bottom right) Illustrative Plan of Sydney Road & Reeves Parkette
 (Far Right) Illustrative Plan of Western Gateway

3.6 Lot Development Standards

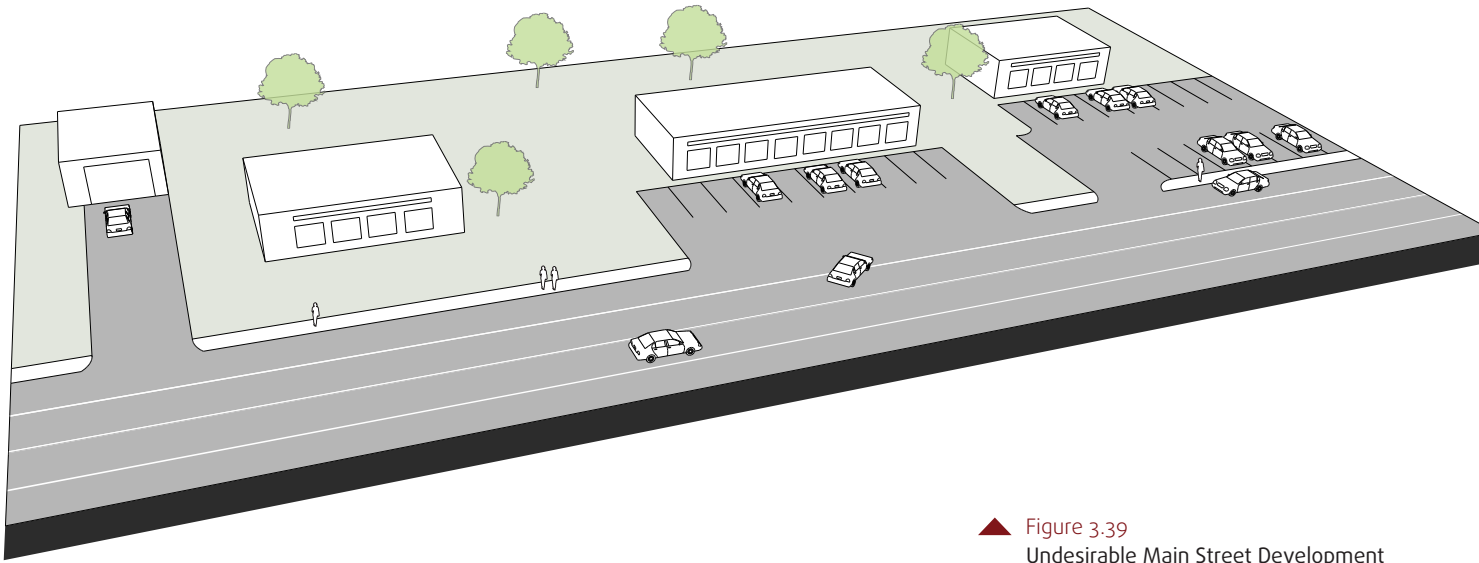
Zoning controls some aspects of the C3 zone including setbacks, parking requirements, coverages, etc. But, zoning does not control how many driveways are allowed, how wide the driveways are permitted, where the parking can be located and the buildings relationship to the street. Future bylaw updates should require that:

1. No parking is permitted between the building and the street
2. The building should have a maximum setback of no more than 12' from the lot line (for no less than 60% of the frontage).
3. The building must have a door on Reeves Street connected with a

