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Item No. 11.1.12
Halifax Regional Council
July 22, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original signed by

SUBMITTED BY:

Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by Director

Brad Anguish, Director, Community and Recreation Services

DATE: June 30, 2014

SUBJECT: North Preston Community Boundary Project

ORIGIN

The Civic Addressing corrections program.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, Part XII, Streets and Highways, S.323

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Recognize North Preston as an official HRM Community, as per Map 1 of this report, and authorize staff to install community signs as identified on Map 3; and
2. Retire the community name of Lake Major, and include all associated lands into the community of Westphal, as per Map 1 of this report and authorize staff to install community signs at the Lake Major Road boundary as identified on Map 3.

BACKGROUND

In 2002, HRM began a program to ratify its community boundaries. This was deemed necessary to enable the efficient delivery of the E911 and Canada Post services. It was also regarded as an opportunity for local communities to demonstrate community pride while reflecting local history. To date, 191 of the 201 communities have been approved by Regional Council. North Preston is one of the 10 remaining communities that has not yet had its boundaries ratified by Council.

The verification of the North Preston community boundary began in 2009. The community of North Preston currently shares a boundary with two other communities:

- i) Lake Major, which is located at the intersection of the Lake Major Road and North Preston Road (street name changes at the community boundary); and
- ii) East Preston which is located at Upper Governor Street.

The verification process for North Preston also included a review of the community boundaries for Lake Major. Currently, Canada Post does not recognize the community of Lake Major; instead it is identified as Dartmouth. In light of these differences in community names, Canada Post and HRM now have agreed that all civic numbers, street names and communities will be similarly recorded in their respective data bases.

Boundary Review Process

The community boundary verification process, as outlined in Attachments A and B, involved community consultation that determined community boundaries at each vehicular entrance to the North Preston community. This same process has been used to verify the existing 191 approved boundaries.

In accordance with Civic Addressing policies, communities affected by major changes in community boundaries shall be informed, and consulted before, during and after the process. The consultation process focuses on seeking feedback from those individuals immediately affected by the proposed changes.

In addition to the verification of boundaries, HRM Regional Council also approved¹ in May 2003, the installation of standard community signs at each entrance point to a community. The program requires staff to conduct public consultation with residents prior to installation to verify that the community names and boundaries are accurate.

Community History

The community of North Preston was originally part of the Preston Township. The township was named after Preston, in Lancashire England and was originally settled by Black Loyalists and disbanded soldiers in 1784. In 1796, over five hundred additional persons arrived from Jamaica (known as “Maroons”).

The community of Lake Major is named after the Lake adjacent to the Lake Major Road where a small community developed around the lake. To protect the Lake Major water supply, Halifax Water has purchased a number of properties around Lake Major but the majority of the land south of the lake is privately owned.

¹ See staff report at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/documents/030506cow3.pdf>

DISCUSSION

To verify the community boundary for North Preston and the use of the community name “Lake Major”, staff followed its standard Community name Consultation Process which involves:

- researching community boundaries;
- consulting with interested stakeholders and the local Councillors; and
- consulting with those residents who would be affected by a change to their address.

Researching Community Boundaries

As the verification of the North Preston/Lake Major community boundary involved consultation with the residents in the Lake Major Road area, it was determined that the verification of their community name would be timely. As the community of Lake Major was not currently recognized by Canada Post, nor was it signed, it was proposed that the name be retired and the area be absorbed into the community of Westphal, which abuts the southern community boundary of Lake Major. Many of the long term residents, although using Dartmouth for their mailing address, recognize the Westphal community name. Initial research showed that historically this area was known as Westphal, particularly as it included the Westphal homestead on Cranehill Road.

Consultation with Interested Stakeholders and the Local Councillors

In July 2009, staff met with the North Preston Rate Payers Association to discuss their community boundaries with Lake Major and East Preston.

North Preston/Lake Major Boundary: The North Preston Residents felt that historically their community boundary at Lake Major Road extended south to Highway 7 (locally known as Main Street). However, it was acknowledged that this historical boundary would not resonate with the residents residing along the Lake Major Road and adjacent streets, given that they do not use that community name for their mailing address. Therefore a second option of a boundary at the bridge over Little Salmon River was proposed.

North Preston/East Preston Boundary: The boundary between North and East Preston on Upper Governor Street was also discussed. As the section of Upper Governor Street between these two communities is uninhabited, an arbitrary halfway point was chosen as the proposed boundary.

