



TOWN OF NORTH RUSTICO

**OFFICIAL PLAN &
ZONING BYLAW
UPDATE**

PHASE 2 - COMMUNITY SCAN

2023.08.XX

CHAPTER 1		CHAPTER 3	
CONTEXT SETTING	3	DIAGNOSTIC	13
1.1 INTRODUCTION	4	01. LAND USE AND BUILT-FORM	14
1.2 GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT	4	02. TRANSPORTATION	16
1.3 HISTORIC CONTEXT	6	03. ENVIRONMENT	18
1.4 MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION	6	04. POINTS OF INTEREST	20
		05. OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS	20
CHAPTER 2			
SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE	8		
2.1 PEOPLE	9		
2.2 HOUSING	10		
2.3 WORK	11		
2.4 EDUCATION	12		

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT SETTING

1.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Municipal plans should be grounded in a deep understanding of the area they are designed for. An initial step in creating these plans is to examine the critical issues and opportunities within the local context of North Rustico, which helps in setting the priorities that the plan will address. At the beginning of the North Rustico-wide MPS Review process, Stantec conducted studies on Demography and Housing, Economic Development, Environment and Planning, Infrastructure, and Land Use.

The following sub-sections provide a summary of the key issues and themes that these studies revealed. These studies play a crucial role in informing the town's consultation sessions will be held during this period, as well as the Community-wide Visioning Meetings. The insights gained from these studies and various other consultation initiatives will continue to guide the preparation of the MPS and LUB for North Rustico.

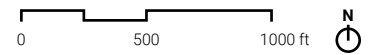
1.2 **LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY**

Situated on the North Shore of Prince Edward Island, the Town of North Rustico lies 30 kms southeast of Charlottetown, the provincial capital. It is on the extreme eastern end of the Resort Municipality of Stanley Bridge, Hope River, Bayview, and Cavendish and 45 kilometres from Summerside which is the second largest city in P.E.I.. The municipality spans an area of 2. square kilometers.

The local landscape is dominated by the harbor and a creek that outlines the southern boundary. Another smaller creek cuts through the town towards the northwest. Locals have affectionately referred to the town as "the crick" for many years. The topography is a mix of a low, flat areas next to the harbor and undulating land to the east and west. This land rises to two notable points near the Gulf Shore School (west) and the Pineau property (east).



FIGURE 1.
NORTH RUSTICO CONTEXT



1.3 **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

North Rustico has a history that traces back to around 1790. The town was established near a natural harbor along the Gulf of St. Lawrence coast. The name Rustico is derived from René Rassicot, a French pioneer who was among the first settlers in North Rustico. The town was initially inhabited by Acadian populations who had escaped British capture and deportation during the Seven Years' War. English, Scottish, and Irish settlers moved into the area during the remainder of the 18th century and throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

North Rustico was incorporated as a municipality in 1954 and was granted town status in November 2013. As of the 2021 Census, North Rustico had a population of 648. The town's primary industries include fishing, tourism, and agriculture. The fishing industry remains the town's most significant economic activity, with approximately 40 vessels home ported in a small craft harbor.

North Rustico is renowned for its Canada Day celebration every year on July 1. The event usually attracts in excess of 10,000 people, who fill the town. The town is known to locals, as well as other Islanders, as "The Crick".

1.4 **MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION**

The Town of North Rustico was originally incorporated as a village in 1954. Changes to the Municipalities Act in 1983 resulted in a change of the name to the Community of North Rustico. In 2013, the Council issued a request to the Provincial Government to change the status and name of the community to the Town of North Rustico. This request was approved on November 16, 2013.

Most communities on Prince Edward Island originally incorporated for two main reasons – the collection of fire dues and to have an identifiable group to represent the residents on local and regional matters. At the time of its incorporation, North Rustico was given five main areas of authority that were standard for all communities: administration, fire protection, garbage collection, street lighting, and recreation. Today, the town has expanded its services and now includes street lights, sidewalks, a boardwalk, a fire department, rink, and several parks.

