

Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan

Final Draft - October 2013



Open Spaces Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

Prepared by:

Planning & Infrastructure

Halifax Regional Municipality



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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

1.1 *Plan Purpose*

The Cole Harbour Basin community is an historic landscape centered around the Cole Harbour Estuary and settled by the communities of Cole Harbour, Cow Bay, Lawrencetown and Westphal. The Estuary is critical to the Cole Harbour Basin open space system and an important component of the larger “green” network supporting environmental, cultural and social vitality across the Region. The conservation of the Estuary itself is supported by the 1,500 acre Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park System which provides a significant regional park system and natural “gem” for the Cole Harbour basin community. The Coastal Heritage Park along with an extensive portfolio of municipal parks, sports-fields, trails and streets serve core public and environmental needs and help to shape settlement form and community identity. A comprehensive open space planning framework based on strong objectives and strategic decision-making criteria is needed to effectively manage the protection and development of this important open space system.



The purpose of this Plan is to adopt an integrated Municipal strategy for the delivery of HRM's Regional Plan objectives for open space management and protection in the Cole Harbour Basin study area. Using an open space "lens" the Plan establishes a policy and implementation framework to guide future decision-making toward a viable network of natural and public open space to support HRM's goal of a sustainable region. Key to this approach is an integration of open space, land-use, and public service delivery objectives based on a solid and healthy foundation of open space resources. This is best described as an ecosystems planning approach¹ which considers how cities and communities can function sustainably at multiple levels without compromising ecological function. The Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan is a strategy for managing public open space lands and influencing land-use and transportation planning to protect, develop and maintain a multi-functional system of open space. Such a system will perform multiple environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits including environmental protection, recreation and active transportation service delivery, conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and community design for shaping settlement patterns and character.

The Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan originated from the Municipality's need to respond to multiple public land investment issues and opportunities in the general area of the Cole Harbour Estuary and Basin. Decisions affecting the future of the former Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Hospital lands, opportunities to acquire lands in support of the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park, and the need to manage the installation of utilities across public open space lands, were converging issues in need of coordination. Rationalization of continued investment in the Salt Marsh Trail Causeway in light of destructive storms was also needed. This requires HRM Council-approved objectives, policy direction and a strong community vision for the Cole Harbour Basin area to make decisions more strategically and rationally. Without this open space planning framework, staff and Council have been challenged to coordinate and prioritize individual projects.

1.1.1 Objectives & Outcomes:

- A) **Quality and Diversity of Public Open Space** – A well-located, well-designed and managed network of parks and corridors. Planning and best management practice has moved toward the quality of provision of open space and away from raw quantity. Issues such as user experience, identity, connectivity and biodiversity are examples of important issues linked to the quality of open space. The community has a diverse range of needs for active and passive recreation and strong values for open space connectivity, sustainability and identity.
- B) **Protected Natural Landscapes and Ecological Systems** – The HRM region depends on an environmentally sustainable and diverse network of lands, waters and ecological systems to support plant, animal and fish habitat and human settlements. Maintaining

¹ An ecosystem approach considers the interactions and connections between natural areas and between developed and undeveloped areas

diversity within the system and connectivity requires public investment, integrated planning and development, and community stewardship.

- C) **Access and Equity** – People need free access to open space. A range of open space lands and facilities should be located within appropriate distances from residents, be readily available and accessible.
- D) **Sustainable Asset Investment & Management** – The Municipality has an interest in open space and supporting facilities that are economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable. A strategic and rationalized public open space land portfolio ensures that assets are well-located, well-programmed, well-managed and affordable to meet service delivery standards and community needs.
- E) **Flexibility to Respond to Changing Needs** - The needs of the community will change over time, and planning policy and implementation strategies should be flexible enough to adapt to change without compromising fundamental values and principles.

1.2 *Planning Approach*

In 2006 HRM adopted its' first Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan) which supports the development of a regional network of open space. Toward this end the Regional Plan establishes policy direction to develop an “economically and environmentally sustainable strategy for the equitable maintenance and distribution of parks and open space throughout the Municipality”.² This provides the basis for an integrated ecological approach to open space planning which considers a system of lands, waters, parks and corridors that function together as a diverse network of natural and public open space. There is a paradigm shift toward open space systems planning which has emerged through this Plan and which recognizes the multiple functions and benefits of open space in achieving multiple Municipal objectives. This shift is supported through the HRM Regional Plan which moves beyond a conventional “parks and recreation” approach toward an open space network and integration of land-use, transportation and open space planning objectives to achieve truly sustainable communities. This comprehensive planning approach emphasizes the role of open space in not only serving vital environmental and human needs³ but also shaping community and cultural identity, settlement form, and sustainable regional growth. This Plan aligns closely with multiple HRM Regional Planning objectives and provides an inter-departmental management plan for public open space service delivery, open space protection, and for helping to shape community design.

The open space strategy enabled under the Regional Plan (Open Space Functional Plan) has not yet been developed however the planning process for Cole Harbour Basin highlighted the need to develop an open space model that could be used as a pilot for future open space planning across the Region. The Plan does this by aligning with multiple regional planning objectives and

² Halifax Regional Municipality, Regional Municipal Planning Strategy 2006

³ Planning Public Space Networks Towards Urban Cohesion, ISOCARP Congress 2010 Pinto J., Remesara A., Brandao P., Nures da Silva F.

by introducing a new methodology for evaluating open space land capability using multiple environmental, social and cultural values. This creates a strong foundation for integrated decision-making to plan for and manage open space at both the site and the system level. This (composite values) functional evaluation method is explained further in the report.

The first five year review of the Regional Plan currently in progress known as RP+5, has also identified key themes which support a stronger focus on open space planning as an inter-connected network. Several of the themes and actions emerging through the Regional Plan review are directly related to the protection and management of open space as a means of achieving sustainable and balanced regional growth and healthy, livable communities.

1.2.1 Regional Plan Alignments

Sustainable Development Solutions:

Community and regional growth brings both opportunities and challenges. The way growth is managed must be environmentally and economically sustainable through efficient and effective service delivery, and strong communities that can provide multiple living, commerce, and service needs. The availability of open space for public use and to sustain natural ecosystems is essential and depends on sustainable development that is guided by “low impact” ecological principles for protecting critical natural and cultural resources.

Building a “Green Network”:

The management and protection of vital environmental and natural resources is at the forefront for municipalities. Dispersed development patterns and unsustainable servicing compromises open space resources and fragments ecological and natural systems. The Regional Plan and the actions emerging through the RP+5 Regional Plan review support more sustainable development and community prosperity through “green-belt” and other tools for the protection, development and management of a regional network of natural and public open space.

Designing for “Complete” Communities:

There is demand for “complete communities” which are walkable, attractive, multi-functional neighborhoods and districts where people can live and work. These are places that have a strong sense of place and character. Core to complete communities is an efficient use of land, conservation of environmental and natural resources, highly functioning multi-modal transportation, a vibrant commercial core, and a strong social and cultural environment. Open space which is well-located, well-designed and well-managed provides the foundation for “complete” communities.

An Aging Population:

Baby-boomers are aging. This is creating a notable demographic shift that will have significant impact on how we focus planning, development and public service delivery. Open space programming must shift over time to meet the needs of the older resident. Household

composition and family dynamics is also shifting toward a higher percentage of single parents and smaller families. Public open space must adapt over time to meet the needs of a changing community. These are spaces that are multi-functional and can support flexible programming.

Limited Public Resources:

Municipalities are doing more with fewer resources. This demands strategic investment and responsive planning. Decades of dispersed development trends and servicing has shifted to more sustainable development approaches. There is growing pressure to carefully manage public assets and to invest strategically as community servicing needs and expectations grow and change.

1.2.2 Methodology & Planning Process

A systems approach was used to understand the composition and functionality of open space at the site and community level and at the network and system level. Multiple evaluation criteria were used to determine the composite value of natural and public open space assets using filters of identity, conservation, recreation, connectivity and culture. This approach measures the capability of open space lands for recreational service delivery and connectivity, for environmental and cultural conservation and for shaping community form. The results of this evaluation along with community input and community and regional planning and development factors has led to a set of goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations which form the “Planning Framework”. The planning framework is a compendium of multiple layers of data and information which has been synthesized into key issues and opportunities.

The methodology and planning process included a detailed inventory and analysis of natural and human-influenced open space assets in the study area to understand multiple open space functions including recreation, heritage conservation, community identity, environmental conservation, and mobility. The findings of this open space functional analysis shows the important natural systems and cultural landscapes, areas with high community identity value, strategic sites within the park system and key connections and mobility routes within the corridor network. Using multiple layers of data and planning information, a synthesis of key finding was developed. The synthesis forms the policy directions and recommendations under the Planning Framework.



Planning Phases:**Community Visioning:**

The core values, issues and opportunities within the community with respect to open space were identified through engagement to determine the fundamental elements of the Plan and to shape the planning framework.

Open Space Inventory:

All open space assets – parks, corridors, natural lands, water-bodies, wet-lands, and natural systems were identified and mapped.

Spatial Analysis:

In order to understand the larger open space system a spatial analysis was conducted to look at the relationships between the open space components (natural and public) and the impact of development patterns and demographic composition. This helped to identify where the natural and public open space system is working well, where it is compromised, where future investment should be focused, and where operating efficiencies and service delivery improvements could be achieved. The goal is to manage a municipal open space portfolio that is more effective and efficient in delivering services and meeting planning objectives.

Service Level Analysis:

The analysis also included a review of service levels to identify how well communities in the study area are served by the existing park network. Using HRM's evaluation criteria for park planning and development and population density, community service delivery levels were identified. This analysis found that many communities are well served or over-served by a sufficient number of parks while others are under-served. It is important to note, however, that service delivery standards focus only on land "quantity" and do not provide a sufficient understanding of the "quality" of the park in meeting service delivery objectives. Demographics and population trends were also factored into the analysis to understand where future open space lands and programming might be directed.

Land Capability Evaluation:

This planning process emphasized the limitation of community service delivery standards which rely on land quantity versus quality. Staff, therefore, put emphasis on developing a more comprehensive, multiple values model to measure the capability and suitability of HRM's open space lands in supporting multiple open space functions. The (Composite Values) Functional Analysis Tool – Scoring Criteria (Appendix 1) was developed to score lands as *high capability*, *moderate capability*, and *low capability* using multiple values criteria. Over sixty (60) public parks and open space land holdings were assessed using this tool to measure the identity, recreation and leisure, environmental, heritage, and connectivity capability and value of the land.

The model provides a decision-making tool that will be used in conjunction with additional decision-making filters, plans and processes including Municipal Planning Strategies (Community Plans), the HRM Community Facility Master Plan⁴, Active Transportation Plan and other relevant management plans. This Cole Harbour planning process focused only on open space *land* capability to determine how well the open space network and the parks within the network are functioning. Performance audits for individual parks with respect to recreational programming and use was not included within the scope of this Plan. This work will take place through the implementation of the Plan and future integrated decision-making.

1.3 Implementation

The Municipality owns, manages, and regulates open space lands for recreational and active transportation service delivery, for environmental and cultural protection, and for shaping community development. This Plan will help HRM effectively perform its role as owner, manager and steward of public open space. This role includes investment in a diverse portfolio of public parks and connecting corridors, the protection of ecologically and culturally important landscapes, land-use policy and regulation for private lands, and the delivery of multiple programs and services to meet public needs

This Plan is one of several management plans used by the Municipality to implement the objectives and policies under the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan). The policies guidelines, recommendations and tools in the Plan will provide decision-making guidance for multiple departments and divisions within the HRM organization and will help to integrate multiple mandates and service delivery. Program administrators, policy-makers, regulators, operations staff, and managers will use the Plan as a guideline for developing multi-year budgets, for managing assets, and for determining programming and land investment priorities. For Regional Council the Plan provides multi-year strategic guidance for investing in open space service delivery, conservation, and community design efforts.

1.3.1 How will the Plan be used?

The Plan will guide open space service delivery through:

Land-Use and Public Ownership – Understanding the cost benefit of public land is key in making rational and strategic investment decisions. The newly developed land evaluation tool paired with a spatial assessment of the Cole Harbour Basin open space system will allow HRM to consider multiple factors in determining suitable lands for the Municipal open space portfolio.

⁴ The HRM Community Facility Master Plan CFMP uses a Facility Implementation Model FIM to guide decisions and set priorities for HRM community facility investments.

Maintenance – Operational regimes for municipal parks are put in place to deliver a standard of service for ongoing maintenance and upkeep for municipal park infrastructure. This can create resourcing pressures where multiple parks delivering duplication in programming are consuming more and more maintenance resources. This Plan looks at the potential consolidation of park-lands and strategic investment in high capability, high potential sites that can deliver both an improved level of service to the public and create operational efficiencies for park operations.

Park Programming – The Plan will help to guide strategic municipal investments for outdoor recreation and active transportation programming for parks and corridors by aligning neighborhood, community, district and regional park service delivery with multiple municipal objectives for open space connectivity, environmental and cultural conservation, and community design. The planning framework provides recommendations and a decision-making framework to determine where opportunities exist to integrate community programming and park investments with public lands planning objectives to achieve mutual benefits and a stronger network of open space. The Plan will also allow for more effective matching of community programming needs with long-term land capability and opportunities associated with changing community and development trends.

Asset and Portfolio Management – The Municipality owns, develops and manages open space land to achieve its mandate for public service delivery and to achieve broad objectives that are of benefit to the community. The policy framework, multiple decision-making filters and measurable criteria will allow for consistent and integrated decision-making criteria and process to be applied across HRM departments. This will help to rationalize HRM’s land portfolio and prioritize multi-year investments in close alignment with Regional Plan and Council objectives.

Land-Use and Transportation Planning – The level of integration between development, transportation, and open space is key in protecting and shaping regional open space and community landscapes. This Plan provides guidance for developing future land-use policy to emphasize the delineation and protection of important natural systems and landscapes as the foundation for sustainable development patterns and regional growth management. The Plan identifies where future attention should be given to protect natural areas and to shape community open space including conservation design and “low-impact” subdivision development, and road investments that help support “complete” streets.