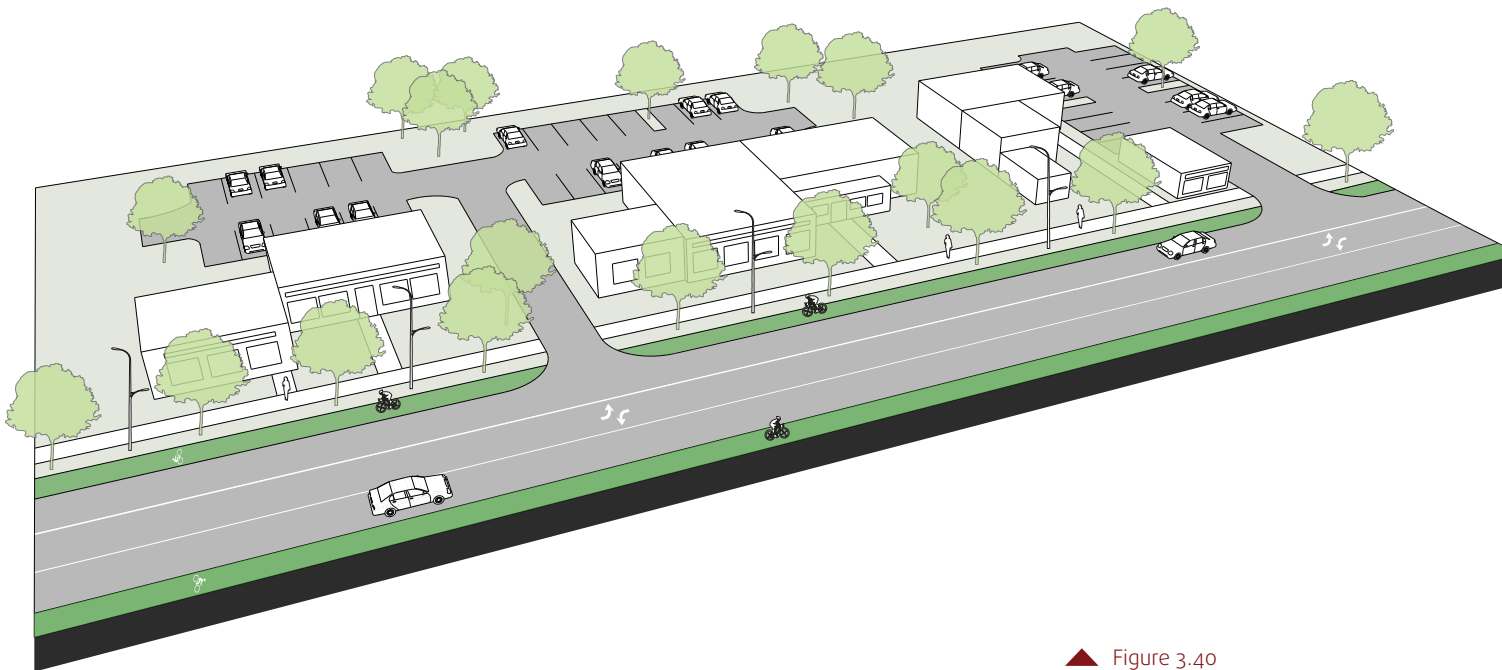
walkway no less than 8' wide.

4. Only one driveway is permitted per 150' frontage per lot with a maximum width of 24' (for instance, a 140' frontage can only have 1 driveway, a 160' frontage can have 2 driveways but not 3, etc.)
5. There should be one caliper sized tree planted for every 40' of frontage

Existing developments would be grandfathered from these new development requirements. Perhaps the façade program could include an allocation for landscape improvements that would reduce asphalt areas, and increase shrubs and trees, or create walkways from Reeves Street to the front of businesses.



▲ Figure 3.39
Undesirable Main Street Development



▲ Figure 3.40
Ideal Main Street Development

3.7 Reeves Façade Program

Façade improvements are a key element in revitalizing a street or area. Façades that are in disrepair and derelict bring down the property values of the area, discouraging new development. Many municipalities in Cape Breton have benefitted from Façade Incentive Programs using regional development or direct municipal funding. As a municipal tool, municipally funded programs tend to have a pay back of between 7-10 years depending on how well the program is adopted. Programs that are cost shared or fully funded by regional development agencies create direct spin-off benefits for the municipality.

Façade programs act to leverage government funding (usually 50 cent dollars) for every dollar privately invested up to some limit. For instance, a building owner's \$5,000 investment will leverage another \$5,000 from government funding. The funding can only be used on the visible exterior of any façade that fronts on to Reeves Street, with potentially additional funds for side street façades. The money cannot be used for interior renovations. Exterior funding must follow the requirements outlined in the eligibility requirements.

Façade Incentive Program

Façade programs have a history of successful implementation throughout

Cape Breton, initiatives in Cheticamp, St. Peters, Mabou, Sydney and North Sydney have all helped increase the curb appeal of – and pride in – Cape Breton communities. This success has led to the continued proliferation of such initiatives in practice and policy. Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) continues to include Façade programs as part of their strategic planning for the Tourism sector in select areas of Cape Breton.

Façade programs only work when a common theme or approach is coordinated amongst the participants. The idea behind the plan is to ensure good design practices are followed. This includes the use of high quality building materials, reviving the architectural intent of a building, using high quality signage design practices or using colour themes that work with a family of buildings rather than an uncoordinated colour styles. The visual and economic impacts of a good façade program are noticeable in a community.

