

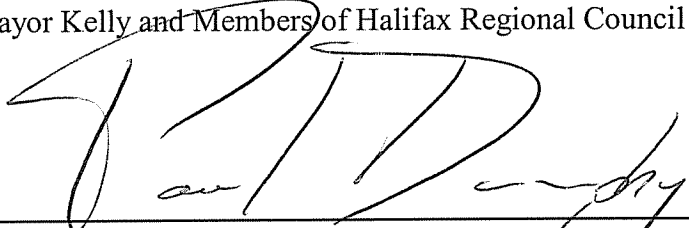


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Regional Council
July 13, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


Paul Dunphy, Director of Planning & Development Services

DATE: June 29, 2004

SUBJECT: Master Plan Studies

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

- December 1, 1998 motion of Regional Council to initiate master planning studies in four areas of the Municipality (Morris/Russell Lake, Port Wallace, Wentworth/Bedford South and Governor Lake North).
- July 2, 2002 motion of Regional Council to initiate a master planning study for Bedford West.

BACKGROUND

In December 1998, Regional Council authorized staff to initiate master planning studies at four greenfield locations around the Municipality:

- Wentworth/Bedford South;
- Morris/Russell Lake;
- Port Wallace;
- Governors Lake North; and

In 2002, a fifth study was initiated for the Bedford West area.

The master plan objectives were to determine:

- the feasibility of developing each site with municipal sewer and water services;
- assuming servicing is feasible, prepare policy guidance for future negotiations with the proponents over development of each site; and
- in a subsequent report for Wentworth/Bedford South and Governor Lake North master plans, the study objectives were further articulated to include the concepts of smart growth.

To date:

- plan and by-law amendments for Wentworth/Bedford South have been adopted and construction has commenced on the first phase (a community of roughly 10,000 persons is expected upon completion); and
- Morris/Russell Lake has received partial approval with the adoption of plan and by-law amendments for Dartmouth, Cole Harbour/Westphal and Eastern Passage/Cow Bay in 1999.

This report has been prepared to provide an update on the status of the four outstanding master plans and to highlight that they have a relationship to the regional planning program. Various specific studies (e.g. traffic, water, sanitary and storm services, community design etc.) have been undertaken with respect to each master plan. The regional planning program has also undertaken larger scale studies which may have a bearing on which master plan areas should be given approvals. Most notably:

- the Greenfield Study of ten areas (Attachment III identifies the areas studied) has a fundamental bearing on the master planning objective respecting servicing feasibility;
- the four remaining master plan areas have been included within the ten greenfield study areas; and
- the specific and comparative information from the Greenfield Study will therefore have direct relevance to the master plans.

DISCUSSION

Staff have reviewed the various studies which have been undertaken for the master plans and regional planning with property owners within each master plan area. Over the summer, further meetings will be held to determine if there are any discrepancies between staff and the property owners in determining the infrastructure needs, associated costs for each master plan area and the application of capital cost charges.

Following these discussions, staff will submit recommendations to Council in early fall on the disposition of the Master Plan areas within the overall context to the Regional Planning project. The key issue to be addressed for each site is whether or not to proceed with Plan and Bylaw amendments concurrently with regional planning or to postpone any further action until after the regional plan is complete. Capital cost charge implications will also be addressed at that time.

The Morris/Russell Lake area is unique in that Plan and Bylaw amendments are already in place giving direction to proceed with additional amendments following resolution of a major transportation issue in the east Dartmouth/Cole Harbour area. As construction of a new interchange on Highway 111 appears imminent, community planning work should proceed in the Morris/Russell Lake Master Plan area to resolve outstanding issues respecting community form, scale of the overall development and infrastructure financing.

It is evident that the Municipality does not need all ten greenfield areas developed in order to meet future growth needs within any reasonable planning horizon. In addition, it may not be necessary to develop all four master plan study areas to accommodate projected growth. Caution will have to be exercised when approval requests are brought before Council for master plan areas since in some cases selection of one site will necessarily infer that other sites cannot be developed.

