



TOWN OF NORTH RUSTICO OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE

2024.08.27

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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 Official Plan 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 Official Plan and Development Regulations 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 north 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.

This land rises to two notable points near the Gulf Shore School (west) and the Lantern Hill Drive (east).



FIGURE 1. NORTH RUSTICO CONTEXT



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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.

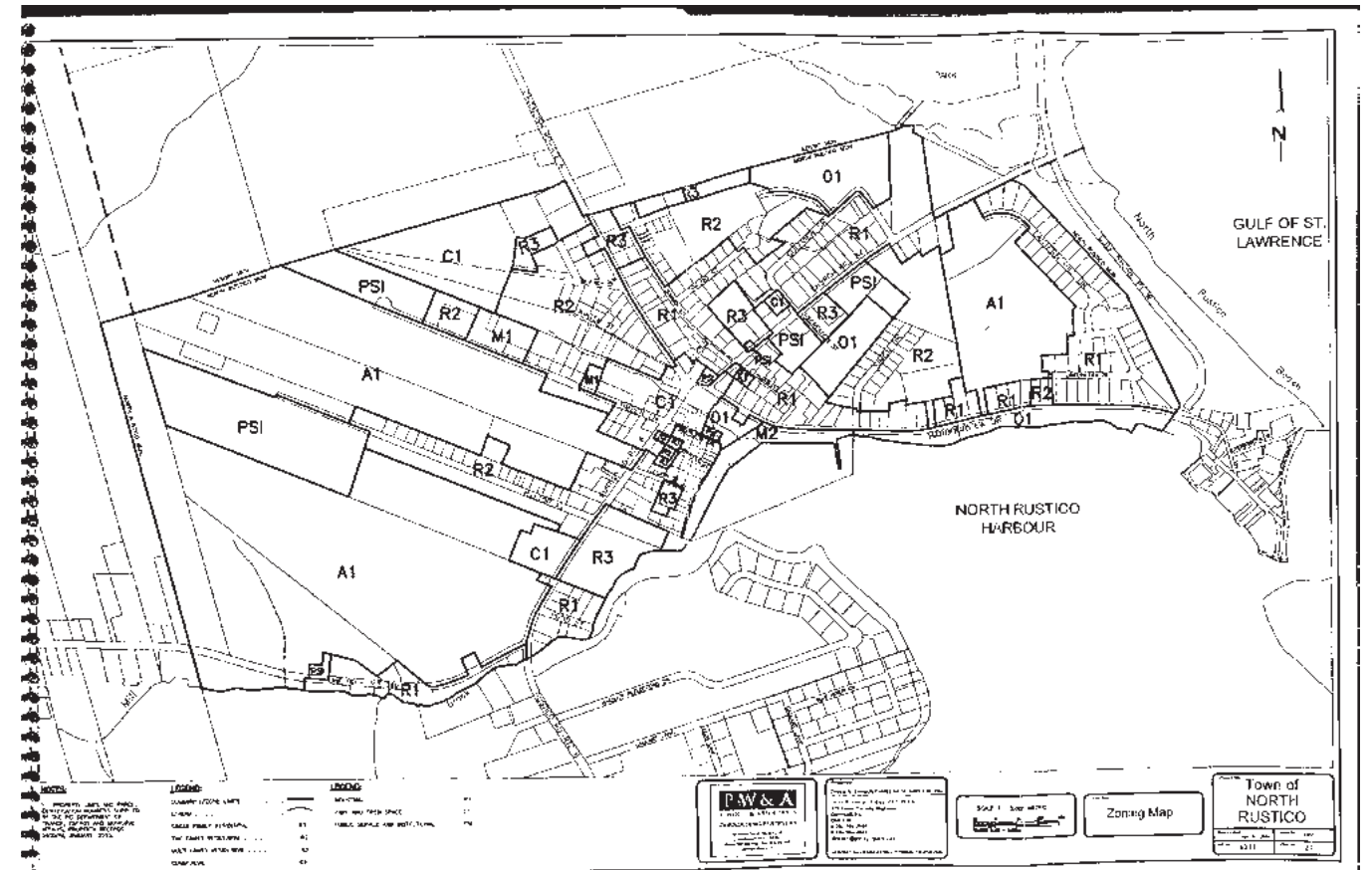


FIGURE 2. CURRENT ZONING MAP

The background is a watercolor-style illustration. It features silhouettes of several people walking, some of whom are using wheelchairs. The color palette is warm, with shades of orange, yellow, and brown, transitioning into cooler tones of teal and blue towards the bottom. The overall effect is artistic and evocative, representing a diverse group of individuals.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

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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.

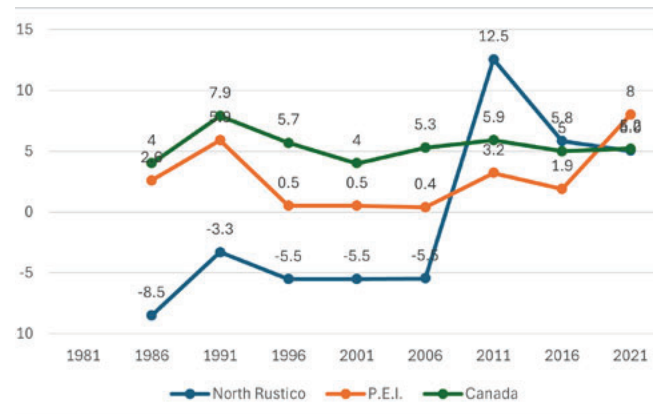


FIGURE 3. POPULATION GROWTH IN THE TOWN OF NORTH-RUSTICO
Source: Statistics Canada

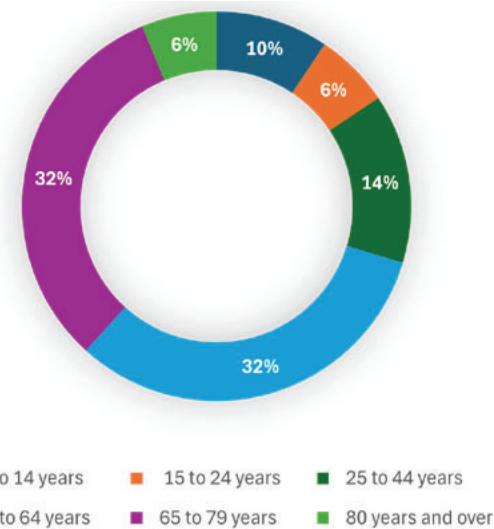


FIGURE 4. POPULATION BY AGE
Source: Statistics Canada

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.