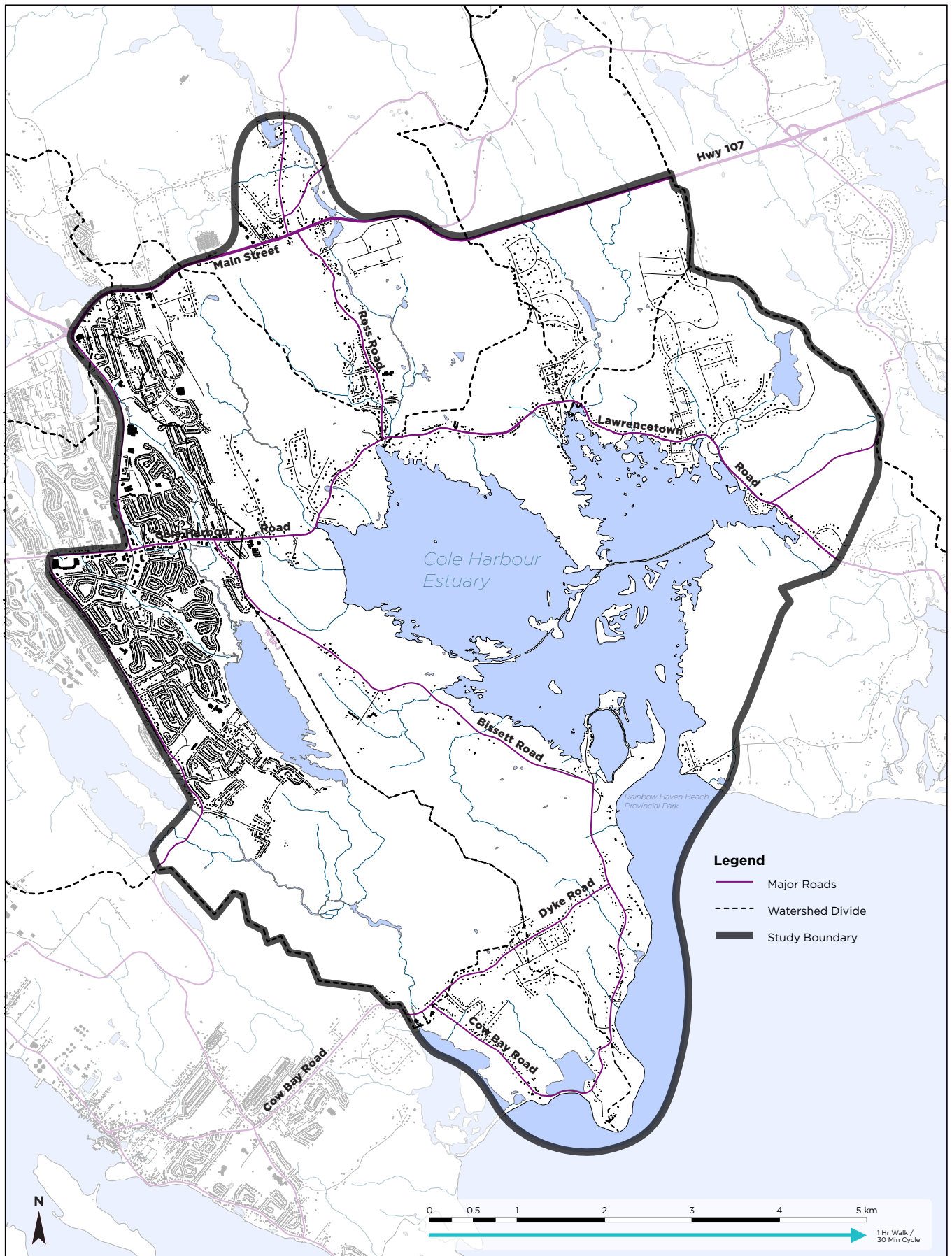
CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY SETTING

2.1 Overview

The Cole Harbour Basin Study area (Map 1 Study Area) includes much of the Cole Harbour Estuary Watershed and a portion of the eastern portion of the watershed of Cow Bay. While the study area uses watersheds as the foundation it does expand in places in order to include pockets of human settlement who would be immediate users of the associated open space system. The study area contains portions of four distinct communities, Cole Harbour, Westphal, Lawrencetown, and Cow Bay. The rich communities and natural areas within the Cole Harbour Basin Study boundary present an interesting dichotomy. A mix of suburban settlement, rural farms, rural subdivision and natural forests, lakes, bogs, coastline, beaches and saltmarshes, the dichotomy appears in the abruptness in which the intensely suburban area gives way to rural and natural areas. (Map 2 Settlement) This is amplified by the drumlin ridge (Long Hill) which physically separates the community of Cole Harbour from the actual water body that is Cole Harbour and marks that change. On the surface, it appears that the community of Cole Harbour has a limited relationship with its namesake harbour. However, listening to residents there is a real emotional connection with the Harbour and the unique contrast that it brings to the community. Other communities within the study area seem much more in keeping and physically connected with their surroundings.

Much of this dichotomy is owing to the HRM Service Boundary which transects a good portion of the study area. The more highly settled suburban areas are within the Service Boundary where properties are serviced by municipal water and sewer. They are largely a mix of medium density suburban residential and commercial uses. The pattern is dominated by serviced small lot residential development, much of it single family. Some higher density multi-unit development does exist but at a much lower occurrence than one would find in urban areas or even some other suburban areas in HRM. Some areas of growth and infill development continue today within the suburban areas. Housing is separated from commercial and service areas along Cole Harbour Road and vicinity and communities are largely car dependent owing to the curvilinear nature of the suburban residential development. The same settlement pattern continues east to through Portland Estates and Portland hills and leading into Downtown Dartmouth.

Within the study area the suburban settlement is organized around Cole Harbour Road and Main Street as the primary arterials running east/ west with Caldwell Road and Forest Hills Parkway and Caldwell Road providing north/south connectors. These travel ways organize residential, commercial and institutional uses. Internal circulation is dependent on Colby Drive, Astral Drive, John Stewart and Auburn Drive. (Map 3 Transportation)



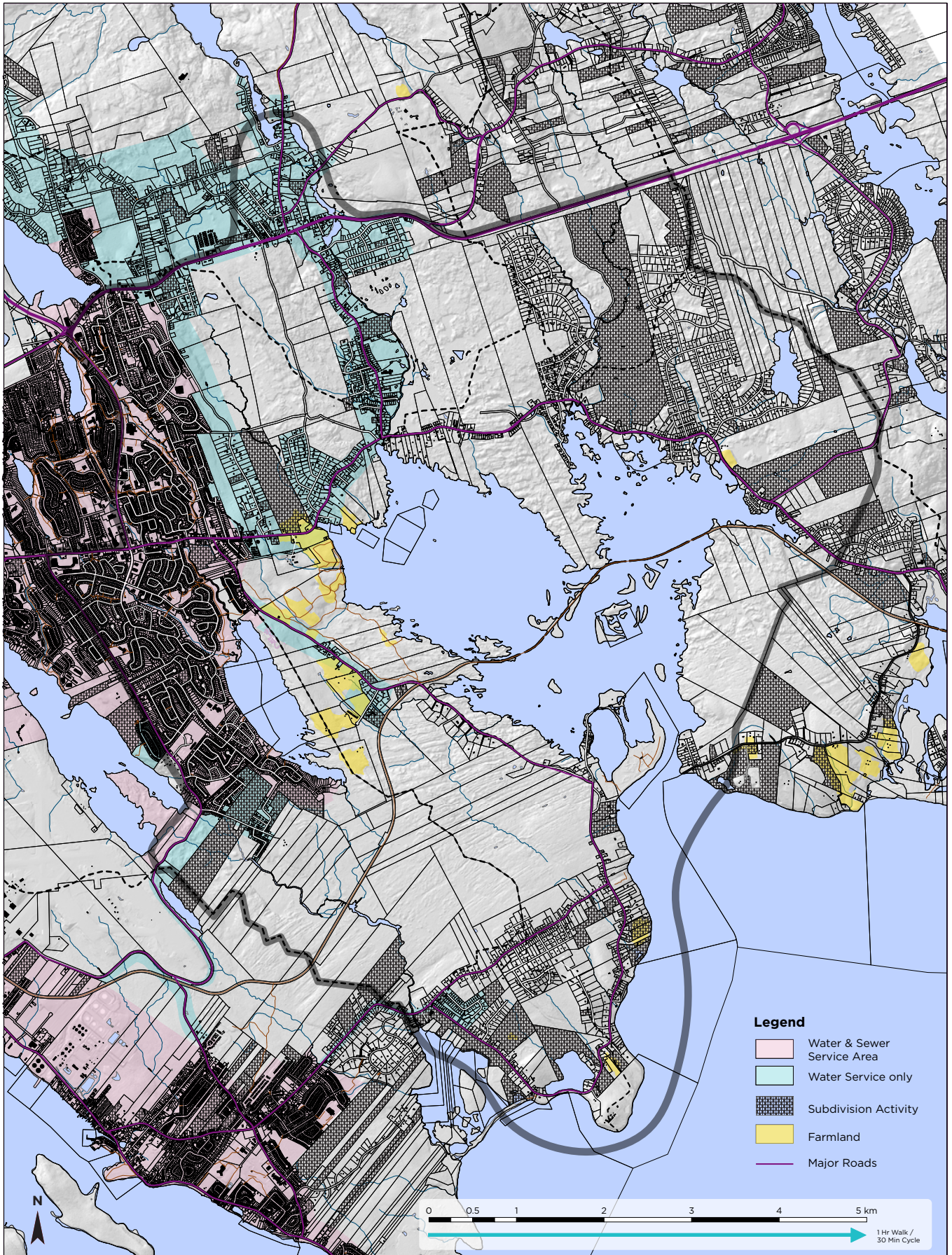
Study Area

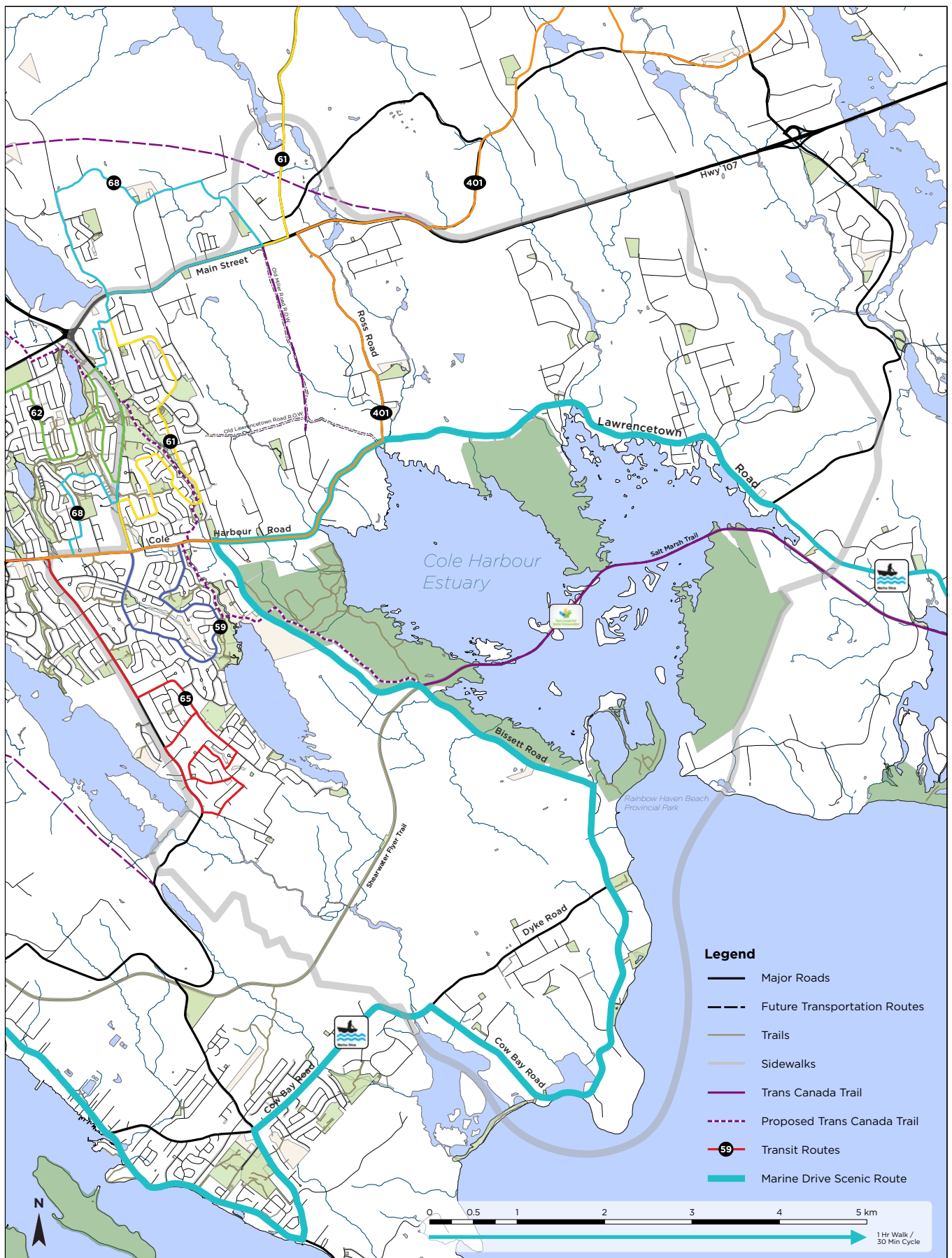
Map 1

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

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Outside the Service Boundary is a predominance of natural forest, agricultural field, and coastline and widely spaced rural development. The rural settlement is organized along historic highways and in rural large lot subdivisions accessed by local roads off of these travel ways. There are areas within the rural settlement areas, in close proximity to the service boundary, where water services have been extended. However, these areas still retain the requirement for rural lot size in order to accommodate on-site septic services. The 107 and 207 highways, Ross Road, Cow Bay Road and Bissett Road are the primary organizing travel ways. They too are car dependent but this time owing to the distances between service destinations within the rural settlement areas.

2.2 Settlement History

Early Settlement

Prior to European arrival, the aboriginal Mi'kmaq had settlements in the *Wampawk* area (Cole Harbour). Wampawk means “still water” in the Mi'kmaq language. Evidence points to encampments along the estuary shores with strong evidence at the Little Salmon River where it meets the marsh. Cole Harbour, Halifax/Dartmouth and the Eastern shore are all within the Eskikewa'kik territory, one of seven territories within the Mi'kmaq confederation in what is now Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. The pre-European Mi'kmaq were largely a coastal people. In the Cole Harbour Basin area, the harbours and salt marshes provided fowl, fish and shell fish as well as naturally occurring crops. The coastal areas and islands offered marine mammals and coastal fish. Away from the coast, lands and waterways provided seasonal fish and game as well as additional crops and plants. Routes connecting to the Shubenacadie Lakes allowed for inland travel to seasonal hunting camps as well as routes to the other Mi'kmaq territories. From initial European contact in the 15th century up to today, the Mi'kmaq have held presence in the Cole Harbour Basin area. Today the Cole Harbour Mi'kmaq community holds a reservation within Cole Harbour. The reserve has been under the administration of the Millbrook First Nation Community since the 1920's. The reserve consists of residential dwellings and a commercial/industrial development housing the General Dynamics Corp who supply software and engineering to the Maritime Helicopter Program.





European settlement consisted of seasonal fishing camps along the coast from the 1500's through to the 1740's when a few Acadian families established themselves in the nearby Chezzetcooks. This settlement was supplemented by other Acadian families after the Acadian Expulsion from other parts of Nova Scotia. More intense European settlement really did not really begin to grow in the basin until after the British founding of Halifax in 1749.

Five years after Halifax was founded, the first British land grants in the area were made when the Township of Lawrencetown was laid out. The twenty, 1000-acre lots extended from the western shore of Cole Harbour at Broom Brook (the foot of the present day Long Hill Road) all the way eastward to Chezzetcook. A road was cut from Dartmouth via Woodlawn (the Old



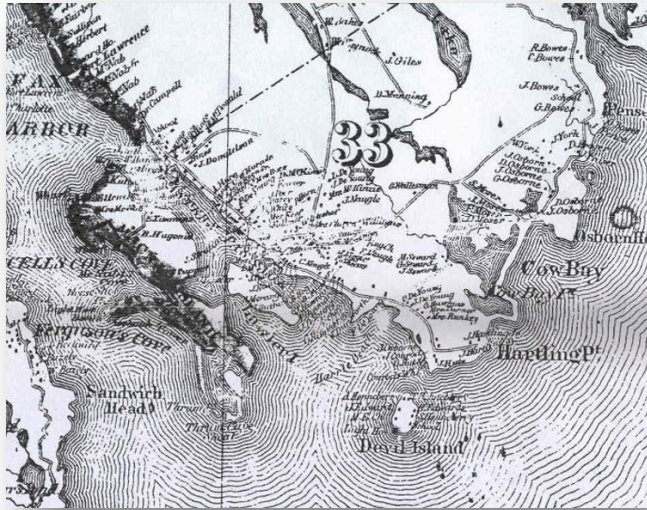
Lawrencetown Road), which met the Cole Harbour shore at the mouth of Little Salmon River and continued along the route of the present Highway 207. The settlement was not initially successful, due to raids by Acadians (Beausoleil) and Mi'kmaq, and it was not until 1762, that things settled down. In the 250 years since then, rural development has occurred in linear fashion along the Lawrencetown Road and some old

large properties have been developed into rural suburban subdivisions. However, much land remains undeveloped and the old grant lines still remain evident in tree cut lines and fence lines.