Growth Projections and Land Requirements

Council will ultimately have to review the merits of the master plan study areas within the context of the information obtained from the regional planning greenfield study and any other factors or values which are deemed relevant such as community form etc. It is clear however that the amount of land identified in the master plan areas and greenfield study exceeds the Region's growth requirements over the next 25 years.

Full build out of all ten greenfield sites could accommodate approximately 273,000 people. This represents a supply of 4.5 to 5.5 times the Region's expected needs for suburban growth over the next 25 years. It has been estimated that by 2025, the region's population will grow between 55,000 to 125,000 under low and high growth scenarios respectively¹. Approximately 50,000 to 60,000 people would be accommodated within greenfield/master plan areas, with the remainder located within established urban service boundaries or developed in suburban/rural areas with on-site sewer and water services.

Summary of Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis indicates that:

- development of all of the ten greenfield study areas are not needed to satisfy regional needs for the next twenty-five years, even under a high growth scenario;
- the capital cost of extending basic municipal services (roads, sewers, water) to each study area varies considerably, both in aggregate and based on per developable acre;
- the potential scale of development within each study area is of such a magnitude that approval of one implies that other sites may not be developed due to service capacity constraints-particularly for sanitary sewage treatment; and
- approvals may limit the Municipality's capacity for infill development within established urban boundaries.

¹ *Employment, Population and Housing Projections: Halifax Regional Municipality (Revised)*. Prepared by Clayton Research Associates in Partnership with Cantwell & Company Consulting (May 12, 2004)
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Summary of Activities for Each Master Plan

The following information summarizes the extent of work completed to date on each master plan area.

1. Morris/Russell Lake

- Griffiths Muecke and Associates was commissioned by the Municipality to prepare a watershed management plan. *Morris Lake Watershed Management Plan: Final Plan* was submitted in May 1998.
- A public participation committee was formed and guided policy development which culminated with adoption of amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategies for Dartmouth, Cole Harbour/Westphal and Eastern Passage/Cow Bay in June 1999. The amendments established comprehensive guidelines to accommodate future development within the Morris and Russell Lake watersheds. Undeveloped lands were zoned comprehensive development district to implement this intent
- The public participation committee prepared a master development plan report with a series of recommendations pertaining to land use, transportation, environmental protection and implementation. The report featured a conceptual land use and transportation plan. Harbour East Community Council approved the committee recommendations in principle, with amendments, in May 2000.
- Dillon Consulting was retained by the Municipality to prepare a design and cost estimate for the proposed interchange with the Circumferential Highway and connector road extending from the interchange to the Caldwell Road. The *Cole Harbour Arterial Corridor and Interchange Study* was submitted in November, 2001.
- Revised development proposals were submitted by Clayton Developments to the Harbour East Community Council in 2002. A revised transportation plan was referred to the public participation committee. Canada Land Company was given representation on the committee in light of its interest in developing lands deemed surplus to the Shearwater National Defence Base.
- Jacques Whitford was retained by the Municipality to prepare a stormwater management plan. The final document *Morris Lake Stormwater Management Plan*, dated December 2003, has recently been presented to the public participation committee and the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board. The public participation committee has reviewed the study and recommended further changes to the master development plan.
- Atlantic Road & Traffic Management have been retained by the Municipality to review a number of options for the design of the proposed Circumferential Highway interchange and connector road to Caldwell Road. The final report is expected to be submitted in the near future.
- At the March 9, 2004 session, Regional Council approved a motion to support the interchange and connector road on the 2004/05 list for funding under the Canada - Nova Scotia Infrastructure Program.

- On May 20th 2004, a news release stated that the federal and provincial governments will contribute \$2.4 million towards the proposed interchange, subject to completion of an environmental assessment study.