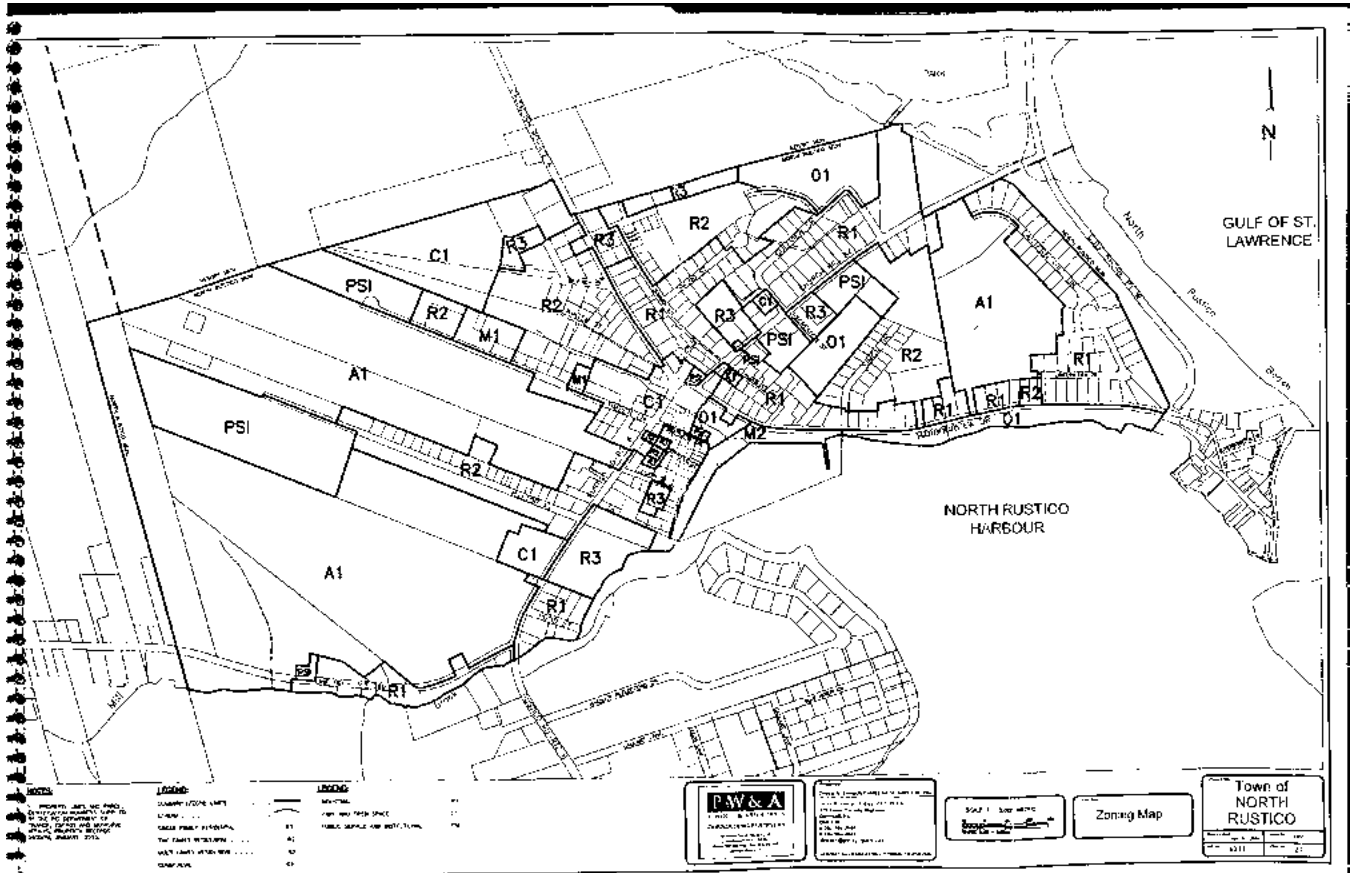


FIGURE 2.
CURRENT LAND USE MAP

CHAPTER 2

**SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
PROFILE**

2.1 PEOPLE

A GROWING POPULATION

North Rustico’s population grew by 5% from 617 in 2016 to 648 in 2021, mirroring Canada’s national growth rate of 5.2%. This indicates that the town’s population growth is consistent with the country’s overall demographic trend as demonstrated in FIGURE 3.

The age distribution in North Rustico is in accordance with most of rural Atlantic Canada. The town has around 65 individuals aged 0 to 14 years, making up 10.1% of the total population. This is lower than both the provincial average of 15.3% and the national average of 16.3%, indicating a smaller youth population in North Rustico. This could potentially influence the future demand for educational and recreational services.