Settlement at Cow Bay followed Lawrencetown when a grant was made to Robert Cowie in 1763. Cow Bay evolved with a few small farms and a seasonal fishery. In 1765 suitable conditions for agriculture and fishing as well as proximity and road connection to the towns of



Dartmouth and Halifax allowed for successful rural settlement in the remaining areas surrounding the Cole Harbour marshes and to the west towards the towns. These activities and land uses shaped the landscape of this area into a rural agricultural centre. The area became one of several agricultural communities which supplied Halifax and Dartmouth with local food. Agricultural land use gradually started to create a unique and recognisable settlement character for the area.



Only a small portion of the communities of Preston and Cherrybrook are located within the Cole Harbour Basin study boundary however, their early settlement played a significant role in the development and identity of the area. These communities are historically African Canadian having been settled largely through waves of black immigration related to significant events including

the American Revolution, the War of 1812, Maroon Wars in Jamaica, the Underground Railway and eviction from Africville. Like the Cole Harbour, Lawrencetown and Cow Bay these communities provided Market Farm production of foods to the growing City. This rural agricultural character was firmly in place and continued to define the identity of the community well into the 1960's.

Suburban Growth

In the 1970's suburban subdivisions began to take hold and by the 1980's much of Cole Harbour area had changed dramatically. The change from an agricultural to a suburban residential community was initiated by rapidly growing demand for new housing, fueled by increased accessibility of this area from the urban centres as a result of improvements to Highways No. 107 and 207 and by construction of the MacKay Bridge. The creation of Burnside Industrial Park began to create a substantial supply of employment on the Dartmouth side of the Harbour during that period and the Urban Renewal associated with downtown Halifax and Dartmouth in the 1960's and 70's saw young adults who grew up in the older parts of the urban area moving to new suburban lifestyles as they started families. A steady residential and commercial expansion along Main Street and Cole Harbour Road (renamed Portland Street within the expanded Dartmouth City Limits) flooded into the Westphal and Woodlawn areas.

The 1975 Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Development Plan designated Cole Harbour/Westphal as a priority area for residential development. This was stimulated by the Province of Nova Scotia who, through their Department of Housing, worked to provide easy access to residential lots with lower development costs and favorable, agricultural grade soil. This meant the area was ideal for development of engineering infrastructure and extension of municipal services. Growth in the community subsequently occurred at a rapid pace with relatively limited consideration for the areas natural features and historical and cultural values. In the period of time between 1976



and 1980 population growth reached 19% annually. Subsequently the growth rate slowed between 1981-1986 to a rate of 6.4% and to 2.3% between 1987 and 1991. These areas became the Planned Unit Development of Forest Hills and the Subdivision of Colby Village. The remaining areas of Portland Estates and Portland Hills filled in between the 1980's and 2008 creating a consistent suburban pattern reaching to the old boundary of the Town of Dartmouth.

The overwhelming segment of the area population now became suburban families with young children. This created a strong demand for parks, sport fields, recreation facilities and schools. Unfortunately, the response to these immediate needs did not always

consider the unique and special natural and cultural features of this area. The planning process also had little consideration for the environmental systems of the surrounding land. The north western rural portion of the Cole Harbour Basin was transformed into a suburban community with a patchwork of fragmented suburban parks with some minor preservation of natural open space along the existing waterways. Unfortunately proper interaction of these parkland components with the surrounding rural and natural open space system has been significantly compromised or lost. In this period most of the newcomers to this area had very little knowledge of the area history and cultural past. Over 20,000 persons moved into this area between 1975 and 1995. Service Boundary limits and the MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Commission) Metropolitan Area Regional Plan prevented development from stepping over Long Hill into the Marsh area and continuing towards Ross Road. One of the most strategic open space considerations under MAPC was the call for the development of a Regional Park system.

While this was occurring, development continued at a steady but much slower pace in Cow Bay, Cherry Brook and Lawrencetown. Minor development was aided by transportation improvements linking into Dartmouth and Halifax. At this time, rural subdivision was leapfrogging to Lake Echo and Porters Lake where growth was much more profound. A conscious decision was made by the residents of Cow Bay to put planning regulation in place to limit rapid subdivision in the 1990's in order to maintain the character of their community.



2.3 Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park System

In 1984, responding to community pressure, the Provincial Government established the Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system in congruence with the MAPC plan. The park was meant to protect preserve and present the remaining natural and cultural



assets on the east side of Long Hill which were associated with the community prior to its rapid expansion. Along with a variety of habitats, scenic landscapes associated with the marsh and coastline, the Park included several other valuable natural and cultural, archeological and natural features stretching to the east end of Lawrencetown Beach.

The primary objective of the Park was to protect outstanding environmental values and the landscape character of Cole Harbour Marsh area. The area was already an internationally recognized biological site important to migratory Canada geese and black ducks which make use of the harbour and salt marsh. The presence of several endangered plant and animal species as well as the scenic quality and diversity of landscape so near to urban and suburban centres made this an ideal candidate for a major Provincial Park. The subsequent provincial acquisition secured a significant portion of the surrounding land for public use. A donation of 2300 acres from the Kuhn family secured most of the actual marsh, which has previously been dyked, was privately owned and used for cattle, hay and cranberries, as an addition to the park. Since that time additional lands have been added through purchase and through donation.

In addition to the environmentally sensitive lands around Cole Harbour, the early park plan also identified Lake Major Watershed located to the north from Cole Harbour Basin as a significant element contributing to the character and health of the estuary as its headwater and as a drinking water resource for the Municipality.

Later this provincial initiative received support of the Municipality of the County of Halifax. The County Municipal Planning Strategy for this area included several planning policies to reinforce the public desire to protect the environment and heritage of this area.

2.4 Demographic Profile

Many of the functions of open space are related to human activity. Understanding who the open space system should be tailored for is essential if the Municipality is to meet public needs and balance services for a reasonable cost. In addition to a series of community consultation meetings, a demographic analysis and a consideration of development trends was conducted.



This information paired with the HRM 2012 Cole Harbour Recreation Needs Assessment helps to identify future public open space needs and service delivery opportunities by understanding how the community is growing and what the future needs and trends are likely to be. Investment and resources can then be focussed where they are most needed and where the greatest benefit and outcomes can be achieved.

Nationally gathered census data rarely matches study boundaries and this instance is no exception. However, staff were able to extract general trends by cross referencing census tract, electoral boundaries and community data from the federal census and processed by the Province.

Following is a snapshot demographic profile for the Cole Harbour Basin Study area:

Housing

Most housing in the study area is owned. Statistics from 2006 show that 88.2% of housing is owned and 11.6% is rented. Compared to HRM where only 64% is owned and 36% is rented. This perhaps reflects that **the majority of the population in Cole Harbour are married with dependent children.**

Age

The middle-age cohort represents the largest group with 35.3% of people between the ages of 35 and 54. This represents a less transient population base who has established roots in the community. **The Cole Harbour Basin has an above average percentage of children (27.5 %)** as compared to HRM (22.7%) and Nova Scotia (22.8%). The number of children has decreased in the community since the previous census as the cohort becomes adults and leave while their parents stay in the community. This is expected to continue and reach lower levels owing to aging and the trend for fewer children per family. There is still a lower percentage of seniors 65 years and older, however, **with a larger than average middle-age “baby-boomer” population the next 10 to 20 years will see a significant increase in older adults.** If the trend of “aging in place” becomes evident in this area in the coming years more seniors will choose to stay in their own home or move elsewhere in the community to access more suitable seniors housing. Local Real Estate trends are showing that this is a viable choice rather than the forecasts from fifteen years ago that assumed all empty nesters will flee to the downtown and purchase condos. Instead the area may end up with a more evenly distributed age profile than it has experienced since the homogenous young adults and children trend during the boom of the 70’s and 80’s.

Education and Family Income

The Cole Harbour Basin communities are well educated with a higher than average income. People who have attained a post-secondary diploma or degree make up 87.2% of the population as compared to 84.7% in HRM and 77.1% in Nova Scotia. The median family income in 2006 was \$75,292 which is higher than HRM where the median income was \$66,881. There a notable difference in the percentage of lower income people in area at 5.7% compared to 10% in HRM.

Transportation

Area residents drive to work. Typical of suburban communities 82.8% of people in area Harbour rely on a personal vehicle to get to work compared to 75.8% HRM-wide. Public transit represents 12.7% of commuters which is on par with HRM at 11.9%. However, whereas 10.1% of HRM residents walk to work, only 2.4% in Cole Harbour get to work on foot.

2.5 Trends and Issues:

The demographics of the Cole Harbour Basin area translate into the following trends and related issues:

Aging Population

An increasing proportion of the population across North America and Nova Scotia are late middle age and seniors. The post-war baby-boomers make up this demographic trend and it is projected that by 2020 38% of Nova Scotia's population will be in their late 50's to early 70's.⁵ Statistics indicate that older citizens today are more active and healthier than the previous generation and are often working longer past the traditional retirement age.⁶ With more disposable income and higher levels of physical activity older adults will demand a sufficient supply and quality of outdoor recreational facilities, parks, and trails that can offer programming and open space infrastructure that appeals to the needs of older communities.

Multi-Functional Open Spaces

Municipal service delivery can be expected to shift toward more multi-functional public open spaces which are capable of delivering a flexible mix of recreation and leisure opportunities. Replacing single-use (or limited use) facilities with a community-hub type of space can deliver more inclusive, accessible programming which is more likely to meet the needs of a community that is showing a clear trend toward an aging and more diverse population in terms of culture and household make up. The opportunity to achieve recreational, social, cultural and environmental outcomes together is significantly increased with a multi-functional open space program. Interest in more unstructured recreational opportunities is also on the rise. Time constraints are fueling this trend as many people are juggling work and home life, including households with two working parents, have little time for heavily scheduled or structured activity. Older persons are less active in structured sport and are more easily able to partake in unstructured activity on a regular basis. This has led to a trend toward more casual, accessible outdoor recreational preferences such as nature trails and multi-use parks and facilities which provide more flexibility of use appealing to a more diverse and larger population. Combining

⁵ Community Counts, Population projections, Nova Scotia, www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts/default.asp

⁶ Ibid

multiple services and leisure opportunities in one location also allows families and a diversity of age and community groups to participate simultaneously but at their own pace and interest.⁷ This kind of multi-purpose, flexible public space can also contribute to more social interaction and community cohesion than a single-use space might provide.

Active Healthy Living

More emphasis on healthy active living and interest in unstructured outdoor recreational activities such as walking, nature observation and biking are on the rise partially because of the aging demographic who are taking measures to improve their future health as well as a greater appreciation for more healthy lifestyle options. There is also a growing interest in urban living and more “complete communities” that are connected through an accessible network of pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets, greenways and parks. Active transportation is a significant and growing trend influencing open space planning and municipal infrastructure investment. Currently in HRM, not unlike many municipalities across the country, work needs to be done to link community facilities, public spaces and other key service destinations with continuous and connected AT routes that can get people from place to place comfortably and conveniently. This also encourages daily physical exercise, lower car use, social interaction and community cohesion. A viable public open space system depends on the network that ties the open space components together.

Environmental Sustainability

The incorporation of conservation principles and environmental stewardship into open space programming and land management will continue to shape the way public lands are developed. The emphasis is on creating a balance between recreational service delivery and environmental sustainability. An objective driven and integrated planning approach will be needed to achieve this balance between community development and conservation. This balance will consider the ecological sensitivity of individual sites, the context and landscape that the site sits within, and the larger ecological landscape that forms the foundation of the open space and environmental systems. This kind of sustainable and comprehensive planning approach is desirable within the Cole Harbour Basin community.

Financial Sustainability

There is growing pressure to spend public dollars more effectively on services and to upgrade or replace aging infrastructure. More of a permanent condition than a trend, economic efficiencies are a reality of modern government tasked to do more with less. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity with respect to open space investment. Although decisions will need to be made in terms of where investment should and shouldn't be focussed there is an opportunity to look at aging and poorly performing facilities to respond to changing community needs so that

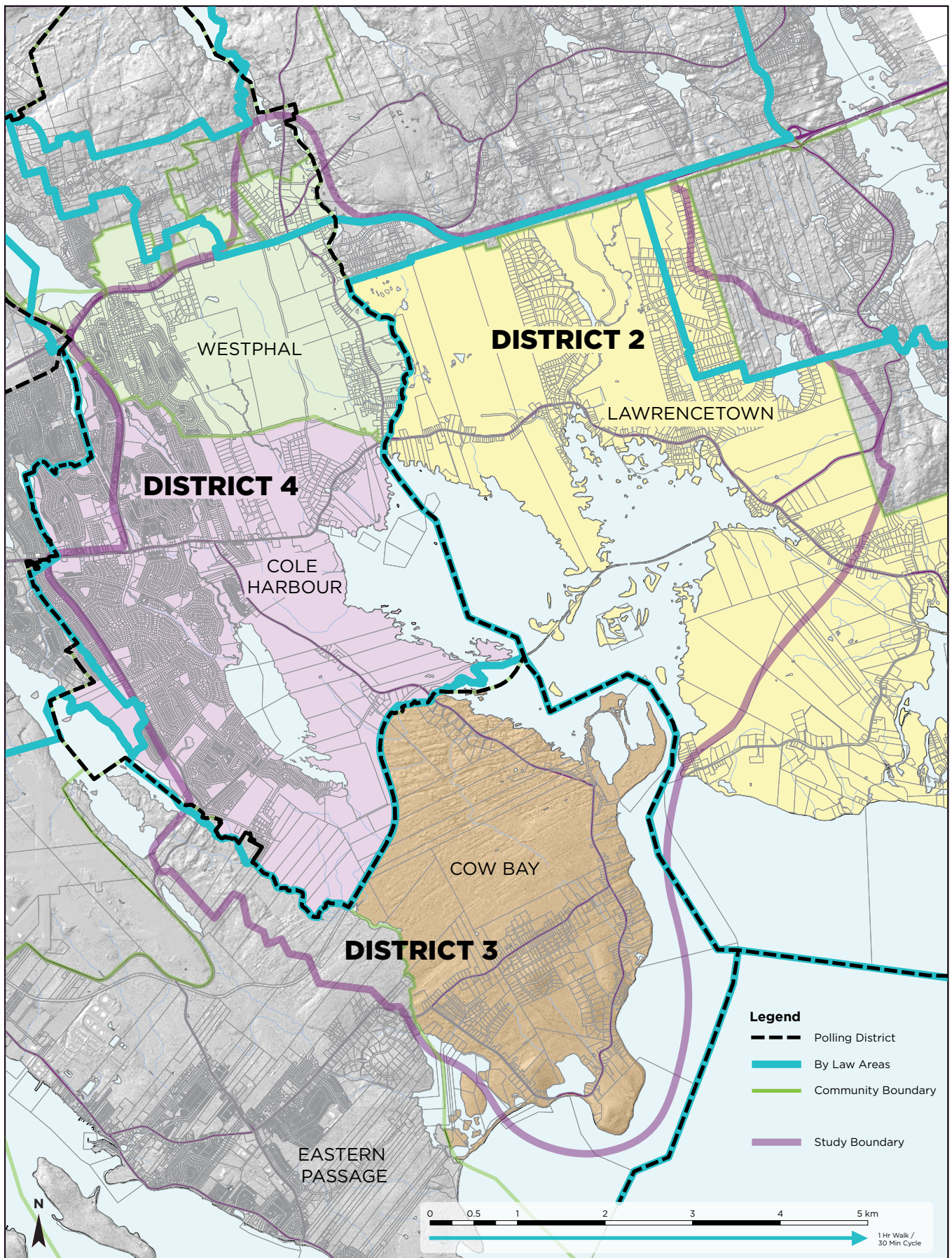
⁷ HRM Peninsula Recreation Facility & Service Review Final Report 2010 dMA Planning & Management Services

open space assets are more functional and can deliver a quality standard of service and more affordable by creating efficiencies in operating and maintenance costs.