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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 year-round 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.

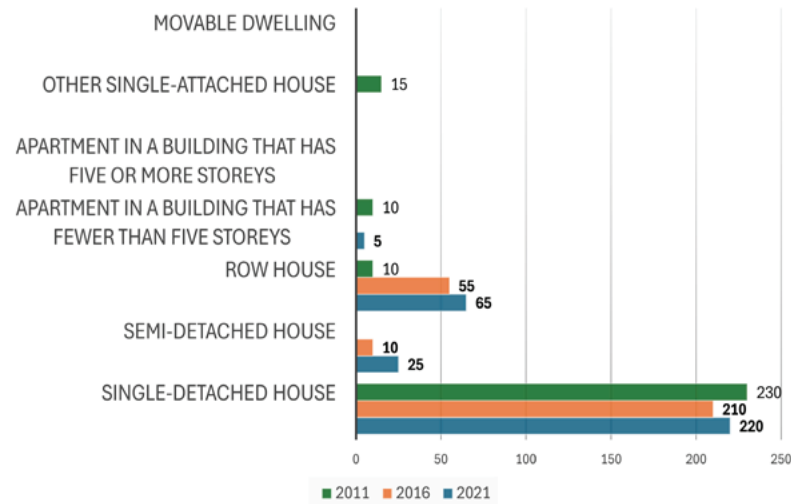


FIGURE 5. HOUSING STOCK TYPOLOGY
Source: Statistics Canada

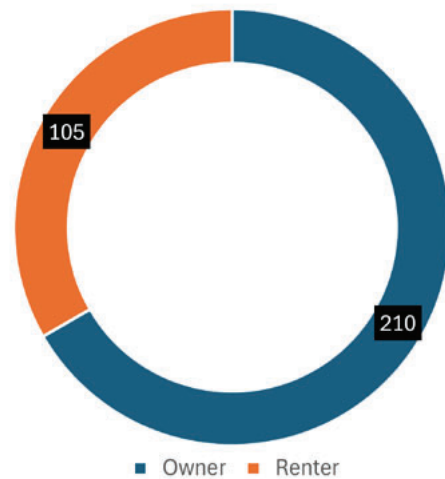


FIGURE 6. RENTERS VS OWNERS
Source: Statistics Canada

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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, herring, along with some cod during allocated time

In 2020, North Rustico had a total of 575 income recipients aged 15 years and over, which represents 98.3% of the population. This figure is slightly higher than both the provincial average of 96.8% and the national average of 96.4%. The median total income among recipients was \$31,800, providing a solid foundation for the local economy.

North Rustico's economic indicators highlight unique characteristics of the town's labour force. The labour force participation rate stands at 44.3%, indicating a significant portion of the town's working-age population (those aged 15 years and over) is engaged in employment or actively seeking work. The unemployment rate in North Rustico is 27.5%, which presents opportunities for initiatives aimed at job creation and commercial development. The town has a robust workforce, with 205 employees accounting for 82% of all classes

of workers, and a thriving entrepreneurial spirit, as evidenced by the 30 self-employed individuals representing 12% of all classes of workers.

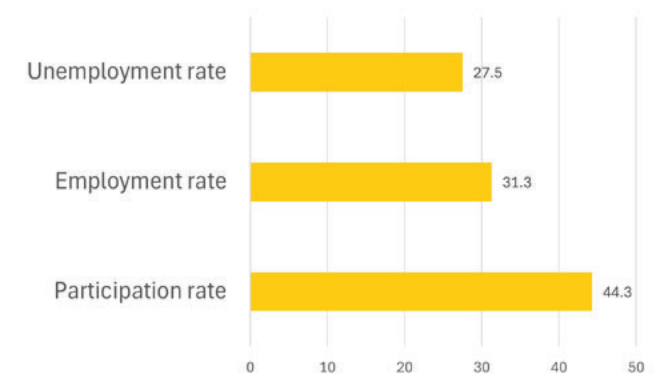


FIGURE 7. LABOUR FORCE STATUS
Source: Statistics Canada

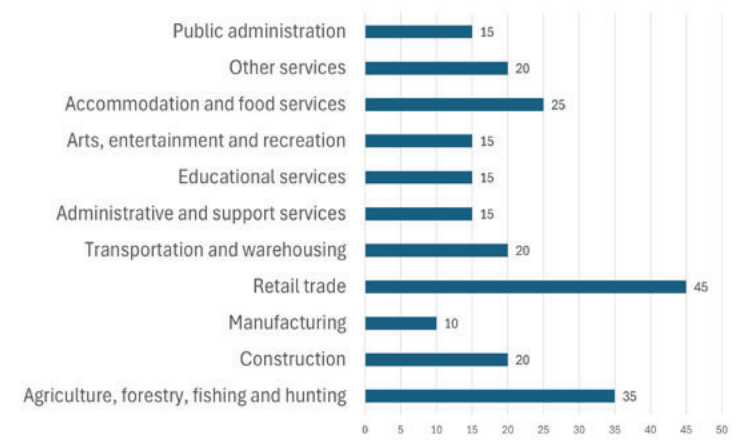


FIGURE 8. OCCUPATION
Source: Statistics Canada

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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%). When it comes to postsecondary education, North Rustico is 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.

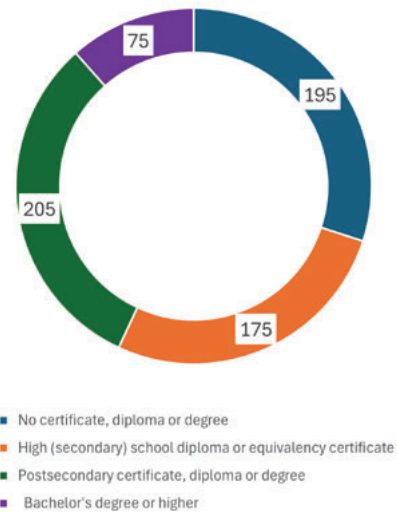


FIGURE 9.
EDUCATION DEGREE
Source: Statistics Canada

CHAPTER 3

DIAGNOSTIC



3.1 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 Pineau'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 make up for 22 acres of green space, which has received federal government funding for upgrades and renovations, and a large conservation area owned by the Town.