The working-age population, aged 15 to 64 years, includes about 335 individuals or 51.9% of the town’s population. This is lower than the provincial average of 63.5% and the national average of 64.8%. As observed in FIGURE 4 Ages 60 to 74 aka baby boomers form the largest cohort followed by Generation X (i.e., ages 44 to 59) suggesting a smaller workforce in North Rustico. This could have implications for the local economy.

North Rustico has 250 residents aged 65 years and over, accounting for 38.8% of the population. This is significantly higher than both the provincial average of 21.2% and the national average of 19%, indicating a larger elderly population in North Rustico. This highlights the need for healthcare services and amenities for seniors.

The demographic profile of North Rustico influences the town’s societal structure and impacts various aspects of community life, including the education system, the local economy, and the healthcare infrastructure. The increase in population also signifies evolving demographic patterns, which could shape future community planning and development strategies. Notably, North Rustico has a higher population density and an older demographic compared to both the province and the country.

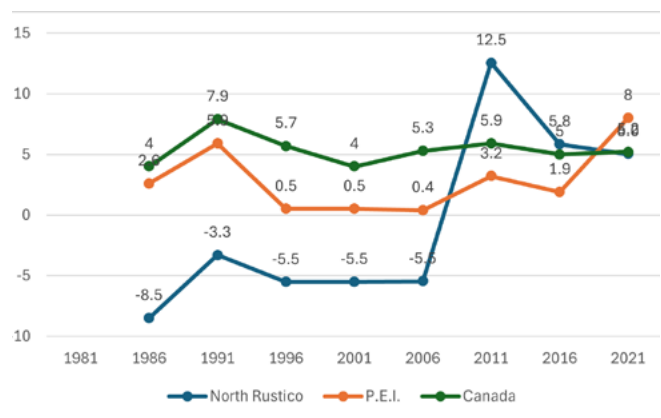


FIGURE 3.
POPULATION GROWTH IN THE TOWN OF NORTH-RUSTICO
Source: Statistics Canada

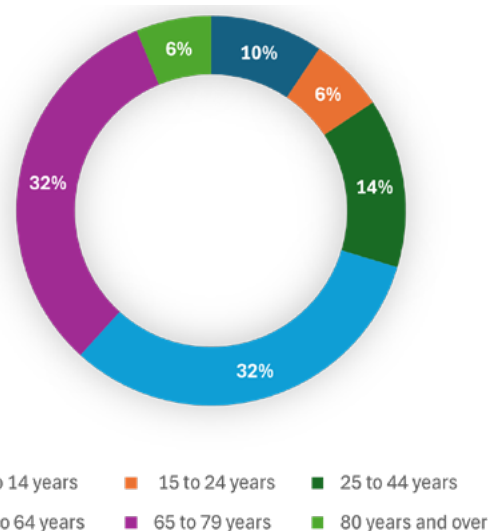


FIGURE 4.
POPULATION BY AGE
Source: Statistics Canada

2.2 HOUSING

THE HOUSING MARKET

The 2021 Census data offers a thorough understanding of the housing landscape in North Rustico. The town features a total of 386 private dwellings, with 321 of these occupied by usual residents.

Single-detached houses are the most common type of dwelling in the town, comprising 67.7% of the total occupied private dwellings (Figure 5). This rate is closely aligned with Prince Edward Island’s average of 67.9%. Semi-detached houses and row houses make up 7.7% and 20% of the dwellings in North Rustico respectively. These rates exceed those of Prince Edward Island (5.6% for semi-detached houses and 4.2% for row houses) and Canada (5% for semi-detached houses and 6.5% for row houses).

There are no apartments or flats in duplexes reported in North Rustico, according to the 2021 Census. Apartments in buildings that have fewer than five storeys constitute just 1.5% of dwelling units in North Rustico contributing to the low proportion of renters seen in Figure 6. In terms of household size, North Rustico averages 2 persons per household, which is significantly lower than Prince Edward Island’s average of 2.3 persons per household and Canada’s average of 2.4 persons per household.