2.6 Municipal Planning Strategies

This study is not the first effort to plan for open space in the area. The local communities have participated in planning their communities and protecting their open space heritage since the 1970's. One function of this study is to look at the relevance of those ideals in relation to the situations that exist today. The majority of these efforts are captured in the Municipal Planning Strategies which affect the area. The primary municipal plans affecting public open space within the study boundary are the HRM Regional Plan and the Cole Harbour/Westphal Municipal Planning Strategy (Map 4 Municipal Governance) However, the study boundary also extends into portions of the adjacent Municipal Planning Strategies of Eastern Passage/Cow Bay, Lawrencetown, Lake Echo/Porters Lake and North and East Preston Lake Major/ Lake Loon/ Cherrybrook.





The following synopsis of Municipal Planning Policy for the study area shows several areas of alignment between existing MPS policy for the study area and the policy directions under the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan. Despite MPS documents which are decades old, there seems to be a solid foundation for the protection, and management of natural areas and public open spaces for environmental, cultural and social benefit.

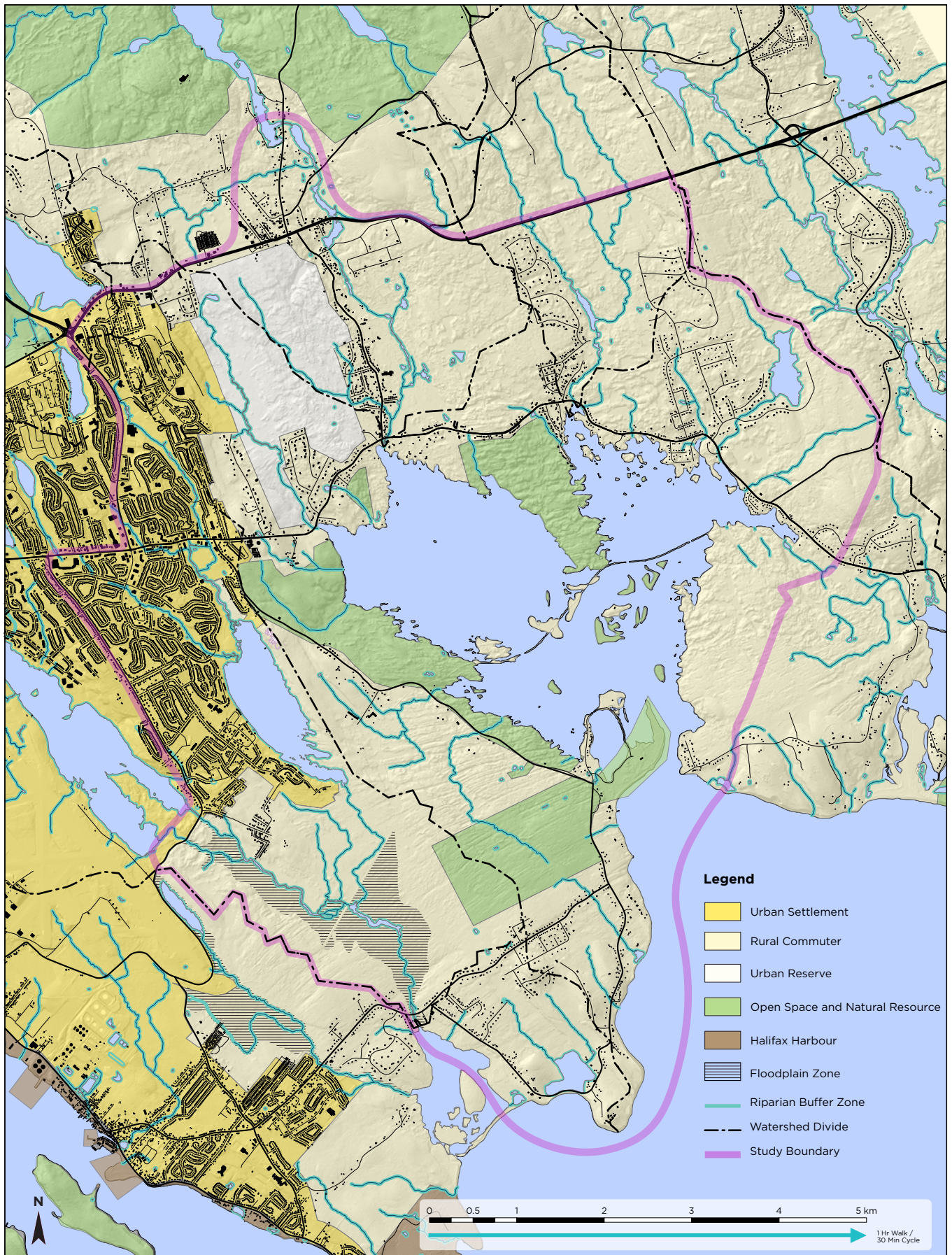
HRM Regional Municipal Planning Strategy

The Regional Plan (RP) document, approved in 2006, states that HRM's vision for the future is to maintain and enhance our quality of life by fostering the growth of healthy and vibrant communities, a strong and diverse economy, and sustainable environment. It sets out land use designations within the study area. (Map 5 Land Use Designation) During the development of the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan the first five-year review of the Regional Plan (RP+5) was underway. The emerging open space themes coming out of this review are summarized in Chapter 1 of this Plan.

The principles of the 2006 RP identify several elements including; cultural, historic and natural assets, healthy lifestyles as well as protection of open space wilderness, natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas as key to that vision. The RP also provides for protection of natural areas through connected corridors and the creation of six new regional parks. The Plan provides a strong emphasis on creating an open space network formed along natural corridors and waterways. The general strategy is to provide support for improvements and preservation to enhance connectivity and accessibility within the open space system. This will allow for greater resilience and sustainability when consolidated with active and passive recreation uses.

The RP also provides guidance and directives for application of an Open Space and Natural Resource (land-use) Designation and policies for the protection of Riparian Buffers and Floodplains. The significance of cultural landscapes, scenic views as well as archeological resources is also recognised as a regional planning objective. These regional open space objectives and directions will be coordinated and implemented through future open space management plans including the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan.





Inventory
Land Use Designation
 Map 5

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
 Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal
 October 2013

Cole Harbour/Westphal Municipal Planning Strategy**Stormwater Management**

A key concern of the CH/W Planning Strategy is the management of storm water. Storm water has a significant impact on the existing waterway corridors and a subsequent impact on the overall health of Cole Harbour Estuary, its associated streams as well as Bissett Lake.

Despite the fact that the MPS focus is on residential development and community infrastructure the recommended actions and initiatives will have a significant impact on water quality in the area and overall health of the estuary.

The document emphasizes action in the developed areas of the community where additional surface runoff can lead to erosion and sedimentation in rivers and lakes. Storm water management has been considered as a high priority for this community since passage in 1988 of the Halifax County Storm Water Drainage Act. Consideration of Policy E-14, E-17 and E-19 may have a significant impact on environmental sustainability of the area, natural waterways and health of the Cole Harbour Estuary. With Policy E-22 the document also recommends development of flood plain mapping in order to reduce negative impact of development on natural ecosystem in this area.

Utility Corridors

The MPS document recognizes the potential detrimental impact of utility corridors on the environmental and aesthetic qualities of Cole Harbour Basin. It is stated in the document that all siting of utility corridors should be subject to municipal review due to their effects upon scenic, recreational and residential values of this area and the general pattern of the future development. This intention is clearly identified in Policy TR-19.

Heritage Conservation

Heritage conservation is a major community concern and has been strongly identified in the MPS document. With contributions from provincial, municipal and local institutions the community implemented several projects promoting culture and heritage in this area. In recognition of the community effort in this area Policy H-1 has been established.

Recreation

This issue has emerged as a result of significant residential development and subsequent recreation needs. The document recognises a deficiency of usable land acquired in this community for recreation uses. It states that in the future, effort should be made to acquire usable land, rather than difficult properties, for recreation and for any lands needed to complement existing parks and community facilities. There are also directions for the development of guidelines to optimize parkland planning, development and maintenance. This is intended to provide a coordinated approach for the parkland acquisition process. This is addressed in Policy REC-1, REC-2 and REC-3.

Provincial Park Designation

The planning document specifically recognises the Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park. To support the existence and operation of this park a Provincial Park Designation

has been established. The direction for operation and future activities within the park are outlined in Policy PP-1, P-2 and PP-3. The policies also provide direction for the future acquisition and expansion of this park in cooperation with community organizations and municipality.

Special Area Designation

The most significant directives for open space and park design and development in the area of the Cole Harbour Estuary are provided by application of Special Area Designation. This designation underlines the specific and significant role of the Cole Harbour salt marsh in this Plan as well as a significance of Long Hill view plain. To address these issues policy SA-1 and SA-2 has been developed. Notwithstanding the limitations outlined in these policies the Plan also allows for some creative residential development opportunities which will not compromise the primary objectives of this designation. All this is outlined in Policy SA-3.

Eastern Passage/Cow Bay Municipal Planning Strategy

In the Eastern Passage/Cow Bay Plan Area careful consideration was given to environmental constraints in respect to the natural environment, run-off and shoreline protection. Similar to other Plans in this area, the MPS gives particular attention to the management of storm water recognizing the need to protect rivers and lakes and prevent the loss of natural wetlands.

Storm Water Management

The interest in stormwater management was initiated largely due to problems and concerns with the flooding of built up areas and impact on the natural environment. Policy E-9 provides support for management of this issue. This issue has further support in Policy E-11 which requires preparation of a comprehensive stormwater management system for the Eastern Passage/Cow Bay Plan Area. This also includes storm drainage controls at the single lot as well as the subdivision level as well as a subdivision level.

The Plan underlines the significant role of natural drainage systems and the impact this system may have on recreation. This has been expressed in Policy E-13. The Plan states that the protection of the natural drainage systems can, in some instances, also provide opportunities for active recreational and natural open spaces. It is stated that this land is often available through the subdivision process. However, the potential of this land for recreational purposes is not always examined. In Policy E-13 it is recommended that aspect of the storm drainage planning and design will be considered.

Environmental Protection and Wetland Protection

In a 1998 amendment to the MPS more attention was given to environmental issues. An Environmental Constraint Map for this area has been created to identify critical environmentally sensitive and significant features such as wetlands, watercourses and floodplains. This objective has been addressed by Policy EP-1. The subsequent Policy EP-2 was created to restrict rezoning applications which would result in the loss or alteration of such features.

The same amendment underlines the significant role of wetlands in protecting water quality and habitat in the Plan area. Particular attention has been made to the watershed of Cow Bay and Cole Harbour. It was stated that an improvement to stormwater quality has a direct impact on supply and quality of drinking water and preservation of wildlife habitats. Policy EP-3 provides for the protection of environment in regards to development activities. Policy EP-4 was created which establishes a 100 foot wide protective buffer around any watercourse in the Plan area. The Plan also allows for further protection of the watercourse by creating a riparian zone which may be wider subject to natural conditions and site topography.

The Plan also, very specifically, underlines the significant role of Cow Bay River which flows from Morris Lake and Bissett Lake to Cow Bay. The objectives and limitations of any activity in this area have been outlined in Policy EP-5. The Plan also makes very specific recommendations in Policy EP-6 to create an appropriate policies and regulations in the Cole Harbour/Westphal MPS with respect to storm water quantity and quality of the Cow Bay River and Cow Bay Lake.

The Plan also makes reference to coastline protection. This issue has been identified in Policy EP-7. It is also important that the Plan provides directions for development of innovative storm water systems which will reduce the degree of impact on the natural environment. These objectives are outlined in Policy EP-8.

Transportation

There is a long standing concern in the MPS plan area regarding pedestrian safety along the major public roads in the Plan Area including existing sidewalks, crosswalks and street lighting. The directives to address these issues are outlined in Policy TR-17.

Utility Corridors

The MPS indicates that any new siting of utility corridors should be subject to municipal review due to their effects upon scenic, recreational, residential areas and general development patterns. This specific requirement is outlined in Policy TR-20. It is very important to note that this particular policy discourages the location of utility corridors through scenic, recreational and residential areas of the Municipality.

Recreation

The MPS indicates that the efforts should be made to ensure that future areas acquired for parkland purposes are useable for active or passive recreation and are integrated with existing parks and community facilities. There is a need to establish site development standards and guidelines which will guide the land acquisition process. Policy REC-1 provides specific guidelines for acquisition of the new park and open space. Policy REC-2 furthers these objectives and requires establishing guidelines to optimise park acquisition and budgeting of funds for this purpose. Policy REC-3 requires the Municipality to prepare a recreation master plan for the area which should guide all issues associated with park and open space design and development.

Education

The MPS provides general guidelines for the location of the new schools in the area. Policy ED-3 indicates that any new schools shall be located so that pedestrian and vehicular safety is

enhanced. Furthermore, the new schools shall be adjacent to existing or proposed parks, open space and community facilities.

Morris-Russell Lake Secondary Plan

Despite the fact that Morris-Russell Lake Secondary Plan area is located outside of the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan, the development of this area has a significant impact on the water quality of Cow Bay River. Plan Policy ML-16 outlines several conditions and limitations with the primary objective to minimize impact of development on existing watercourses. These objectives are further enforced by Secondary Plan Policy ML-17, ML-18, ML-19 and ML-20. Furthermore, the specific storm water objectives for this area are outlined in Policy ML-21 ML-22, ML-23 and ML-24. The monitoring program for this development is outlined in Policy ML-26, ML-27 and ML-28. A concern regarding increased water levels in Morris Lake is also raised. This concern is addressed in Policy ML-29, ML-30 and ML-31.

Tourist Accommodation

Given the proximity of the community to the urban area, and the availability of outdoor recreation and sightseeing opportunities, the MPS Plan identifies a need to provide for a broad range of accommodation options related to the tourist industry. Policy RA-4 and particularly RA-4a provides for a range of such uses outside of serviceable area on Dyke Road, Cow Bay Road, Bissett Road and Old Dyke Road (Rainbow Haven Lane). Policy RA-5 also allows for golf course development in this area.

Special Area Designation

The MPS contains several areas which are environmentally and historically significant and which should be protected from indiscriminate development. These include both public and private lands which are both developed and undeveloped. A Special Area Designation has been applied to lands within the Plan Area which are environmentally significant and which provide a focus to the Plan Area's communities and beyond. Special attention was given to Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park which is located within the Plan Area. The recognition of this value and importance of this area is outlined in Policy SA-1, SA-2, SA-6 and SA-11.

Lawrencetown Municipal Planning Strategy

One of the primary objectives of the MPS for this area is to protect the natural assets of Lawrencetown, beaches of Cole Harbour and Lawrencetown Lake, as well as all of the area's groundwater, salt marshes, and watercourses. This main theme is reflected in several planning policies. Complementary to this objective is the protection of the rural character of the Plan area and conversion of the CN rail track into recreation corridor.

Lawrencetown Designation

The intent of the Lawrencetown Designation in the MPS is to protect the present environmental and rural character of the area. This objective is supported by Policy P-1. This focuses on the preservation of rural character of scattered farms, especially along the West Lawrencetown Road

and Conrad Road. This represents important reminders of the agricultural base upon which Lawrencetown once thrived. This objective is also supported by Policy P-2. However, the recent amendment to the plan allows also some tourist related accommodations and water related recreation uses. Policy P-8 allow for such uses in this designation.

Comprehensive Development District (CDD) Cluster Development

Recognising increasing development pressure for this area the MPS responds by allowing residential cluster development. The objective of this initiative was to provide for an alternative housing development pattern in order to protect the most environmentally sensitive land in this area. The development criteria for this development are outlined in Policy P-9 and P-10.

Special Area Designation

The Special Area Designation was created to protect unique biological and physical characteristics of certain lands within Lawrencetown and to support the Provincial efforts to establish the Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park System. This objective is supported by Policy P-16.

Environmental Concerns

Crucial to protecting of the environment and preserving the rural character are adequate sewerage disposal, water supply and storm drainage. Policy P-18 and P-19 has been developed to address this issue.

Stormwater Management

The MPS also emphasizes the importance of stormwater management in order to protect the natural environment and particularly salt and fresh water in the Plan area. This issue has been addressed in Policy P-25.