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 Eliyahu Wellness Centre Canada Games Place 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.

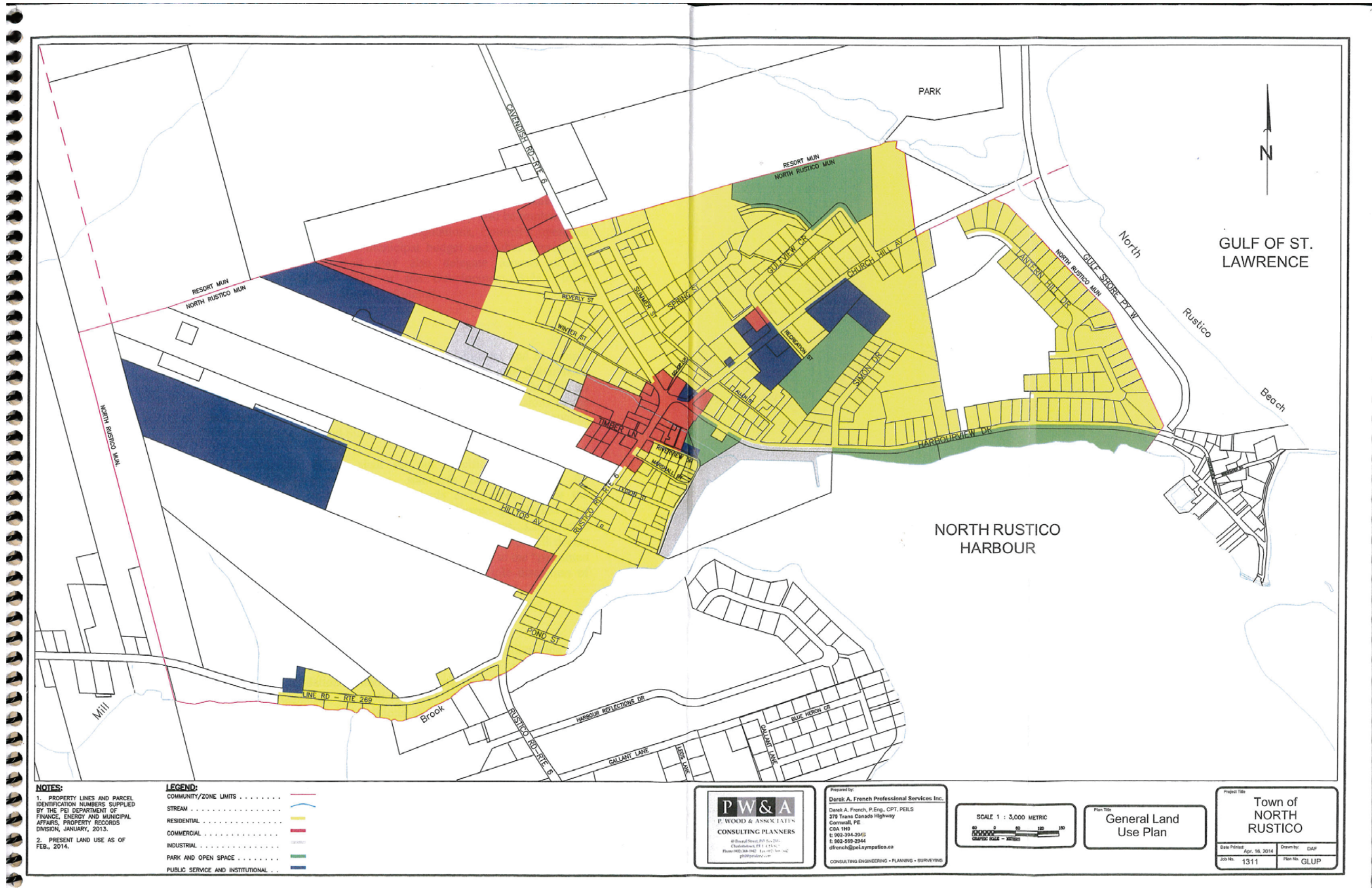
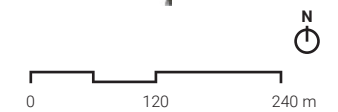


FIGURE 10. LAND USE

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



3.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

Sanitary Sewer

Almost all lots in the Town are connected to the central sewer system. A brand new sewage treatment facility was installed in 2014 to replace the somewhat problematic RBC system. The system is considered state-of-the-art. The system is designed to produce treated effluent that exceeds Federal quality standards. Routine monitoring of the system is crucial to ensure it operates within its design parameters.

Central Water

Almost all properties in North Rustico are connected to the central municipal water system. The Town draws water from three wells on Line Road in the southeast corner of the Town. Surrounding land is predominantly agricultural although properties fronting on Line Road are mostly residential. The catchment areas of all three wells extend beyond the southern boundary of the town, which follows the back property lines of properties on the south side of line road. To the north they are covered by farmland.

Storm water

North Rustico has experienced flooding and significant storm surge events in the past. As a coastal community, the town is subject

to storms that can result in significant flooding. The Town has been flooded from Fisherman's Wharf to the harbour and the road connecting to Rustico Harbour and the Lantern Hill subdivision has also been inundated.

Storm water management systems in the Town need to be upgraded as budgets permit, hopefully with the participation of the Provincial Government. Incorporating green infrastructure that retains water during heavy rain or melt events can help recharge groundwater supplies. Improved storm water management will be beneficial to mitigating potential flooding risks and will provide enhanced protection for the local streams and bays.

Fire Protection

The North Rustico Fire Department is located next to the Town's offices on Riverside Drive. The department is a volunteer force.