2. Port Wallace

A preliminary evaluation undertaken through the master planning program found a significant development constraint in the sanitary sewer system. The sanitary sewer main along the Waverley Road does not have the capacity to service the Port Wallace area, thereby necessitating construction of a new main along the west side of Micmac Lake to service Port Wallace.

More recently, consultants have been retained to study the sewersheds that discharge into Dartmouth Cove. The study is expected to provide insights into the significance of downstream capacity constraints which could further affect the financial viability of developing this area.

3. Bedford West

- An open house session was held in the fall of 2002, followed by a meeting with property owners to review the proposed boundary.
- In February 2003, Regional Council approved the study area boundaries, the study terms of reference and a public participation program. A public participation committee, comprised of citizens from the three polling districts in which the study area is located, has been appointed to oversee the process. The committee has reviewed development proposals of landowners and has hosted three public meetings to date.
- Annapolis Group, the major land owner within this study area and proponent of this study, has submitted design briefs pertaining to a conceptual development plan of its property as well as servicing proposals for sanitary and water services for the entire study area. The design briefs have been presented to staff and the public participation committee and at a public meeting.
- Delphi - MRC has been retained by Annapolis to prepare a transportation study. The most recent draft *Bedford West Master Plan: Transportation Study (December 2003)* is under review by a steering committee with staff representation from the N.S. Department of Transportation & Public Works and the Municipality. The study has been presented to the public participation committee and at a public meeting.
- SGE Acres was retained by Annapolis Group to undertake a structural study of the dams owned by Annapolis at the outfall of Paper Mill Lake, Kearney Lake and Quarry Lake to fulfill provincial licensing requirements. The study, entitled *Bedford Dams Comprehensive Review (final report: October, 2003)* has been reviewed by staff, the public participation committee and Bedford Waters Advisory Board and presented at a public meeting. SGE Acres also prepared a supplementary document, entitled *Bedford West Stormwater Management Pre-Design Brief (March 2004)*, which outlined a proposal to introduce gated structures at each of the dams to control water levels on the lakes and manage stormwater.

- The Dalhousie University Centre for Water Resource Studies (CWRS) prepared *Water Quality Impact Assessment of Water Bodies Contained in the Bedford West Planning Area using a Phosphorous Loading Model Approach* (R.S. Scott and W.C. Hart, April 28 2004)
- Jacques Whitford has prepared *Bedford West Planning Area Subwatershed Management Plan* (May, 2004). This study, the CWRS study and the SGE Acres study are being reviewed by a steering committee comprised of four municipal staff and three staff members of the N.S. Department of the Environment and Labour. The studies have also been presented to Bedford Waters Advisory Board and at a public meeting.

4. Governor Lake North

- An open house session and two public meetings have been held in the community.
- The *Master Plan for Governor Lake Area and Development Plan for Governor Village* (June 2000) was prepared by Atlan Plan for review by staff.
- Delphi Systems was commissioned by Parkdale Developments to prepare a traffic impact study. The document entitled *Governor's Run: Traffic Impact* (May 2001) has been reviewed by municipal and provincial staff.
- The *Nine Mile River Assimilation Study* (February, 2003) was prepared by Dillon Consulting Ltd. for the Municipality.
- SGE Acres prepared the *Governor Lake Area Transportation Study* (January 2003) for the N.S. Department of Transportation & Public Works and the Municipality to determine transportation improvements needed to allow for future developments throughout the area. Future developments included the Governor Lake North and Ragged Lake study areas and the Westgate Community.
- SGE Acres prepared the *Capital Cost Contribution Determination of the Transportation System for Governor Lake North Master Plan* (July, 2003) for the Municipality based on the recommendations of the Governor Lake Area study and in conformity with the Municipality's Infrastructure Charges policy document. A supplementary investigation was undertaken by the consultant to determine the impact of an alternative scenario²
- CBCL prepared the *Governor Lake North Sanitary Servicing Master Plan* (August 2003) for the Municipality to provide an estimate of the capital cost contribution estimate for the sanitary sewer system. CBCL has also been retained by the Regional Water Commission to estimate the water distribution system component. A draft report has been submitted to the Commission.