Watercourse & Wetland Protection

Environmental protection of all watercourses in the MPS area has been identified as a one of the most significant issues. This has been addressed in Policy P-26 and P-27. This issue has been further supported by Policy P-28 which requires setback from watercourses for environmental reasons. The MPS gives particular attention to the protection of coastal wetlands. This includes the salt marshes of Cole Harbour, Lawrencetown Lake, Porters Lake and the West Marsh which constitute a significant habitat in this area for many wildlife species. This critical element of the Plan is supported by Policy P-29, P-30 and P-31.

Transportation

The transportation section of the MPS emphasizes the importance of active transportation within the plan area. The Plan identifies needs for sidewalk and bicycle lines along the main roads. This objective is supported by Policy P-34 of the Plan. Policy P-38 provides support for development of the abandoned Canadian National Railway right-of-way running from the Woodside Ferry Terminal to Lawrencetown Beach. The objective is to transform this corridor into a non-motorized recreation corridor.

Heritage Conservation

Heritage Conservation is a significant concern identified by members of the community and reflected in the Plan. The area has several historical and cultural features and the Plan provides for protection of these elements in Policy P-42 and P-43.

Recreation

Public recreation is an integral part of a community. The provision of a variety of open space is necessary to fulfill broad community objectives in new and existing developments and is an important function for residents of the Plan area. The main focus of recreation development in the Plan Area has been the Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park. The Plan indicates a real need to improve the quality and quantity of local open space and recreation opportunities. This is reflected in Policy P-44, P-45, P-46, P-47 and P-48.

Lake Echo/Porters Lake Municipal Planning Strategy

The MPS Plan Area is situated at the interface of two significant and contrasting regions; to the east it includes the western periphery of the Eastern Shore Region, and to the east the eastern fringe of the Halifax-Dartmouth metropolitan area. Only a small south west portion of this Plan area is included in Cole Harbour Basin Study boundary. Eastern Shore patterns of community have always provided the most dominant regional influence into this area. However, in recent years metropolitan growth of Halifax and Dartmouth has introduced a significant rural suburban influence which challenges this area.

The MPS indicates that there is general desire from the area residents for the conservation and preservation of natural environment. However there are two perspectives on this issue. The first aspect is focusing on rich historical past of this area which contributed to the regional distinctiveness of the Eastern Shore. The second is a willingness to open this area for economic development and non-traditional development but while still protecting the natural environment. Generally, the need for more specific examination and measures to protect valued natural environment and water quality is widely accepted.

Environmental Concerns

It is stated in the MPS that proper protection of the environment will allow for continued use of the rich natural assets of the area. The environmental problems associated with human activity are relatively simple compared to other areas. The most significant issue is protection of water quality. This involves the proper disposal of sewage, control of any activities resulting in removal of vegetation or changes in watercourses, and general stormwater management. The plan requires that all new development will have a proper set back from existing watercourses and that existing watercourses will not be compromised. These requirements are outlined in Policy P-5 and P-8. The specific attention to setback requirements is reinforced with additional requirements presented in Policy P-11A. It is also stated that disposal of the abandoned CN railway corridor to the abutting land owner will be permitted subject to Policy P-24.

Transportation & Utility Corridors

The MPS provides very specific direction to road development and public safety. This objective is outlined in Policy P-30 and P-31. The MPS also indicates that location of the new utility corridors is discouraged particularly through scenic corridors. This objective is specifically stated in Policy P-33. A specific requirement for the review process of any new corridors is also included in this policy.

Recreation

The MPS provides a strong emphasis on recreation opportunities in the area. To satisfy these requirements the Plan provides several very specific guidelines to guide the parkland acquisition process. All issues associated with this process are included in Policy P-34, P-35, P-36 and P-39. It is also required by the Plan that all new schools will be adjacent to existing or proposed park. This has been outlined in Policy P-41.

North/East Preston Lake Major/Lake Loon & Cherrybrook Municipal Planning Strategy

The MPS Plan area touches on the north portion of the Cole Harbour Basin study boundary. The strategy originated from a strong need to resolve conflicts between the continued function of the Lake Major Watershed as a primary source of potable water for Dartmouth and growth of the existing communities located partly within the Watershed. The Lake Major Watershed is also the most significant contributor of fresh water to Cole Harbour Estuary.

Transportation

Policy TR-8 of the MPS encourages Council to seek cooperation with local land owners in order to provide resource land for building sites and recreational opportunities. Furthermore, Policy TR-9 requires that all new roads be constructed to minimize impacts on the Lake Major Watershed. The Plan clearly supports public safety and cycling opportunities in the Plan area. These issues are presented in Policy TR-13, TR-14 and TR-15.

Environmental Health

The communities located within the MPS area identified several issues associated with the environment. One of these issues is a reliable supply of potable water. Provisions for a central water system in this area may have effect on development capability in this area as well as quality of the area aquifer. This will result in improvements of water quality flowing into Cole Harbour Estuary. This issue is addressed by Policy EH-2, EH-3, EH-4b and EH-5. The most significant recommendation on this subject is included in Policy EH-6. In Policy EH-10 and EH-11 the Plan also provides recommendations for proper management of the stormwater system and protection of watercourses. Furthermore in Policy EH-13 the Plan provides very specific recommendation for protection of the Lake Major and Long Lake potable water supplies.

Education

This section of the MPS indicates in Policy ED-5 that all new schools should be located in close proximity to existing and new parks and open space.

Recreation

The MPS indicates that the area has a limited number of recreation facilities and infrastructure. It is also states that efforts should be made that future lands acquired for parkland purposes are useable for active or passive recreational purposes and are integrated with existing parks and community facilities. These objectives are outlined in Policy REC-1 and REC-2. These policies also identify the need for development of guidelines in respect to the optimum amount and type of public lands necessary for Recreation and Open Space needs. Policy REC-3 further requires that a Recreation Master Plan should be developed for the area. Furthermore, Policy REC-9 requires development of additional recreation facilities in association with elementary schools where other opportunities do not exist. The MPS indicates that the area residents have traditionally used the Lake Major Watershed area for various recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, skating, swimming, hiking and picnicking. Application of the watershed designation to this area limits the extent to which the watershed is used for recreational purposes. However, the Plan also indicates that the effects of low intensity recreational activity on Lake Major water quality would be minimal. This use is supported by Policy REC-10.

Resource Designation

The MPS allocates a significant area for Resource Designation to support of local resource base economy. As indicated in the Plan livestock operations are still permitted in this designation subject to specific requirement outlined in Policy RE-3. Further limitations for this use are outlined in Policy RE-4 and RE-5. The recreation and open space uses are permitted in this area as outlined in Policy RE-6 and RE-7.

Conservation Designation

The MPS applies a Conservation Designation to the environmentally sensitive areas along the shorelines of Long Lake and Lake Major. These areas consist of either marsh or wetlands which are susceptible to flooding or of areas having natural slopes which exceed fifteen per cent. The designation is intended to preserve these areas in their natural state. The objective of this designation was to reduce the level of contamination reaching these lakes and planning limitations for this area are outlined in Policy CO-1, CO-2 and CO-3.

CHAPTER 3 OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

3.1 *An Integrated Open Space Model*

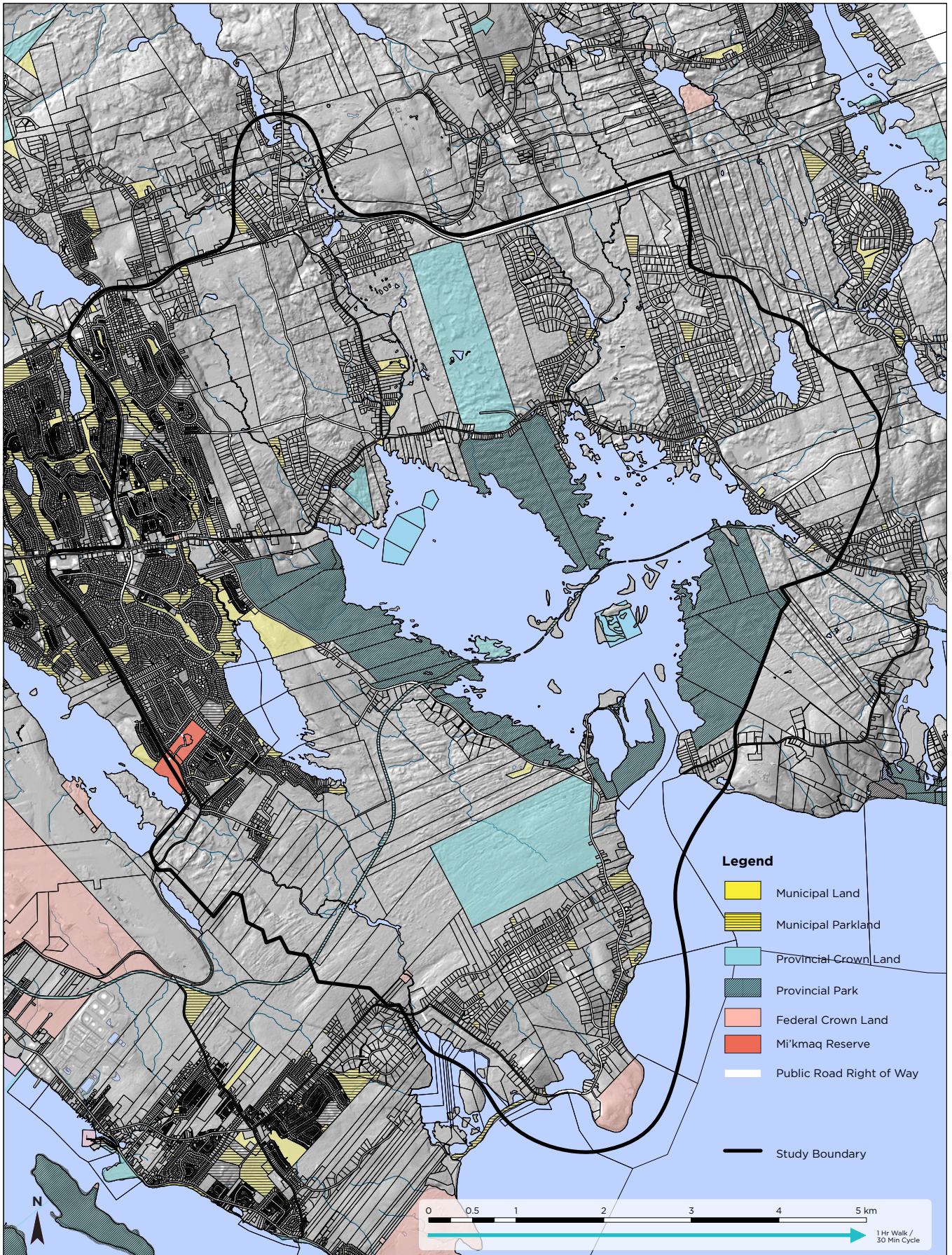
Successful cities and towns have always been marked by the intentional development of built areas and retention of private and public open spaces. Beyond the initial parks as health of the 1860's Parks Movement and parks as social reform City Beautiful movement of the 1900's and efforts to save scenic landscapes which followed through the 1930's Municipal Open Space has been subject to several trends since the Second World War. The 1950's and 60's were marked by rapid expansion of neighbourhood recreation parks and playgrounds to meet growing populations of young families. The rise of environmental and cultural consciousness since the 1970's led to the use of local and regional parks and open spaces as a means to preserve valued environmental and cultural assets within a municipality. Added to this was a move toward urbanism as a means to reduce the environmental footprint in the last fifteen years which included parks and greenways for mobility and to allow nature into cities.

The shift in the last 20 years has been to a knowledge and creative based economy where cities to compete for "human capital" rather than industry, as the means to drive the economy. The need to retain and attract skilled, educated, creative people has led to a renewed concern for the quality of communities as people are more able to choose the city which they wish to live in based on the overall quality of living experience rather than personal economic necessity. Public spaces not only lend themselves to this functionally but also present a positive marketable image of a "desirable community". The latest influencing trend is the public desire to maintain a reasonable size, cost and efficiency of government and the services that it provides. This does not negate any of the objectives above but does require a focussing of efforts to target greatest impact and rationalize marginal or redundant services and assets.

This evolution means that municipal open space has to be more multi-functional in helping communities achieve a number of goals. Municipalities are using Open Spaces to provide for public recreation, protection of publically valued cultural and environmental assets and facilitate the quality of community interaction associated with high levels of social cohesion characteristic of desirable and liveable communities. The achievement of these multiple objectives requires an integrated approach to open space planning. No one piece of open space can achieve all of these functions well, so it is necessary to create a system of public lands which clearly identifies the purpose and value of each asset and how it fits within the overall system. This enables the municipality to be deliberate in acquiring, developing and maintaining a public open space network to maximize their contributions in creating livable and economically successful communities while maintaining a system that is of reasonable size and service level.

3.2 *Definition of Open Space*

The most commonly understood type of open space is our public parks. However, in order to comprehensively plan, regulate and shape positive communities the definition of open space must be broader. To aid in this approach, HRM is adopting an open space definition and model which identifies each component of the system, the role or function that it plays and evaluates its capability and contribution to perform that role. (Map 6 Land Ownership). At its simplest, open spaces are the areas which are not built upon and are open to the sky. This broader definition includes both privately and publicly owned open space.



Inventory Land Ownership

Map 6

Private open space includes agriculture and private forest lands as well as lands held by private institutions. It even includes small areas such as residential back yards. Private open space is generally regulated by the municipality through land use planning in order to ensure, along with built form, the orderly and balanced creation and sustainability of communities. Examples of open space regulation include lot size, building setbacks, lot coverage, sunlight penetration, wetland conservation, tree retention, etc.

Public open space includes publicly owned parks, publically owned natural areas, watershed lands for water supply, squares and plazas, beaches, streets, historic sites and forest land. They can be owned by any level of government or their associated agencies on behalf of the public. Within HRM, owing to Federal and Provincial Law, coastal waters, bays and harbour as well as lakes and streams are also considered public open space assets. Thus, a comprehensive view of open space includes water, natural areas and urban plazas and streets. It is easy to remember “Blue, Green, and Grey”.

There are two general divisions of open space - *Natural Areas* and *Settled Areas*

- 1) **Natural Area Open Spaces** are the areas where natural systems are relatively complete and intact, capable of being self-sustaining or returned to a natural state relatively quickly (within one’s lifetime). These significant forests and waterways are generally found surrounding areas of more intense settlement creating a natural belt. Occasionally, and for reasons of geography, land use, ownership or deliberate protection, intact natural areas can penetrate into settled areas as natural wedges. These natural areas can be privately or publicly owned. In either case there is a long tradition of public use of large tract natural areas for such things as fishing, hiking, hunting etc. as long as there is respect for the land and the waters and the wishes of the owners. There is often human settlement within Natural Areas especially towards the fringes of intense settlement and along rural transportation corridors. However, these settlements within the belts and wedges tend to be much less intense than urban and suburban settlement, occurring either as traditional widely spaced rural patterns or rural subdivisions. What is important is that in a natural area the natural systems dominate and are self-sustaining.
- 2) **Settled Area Open Spaces** are found in the areas where human settlement has altered the natural eco-system and replaced it with dominant intensities of human living. Private Opens Spaces within settled areas tend to be much smaller and carry less of a tradition of shared public use than their large tract natural counterparts. They are generally considered private or semi- private spaces. The exception can be large institutions such as university campuses which are designed with well afforded opens spaces for their populations but offer these spaces to the public as well. The publically shared spaces within settled areas are Public Open Spaces. They are important to the individual livability and social function of urban and suburban communities. They are the networks of streets, patches of public squares and parks and ribbons of corridors providing outdoor social and recreation spaces, linking community destinations and providing access to some level of nature. While these settled area open spaces often contain elements of natural assets or contribute to a positive urban ecology they

differentiate from Natural Areas in that the natural systems are not complete. They are termed “fragmented”. Elements associated with those natural systems, be it forest/ street trees, brook/drainage channel, frog pond/storm water retention pond, has been compromised to the point where they would only return to their complete natural condition if settlement was withdrawn and given generations of time to return to a natural state. Therefore where natural areas occur within settled areas they tend to be compromised and/or fragmented and require deliberate higher levels of stewardship on the part of the owner or the public if they are to function and be sustained.