The verification of the community boundaries of North Preston, East Preston, Lake Major and Westphal affect the Councillor of District 2 (Councillor David Hendsbee) and the Councillor of District 4 (Councillor Lorelei Nicoll). Both Councillors were consulted throughout the process and reviewed all letters and maps before they were sent to affected residents.

Consultation with Residents affected by a Change to their Address

Based on the research, consultation with stakeholders and councillors, maps and letters were drafted to be sent to affected residents.

Lake Major Consultation

In August 2012, letters and a proposed map (Map 1) were sent to each property owner in the Lake Major Road project area (approx. 97 letters). The project area includes: Bainbridge Court, Chamberlain Drain, Cranehill Road (civic numbers 1-141), Lake Major Road, Lenora Lane, Old German Road and Reddy Drive. The letter indicated the need to verify the community names and boundaries and asked residents to respond if they had an issue with the proposed community name and boundaries.

Six responses were received, all in favour of the community name Westphal. Although it had been clearly stated in the letter that staff would assume any property owner who did not provide feedback agreed with the proposal, it was felt that due to the particularly low feedback, a second letter was required.

In September 2012, a second letter was sent to all property owners in the Lake Major project area clearly stated their proposed specific future addresses. There was no feedback received from this second letter.

North Preston Consultation

As the North Preston Rate Payers Association had specifically requested the boundary line of the bridge over Little Salmon River, a letter was sent specifically to the thirteen (13) property owners north of the Bridge in February 2013. This letter offered two alternatives, a boundary just north of the last house before the hill (Map 1) and a boundary at the bridge (Map 2). Nine (9) responses were received, with the majority being in favour of the community name of Westphal.

Also in February 2013, letters and a proposed boundary map (Map 1) were sent to property owners along Upper Governor Street, in the vicinity of the proposed boundary between North and East Preston (approx. 23 letters). The letter indicated the need to verify the community names and boundaries and asked property owners to respond if they had an issue with the proposed community name or boundaries. There was no feedback received from this letter.

Given the results of the Community Consultation process, a new community boundary for North Preston is recommended as shown on Map 1. In addition, the community name "Lake Major" is recommended to be retired. With the retirement of Lake Major, the lands formerly part of this community are recommended to be identified as being within the community of Westphal as shown on Map 1.

Signage

In May 2003, HRM Regional Council approved the design of standard community signs for each community in HRM. Once community boundaries have been ratified by Regional Council signage is to be installed at the approved boundaries. In this case, four community signs are proposed to be installed. Two "Welcome to North Preston" signs; one where Lake Major Road meets North Preston Road (Map 3) including an additional street name banner indicating the change to North Preston Road and the second on Upper Governor Street approximately 600 m north of Lake Eagle Drive (Map 3). A third sign, the "Welcome to Westphal" sign will be positioned directly across from the North Preston sign at the intersection of Lake Major Road and North Preston Road and will also include an additional street name banner indicating the change to Lake Major Road. A "Welcome to East Preston" sign (the fourth sign) will be installed directly across from the North Preston sign on Upper Governor Street.

Address Changes

As a result of the consultation process, staff recommends that the boundaries between North Preston and Westphal and North Preston and East Preston be as illustrated on Map 1 and that two community signs be installed at each boundary entry point as illustrated on Map 3. This recommendation will require residents in the Lake Major Road area to change their mailing addresses from the community of Dartmouth to Westphal. If Regional Council approves the proposed boundary changes, staff will send written notification to each affected resident to advise them of this change to their address. In accordance with By-law C-300, Respecting Civic Addressing, the residents will have 60 days' notice before their new address takes effect. HRM staff will co-ordinate with Canada Post to automatically redirect each resident's mail for a period of 12 months.

In order for the proposed community boundaries to be enacted, Regional Council must pass a motion verifying the proposed boundary changes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Identification of the communities of North Preston and Westphal in the project area would require the installation of four community signs for a total estimated cost of \$3600. The total estimated cost for this can be accommodated within the Civic Addressing Operating Account of C330-6910.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for this exercise is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was consultation, achieved through meetings with a community group, the local Councillors, and written communication with affected residents. The written communication process involved contacting each property owner potentially affected and requesting their participation. During the time set out for gathering feedback, all responses were recorded and used in determining the proposed boundaries recommended in this report.