² Technical Memorandum to David McCusker, HRM Public Works & Transportation from Robert McLure, SGE Acres, dated April 27, 2004.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ATTACHMENTS

- I Location Map: The Five Authorized Master Plan Study Areas
- II Planning Activities that have Influenced the Master Plan Studies
- III Location Map: Greenfield Study Areas

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Paul Morgan, Planner, tel: 490-4482

Attachment II: Planning Activities that have Influenced the Master Plan Studies

The Capital Cost Contribution Policy

With provincial adoption of the *Municipal Government Act* in 1999, municipalities in Nova Scotia were granted the statutory authority to recoup certain infrastructure costs associated with new development through the imposition of infrastructure charges. HRM had sought such authority shortly after amalgamation as a means of compensating for diminished federal and provincial financial support for new infrastructure projects.

In July 1992, Regional Council adopted *Infrastructure Charges Best Practice Guide: A Capital Cost Contribution Policy* which presented the Municipality's role, guiding principles, policies and administrative procedures in financing new infrastructure for new development. The document contemplated that the Municipality would take a lead facilitation role in determining infrastructure needs, apportioning costs among benefiting parties, and collecting and payment of funds. However, it also stated that the Municipality was to balance its financial responsibilities with its ability to pay through approved capital budget expenditures and to do so without assuming developers' risk.

Amendments to community planning strategies were approved concurrently with this policy document and in February, 1993 the first charge area was established for the Wentworth/Bedford South master plan area through amendment to the Bedford and Halifax subdivision by-laws.

The Regional Planning Program:

In November 2001, the Municipality initiated a regional planning program. Phase I, completed in December 2002, primarily involved undertaking various consultation processes and preparation of discussion papers to help identify planning themes well as a vision and principles. Under Phase II, five focus themes were selected to drive the program: economy, environment, settlement pattern transportation and Halifax Harbour. Principles, goals and objectives were drafted for each theme in consultation with the Regional Planning Committee and were approved in principle by Regional Council in January of this year.

In 2002, Council authorized a green field study in support of the regional planning program to investigate the feasibility of developing serviced communities on ten greenfield sites around the metropolitan area (the location of each is shown on attachment II). The study was to provide a commentary regarding the opportunities and constraints for development of each site and to estimate the capital costs of upgrading municipal services (transportation, water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems) to accommodate several development scenarios. With the exception of Wentworth/Bedford South, the four outstanding master plan study areas were included in the greenfield study to gain further knowledge and to allow for a comparative analysis³.