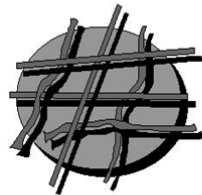
When applied to the Open Space Model which HRM staff is currently using, this division appears as follows:



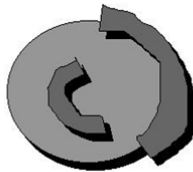
Scattered: the patchwork



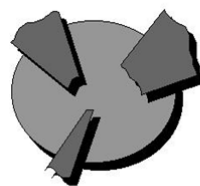
Linear: the ribbon



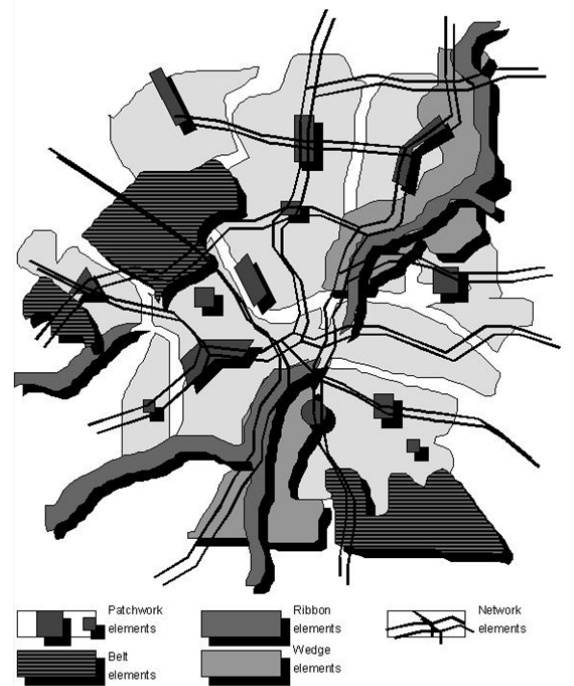
Linear: the network



Area: the belt



Area: the wedge



Generally, Natural Areas appear as intact wedges and belts around more intensely settled areas with the occasional penetration into suburban areas, while ribbons, networks, and patchwork appear as parks and squares, streets and trails and corridors and waterways within the Settled Areas. This model can be applied at a regional level or a community level. It permits a physical model of the interrelationships of various open space types to be produced.

3.3 Purpose of Public Open Space

The Halifax Regional Municipality is interested in Public Open Space for the provision of three primary functions:

3.3.1 Service Delivery

Recreation & Leisure – public parks are developed and managed by HRM to provide a diverse network of neighbourhood, community, and regional recreation and leisure opportunities accessible to everyone and equitably located and programmed to meet community needs. Public open spaces also provide important community places where a community can come together and foster social cohesion through special events and through simple daily activities.

Active Transportation – trail, street and greenway corridors are developed and managed by HRM and its community partners to provide safe and enjoyable pathways for pedestrians, cyclists and other active transportation modes of travel.

3.3.2 Protection

Natural Heritage – the natural features and areas which we collectively value, wish to enjoy and pass onto future generations are protected and managed in order to maintain them and provide a human connection to nature.

Cultural Heritage – the built features and landscapes that reflect phases of human civilization and are significant to cultural identity and heritage are protected through public land ownership and management, public education and display, and community stewardship.

Environment – the quality of air, water, land and associated ecological systems which sustain all life are preserved and protected through multiple mechanisms one of which is open space protection and management.

3.3.3 Community Design

Development Form – settlement patterns and the quality of a community are shaped and influenced by the protection of open space and the location, function and design of public parks, corridors and natural areas.

Community Identity – open space helps to create and foster community pride and sense of place within neighbourhoods and communities through the protection, provision and design of parks, corridors and natural areas.

Open space is an important component of our Municipality. It is important in the creation of communities and cities, how they function and how successfully they sustain themselves. However, the natural and built environments are made of multiple, complex and intertwined relationships. Open space is only one of a number of factors which need to be balanced for a successful Municipality. Open space is a legitimate “lens” in municipal planning along with transportation planning, utility planning, land-use, and environmental planning.

3.4 *Open Space Inventory*

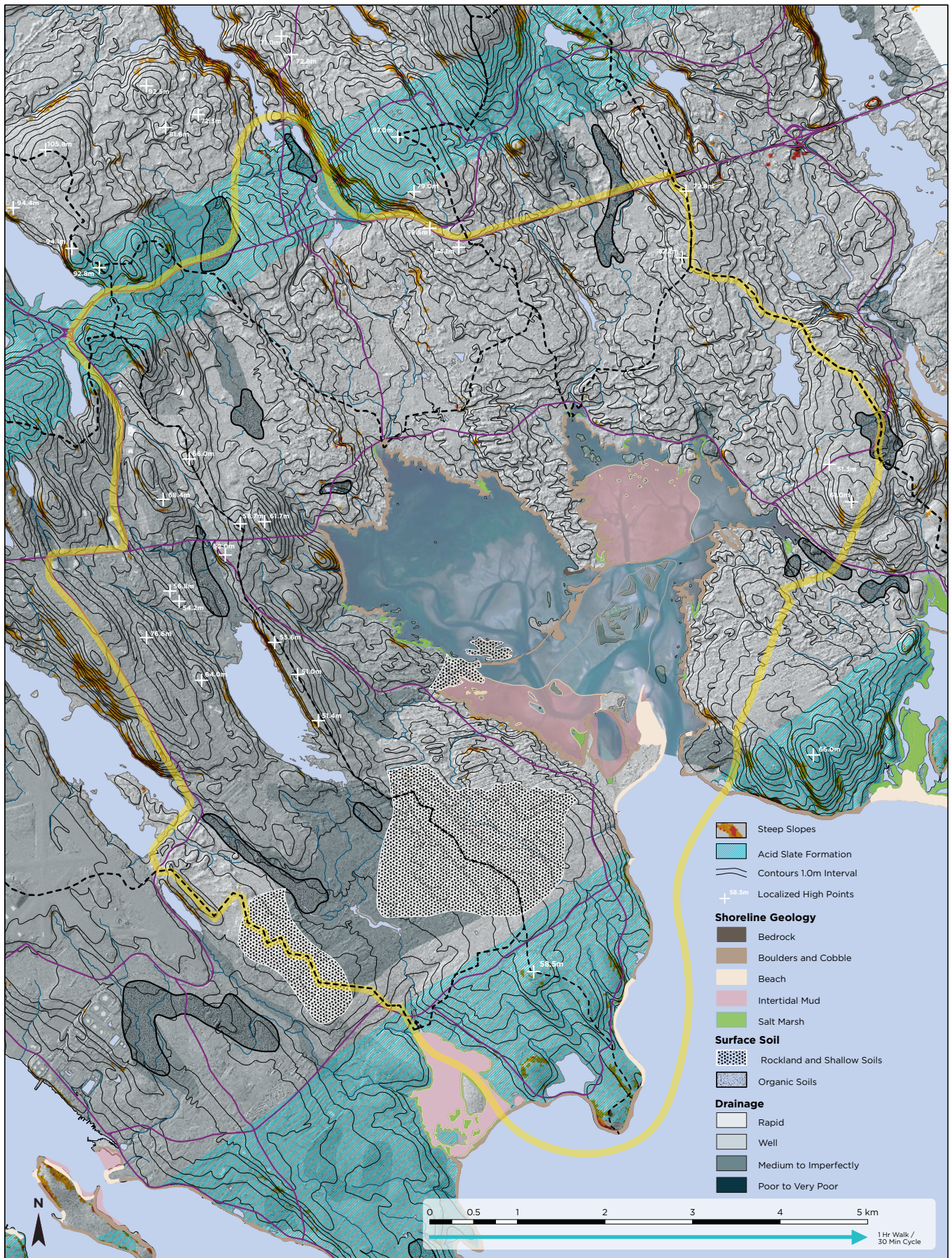
3.4.1 Physical Geography

Geology

The study area is shaped by its underlying bedrock, recent glaciation and costal processes. (Map 7 Geology) The bedrock is largely Meguma Group Halifax formation greywacke and slates underlying much of the eastern shore from the Halifax Peninsula to Canso. The area was heavily glaciated several times along with the rest of the Maritimes. The last ice event (10,000 yrs BP) left behind a till drape of uneven thickness made of variable size quartzite cobble and sediment. The area is marked by drumlin fields which lay perpendicular to the coast intermittently up the Eastern Shore to Musquodoboit from Halifax. They are comprised of red-brown Lawrencetown tills. It is these drumlins and areas where the till drape is thick that create conditions for agriculture in the Cole Harbour Basin.

The coast is a combination of headlands separated by long inlets. The Cole Harbour Estuary and Cow Bay Estuary are drowned river beds and their associated lowlands which have flooded as a result of rising sea levels and continental crust subsidence since the last glaciation. They have been further in-filled by a combination of glacial tills and sediment from eroding headlands brought ashore by incoming tides through the main channel or are pushed onto the barrier beaches and then inland by major storms. The coast line varies with areas of resistant bedrock and eroding till banks and drumlins. This sets up cobble shores, sand deposits on barrier beaches and in low wave energy areas and fine sediments in tidal marshes.





Several kilometers inland is generally regarded as the Atlantic Interior Quartzite Barrens. The quartzite is folded, eroded and scoured into repetitive patterns of Ridge-Swamp-Swale in a north south orientation. This creates north south running ridges, lakes and small drainage valleys. Some areas are completely scoured of soil however the majority has quartzite derived soils averaging 10 ft. thick. In some areas, poorly draining soils block drainage channels creating substantial wetlands and bogs. There are also areas to the west of the Marsh which exhibit these barren characteristics.

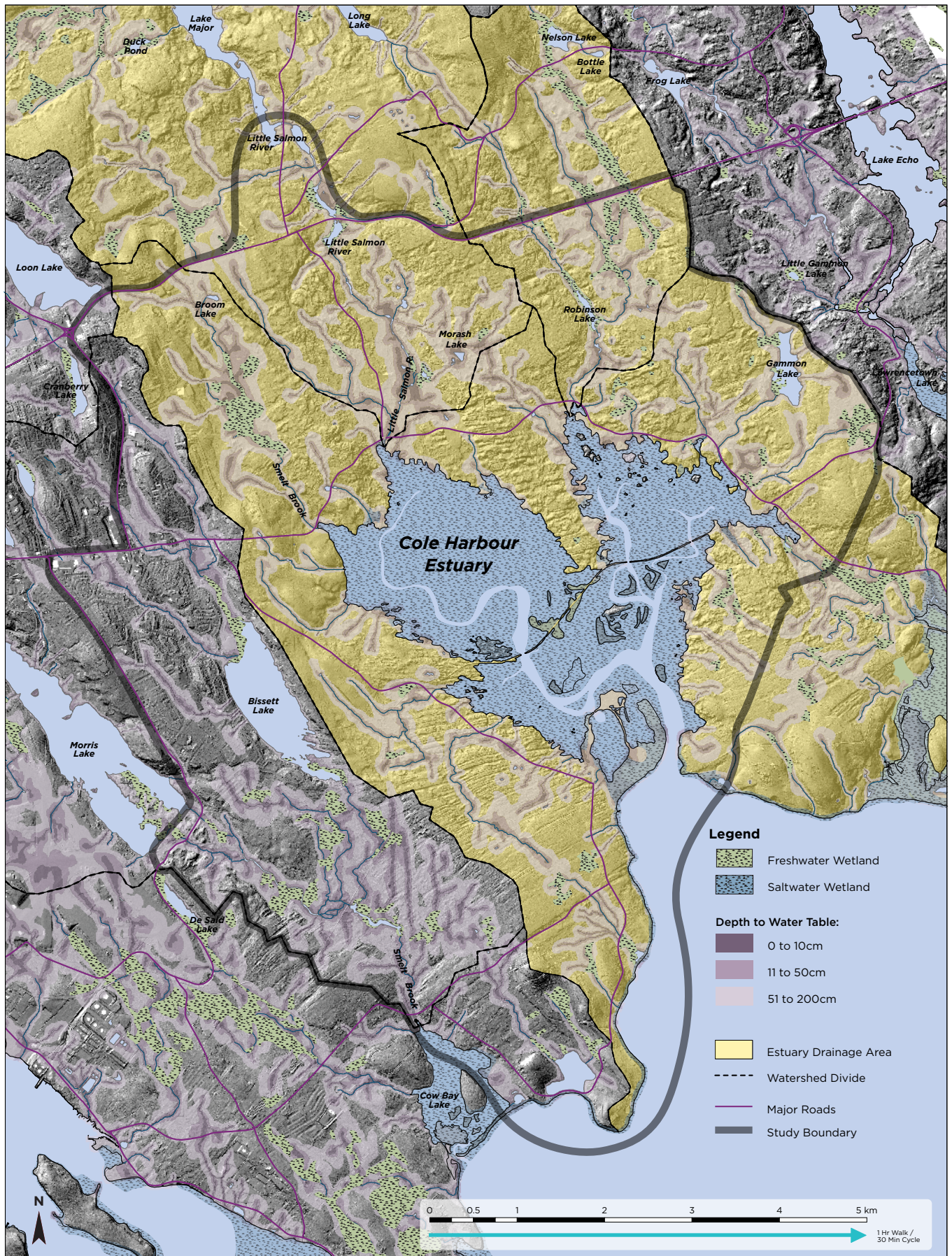
Hydrology

The study area involves two watersheds, the Cole Harbour Estuary Watershed and the Cow Bay Watershed. (Map 8 Hydrology) The area enjoys a unique cross section of water bodies, ranging from direct exposure to the Atlantic Ocean to salt marshes and brackish bays, freshwater lakes, bogs, wetlands, streams and rivers. All but bogs and wetlands are publicly owned open space. The Cole Harbour Estuary is the most significant inland water body. It consists of three lobes, an outer lobe near the Atlantic and constricted by the sediment build-up of Rainbow Haven Beach



and two inland lobes which are further constricted in flow by the four small openings in the Dartmouth to Musquodoboit Rail Causeway (now the Salt Marsh Trail). The daily tidal action is what creates the high productivity and diversity of the marsh. Daily advancement and recession of the tides creates deep channels bordered by shallow tidal flats, saline pools and

zones of low and high marsh lands according to tide heights and elevation. Salt tolerant herbaceous plants create sediment traps stabilizing and growing the saltmarsh. It is these plants (saltmarsh hay) which spawned the dyking of the saltmarsh in the 1800s to create dryer areas for agriculture. Some areas of dry land along the shore are subject to saltwater flooding during spring tides and storm events. Water salinity levels vary in the marsh as freshwater mixes with ocean water near mouths of streams. Salt marshes play a large role in the aquatic food web, including the lifecycle of many coastal fishes and the delivery of nutrients to coastal waters. They also support terrestrial animals and provide coastal protection against storms. The same processes are at work at Cow Bay/Silver Sands beach. Here the bay is smaller but deeper and contains less salt marsh.



Freshwater is provided through drainage of several lakes including Lake Major, Gammon in to Cole Harbour and Bissett and Settle Lakes into Cow Bay. The Little Salmon River, Cow Bay River and several shore direct streams carry freshwater to Cow Bay and Cole Harbour. Substantial bogs and wetlands occur north of Cole Harbour Marsh and south of Bissett Lake within those watersheds.