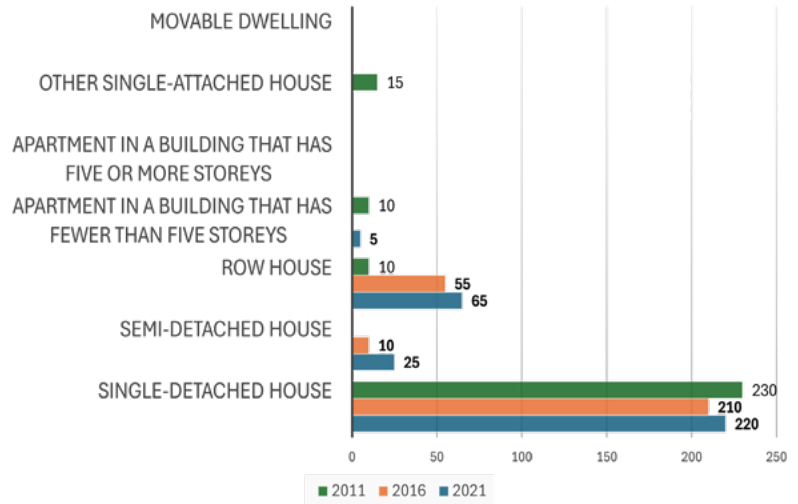


FIGURE 5. HOUSING STOCK TYPOLOGY
Source: Statistics Canada

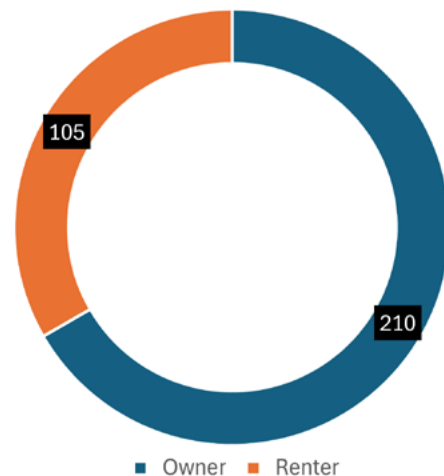


FIGURE 6. RENTERS VS OWNERS
Source: Statistics Canada

2.3 WORK

In North Rustico the main economic activities include fishing, tourism, and agriculture. The town significantly profits from the fishing industry, which is the largest contributor to its economy indicated in Figure 8. The local harbour accommodates approximately 40 fishing vessels. North Rustico is known for supplying mackerel, cod, herring, halibut, and tuna, aside from offering tourist fishing opportunities

North Rustico, in 2020, had a total of 575 income recipients aged 15 years and over, accounting for 98.3% of the population. This is slightly higher than both the provincial average of 96.8% and the national average of 96.4%. However, the median total income among recipients was \$31,800, lower than both the provincial (\$38,800) and the national (\$41,200) averages.

The economic indicators for North Rustico present a challenging scenario. The labour force participation rate is only 44.3%, significantly lower than both the provincial rate of 65.8% and the national rate of 63.7%. This means that less than half of the city's working-age population (those aged 15 years and over) is either employed or actively seeking employment. Moreover, the unemployment rate in North Rustico is alarmingly high at 27.5%, which is much higher than the provincial and national rates, both at 10.3%. This stark contrast indicates a pressing need for initiatives that generate employment and foster commercial development. The total number of employees in North Rustico is 205, accounting for 82% of all classes of workers. The number of self-employed individuals is 30, representing 12% of all classes of workers, slightly lower than the provincial rate of 12.5% and the national rate of 14.1%.

This highlights the need for strategic interventions to improve the economic and labour force conditions in the area. The number of employees in North Rustico was 205, which is 82% of all classes of workers. The number of self-employed individuals was 30, which is 12% of all classes of workers. This is slightly lower than the province (12.5%) and the country (14.1%).

The data indicates that North Rustico faces significant economic and labour force challenges compared to the province and the country. These challenges require strategic interventions to improve the economic and labour force conditions in the area.