It should be noted that the North Preston Rate Payers Association requested the boundary as shown in Map 2. In keeping with Civic Addressing's standard community name consultation process, greater consideration is given to feedback received from the affected property owners than that from the larger community. Therefore, staff recommends the boundary that the affected property owners prefer as shown on Map 1.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No implications have been identified.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose to approve the community boundary of North Preston as outlined on Map 2 and retire the community name "Lake Major" as outlined in Map 1 and direct staff to install signage. This alternative is not recommended.
2. Regional Council may choose not to amend the North Preston and Lake Major community boundaries. This alternative is not recommended due to potential confusion in the delivery of E911 and Canada Post services.

ATTACHMENTS

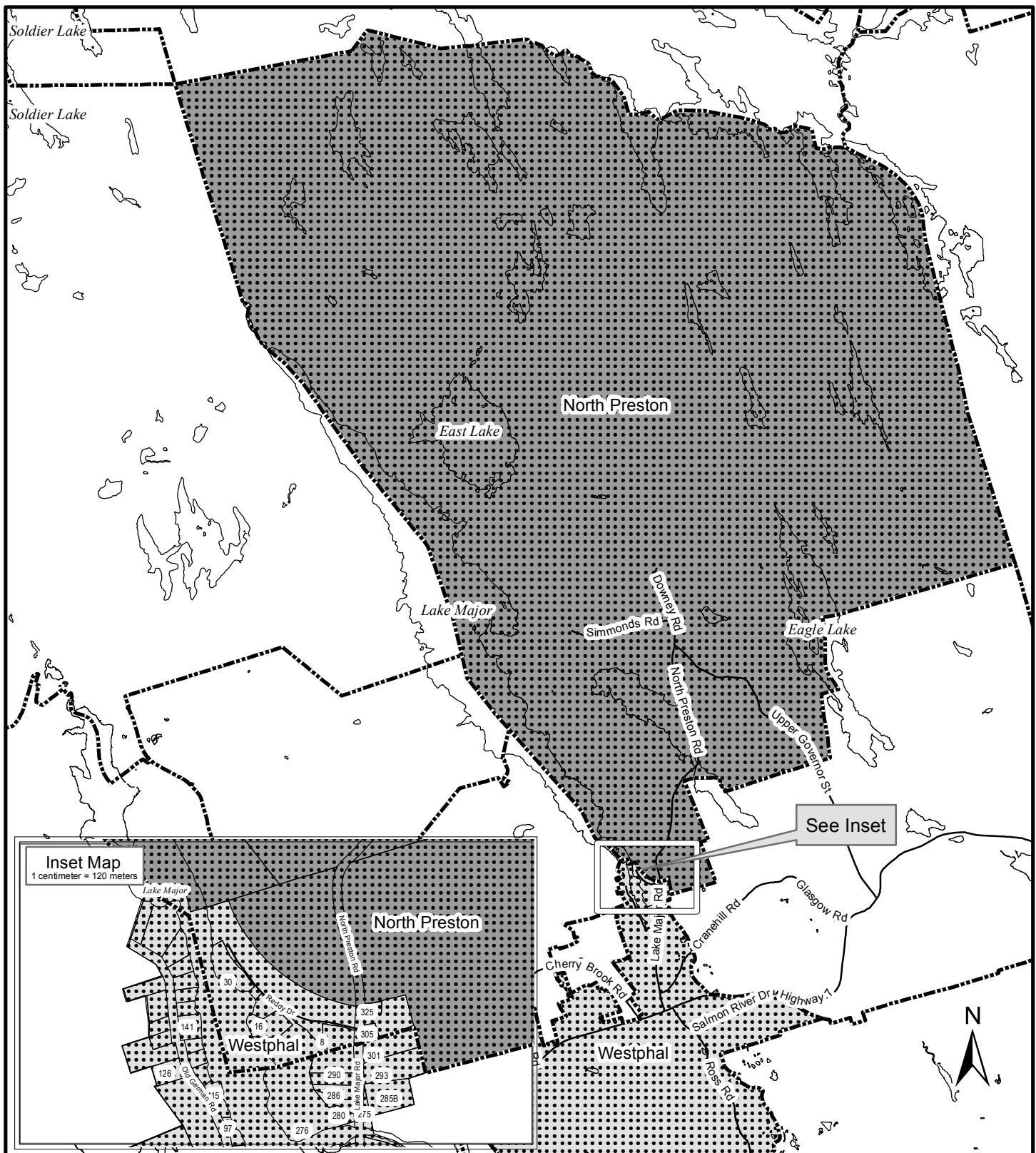
Map 1 Recommended Community Boundary North Preston/Westphal
Map 2 Alternative Community Boundaries North Preston/Westphal
Map 3 Proposed Community Sign Placement
Attachment A Flow Chart of Community Consultation Process

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.