Police Protection

The RCMP detachment based in the former Community of West Royalty polices the Town of North Rustico. The service is provided from the Province.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

The Town of North Rustico participates in the province-wide waste reduction strategy managed by the Island Waste Management Corporation. Residents sort their household waste, compost and recyclables for roadside pick-up. The former municipal dump site on Timber Lane was closed more than a decade ago and sorted solid waste products are trucked to the recycling/composting plant in nearby Brookfield.

Social and Recreation

North Rustico is well supplied with parks and recreation facilities but recreational programming has declined in recent years due to a decline in the number of children. Recreation programs at Gulf Shore Consolidated School remain very active, however, and the Central Queens Soccer Program in Hunter River is exceptionally well attended by children from North Rustico and across the region.

The largest recreation facility in the Town is the Eliyahu Wellness Centre Canada Games Place & Recreation Grounds. The facility stands as a testament to the town's dedication to health and fitness, offering residents ample opportunities for engaging in sports and physical activities. Children in the town attend Gulf Shore School, which

provides classes for grades K to 9 as well as day care in the Gulf Shore Early Years Centre, which also provide recreational facilities that are well used during school hours. 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.

Centennial Park is the Town's major park. It is well developed, and its central location makes it popular with local families and a logical focus for celebrations like the Town's well-known Canada Day Celebrations. There is also a linear park running along the shoreline adjacent to the Boardwalk, walking trails and other amenities.

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. Other areas enhancing cultural aspects include Eliyahu Wellness Centre and Watermark Theatre. 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.

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 made of shale, i.e. a fine-grained, sedimentary rock that forms from the compaction of silt and clay-size mineral particles. 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 and commercial properties at heightened risk and increases flooding incidents. 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.

In 2024, Hurricane Fiona exacerbated these issues, causing significant coastal erosion and property damage in North Rustico. The storm surge and high winds led to the destruction of infrastructure and further loss of land along the coastline.



FIGURE 11.
AN IMAGE OF THE NORTH RUSTICO BEACH

3.4 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, Duplex and Townhouse Condominium 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

3.5 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

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 Eliyahu Wellness Centre Canada Games Place which includes a walking track, a fitness centre, and an Olympic-size ice surface.

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.



FIGURE 12.
AN AERIAL VIEW OF NORTH RUSTICO



CHAPTER 3

PLAN POLICIES

PLAN POLICIES

North Rustico thrives as a year-round home to approximately 648 residents, with an additional 500 seasonal inhabitants. The town's economic pillars include:

- › Fishing: Anchored by a small craft harbor, the fishing industry remains paramount. Around 40 vessels call North Rustico home, with lobster fishing dominating during May and June. Deep-sea fishing excursions and other fish varieties sustain activity from July to September.
- › Tourism: North Rustico welcomes visitors with direct access to the Prince Edward Island National Park. Its free, public waterfront offers scenic vistas and leisurely strolls.
- › Agriculture: Farming is an important feature of North Rustico, contributing to the character of the community and providing income for many residents. As the town evolves, preserving agricultural land becomes a critical challenge.

The town also offers an appealing location for residential development due to its excellent services, exceptional water views, close knit community charm, and location within easy driving distance of Charlottetown. This Official Plan has been developed to preserve the positive qualities of North Rustico while building on them to accommodate additional residents and ensure the continuation of services and amenities that support all community members.



4.1 RESIDENTIAL

As in most communities, residential land use dominates North Rustico. Creating and maintaining a comfortable, convenient, and safe residential environment is a critical goal of this Plan. As North Rustico aims to retain its existing residents and attract additional population, strategic residential expansion becomes imperative. Residential development should however align with existing municipal service infrastructure or be viable with accepted on-site solutions.

The previous version of this Official Plan identified the traditional residential fabric around the harbour, “retirement abodes” in subdivisions outside the core, and “emerging multi-family development” as key features of the town's housing stock. The three types continue to be relevant to the current housing context in line with current plan goals to maintain the unique charm of the town's waterfront, attract new residents, and providing varied, affordable housing options.

4.1.1 Residential Goals

- › Maintain the character of existing residential neighborhoods
- › Facilitate infill development including seasonal residences and secondary suites in residential buildings and in accessory structures on residential lots
- › Provide for medium and high-density residential development in appropriate locations
- › Discourage strip residential development along existing arterial and collector roadways with the Town.

4.1.2 Residential Policies

Policy 1.1 Residential Development

Town Council shall encourage residential development where municipal water and wastewater services are available or where on-site service are deemed to be suitable particularly within existing residential neighbourhoods and planned subdivisions adjacent to existing residential neighbourhoods.

Policy 1.2 Residential Zone

Town Council shall establish a Residential (R1) Zone in the North Rustico Development Bylaw permitting the following uses:

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- › Single-detached residential structures
- › Two-unit residential structures
- › Bed and breakfast establishments
- › Apartment buildings (including specialized accommodations for seniors)
- › Parks and playgrounds
- › Seasonal cottages
- › Neighbourhood convenience stores.

- › Residential structures having three or more dwelling units
- › Specialized accommodations for seniors and for other individuals requiring special care
- › Parks and playgrounds
- › Public service and institutional buildings
- › Neighbourhood convenience stores.

Policy 1.3 Rural Residential Zone

Town Council shall establish a Rural Residential (RR) Zone in the North Rustico Development Bylaw permitting for the following uses:

- › Single-detached residential structures
- › Two-unit residential structures
- › Bed and breakfast establishments
- › Parks and playgrounds
- › Seasonal cottages
- › Agriculture
- › Public service and institutional buildings.

Policy 1.4 Multi-unit Residential Zone

Town Council shall establish a Multi Family Residential (R3) Zone in the North Rustico Development Bylaw permitting for the following uses:

Policy 1.5 Residential Lot Requirements

Town Council will define specific development standards for all Residential Zones within the North Rustico Development Bylaw to establish minimum requirements for lot size; front, rear, and side yards; the maximum building heights; and setbacks and separation distances for accessory structures; as well as other features of buildings and properties that influence the character and appearance of North Rustico.

Policy 1.6 Buffering Multi-unit Residential

Town Council may impose additional requirements to mitigate visual, noise, or odor impacts of multi-unit residential properties where they abut other residential properties to enhance separation including increasing setback distance and/or installing physical barriers such as plantings or fencing.