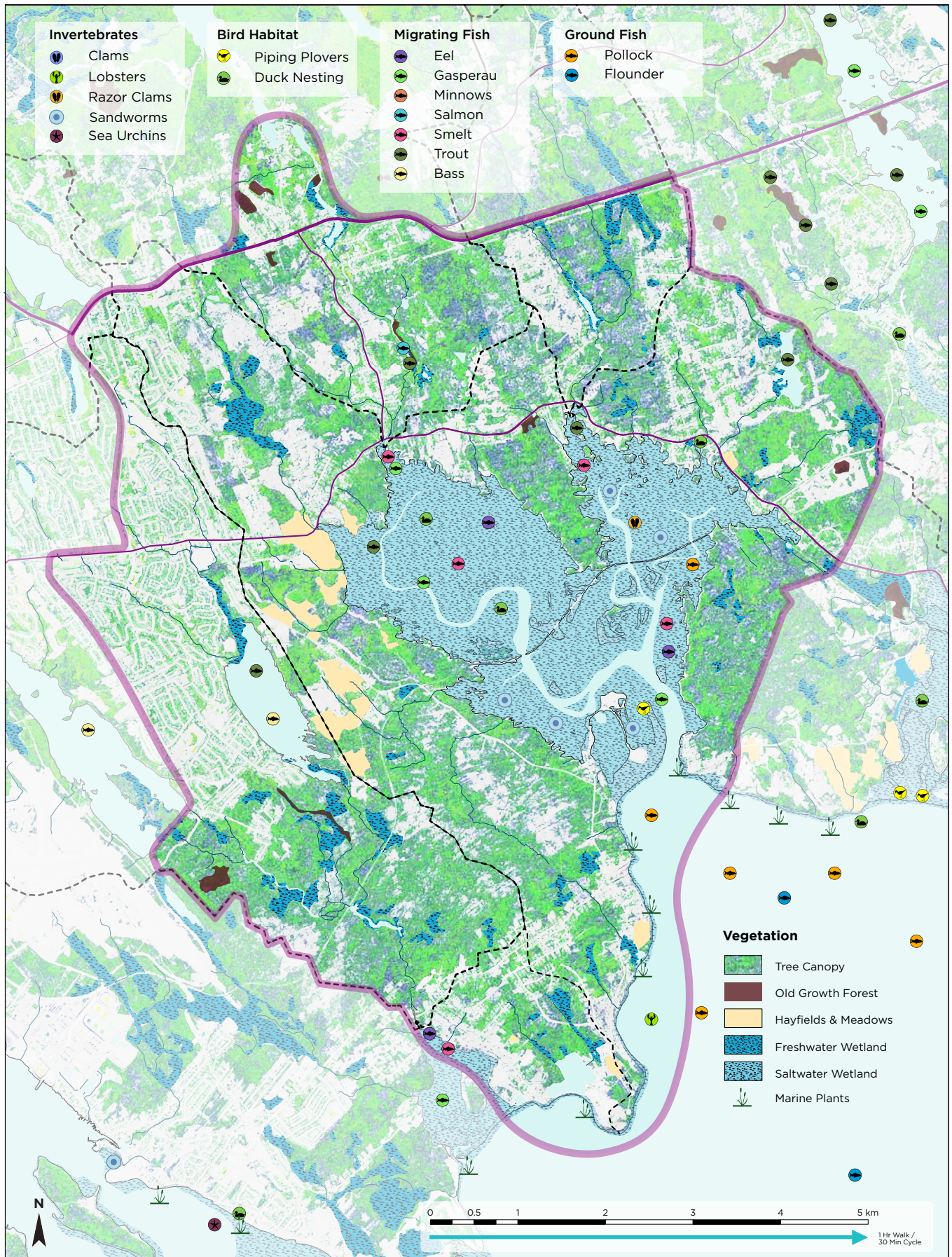


Natural Ecosystems

The study area is part of the Eastern Shore Eco region, and is marked by coastal influences. (Map 9 Natural Ecosystems) Coastal forests are typically white spruce, balsam fir, black spruce and birch. Red maple, poplar and a few other tolerant hardwoods occur away from the ocean shore or in sheltered areas along the coast. Coastal forests tend to transition into interior forest types near the 60m elevation level or several kilometres inland. Then pines, red spruce, sugar maple, beech and hemlock become possible. Forests along the coast are generally short lived, lasting under 100 years with stand renewal being initiated by disturbances caused by blow down, disease, insects and fires. Despite this there are several but very small areas of old growth forest in the study area.

The area is rich in animal species diversity owing to the variety of ecosystems. Coastal Atlantic species include marine mammals, birds and fishes. The beaches saltmarshes, freshwater and forest provide habitat for a variety of bird, fish, insect and mammal species.





Inventory Natural Ecosystems

Map 9

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

October 2013

3.4.2 Open Space Assets

The Study area is an interesting mix of natural and settled areas containing a variety of public open spaces providing a number of public benefits. There are fifty six (56) municipal parks and one regional Provincial Park within the study area. (Map 10 Public Recreation Assets) There are 161 kms of streets, 31 kms of off-road trails and 10 identifiable water bodies. These serve an immediate population of approximately 25,000 persons.

Public Parks and Corridors

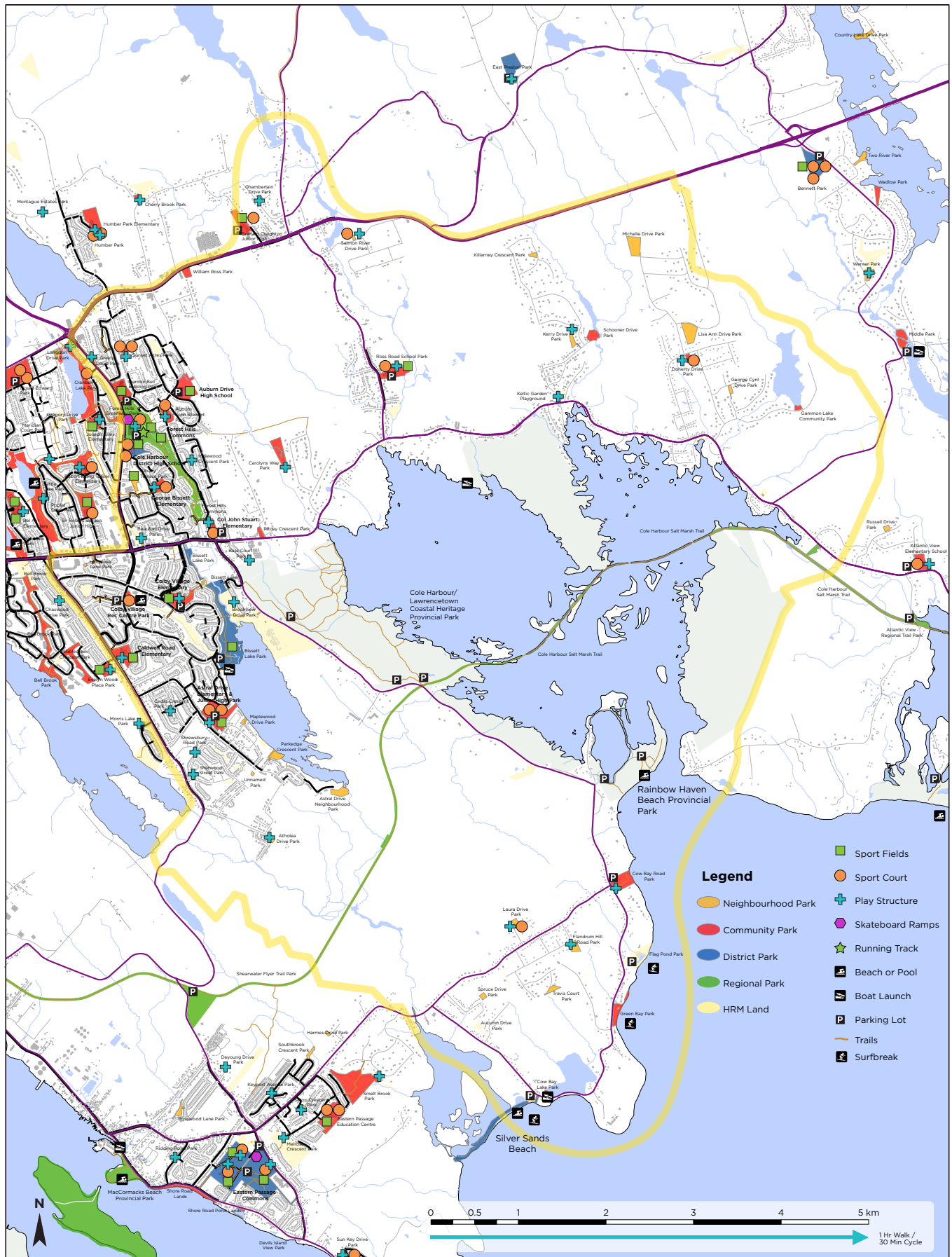
The park assets within the study area breakdown is as follows:

Park Type	Primary Use	Number	Comments
Regional	Regional Parks are used to provide access to and protection for regionally significant open space assets. For that reason they vary in size and proximity to populations. Regionally significant components of the Regional Trail system are also included.	3 Regional Parks serve the area	Two of the three regional park holdings serving this area are owned by the Province. They are Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park and the Salt Marsh /Shearwater Flyer Trail. The third regional park, Cole Harbour Common, is owned and managed by HRM
District	District Parks generally serve urban and suburban populations of 10,000 persons within a service radius of 5 kms. They focus on sport facilities and passive recreation but are also used to protect local patches of sensitive or heritage landscapes. They also include local community trail connections.	4 District Parks Serve the area	With the exception of Cole Harbour High School the District Parks within the Basin permit local access and protection to water and the community's natural heritage.
Community	Community Parks serve populations of 1,200 persons and a service area radius of 2kms. They largely focus on multi-use recreation, including sport and passive recreation. Access to and protection for small patch natural areas is also included. Community Parks are often associated with Jr.	There are 24 Community Parks within the study area.	There is a significant number of Community Parks within the study area when considered with the portfolio of neighbourhood parks.

	High and elementary schools as they service a similar population and service area.		
Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood Parks aim to serve approximately 300 persons within a 500m service area. They generally are small parks within neighbourhoods providing playgrounds and open areas for play.	There are 27 Neighbourhood Parks within the study area	The area is well afforded with Neighbourhood Parks

The area is very well supplied with open space, being blessed with the Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system as well as substantial municipal parks and open spaces. This means that the area has a total of 662 hectares of open space, amounting to almost 37 hectares of open space for every 1000 persons within the study boundary. When the provincial park is removed and only municipal open space is considered the study area enjoys 6.3 hectares of open space per 1000 persons. A scan of municipalities across Canada generally shows park standard targets of between 5 and 10 hectares per 1000 persons. There does need to be some caution in using these kinds of standards as they are only intended as guidelines. Municipalities should develop public parks in accordance with their needs and objectives rather than any simple standard. However, the high combined park numbers are not unexpected for a community that grew rapidly next to a highly valued natural open space asset like the estuary, had a higher than average number of children and younger adults who would use parks and active recreation facilities and enjoyed a higher level of family income than other areas of the municipality.





Inventory Public Recreation Assets

Map 10

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal
October 2013



Overall there are some good things happening with open space within the Study boundary. The Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park is a significant regional asset preserving natural and cultural heritage, protecting environmental systems, providing mobility connections and offering recreation opportunities along its waters, beaches and woodlands. It is as significant a regional asset as any other park in HRM. In a 2012/13 review of the Province's Parks and Protected areas the Province sought to categorize its parks holdings into those that best supported the Core Provincial Park Mandates and those parks that played more of a supporting role.

“Core parks protect a range of provincially significant heritage values and provide opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation, nature-based education, and tourism (e.g., T.H. Raddall, Cape Chignecto, and Mira River). Supporting parks are locally significant but may not offer the range or quality of values and opportunities as core parks (e.g., Blomidon Look-off, Gulf Shore, and Dominion Beach). “Our Parks and Protected Areas – Nova Scotia Government

Some provincial parks reverted to crown lands to be managed either as protected areas or resource land. Others became supporting parks and the remaining were identified to be managed as core parks. Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park was identified as one of 27 core parks out of its total park portfolio of 282 sites. The full Provincial Park as it was originally envisioned has not yet been completed as was initially envisioned with frontage on Cole Harbour Road and protection of the Long Hill view.



Our Parks and Protected Areas
A Plan for Nova Scotia



Within the municipal parks holdings one can find past efforts to create an interconnected corridor system linking high value open spaces and community destinations. However, there are also a

number of stand-alone patches of open space. This seems to be a product of the area's development history. Multiple phases, multiple developers with different approaches to open space, lack of an overall plan park plan and immediate population pressures seem to have made it difficult to create a balanced and integrated open space network. Some areas are very over supplied and others lack a basic neighbourhood park. Some areas have great open space connections and others have barriers to access. Some lands are high in value and capacity to function as parks and open space and others are poor in quality and capability.

Both the Province and the Municipality have played a role in preserving and providing public access to natural areas. The Coastal Heritage Provincial Park represents the most significant effort with the Province now owning all of the salt marsh, much of the shoreline and Rainbow Haven Beach. HRM is providing access to surf breaks and visual access to the expanse of the Atlantic through strategic acquisitions along Cow Bay Road and at Silver Sands Beach. HRM also has significant property around Bissett Lake and (outside the study area) Settle Lake. The Municipality also has lands at Bissett Run as well as several brooks and streams. These assets allow for public access for boating, fishing, surfing, swimming and visual enjoyment as well as protecting heritage values and the environment. The Cole Harbour Marsh, Bissett Lake and Cow Bay Coastline provide a strong sense of identity for the local community and for the region.



Streets and Roads

Streets and Roads are an important part of the open space system, creating important physical connections, signifying gateway, creating identity and social spaces and providing access to scenic beauty. (Map 3 Transportation) There are a number of key streets within the study area which make or have the potential to make significant contributions to the open space system. In the suburban settlement areas Cole Harbour Road, Caldwell Road, Forest Hills Drive and Main Street are organizing streets with significant open space contributions and/or potential. In the rural areas, Cow Bay Road, Lawrencetown Road and Bissett Road are key open space travel



ways. The intersections of these roads with each other and where they come into contact with other forms of open space such as parks and trails, water bodies, or through natural areas needs to be better considered if there is to be a higher level of integration between streets and other forms of public open space.

Of particular note are the public but abandoned road corridors in the area. These include Old Lawrencetown Road, Miller Road and

Robinson Brook Road. The significance of these abandoned sections of the road network is in their public ownership and the role that they can play creating open space connections for future residential development.

Cultural Landscapes and Features

We are all familiar with buildings as cultural heritage assets. We are less familiar with landscapes as heritage assets, however landscapes are recognized under Provincial and Federal Heritage Acts and under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO). These programs present models for evaluating cultural landscapes. This study has picked from those programs well founded elements and approaches including the following definitions:



Cultural Landscape (Parks Canada): Any geographical area that has been modified, influenced or given special cultural meaning by people, and that has been formally recognized for its heritage value. Cultural landscapes are often dynamic, living entities that continually change because of natural and

human-influenced social, economic and cultural processes.

- **Cultural Landscape (NS Heritage Property Act):** a distinct geographical area or property uniquely representing the combined work of nature and of people.
- **Heritage Value:** The aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations and embodied in character-defining materials, forms, locations, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings.
- **Character-Defining Elements:** The materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to heritage value and that must be sustained in order to preserve heritage value.

Cultural Landscape Categories (UNESCO)

- **Designed Cultural Landscape:** A landscape that is designed and intentionally created.
- **Evolved Cultural Landscape:** A landscape that results from an initial social, economic, administrative or religious imperative and has developed in its present form in response to its natural environment.

Relict: A landscape in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past and for which significant distinguishing features are still visible in material form.

Continuing: A landscape which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress.

- **Associative Cultural Landscape:** A landscape valued for the religious, artistic, or cultural associations of its natural elements rather than any material cultural evidence which may be insignificant or even absent.