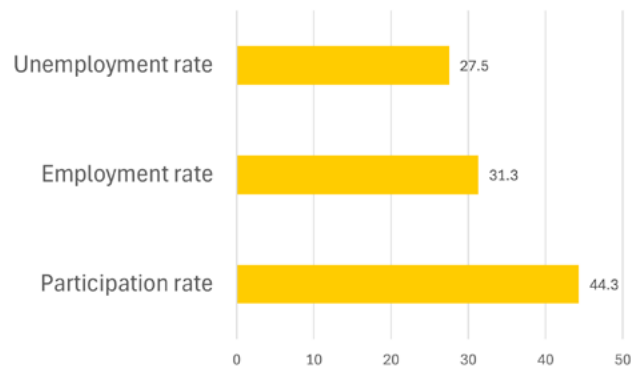


FIGURE 7.
LABOUR FORCE STATUS
Source: Statistics Canada

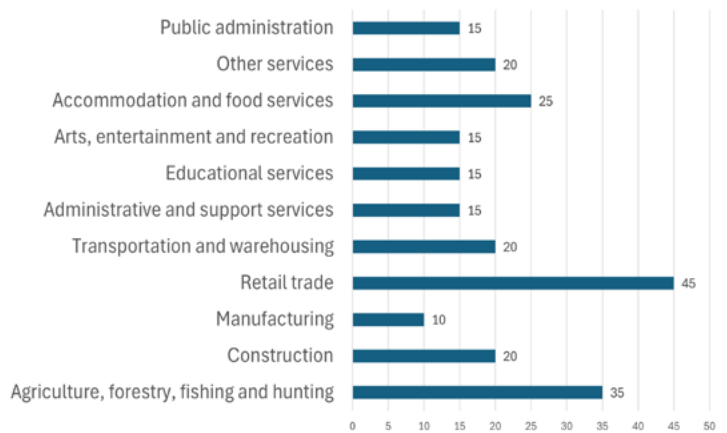


FIGURE 8.
OCCUPATION
Source: Statistics Canada

2.4 EDUCATION

North Rustico offers a range of educational facilities for its residents. The town is home to the Gulf Shore Consolidated School, which caters to students from grades 1 to 9. The school also includes the Gulf Shore Early Years Centre, providing daycare services. For high school education, students typically attend Bluefield High School, located approximately 20 minutes away in North Wiltshire.

In addition to these public schools, North Rustico houses Mount Academy, a private university preparatory school. This institution is known for its rigorous academic curriculum and elite athletic training, playing a significant role in the town's educational landscape.

However, despite these educational facilities, North Rustico faces challenges in educational attainment. 33.9% of the population aged 15 years and over do not hold any certificate, diploma, or degree, a figure significantly higher than the 16.1% in Prince Edward Island and 16.2% in Canada.

On a positive note, the town has a higher percentage (30.4%) of individuals who have completed high school compared to Prince Edward Island (28.4%) and Canada (26.7%). Yet, when it comes to postsecondary education, North Rustico lags behind with only 35.7% of individuals holding a diploma compared to 55.6% in Prince Edward Island and 57.2% in Canada. Furthermore, only 13% have attained a bachelor's degree or higher in North Rustico, compared to 22% provincially and 26.7% nationally.

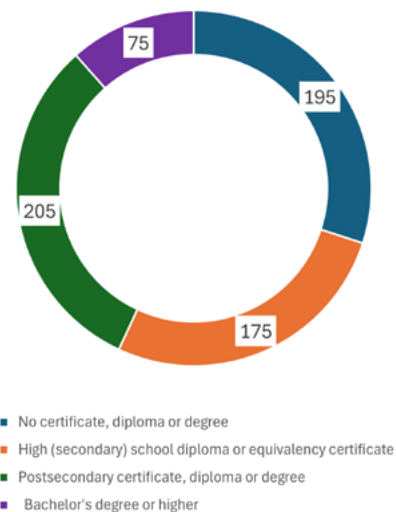


FIGURE 9.
EDUCATION DEGREE
Source: Statistics Canada



FIGURE 10.
MOUNT ACADEMY

CHAPTER 3

DIAGNOSTIC

01.

LAND USE AND BUILT-FORM

Land use in North Rustico is guided by the Town’s zoning and subdivision control bylaw. Primary land uses align with its main industries: fishing, tourism, and agriculture.

Residential Land Use

The residential areas in North Rustico primarily consist of Chapter homes. There are also various residential land parcels available for sale, offering opportunities for further residential development.

Commercial Land Use

Commercial activities is concentrated in the town center, where businesses cater to both the local population and tourists. This includes restaurants, shops, and services. The commercial landscape has seen some changes, such as the closure of a second food store and the relocation of the co-op. The Fisherman’s Wharf Restaurant has expanded its parking area, and a new pharmacy and health center have been constructed. The large North Rustico Home Hardware store, while legally in the Resort Municipality, is on the boundary of North Rustico and is an integral part of the town’s economy.

There is a large area in the northwest that is zoned for commercial land use but has not been developed yet. This indicates a potential for commercial development in that area, which could provide easy access for residents. The zoning on adjacent plots also suggests potential for expansion. Interestingly, in the southwest of Rustico, an area zoned as commercial land use appears to currently have a residential building on it. Undeveloped and underutilized areas present opportunities for the growth and diversification of North Rustico’s economy.