Policy 1.7 Undersized Lots

Town Council shall permit the development of existing undersized lots provided all other provisions of the Development Bylaw are met.

Policy 1.8 Encourage Residential Development

Town Council shall encourage residential development in varied forms to attract residents to North Rustico and ensure existing residents have housing options that will allow them to stay in the community.

Policy 1.9 Accessory Apartments

Town Council shall permit the addition of an accessory apartment within any single family dwelling or in an accessory building located behind the primary residence provided the exterior of the residence retains an appropriate single-detached appearance, and municipal water and wastewater services are available or onsite services are deemed suitable to serve the additional unit.

Policy 1.10 Home Occupations

Town Council will define standards for home occupations in the North Rustico The Development Bylaw to permit the conduct of retail, office, commercial, and professional businesses by an owner-occupant subject



FIGURE 13. AN IMAGE OF A HOUSE IN NORTH RUSTICO

to provisions to limit potential residential conflicts such as noise, hours of operation, square footage, number of employees, parking, signage, physical changes to the structure and any other factors which may represent an impediment to the safety, convenience or enjoyment of neighbouring residents.

Policy 1.11 Bed & Breakfast

Town Council shall permit the operation of small-scale bed and breakfast” establishments in all residential zones, provided they are limited in terms of size, signage, parking, and dining facilities, and that the overall visual appearance of the building and character of the neighbourhood is not negatively affected.

Policy 1.12 Seniors and Special Care Facilities

Town Council shall consider rezoning to the Multi Family Residential (R3) Zone to accommodate multi-unit structures including homes for seniors and others requiring special care where lot requirements can be met and suitable buffering is incorporated pursuant to Policy 3.6.

Policy 1.13: Short-term rentals

Given the rise of short-term rentals in the Municipality and their impact on the local housing market, as well as the loss of property tax revenue, Council shall undertake a comprehensive study on short-term rentals to understand the extent of their impact on the North Rustico community and determine if a regulatory system for short-term rentals is warranted in the Municipality and if such a system is financially feasible to administer.

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4.2 COMMERCIAL

According to 2021 labour force data presented above, Retail trade employs more residents of North Rustico than any other economic sector. Commercial development is centered in the core area adjacent to the harbour, with a smaller cluster of facilities on Cavendish Road near the Town’s northern boundary. Commercial land uses are important as a component of a complete community in which residents can conveniently address their daily needs, as a source of employment, and as a feature of the community that adds to its vibrancy and attracts visitors to the area.

The cluster of businesses in the north end of Cavendish Road are accessed from the road where their substantial parking lots are oriented to customers arriving in vehicles. The commercial core along Main Street where it runs parallel to the harbour is also vehicle-oriented but is ideally positioned to capture the attention of tourists. The previous version of this Official Plan suggested the area had a high level of vacancies and many commercial buildings were in need of maintenance. While the condition of the area has improved, its continued maintenance and upgrading is critical to the image of North Rustico and its attraction for tourists. It is also important to seek out and exploit infill opportunities in both commercial areas to develop continuous retail frontage and increase the overall attraction of each area for shoppers.

4.2.1 Commercial Goals

- › Concentrate commercial development in established commercial areas on the Harbourfront and on Cavendish Road
- › Enhance existing business properties and promote additional high-quality commercial development along the harbour
- › Minimize conflicts between commercial and residential areas.
- › Commercial Policies

4.2.2 Commercial Policies

Policy 2.1 Commercial Development

Town Council shall encourage commercial development to concentrate on and adjacent to Main Street near the waterfront and on the north end of Cavendish Road. Within both areas the Council shall encourage the expansion of existing businesses and establishment of new businesses on vacant properties and on existing residential properties whose owners support the transition.

Policy 2.2 Commercial Zone

Town Council shall establish a Commercial Zone in the North Rustico Development Bylaw t permitting uses such as:

- › Retail stores
- › Business and professional offices
- › Service and personal service shops
- › Banking and financial institutions
- › Restaurants and lounges
- › Hotels, motels, or other tourist establishments
- › Entertainment facilities
- › Activities connected with the automobile trade except for a scrap yard
- › Institutional buildings
- › Transient or temporary retail commercial
- › Warehouses.

Policy 2.3 Commercial Recreation Zone

Town Council shall establish a Commercial Recreation Zone permitting uses such as:

Commercial recreation uses

Businesses directly associated with and operated in conjunction with the foregoing (e.g., restaurant, accommodations, equipment shop) Accessory buildings.



Policy 2.4 Commercial Lot Requirements

Town Council will define specific development standards within the North Rustico Development By-law to establish minimum requirements for lot size; front, rear, and side yards; the maximum building heights; and setbacks and separation distances for accessory structures; as well as other features of buildings and properties that influence the character and appearance of North Rustico.

Policy 2.5 Buffering Commercial Properties

Town Council may impose additional requirements to mitigate visual, noise, or odor impacts of commercial properties where they abut non-commercial properties to enhance separation including increasing setback distance and/or installing physical barriers such as plantings or fencing.

Policy 2.6 Harbourfront Core Plan

Town Council shall seek funding support to prepare a long-term Master Plan for the harbourfront commercial core to address vehicular and pedestrian circulation, heritage and cultural values, signage and wayfinding, and street furniture and landscaping,

Policy 4.6 Harbourfront Views

Town Council shall include in the North Rustico Development By-law controls on the height and mass of new buildings, and renovations to existing buildings on properties on Harbourview Drive where such developments may obstruct or otherwise interfere with views of North Rustico Harbour that are deemed important to local tourism and the identity of the community.

4.3 AGRICULTURE

There is only one active farm within the boundaries of North Rustico; however, farming is an important activity in the area providing employment and shaping the character of the community. Zoning for agriculture should accommodate a broad spectrum of agricultural activities encompassing farm buildings, product processing, and livestock operations suitable to facilitate the continuation of current agricultural activities and as well as farmsteads and separate residential and community uses compatible with agriculture.

4.3.1 Agriculture Goals

- › Support provincial policies to safeguard agricultural lands
- › Encourage use of vacant land for agriculture
- › Minimize land use conflicts between agriculture and other land uses.