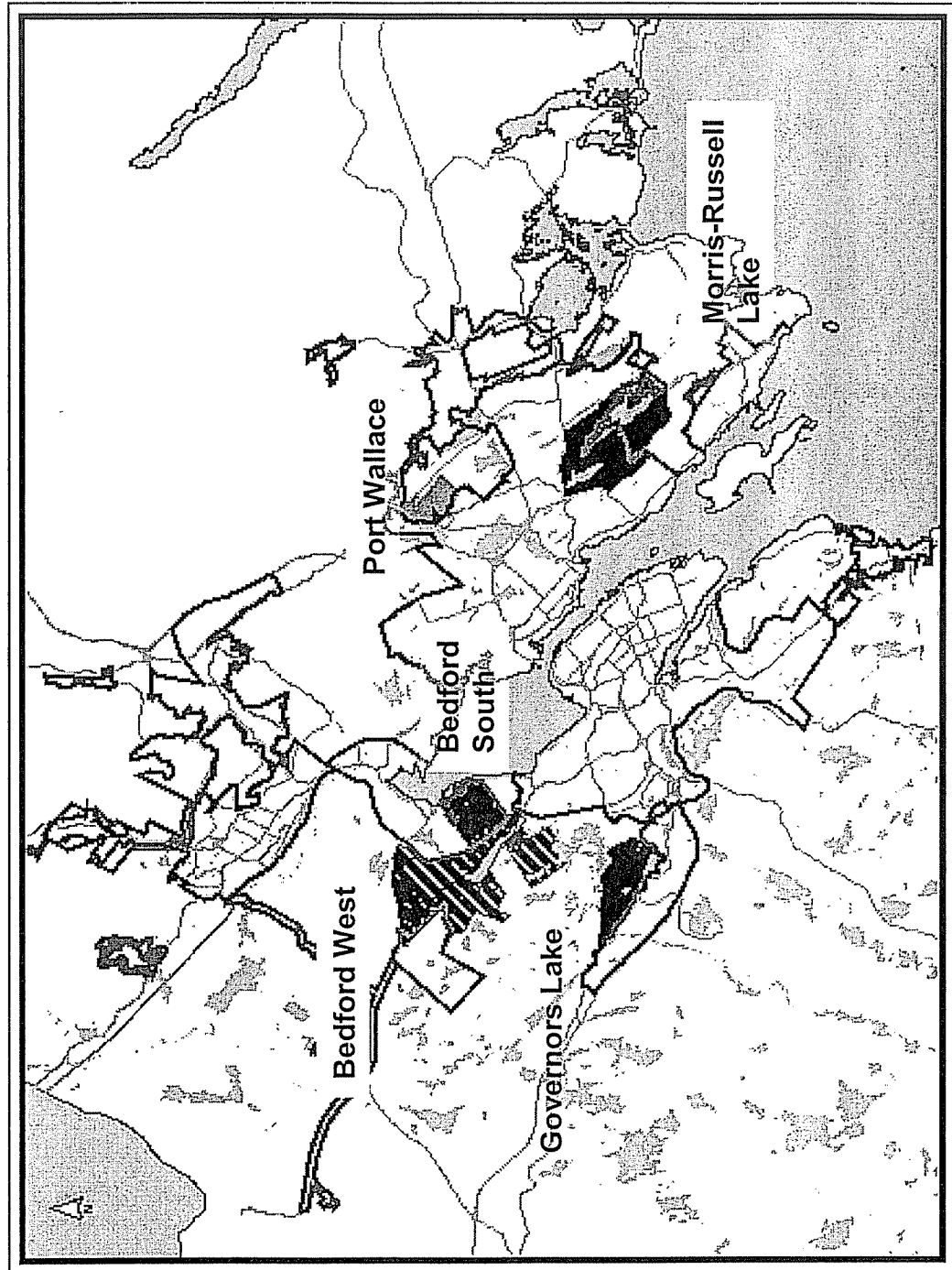
³ The Morris/Russell Lake Master Plan Area formed part of a larger study area identified as Eastern Passage/Shearwater under the greenfield study. Similarly, the Governor Lake North master plan area formed part of the Birch Cove/Governor Lake greenfield study area.

Attachment II: Planning Activities that have Influenced the Master Plan Studies (continued)

CBCL Limited in association with Marshall Macklin and Monaghan were selected for the study. To date, two draft documents have been prepared for review by staff: *Greenfield Areas Servicing Analysis: Opportunities and Constraints Report (January 2003)* and *Greenfield Areas Servicing Analysis Report (October 2003)*. Consultations of the findings have been held with affected property owners. An executive summary has been reproduced as attachment IV.

At the April 20th, 2004 session of Regional Council, four alternative growth strategies were adopted for public consultation. A kick off event was held on May 15th followed by a series of open houses and presentations in May and June. Each growth strategy has differing implications for a variety of planning issues such as community form, service provision, energy consumption, and environmental protection.