Industrial Land Use

Industrial land use is primarily related to the town’s fishing industry, including areas designated for fishing operations and related activities. Industrial activities

also include Pinneau’s Fuels and the bottle exchange. The deep-sea fishing operations and fish markets are within the “fishing industrial area” adjacent to the harbor.

Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural land development is found in the rural areas surrounding the town, where farming activities take place. There is one large farm field in the western portion of the town close to the Line Road that is currently used by Cavendish Farms for potato production and related crops. Other smaller open fields and wooded areas are found throughout the town. Some are used for agricultural production while others remain vacant and idle.

Park and Open Space Land Use

North Rustico has areas designated as park and open space, which contribute to the town’s natural beauty and provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Significant open spaces include the Seawalk Park, which has received federal government funding for upgrades and renovations, and a large conservation area owned by the Town adjacent to the Pinneau property.

Vacant Land

Vacant lands are also available for sale in North Rustico. These lands offer opportunities for future development and can be used for residential, commercial, or other purposes.

The land use plan for North Rustico aims to ensure a balanced mix of land uses that cater to the needs of the community with a focus on supporting the town’s primary industries and providing a variety of recreational and open spaces for residents and visitors.

The town is well-supplied with parkland and public open space, including playing fields adjacent to North Star Arena and open land around the Gulf Shore

School. The town's institutional facilities include the Gulf Shore Consolidated School, Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church, North Rustico Post Office, and the Fire Department / Civic Office. The Royal Canadian

Legion Branch has been closed and converted into an apartment building. Overall, the town's land use reflects a commitment to maintaining its rural heritage while accommodating growth and development.