In tandem with the Complete Streets streetscape development, the success of Reeves Street involves the improvement of the private realm including the infill of empty lots and façade improvements. Along Reeves Street there are several opportunity spots and existing businesses and institutions that will benefit for coordinated façade improvements. Fig. 26 shows the limits of the area that is best situated for a façade improvement district.

Façade programs can be challenging on commercial strips like Reeves Street

› Grant funds for materials and labour

By launching the program with a known cap on the total spending there will be enticement for commercial property owners to engage early while funds are available. This report includes general details on pricing to help assist the façade program in communicating the magnitude of potential expenses associated with façade improvement.

Façade Styles

While Reeves Street businesses generally do not have a historic character, those that do have some traditional style should respect the architectural style if present. For the larger more modern buildings, a more modern industrial style would create a unified image for the street. The use of industrial materials, metal and glass is preferred over more traditional materials.

Façade Design Guidelines

To assist in the creation of Façade Design Guidelines we crafted principles to assist the team when thinking about buildings in Port Hawkesbury; (i) the history and character of Port Hawkesbury is a valuable asset, (ii) all eras are part of this history, no single period is more important than another, (iii) Port Hawkesbury should look like everyone cares for it, and (iv) Port Hawkesbury is at its best in the bright summer months.

- › Signage should be placed in areas originally dedicated for placement - in the sign band about the storefront, in windows, projecting from storefronts, or on awnings.

- › If the original colour, detail, and materials are known, and if they meet modern fire safety requirements, use them.
- › The principles of balance and harmony should be applied to every façade.
- › Traditional building styles should be respected where present.
- › More modern styles and materials should be used where there is no traditional style.
- › Use durable, low maintenance materials.

Façade Signage

Signs and storefronts tend to change much more frequently as businesses come and go while building façades tend to remain relatively static over time. As a result, there is often very little consideration of how the sign relates to the building or its architectural style. Often, the corporate image (new, trendy, flashy, subdued, economical, etc.) is reflected in its sign, and this image may or may not be compatible with the surrounding architectural style. The installation of cheap, backlit signs only serves to reinforce the transient nature of a business in the downtown. This goes against the image of permanence and stability that will attract business. Many municipalities have instituted very strict signage bylaws to eliminate the transient stereotype of businesses downtown. Owners participating in this program will need to include high quality reflective lighted individual letter, shaped or effigy signs.

Signage and storefront improvements represent the most visible and achievable enhancements to the downtown. Generally

speaking, signage on Reeves Street does not reinforce the architectural styles. Signs should provide a reasonable opportunity to advertise a business, but not at the expense of the architecture and the neighbourhood character. Signs have the potential to make a significant positive contribution to the character of Reeves Street.

The following considerations should be adopted for funding of signs as part of the Reeves Street Façade Program:

1. NO steel rectangular metal box back-lighted acrylic or polycarbonate signs should be considered for funding. Preference should be given to front-lit signage wherever possible unless individual sign letters are backlit. Backlit LED signs should be considered for funding if the design style is innovative with high quality materials.
2. Projecting signs and freestanding signs are encouraged on Reeves Street. Brackets should be decorative and relate to the design of the sign.
3. Woven acrylic awnings with applied graphics should be considered for funding.
4. Free Standing Sign are NOT part of the façade program.

Sample Façade Improvements

The following samples were produced to show the range of changes that might be expected for a façade program in Port Hawkesbury using the design principles outlined here.

Administering the façade Program

The program should be administered through a Town Project Manager. An application should be developed

using the example provided to ensure that all applicants are following the rules. Applicants should submit a completed application along with a plan and short description of the proposed improvements.

Building owners must meet with the project manager at this early stage of their project to discuss their proposal in detail. The project manager will provide feedback and guidance to the owners.

Following this meeting, the owner must submit:

1. A preliminary illustration of proposed building renovations with notes adequate to demonstrate design, materials and proposed colour scheme for all changes;

Once the project manager has had a chance to review and comment on the proposed building renovations, approval, with conditions as necessary, will be given.

With the design approved participants will also supply:

2. A cost estimate or tender from at least two contractors.
3. Other professional drawings which may be necessary to implement the façade changes (structural, electrical, etc).
4. A schedule for construction including a proposed completion date.