Existing Master Plan Areas



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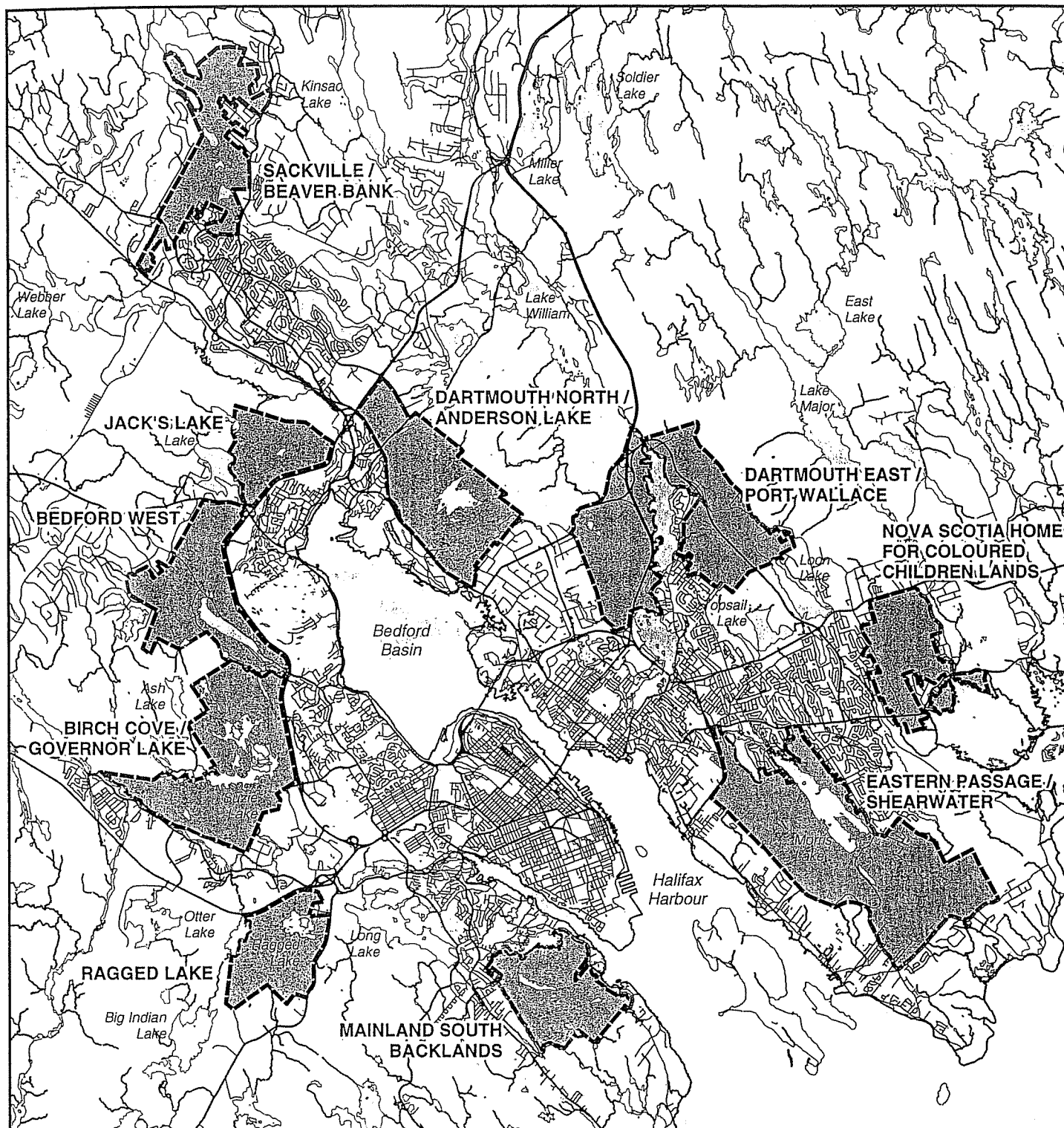
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STUDY AREAS



Base Features



Study Areas



Major Roads



Minor Roads

1:150,000

0 2.5 5 Kilometres



Figure Number :	1.1
Scale :	1:150 000
Issue Date :	January, 2003
Cartography By :	Shiju Mathew

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