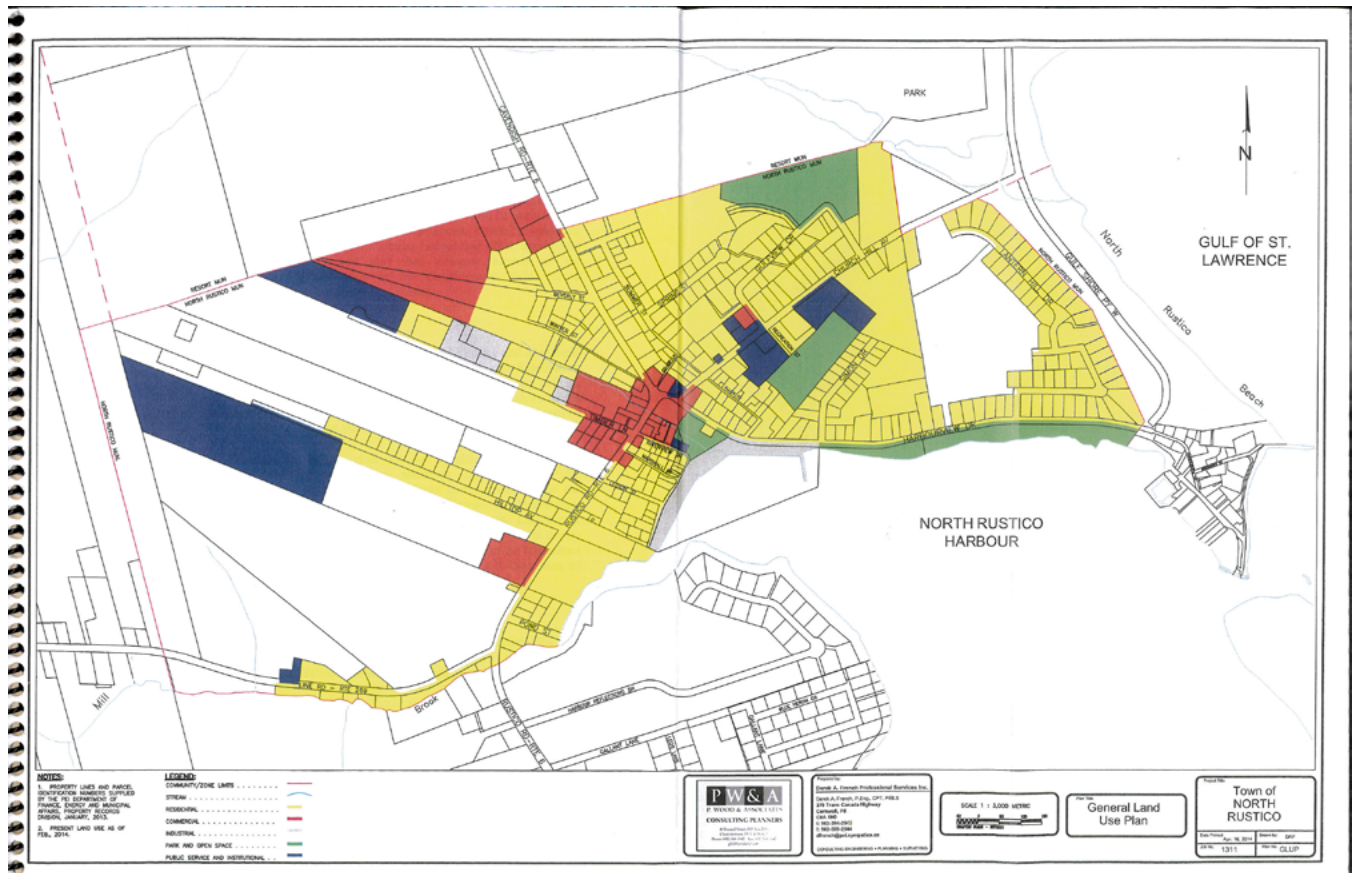


FIGURE 11.
LAND USE

- COMMERCIAL
- PUBLIC SERVICE & INSTITUTIONAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARK & OPEN SPACE
- COMMUNITY / ZONE LIMITS
- STREAM



3.2 **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Council of North Rustico has made advancements in environmental management by installing a state-of-the-art sewage treatment system. The system is designed to produce effluent of quality that exceeds current and future Federal standards. To maintain this high level of performance, it will be crucial to routinely monitor the system to ensure it operates within its design parameters.

In addition to the sewage system, the Town's storm water management systems require attention according to the current official Plan. Upgrades are necessary and should be implemented with support from the Provincial Government. Improved storm water management will be beneficial to mitigating potential flooding risks and will provide enhanced protection for the local streams and bays.

Children in the town attend Gulf Shore School, which provide classes for grades K to 9 as well as day care in the Gulf Shore Early Years Centre. High school students attend Bluefield High School about 20 minutes away in North Wiltshire. The town's social fabric is strengthened by organizations such as the North Rustico Lions Club and the Knights of Columbus, which are pivotal in nurturing community bonds and enhancing social welfare through their varied programs.

The North Star Arena & Recreation Grounds stands as a testament to the town's dedication to health and fitness, offering residents ample opportunities for engaging in sports and physical activities. Spiritual and cultural enrichment is provided by Stella Maris Catholic Church and its affiliated groups, including the Catholic Women's League, which together fortify the town's cultural and religious life.

Recreational pursuits are well-catered for with the scenic Boardwalk and Seawalk Park, which not only serve as destinations for relaxation and leisure but also enhance North Rustico's allure as a destination for

visitors. Addressing the needs of its senior population, the Star of the Sea Seniors Club ensures that the experiences of older citizens are addressed and integrated into the town's activities.

Healthcare is a major factor for the community's well-being, with the Gulf Shore Family Health Centre providing essential medical services to families. The Town's infrastructure is underpinned by reliable municipal sewer and water systems, ensuring the provision of fundamental utilities. Lastly, the presence of established fire protection services offers residents peace of mind, knowing that they are safeguarded against emergencies.



FIGURE 12.
**IMAGE OF THE GULF SHORE
CONSOLIDATED SXHOOOL**

3.3 ENVIRONMENT

Under the *Municipal Government Act*, municipalities in Prince Edward Island (PEI) are entrusted with significant responsibilities to foster the province's economic, environmental, and social prosperity. Section 180 of the Act confers on local governments the authority to implement bylaws dedicated to the preservation and protection of arboreal and other vegetative species, inclusive of the establishment of maintenance standards. Moreover, municipalities are vested with the mandate to oversee the health, safety, and welfare of fauna, both wild and domesticated, in accordance with the stipulations of the *Pesticides Control Act*. Additionally, they are charged with the duty to safeguard the natural environment, a mandate that must be executed in harmony with the *Environmental Protection Act*. These legislative provisions collectively empower municipalities to administer and protect their local environments effectively, ensuring congruence with provincial statutes.