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Report Approved by: _____
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Financial Approval by: _____
 Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO, 490-6308



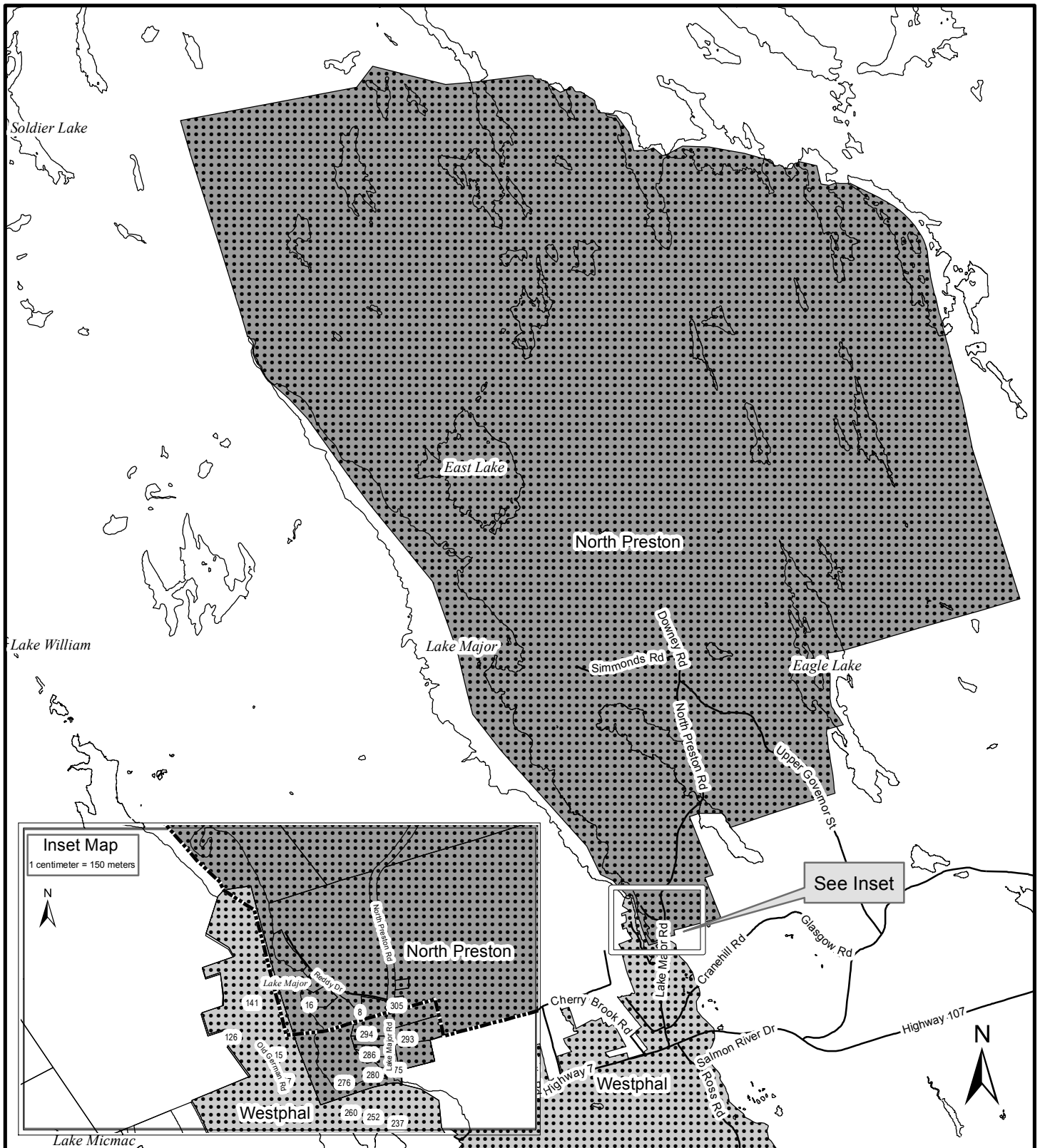
Map 1 - Recommended Community Boundary North Preston / Westphal