When the project is complete, the owner must schedule a site inspection by the project manager to ensure the project is built as detailed in the drawings. Owners should note that deviation from the original design drawings may be grounds for not approving funding. Once the inspection is completed, the project manager will issue a letter of acceptance to the owner and will issue the funding.



▲ Figure 3.42
Kwik-way & A-1 Pizza Existing Façade



▲ Figure 3.43
Kwik-way & A-1 Pizza Façade Improvement



▲ Figure 3.44
SCC Auto Sales & Furniture Warehouse Existing Façade



▲ Figure 3.45
SCC Auto Sales & Furniture Warehouse Façade Improvement



▲ Figure 3.46
The Medicine Shoppe & Dooly's Existing Façade



▲ Figure 3.47
The Medicine Shoppe & Dooly's Façade Improvement





▲ Figure 3.48
Causeway Shopping Centre Existing Façade



▲ Figure 3.49
Causeway Shopping Centre Façade Improvement





▲ Figure 3.50
Carriage House Lounge Existing Façade



▲ Figure 3.51
Carriage House Lounge Façade Improvement

3.8 Civic Branding & Signage

Early in the Destination Reeves Street project, there was some discussion about Reeves Street having its own brand and identity separate from Port Hawkesbury. While this commercial destination brand strategy has worked well in bigger cities with well known commercial streets (Spark Street in Ottawa, St. Catherine Street in Montreal, George Street in St. John's), Port Hawkesbury would benefit by focusing its efforts on branding the Town rather than diluting the brand by focusing on the street alone. That's not to say that the signage for Reeves Street couldn't be bolder or more dramatic than other streets in Town, the consultants believe it is more important to sharpen the Town brand. With that in mind, the branding consultants (Form:Media) led a branding workshop to understand what drives the community's pride. The results of the workshop are summarized in chapter 1. Discussions ranged from "the main street of western Cape Breton" to a superport with the finest harbor in the world. Participants noted that "we need to refine our welcome; we don't do it very well". Indeed it is this aspect of welcoming, sharing our pride, and discovering our secrets that appeal

most to visitors to Cape Breton. The aspects of the Island that resound most with visitors to Cape Breton are the seacoast (83%), natural landscape and wildlife (82%), the culture and the people (70%), and the chance to do interesting activities (63%) (2010 Visitor Exit Surveys for Cape Breton). For locals, the things that resound the most about Port Hawkesbury is its regional service capabilities (the hub or main street of western Cape Breton), its active lifestyle (parks and trails) and its formidable harbor; long the source of ingenuity, industry and livelihood for its people. While some may see these viewpoints as mutually exclusive, there does appear to be confluence and resonance in the 'seacoast and harbour' and 'active lifestyle' ideas.

Clearly, Port Hawkesbury's new brand needs to resonate with how the community views itself while at the same time peaking the interest of both the tourist and new businesses. An effective brand for Port Hawkesbury should capture the quality of life in the community and project it to existing and potential residents, visitors and businesses. By connecting this brand to positive experiences, it will resonate for the community.

▲ Figure 3.48
Existing Logo and tag line



▲ Figure 3.48
Modified Logo and tag line

Tag Line

Atlantic Canada and indeed much of rural Canada, can lay claim to scenic beautiful, natural surroundings, good hospitality and friendly, welcoming residents; serene and peaceful environments; and arts and cultural offerings. This is certainly true for much of rural Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. But, Port Hawkesbury has a number of important things going for it. It has an ice free harbor, a deep water port and a superport that employs thousands (directly and indirectly). For most tourists, it is their first stop on the Island; a place to get your bearings and a place to reflect on your journey. For local residents of western Cape Breton, it is a necessary service destination and a place for weekly provisioning. For both, it is a port of call, a point of reference, a sheltering harbour and a place to take stock. Port Hawkesbury is....

Cape Breton's Port of Call

We already know that this tag line will resound with the public (because it came from them), but we believe it will also tease the interest of tourists and appeal to future businesses who will see the Town as a regional destination. The tag line also works well with the Destination Reeves Street strategy. We think it will appeal to all three groups while creating the desired effect for each (pride for residents, coastal

curiosity for tourists, commercial destination for businesses).