4.2.2 Agriculture Policies

Policy 3.1 Agriculture Zone

Town Council shall establish an Agriculture Zone in the North Rustico Development Bylaw permitting diverse uses compatible with agricultural activities, including:

- › Agricultural uses
- › Single-detached residential structures
- › Two-unit residential structures
- › Bed and breakfast establishments
- › Parks and playgrounds
- › Summer cottages.

Policy 3.2 Agriculture Standards

Town Council shall prescribe minimum lot sizes, front, rear, and side yard requirements, maximum building heights, and setback and separation distances for accessory buildings to ensure agriculture developments are functional, safe, and compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Policy 3.3 Agriculture Setbacks

Town Council shall ensure the North Rustico Development Bylaw requires adequate separation between livestock operations and neighboring properties, wells, and sensitive environmental features such as watercourses.

Policy 3.4 Agricultural Development

Town Council shall encourage the use of vacant lands outside of established neighbourhoods and the harbourfront commercial core for agricultural uses including the pasturing of livestock, planting of crops, and construction of agricultural buildings.

Policy 3.5 Agricultural Transition

Town Council in collaboration with the Province of PEI will develop a comprehensive plan to support the transition of remaining agricultural lands to residential use. This plan will include measures to mitigate potential impacts on the local farming community and ensure the maintenance of a harmonious balance between agricultural preservation and residential expansion.



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4.4 INSTITUTIONAL

Leading institutional uses in North Rustico’s include Gulf Shore Consolidated School, Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church, North Rustico Post Office, and the Fire Department / Civic Office. The Town also owns and maintains Seawalk Park and harbourfront Boardwalk, and conservation lands next to the Pinneau property.

The community would benefit from additional institutional uses to deliver public services to residents. Expanding institutional uses will require collaboration with the Government of Canada and the Province of Prince Edward Island. Positive partnership will improve access to essential services for North Rustico’s residents, spanning health, education, and other governmental domains and encourage the location of additional government offices and services in the community.

Health and education services are particularly important as both are major considerations for potential new residents assessing their residential location options. North Rustico’s well-being hinges on comprehensive health services. The town is committed to working closely with provincial authorities to guarantee the availability of quality healthcare facilities, addressing the unique needs of the community.

4.4.1 Institutional Goals

- › Retain and protect existing institutional uses within the town.
- › Encourage the location of additional institutional uses within the town particularly education and health care services for community residents.

4.4.2 Institutional Policies

Policy 4.1 Institutional Zone

Town Council shall establish an Institutional Zone permitting uses such as:

- › Publicly owned community centres, libraries, museums, and art galleries.
- › Churches, places of worship, monasteries, cemeteries, and related structures.
- › Hospitals, community care centers, schools, and publicly owned childcare facilities.

- › Publicly owned parks and recreational facilities.

Policy 4.2 Institutional Lot Requirements

Town Council will define specific development standards within the North Rustico Development Bylaw to establish minimum requirements for lot size; front, rear, and side yards; the maximum building heights; and setbacks and separation distances for accessory structures; as well as other features of buildings and properties that influence the character and appearance of North Rustico.

Policy 4.3 Buffering Institutional Properties

Town Council may impose additional requirements to mitigate visual, noise, or odor impacts of institutional properties where they abut non-institutional properties to enhance separation including increasing setback distance and/or installing physical barriers such as plantings or fencing.

Policy 4.4 Community Facilities

Town Council will maintain and expand community facilities, parks, and recreational facilities for the benefit of the North Rustico community.

Policy 4.6 Senior Governments

Town Council will continue to collaborate with federal and provincial authorities to maintain essential services and encourage the location of additional government offices and services within the Town of North Rustico.

Policy 4.7 Access PEI

Town Council will actively engage with Access PEI to ensure seamless access to government services for all members of the North Rustico community.

Policy 4.8 Health Services

Town Council will continue to collaborate with provincial health authorities to ensure North Rustico residents have access to timely and effective healthcare services.

Policy 4.9 Education Services

Town Council shall support the English Language School Board to provide enriching education experiences to North Rustico students in quality facilities providing robust programs.

4.5 INDUSTRIAL

Current industrial development is limited in North Rustico to fisheries-related operations on the harbourfront. While industrial zoning will be applied to harbourfront industrial operations, appropriately located light industrial uses would benefit the community by providing employment opportunities. Avoiding conflicts with non-industrial uses will be an important consideration for selection of industrial sites and plan policies give Town Council the discretion to permit industrial development where it will not be disruptive to the community.

4.5.1 Industrial Goals

- › Foster the establishment of appropriate light industrial uses.
- › Ensure the location of light industrial is compatible with other established land uses, particularly residential neighbourhoods.

4.5.2 Industrial Policies

Policy 5.1 Industrial” Zone

Town Council shall establish an Industrial Zone permitting uses such as:

- › Manufacturing
- › Industrial processes
- › Assembly warehousing operations.

Policy 5.2 Industrial Lot Requirements

Town Council will define specific development standards within the North Rustico Development Bylaw to establish minimum requirements for lot size; front, rear, and side yards; the maximum building heights; and setbacks and separation distances for accessory structures; as well as other features of buildings and properties that influence the character and appearance of North Rustico.

Policy 5.3 Buffering Industrial Properties

Town Council may impose additional requirements to mitigate visual, noise, or odor impacts of industrial properties where they abut non- industrial properties to enhance separation including increasing setback distance and/or installing physical barriers such as plantings or fencing.

Policy 5.4 Mitigation of Obnoxious Uses

Town Council will not accommodate any industrial activity that it determines may be considered obnoxious or disruptive to residents of the community.



4.6 ENVIRONMENT

Being a semi-coastal town, North Rustico is at risk of flooding, particularly in areas close to North Rustico Harbour. This risk is expected to increase with predicted sea level rise associated with climate change. The anticipated local climate warming could have mixed effects on agriculture, potentially lengthening the growing season while also increasing the prevalence of agricultural pests.