The town of North Rustico presents a diverse array of landscapes, situated adjacent to Gulf of St. Lawrence on its eastern flank and bordered by North Rustico Bay to the south. The bay's influence gives rise to creeks that evolve into small streams to the south of agricultural land. The topography of North Rustico encompasses both flat prairies and coastal zones, with the latter comprising littoral and coastal areas due to its geographical positioning at the juncture of land and sea. The zones along the coast, known for their sandy beaches, are a significant draw for tourists. The soil composition of the town is a blend of sandstone and sand, mirroring the make up of the oceanic seabed. The region's maritime climate is characterized by minimal temperature fluctuations, with the mercury dipping to -12 °C during the coldest months of January and February and climbing to 24 °C in the peak of summer from July and August.

PEI, is experiencing the adverse effects of climate change, with erosion being a pervasive concern across the island. The combination of escalating water levels and temperatures is resulting in the erosion of the Island's sandstone and sand composition, leading to an annual land loss averaging 28 centimeters. This phenomenon places residential properties and wind turbines at heightened risk. Furthermore, the severity and frequency of storms have intensified, culminating in increased flooding incidents. A notable example occurred in November 2016 when a substantial storm led to the flooding of North Rustico's harbour, inflicting considerable damage.



FIGURE 13.
SEAWALK PARK
AN IMPORTANT PARK OF NORTH RUSTICO'S HERITAGE

04. **POINTS OF INTEREST**

North Rustico offers a mix of housing options, with homeowners occupying around 70% of the units in the community. The housing stock primarily consists of single detached homes, contributing to the town's character. Properties range from those built in the 1960s and 1970s to newer construction from the 1990s. The town has witnessed a variety of real estate activities, with properties available for sale ranging from vacant lands to residential houses.

The primary industries in North Rustico are fishing, tourism, and agriculture. The town is becoming an exurb, with residents commuting to work in Charlottetown, according to the 2021 Census, 70 of 135 workers (51.9%) living in North Rustico commuted outside of North Rustico for work. The local economy has seen investments from all three levels of government, supporting community projects and fostering economic development.

North Rustico also has a strategic environmental assessment in place for Rustico Bay. The Town has established an Emergency Measures Plan to manage municipal emergency operations. The local environment is characterized by its coastal features, including sand beaches, dunes, salt marshes, and the nearshore zone of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

North Rustico has made significant investments in infrastructure. The Town built a new water treatment plant in 2011 and a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant in 2014. The effluent from the wastewater plant is of high quality, contributing to the town's reputation across Canada. The town also boasts a \$10M arena, which includes a walking track, a fitness centre, and an Olympic-size ice surface.

05. **OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS**

OPPORTUNITIES

Demographic Diversity

North Rustico's diverse population, with a unique age distribution, presents opportunities for targeted community planning and development strategies. The town's higher population density and older demographic compared to both the province and the country could lead to the development of specialized services and amenities catering to these demographics.

Housing Market

The variety of housing options in North Rustico, along with the availability of vacant lands, provides opportunities for further residential development. The town's housing trends, which differ from those of Prince Edward Island and Canada, could attract unique demographics and contribute to a diverse community.

Economic Activities

The main economic activities in North Rustico, including fishing, tourism, and agriculture, offer significant opportunities for growth and development. The town's reputation as a supplier of various fish species to the Canadian market and its potential as a tourist destination could be leveraged to boost the local economy.

Land Use

The town's primary land uses align with its main industries, providing opportunities for growth in these sectors. The availability of vacant lands offers potential for future development.

CONSTRAINTS

Population Growth

While North Rustico's population growth is consistent with the country's overall demographic trend, the town has a smaller youth and working-age population. This could potentially influence the future demand for educational and recreational services and have implications for the local economy.

Labour Force

The labour force participation rate in North Rustico is lower than the province and the country, and the unemployment rate is much higher. This indicates a need for employment-generating commercial development and strategic interventions to improve the economic and labour force conditions in the area.

Educational Attainment

There is an observable gap in postsecondary educational attainment in North Rustico, underscoring an area for potential focus in enhancing the community's educational profile.

Environmental Challenges

PEI is experiencing the adverse effects of climate change, with erosion being a pervasive concern across the island. This phenomenon places residential properties and wind turbines at heightened risk and increases flooding incidents. These environmental challenges require strategic interventions and effective environmental management.