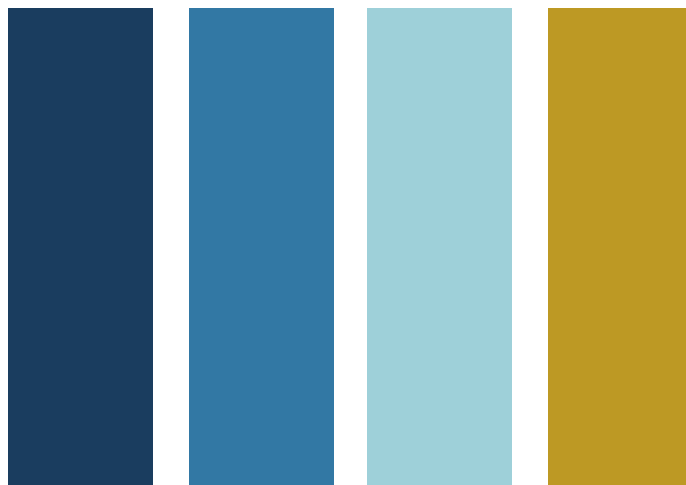
Brandmark

Civic branding is a challenging and sometimes divisive exercise. It can touch the nerve of residents who don't see their image of the community in the physical representation of it. There are challenges with preferences for different subjective styles (I like blue, you like yellow), there are the status quo residents who don't want things to change and there are those who prefer to look back and those that want to look into the future. Needless to say, the dialog that comes with the civic branding process is its most beneficial outcome. People genuinely want to discuss the lens through which they see THEIR community. It can be passionate and it can be heated, but without this zeal, the place is not worthy of a true brand. All too often, the compromise is to appease everyone by including the icon they think represents the community. I want a lighthouse, I want a ship, I want a sunset. The most costly mistake in any branding exercise is not making the hard decisions to distill the brandmark down to its very essence. Mass appeasement is the greatest threat to a civic brand. This approach is a 180 degree switch from the old days of a crowded Town shield. Calculated and thoughtful simplicity is the modern rule of the branding game.



PORT HAWKESBURY

cape bretons port of call



Primary Colour Scheme

Halifax recently went through a similar civic branding exercise in 2014. It was the most involved engagement process in the history of the municipality with over 20,000 people (<http://halifaxdefined.ca/>) responding to the dialog. The result caused heated debate and public outcry upon its unveiling but the leadership stuck to it and the image that it represented of a forward looking, modern city.

In parallel with this study, the Town had commissioned its own landmark and was commencing early trials on its website and

print material. The Form:Media branding team was asked to tweak the concept and ensure that it was supportive of the Destination Reeves Street vision and the overall branding objectives of the Town. Also, the landmark needed to work with wayfinding and directional signage.

The existing landmark is presented along with some alternatives for discussion in the final report.



PORTHAWKESBURY
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PORTHAWKESBURY
Cape Bretons Port of Call



PORTHAWKESBURY

cape bretons port of call



PORT HAWKESBURY

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Have a seat and enjoy the beautiful view of our harbour.



Find Events in Port Hawkesbury

CALENDAR						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



Latest News

November 23 2014

Title for the 1st Latest News.

Maecenas convallis vestibulum neque, eu tempus ligula viverra sit amet. Fusce risus sapien, sodales vitae tempor ac.

December 27 2014

Title for the 2nd Latest News.

Vestibulum neque, eu tempus ligula viverra sit amet. Fusce risus sapien, sodales vitae tempor ac.

November 23 2014

Title for the 3rd Latest News.

Maecenas convallis vestibulum neque, eu tempus ligula viverra sit amet. Fusce risus sapien, sodales vitae tempor ac.

December 27 2014

Title for the 4th Latest News.

Vestibulum neque, eu tempus ligula viverra sit amet. Fusce risus sapien, sodales vitae tempor ac.



Welcome to Port Hawkesbury

Port Hawkesbury is a town located on the southwestern end of Cape Breton Island, on the north shore of the Strait of Canso in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. The Town was originally named Ship Harbour (after the harbour which it is located) and is largely a service centre for western Cape Breton Island. Many of its residents work in large industries in an industrial park located in the adjacent community of Point Tupper, Richmond Country.

Port Hawkesbury is a major service centre, located on the beautiful Strait of Canso, and offers a unique blend of economic, cultural and lifestyle opportunities to those living and visiting the area.