Town Council is responsible to plan land use in a manner that respects the local environment and mitigates potential weather-related impacts, irrespective of future climatic changes. Environmental policies are thus designed to conserve important natural features like watercourses and wetlands, and to ensure that new buildings are erected in locations that are safe for residents and minimally susceptible to environmental harm. These objectives are achieved through policies that prohibit construction in areas prone to flooding near watercourses and in wetlands, which are critical natural habitats. Policy is also included to address the protection of groundwater, which is the source of water consumed by residents and must be protected from the potential impacts of land uses that may place water quality in jeopardy.

4.6.1 Environmental Goals

- › Maintain the quality of water, soil, and air
- › Safeguard public health and safety
- › Ensure safe groundwater for consumption within the town.
- › Shield watercourses from the effects of stormwater runoff from developed lands
- › Reduce the risk and impact of flooding on public and private property, buildings, and infrastructure
- › Promote the conservation and improvement of North Rustico's natural and built environments, vistas, and streetscapes

4.6.2 Environmental Policies

Policy 6.1 Groundwater Protection

Town Council will collaborate with the Department of Housing, Land and Communities to safeguard the volume and quality of the community's groundwater resources through measures such as such as protection of wetlands, ponds, stormwater retention areas, trees, and other dense vegetation.

Policy 6.2 Watercourse and Wetland Protection

Town Council will implement a setback or buffer zone alongside all rivers, streams, drainage courses, ponds, and wetlands in accordance with the Provincial Watercourse and Wetland Regulations.

Policy 6.3 Fill and Soil Removal

Town Council will prohibit any filling or modification of surface drainage features without the issuance of a development permit, the completion of an environmental assessment, and the issuance of a stream alteration permit where required by Provincial regulations.

Policy 6.4 Land Subdivision

Town Council will mandate that any individual wishing to develop or subdivide land must obtain a site suitability assessment and a septic permit under the Environmental Protection Act and Sewage Disposal System Regulations.

Policy 6.5 Waste Watch

Town Council will endorse and continue to support the Waste Watch Program.



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Policy 6.6 Annex North Rustico Harbour Area

Town Council shall explore the annexation of the North Rustico Harbour area and evaluate the costs and benefits these lands being part of the Town.

Policy 6.7 Ensure Full Servicing

Town Council shall explore external funding opportunities from the senior levels of government to expand the existing wastewater and water networks to fully service all development within the town in coordination and where financially feasible with the Municipal capital budget planning process.

Policy 6.8 Climate Change Adaptation Plan

Town Council shall explore external funding opportunities to prepare a Climate Change Adaptation Plan to help the community become more resilient.

Policy 6.9 Exploration of Annexation of North Rustico Harbour Area

It shall be the intention of Council to explore the annexation of the North Rustico Harbour area and evaluate the costs and benefits these lands being part of the municipality.

Policy 6.10 Expansion of Sewer and Water Network in North Rustico

There is a large portion of North Rustico that still utilizes wells and on-site sewage disposal systems. In order to improve the environmental impact of residential developments in the community, Council shall explore external funding opportunities from the senior levels of government to expand the existing sewer and water network in coordination and where financially feasible with the Municipal capital budget planning process.

Policy 6.11 Implementation of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan in North Rustico

Given that the climate is continuing to change and that the resulting impacts of such changes have health, safety, and environmental impacts on North Rustico, Council shall make it a priority to undertake a Climate Change Adaptation Plan to help the community become more resilient.

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4.7 HERITAGE

North Rustico is part of Rustico, which is the oldest Acadian community in PEI. The community has a rich heritage reflected in many older homes and commercial structures, as well as fish shacks and related infrastructure on the harbourfront.

The historic and architectural heritage assets of the community have, however, received little attention. A first step to developing the heritage of North Rustico will be to inventory its heritage and cultural assets and recognize the importance of protecting them within the community. The plan encourages the Town to consider creating a strategy to protect its heritage recognizing that its value as an attraction for tourists, particularly in proximity to PEI National Park.

4.7.1 Heritage Goal

- › To actively promote the recognition of heritage sites and steward the existing sites within North Rustico.



4.7.2 Heritage Policies

Policy 7.1 Heritage Inventory

Town Council shall inventory heritage sites and sites of architectural or cultural value within North Rustico and promote these sites as points of interest for community members and visitors.

Policy 7.2 Heritage Protection

Town Council shall consider the implications of any new development on the character and value of sites and buildings identified pursuant to Policy 7.1 when considering any development adjacent to any such site.

Policy 7.3 Heritage Strategy

Town Council shall consider the development of a heritage strategy to develop standards to identify sites and structures considered to have heritage and/or cultural significance and adopt measures to promote and preserve them within North Rustico.

4.8 TRANSPORTATION

North Rustico's main transport route is Route 6, which connects to Charlottetown and several destinations to the west of the town. The community experiences high traffic during the tourism season. Key local streets include Harbourview Drive leading to the harbour, Church Hill Avenue connecting to PEI National Park, and Hilltop Avenue leading to Gulf Shore Consolidated School. Town streets, which are owned and maintained by the Provincial Government, are generally in good condition, though some are narrow with inadequate storm water drainage. Pedestrian facilities have expanded, including local sidewalks and a popular boardwalk along Harbourview Drive. Despite lacking a connection to the Confederation Trail, there is an extensive trail system and a new bikeway within the National Park.

4.8.1 Transportation Goals

- › Maintain and upgrade the road network within the Town of North Rustico.
- › Encourage and support community transit options
- › Continue to augment and improve active transportation infrastructure within the Town of North Rustico.

4.8.2 Transportation Policies

Policy 8.1 Partner with the Province of PEI

Town Council shall actively collaborate with the Provincial Department of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Energy to ensure the seamless development and upkeep of a robust transportation network. This partnership should extend beyond mere infrastructure to encompass safety protocols, traffic management, and future planning for all transportation modes.

Policy 8.2 Road Design and Management

Town Council engages private consultants to design and manage North Rustico's road system. Key considerations include:

- › Subdivision Roads: Rigorous review and approval processes to ensure that new subdivision roads align with safety

standards and community needs.