-  North Preston
-  Westphal
-  Current Boundary

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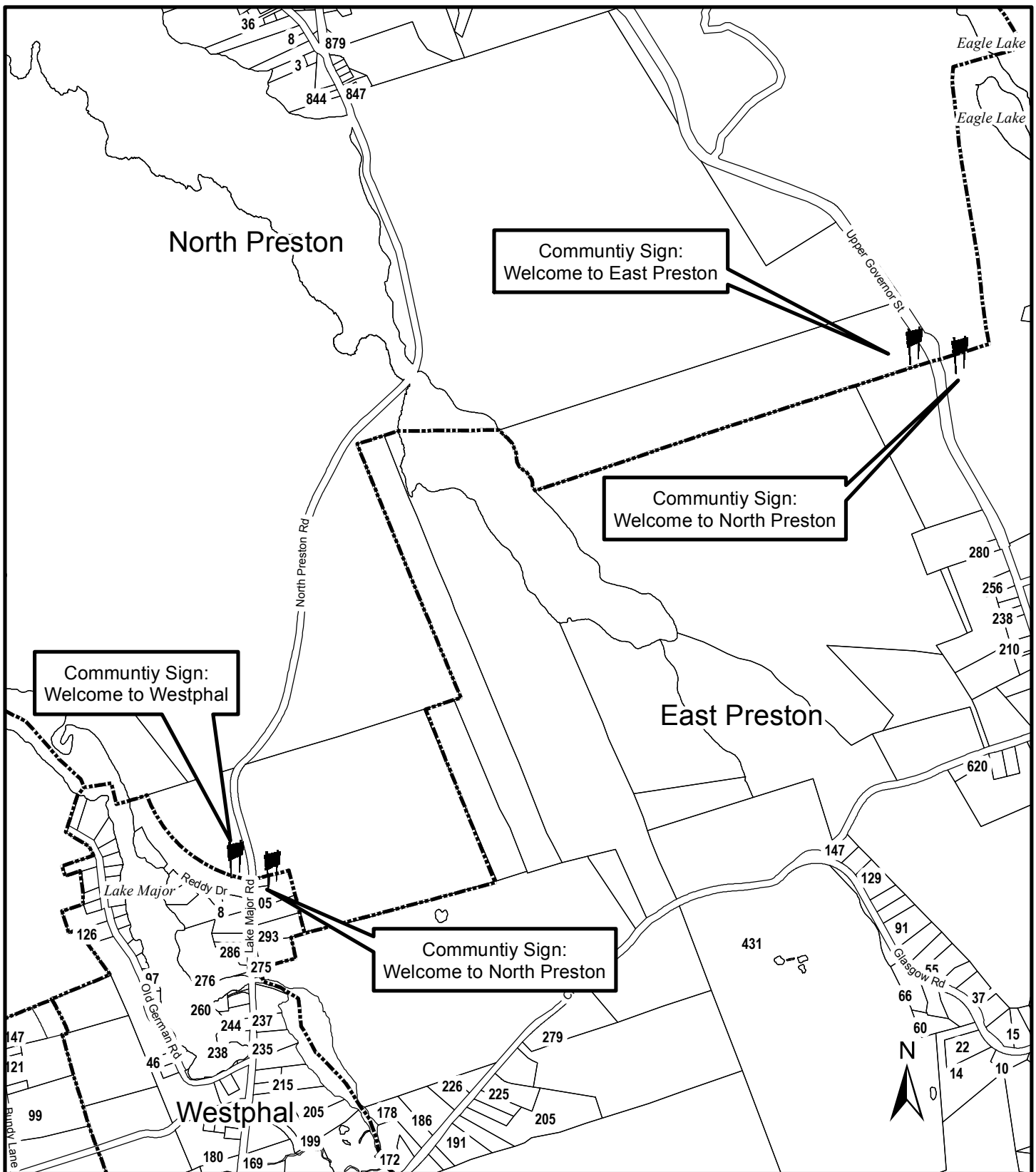
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This map was compiled by the staff of the Civic Addressing Program.
Halifax Regional Municipality Civic Addressing takes responsibility
only for civic address information portrayed in the map and does
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HALIFAX

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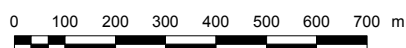
Map 3 - Proposed Community Sign Placement



HRM "Welcome to our Community" Sign

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Attachment A
Flow Chart of Community Consultation Process
for details regarding each stage, please refer to Attachment B