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Signage

The following hierarchy of signage is recommended for Downtown Port Hawkesbury:

- › Street Blade Signage
- › Directional Signage Wayfinding Sign & Event Kiosk
- › Banners
- › Vehicle Signage

Like the civic landmark, it is important that the signage speak from the same design vocabulary. Since the Town of Port Hawkesbury is well known for its impressive marine & nautical heritage, the signage theme picks up on naval details including wood, flags, semaphores, cables, and canvas.



Front Elevation:
Map / Legend

Back Elevation:
Directory / Map Detail

Right / Side Elevation:
Community Events Bulletin

Left / Side Elevation:
Community Events Bulletin





4 Implementation

04: IMPLEMENTATION

This project has envisioned not only what, but how. There are a number of key next steps needed to fully advance the plan as summarized below.

1. Downtown Development Corporation Or BIDC:

A municipality or Chamber of Commerce only has limited potential to engage the 'private' components of this plan. These include advancing the facade program, engaging an active commercial recruitment strategy, or engaging future real estate developers. The Municipal Government Act (MGA) prevents direct investment in private properties so it becomes difficult for the municipality to directly run a facade improvement program. Other municipalities use a variety of service and program delivery models to deliver and engage in these programs. The use of a Business Improvement District Commission (BIDC) or a downtown development corporation could partially funded by the municipality but it has the arms length capabilities to undertake specific projects that are difficult or impossible for the municipality. The formation of a BIDC is one way the Province has enabled the Municipality to collect levies for downtown improvements. The Town should look at what creative funding partnerships could exist to leverage a development entity for the Town. HRM has many examples of BIDC's, Truro has the Truro Partnership and Yarmouth has the Downtown Yarmouth Development Corporation. All of these models should be explored for their utility in advancing this plan for Port Hawkesbury.

2. Business Recruitment Plan

Developing effective business strategies and actively recruiting based on the strategy is important in attracting business to the Reeves Street. An active strategy catches the attention of potential businesses and investors, instead of passively waiting for them to discover what the Downtown has to offer. Having a business recruitment strategy establishes that the Town of Port Hawkesbury is ready and open for business, and it shows that the Town has collectively decided to actively recruit new business. A Downtown Development Corporation or BIDC could spearhead an active recruitment strategy for commercial businesses using a GAP analysis of what services are missing.

3. Developer Recruitment Strategy

In small rural communities, sometimes residential or mixed use developers don't exist or don't have the capacity for larger projects. Reeves Street has significant potential for multi-unit housing, mixed use development and student housing. A Development Corporation should be tasked with actively recruiting the right type of developers for new developments. Prior to this, the Town needs to make sure they are "open for business" and that the MPS and land use bylaws are supportive of the type of development that is desired.

The following section of the report suggests phasing that can be utilized by the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to begin to implement recommendations. It is unrealistic to expect that the aforementioned recommendations will be completed simultaneously. Phasing should be used to address the necessary changes in a feasible manner to ensure improvements result in the desired outcomes. Phasing addresses the most immediate improvements first and then expands to recommendations that build on the groundwork completed in the previous phases.

4. Facade Incentive Plan

A facade Incentive Program is strong way to improve facades on Reeves Street as outlined in this report. The Municipality should pursue the Facade Incentive Program with higher levels of government to determine the potential contributions. A further, more detailed facade study (above the recommendations of this report) may be required as part of this program once the details of the program are better defined. The Town will likely need an administrative vehicle like a downtown development corporation in order to administer the program. Talks with ACOA, the Province and other downtown organizations should begin immediately.

5. DTIR Meetings

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (DTIR) administers improvements to Reeves Street from curb face to curb face. The Town should begin discussions regarding the improvements outlined in this report and the WSP report regarding the proposed streetscape and safety improvements. The public is generally

in support of the recommendations assuming that taxes are not adversely impacted. The combination of new tax revenue from new businesses and developers, increased assessments from the facade improvements and Provincial funding for improvements should be investigated to find the right mix for the community.

6. Land Use Bylaw Enhancements

The Municipality should adopt the design policy recommendations outlined in this report in future revisions of the MPS and LUB.

7. Civic Signage Strategy

The Municipality should commission a detailed civic signage strategy for Port Hawkesbury. Immediate priorities include better signage for parking, gateway signs, a community kiosk, directional signage and street signs. The strategy should include schematic designs for every proposed sign in enough detail for fabrication and installation.

This report provides a high level vision for Reeves Street over the next 20 years. The municipality will need to choose a phased delivery strategy that best suits the funding possibilities and capabilities of the municipality.