- › Private Road Access: Balancing privacy with connectivity, facilitate access to private properties while maintaining overall network integrity.
- › Maintenance Priorities: Annual road maintenance schedules prioritize safety-critical repairs and enhancements.
- › Speed Limits: Thoughtful speed limit regulations safeguard pedestrians and motorists alike.
- › Intersection Improvements: Strategic upgrades enhance traffic flow and minimize congestion.
- › Commercial and Residential Developments: Collaborate with developers to mitigate traffic impacts, ensuring harmonious growth.

Policy 8.3 Community Transit Options

Town Council shall recognize the need for accessible and inclusive transit solutions by supporting local providers of community transportation services such as shuttle vans connecting North Rustico to neighboring towns or specialized services for seniors and differently-abled individuals.



Policy 8.4 Active Transportation Infrastructure

Town Council shall encourage walking, cycling, and other non-motorized modes of transport, and shall prioritize the integration of pedestrian-friendly features into roadways. Sidewalks, bike lanes, and well-marked crosswalks enhance mobility while promoting health and environmental consciousness.

Policy 8.5 Pedestrian and Bicycling Facilities

Town Council shall support the development of pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, well-marked bike lanes, and safe crossings. North Rustico's roadways are designed to accommodate all modes of travel, fostering a vibrant and healthy community.

Policy 8.6: Improvement of Safety and Traffic Flow at Harbourview Drive and Main Street Intersection

In the Interest of improving safety and the flow of traffic at the intersection of Harbourview Drive and Main Street, Town Council shall endeavour to work with the Government of Prince Edward Island Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to evaluate alternative design options.

Policy 8.7: Completion of an Active Transportation Plan for North Rustico

Providing opportunities for residents to be more active and reach their potential destinations of choice without the need for an automobile, Council shall endeavour to complete an Active Transportation Plan to help inform its future capital budget planning for active transportation connections, such as trails and sidewalks.

Policy 8.8 Consideration of Sidewalks in New Subdivision Applications

In an effort to create a more walkable community, Council shall consider the need for sidewalks in all new subdivision applications, with such infrastructure being the responsibility of the developer.

Policy 8.9 Exploration of a Sidewalk Priority List for North Rustico

Given the lack of sidewalks in the Municipality, and with the need for North Rustico to provide more opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in active transportation, Council shall explore a sidewalk priority list as part of its ongoing capital budget planning, with such a list being reviewed and updated annually and reported to Council.

4.9 ADMINISTRATION

The Official Plan for the Town of North Rustico serves as a strategic framework, guiding land use and development within the community until the year 2034. The Town Council, in collaboration with relevant Provincial Government departments, is committed to its effective implementation and adherence.

Key Responsibilities and Initiatives:

- › **Development Bylaw:** The North Rustico Development Bylaw stands as the primary tool for translating the Official Plan’s objectives into actionable measures. Council will ensure its rigorous application.
- › **Government Liaison:** Council maintains active communication with the Government of Prince Edward Island and its agencies, fostering cooperation and alignment with broader policies.
- › **Local Accountability:** As elected representatives, Council remains attuned to local issues, adopts a proactive stance, and reports to relevant agencies.

Interdepartmental Coordination:

- › **Municipal Development:** Council oversees the approval process for land subdivision and site suitability assessments.
- › **Building Approvals:** A comprehensive checklist streamlines the issuance of development permits.

- › **Infrastructure:** Regular contact with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure ensures well-maintained roads and streets.
- › **Environmental Stewardship:** Collaboration with the Departments of Agriculture, Housing, Land and Communities, Economic Development, Innovation and Trade, and Justice and Public Safety safeguards the environment, agricultural practices, and forestry industries.
- › **Fire Protection:** Close ties with the North Rustico Volunteer Fire Department and the Provincial Fire Marshal enhance fire safety.
- › **Regional Context:** Council considers neighboring municipalities’ Official Plans, special planning areas, and Provincial policies while implementing own plan.

The Town of North Rustico is committed to prudent land management and sustainable growth. The Development Bylaw along with the Official Plan, serves as the compass guiding the community’s evolution.

4.9.1 Development Bylaw Adoption

- › Upon Ministerial approval of the Official Plan, Council will enact the North Rustico Development Bylaw. This consolidated document harmonizes with the Plan’s objectives, delineating specific land use zones, permissible activities, and procedural standards.

- › The Bylaw crafted in alignment with the Planning Act, ensures a cohesive approach to development.

4.9.2 Variances with Purpose

Council judiciously considers variances to the Bylaw. When strict compliance imposes undue hardship on landowners, measured deviations are granted while preserving the Plan’s overarching intent.

4.9.3 Regulatory Synergy

- › The building, subdivision, and rezoning permit system harmonizes with Provincial and Federal regulations. Health, safety, environmental, and infrastructure considerations remain paramount.
- › Consultation with Provincial officials ensures seamless permit issuance.

4.9.4 Subdivision Process

- › All subdivisions, regardless of size, undergo rigorous scrutiny. The North Rustico Development Bylaw outlines rules for approval.
- › Council maintains comprehensive records for each zone, submitting approved subdivision plans to the province for registration.

4.9.5 Development Permits

- › Standardized application procedures streamline building approvals.
- › The Bylaw provides clarity on development permit requirements.

4.9.6 Rezoning Requests

- › Applications for land rezoning adhere to established protocols.
- › The Bylaw delineates rezoning regulations.

4.9.7 Procedural Rigor

- › The Development Officer oversees applications, ensuring compliance.
- › Consultations with relevant government bodies inform decision-making.
- › Complex cases are thoughtfully presented to Council for resolution.

4.9.8 Transparent Communication

- › Applicants receive prompt written notices post-decision.
- › Approved plans are duly filed with Provincial authorities.

4.9.9 Boundary Considerations:

- › Acknowledging North Rustico’s unique geography, the policies extend to properties wholly within the Town Limits or

partially within, with road frontage within the Town Limits.

- › Lands partially within the boundaries but lacking road access remain exempt from the Town's regulatory framework.

4.9.10 Map Consolidation and Update:

- › The Municipality must adopt a commendable practice of consolidating and updating their zoning and land use maps on an annual basis.
- › The annual update involves a comprehensive review of all zoning and land use designations, ensuring they accurately reflect the current state of land use and development within the Municipality.