Character Defining Elements of Cultural Landscapes can include (Parks Canada):

- **Evidence of Land Use:** Features that express or support a past or continuing land use. This refers to the human use of the natural environment. It includes activities that significantly modify aspects of the natural environment into a built environment, such as fields, pastures and settlements, but also includes land uses that have a lighter impact, such as hunting and trapping, maple syrup harvesting, or fishing. Land use can evolve over time.
- **Evidence of Traditional Practices:** Features that express or support a past or continuing traditional practice. Traditional practices are based on the close observation and understanding of a local landscape by a cultural community who has a long association with that place. These practices include the beliefs, wisdom, activities, traditions and skills derived from extended observations of the land and its creatures, weather, seasonality and other cycles, and spiritual associations.
- **Land Patterns:** This refers to the overall arrangement and interrelationship of the larger-scale aspects of a cultural landscape, whether natural or human-made. Land patterns help us understand how naturally occurring elements, such as forests, meadows, rivers, lakes, hills or valleys, fit together and fit with human-made elements such as farm fields, pastures, built features and circulation systems.
- **Spatial Organization:** Spatial organization refers to the arrangement of spaces in a cultural landscape and how the spaces are physically, visually, or functionally connected. Landscape features, whether natural or human-made, define the volume of an outdoor space. Vertical planes may be formed by vegetation, such as hedges, garden beds or forest margins, or by the exterior walls of buildings, fences or stone walls. The

ground plane may be made of natural materials, such as earth, sand or grass; or manufactured materials, such as pavers, asphalt or gravel.

- **Visual Relationships:** Pertain to the visual relationships between an observer and a landscape or landscape feature (a viewscape) or between the relative dimensions of landscape features (scale). A viewscape can include scenes, panoramas, vistas, visual axes and sight lines. The scale of a cultural landscape can produce emotional responses in people. Large landscapes either intimidate or inspire us, while small landscapes tend to make us feel comfortable.
- **Circulation:** Circulation refers to individual elements that facilitate or direct movement and travel, such as human or animal paths, traditional trails, roads, parkways, highways, railways, canals and portages. The linkages of such elements create circulation systems.
- **Ecological Features:** an ecological feature is a natural element, such as a marsh, a pond or a stand of trees, which can be part of a larger ecosystem.
- **Vegetation:** refers to trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, grasses, vines, aquatic and wetland plants, and other living plant material. Vegetation may include individual plants, such as a sentinel tree in a pasture, or specimen trees in a garden; groupings, such as hedges, *allées* and perennial borders; and groupings used to control sun and wind patterns. Vegetation can also refer to planted crops, re-forested hillsides and naturally occurring plant communities.
- **Landforms:** Includes naturally occurring landforms (hills, valleys, plains) and human-made landforms (e.g., terraces, embankments, ditches). Naturally occurring landforms may have been significant factors in determining the location and development of a cultural landscape.
- **Water Features:** Can include constructed and natural elements, such as canals, ponds, reflecting pools and fountains, lakes, rivers and streams. Their role may be functional or aesthetic, or a combination of both.
- **Built Features:** Can include archaeological remains; residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and institutional buildings; structures such as dams or bridges; smaller features, such as gazebos, fences, free-standing walls and statuary, as well as site furnishings, such as benches, light standards and drinking fountains. Built features may also include culturally significant objects or constructed symbols, such as *inukshuks*, crosses and medicine wheels. A building may play a role as a character-defining element in a cultural landscape, in addition to having its own heritage value.

Using this understanding of Cultural Landscapes there are distinct areas of the Cole Harbour Basin that have cultural heritage value. (Map 11 Cultural Heritage Assets) These generally fall into three categories;

- 1) **The remaining Agrarian landscape (agriculture)** with their associative seasonal traditions, way of life, passive visual quality and land and building patterns. These speak to the past uses of the land from early European settlement to modern times. They are made additionally strong because of the contrast between these landscapes and the nearby suburban community. Visual accesses over long views, traveling through or physically being within a farm landscape are all existing or possible within the study area. The highest concentration is on the slopes of Long Hill and along Bissett Road. The Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum offers a unique opportunity to be within a farm yard setting which in the middle of suburban development.



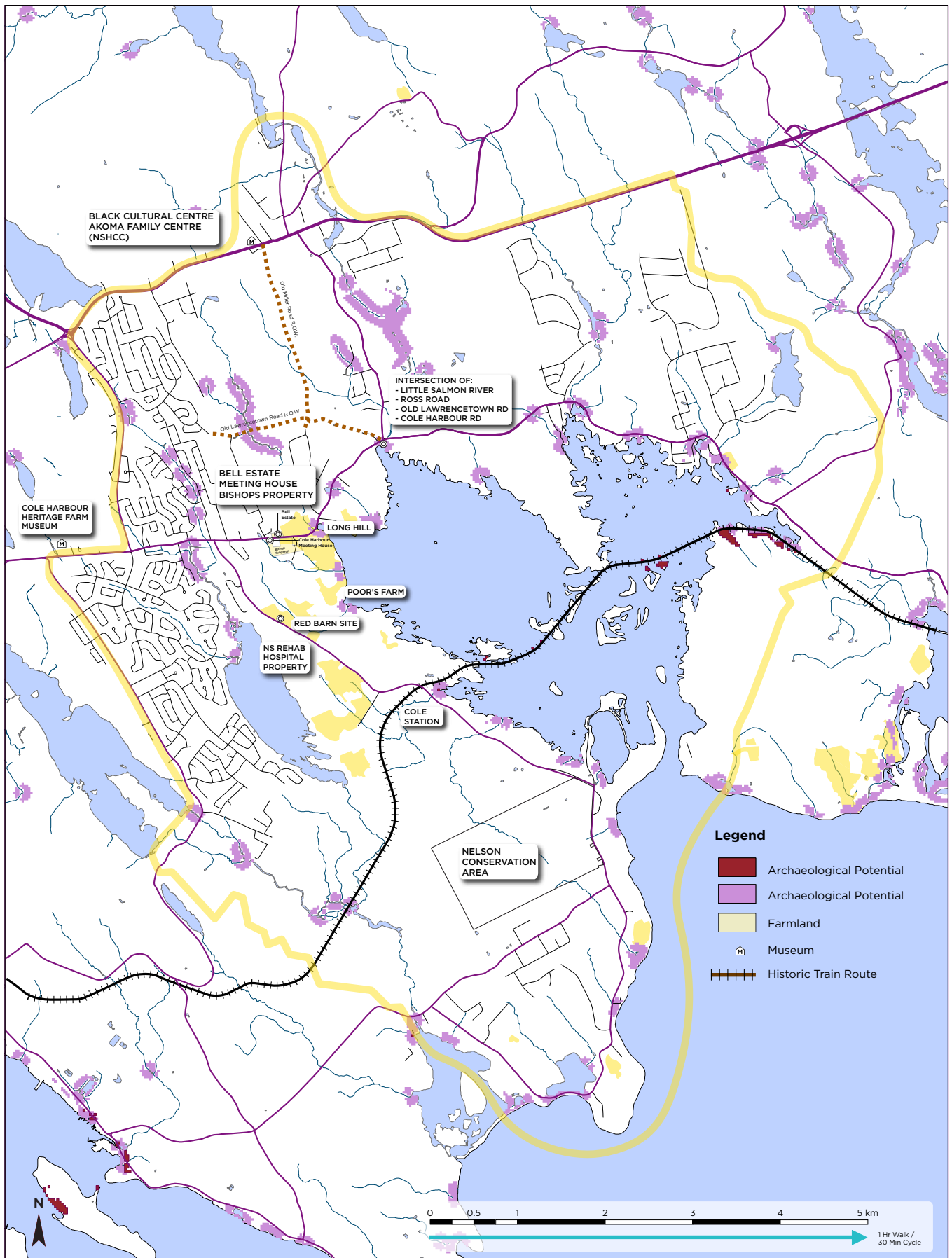
- 2) **The Natural landscape** which connects the community to the ecological elements not shaped by humans but those which shape us and provide a connection to the natural world. This is very strong along the Cole Harbour Estuary and Little Salmon River and Cow Bay. Visual and physical access is readily available in these areas with a diversity of landscapes from interior woodlands to lakes to saltmarsh to ocean.

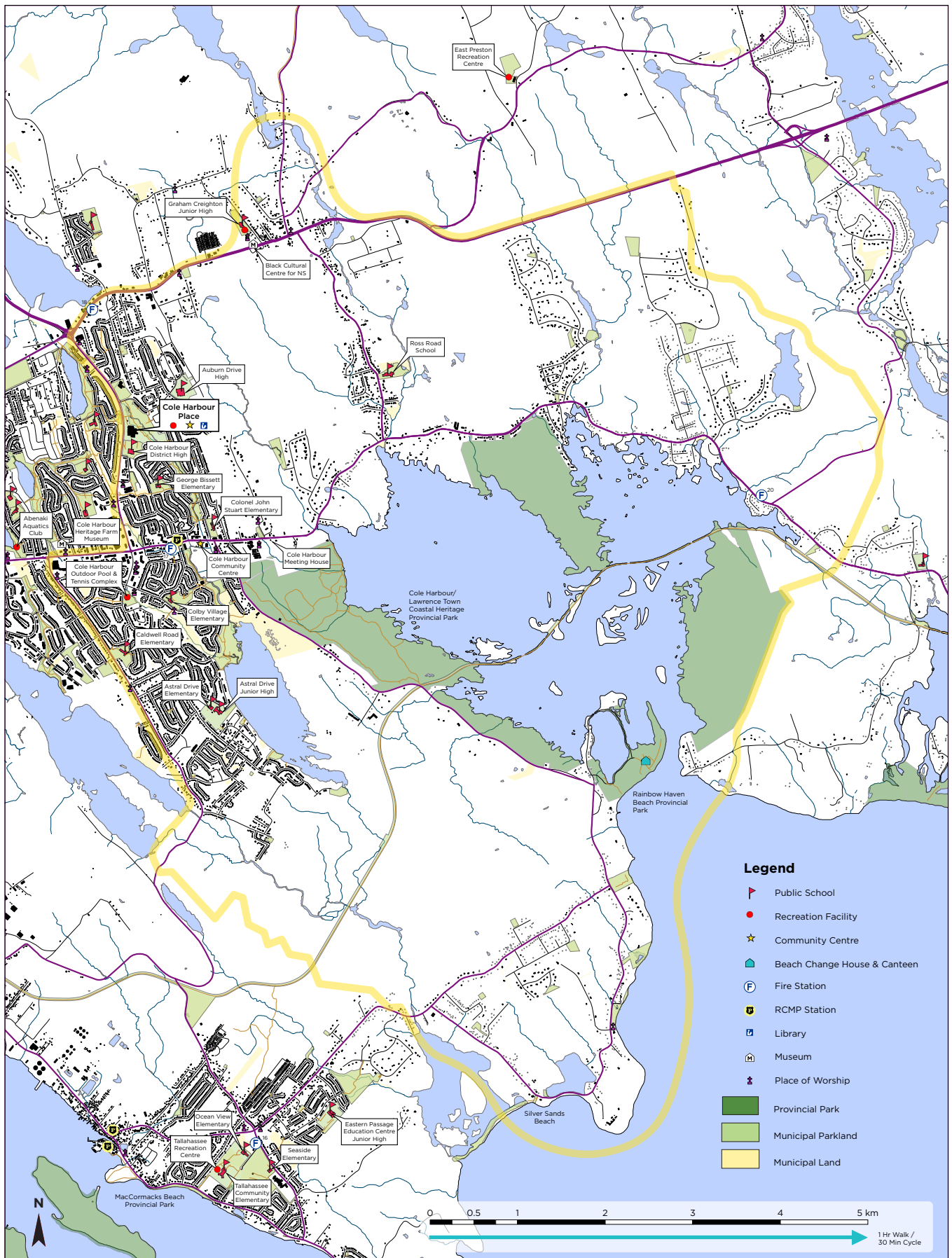


Both of these landscapes have strong visual relationships between the observer and the landscapes and features owing to the heights of land and large bodies of water which allow for long and panoramic views of high quality. This is key to the presentation and unique quality of these assets.

- 3) **The Social landscape** which represents a sense of community cohesion and accomplishment. The area has a strong tradition of “we can do it” as a community. This is found in its festivals and parades, active sport and recreation and its institutions. Associated with this are the community facilities such as Cole Harbour Place, Black Cultural Centre and Rural Heritage Farm Museum, sport fields and Harvest Festival grounds (parking lot at Cole Harbour Place) and parade route (Cole Harbour Road). (Map 12 Civic Building Assets) Many of these facilities happened in the community through will and determination. These stand as a testament to the accomplishments of their community locally, regionally and internationally and play a strong role in their identity. These assets are only actualized when they are functioning within the community so their ability to remain relevant, connected and sustainable is very important.







CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS

4.1 Public Engagement

A key challenge for any community planning exercise is effectively engage the public and to interpret the *collective* public voice. The risks of entering the often referred to “Groan Zone” were met head-on in the community engagement process with the understanding that there were gaps in the Project Team’s knowledge of the open space issues and that community input was needed. Excellent guidance from public engagement specialists Myrgan Inc. brought in a fresh approach to public conversation which became an exercise in relationship building, being authentic, and inspiring trust ie. Quality Relationships lead to Quality Product.



4.1.2 Engagement Outcomes

Stakeholder Planning Session September 30, 2011

How can we bring the community together?

Purpose

To work with community leaders and organizations to design the process for the Open Space public consultations. The session focused on how best to bring the community together to discuss open space issues and opportunities in an innovative way. This would include musicians and artists to add a more relaxed and social environment for good conversation. This first gathering focused on designing how the multi-meeting consultation process would unfold.

The result was to plan the consultations by including:

- Festival energy
- Youth engagement

- Social themes
- Big venue
- Interactive sessions
- Results that influence decision makers
- Invitation and creative public engagement
- Traditional media, Social media, online wizardry and live streaming

These sessions began with key questions to inspire meaningful community input:

- What does the future of development look like?
- What is your future vision for the Cole Harbour Basin area?
- How can we balance development and natural environment?
- Traditional media
- Atmosphere and design of events
- Social media, online wizardry and live streaming

What can the Public Influence?

- a) Our understanding of the “big picture” issues.
- b) Our understanding of values.
- c) Our understanding of relationships.

Goal: Host a large public gathering to Establish Vision Statements and Principles.



Visioning Session October 22, 2011***What is our collective vision for open spaces in the Cole Harbour Basin?*****Purpose**

The purpose of this meeting was to bring together the public and key stakeholders to share early discussions and to engage the larger public to build a collective vision for open space. In addition to residents – participants included city councilors, HRM staff, local business owners, trails and recreation groups, and more. These collaborative conversations explored key questions that led to a broad vision for the future of Cole Harbour Basin’s open spaces.

Key Outcomes:

- A shared community Vision
- Key issues and opportunities to assist in developing the Plan
- Core ideas to help guide future decision-making for investment in public open space

Guiding Principles:

- Build community and civic pride
- Support diverse perspectives and ways of participating
- Integrate expert input
- Be honest and transparent
- Engage the public on issues that they can change and influence
- Focus on the collective public voice

Communication tools:

- Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Speech Bubbles
- Online survey
- Innovations Gathering November 30th

When does the Community Come Alive?

In pairs, participants reflected on times they have felt community spirit and connection in the open spaces of the Cole Harbour Basin – from Rainbow Haven Beach to the Little Salmon River to the playground on John Stewart Drive. Participants were asked to think about connectivity between these spaces, the streetscapes, or views as they walk, bike or drive around the Cole Harbour Basin.

What do these spaces need to become for your children and grandchildren to treasure them?

Many perspectives met in a series of World Café conversations. Thinking not just weeks and months – but generations – into the future, what about these spaces does your community enjoy the most? How will they have changed and how will they have stayed the same?

The community believed these open spaces need to be maintained, protected and restored with a focus on wildlife, habitat, the estuary buffer, keeping areas undeveloped and protecting the natural beauty. Physical access to open spaces is essential as these areas are used by ATVer's, cyclists, walkers, dog-walkers, and horseback riders.

The open spaces are key in attracting visitors and residents to the area. Who will maintain the spaces that are not municipally owned when current land owners are gone?

What themes would you like to be your legacy?***Culture***

- Connectivity and access to open spaces: public transit, trails, roadways, parking, sidewalks, bike lanes
- Open spaces should be multi-use, multi-purpose, multi-generational
- Protecting the history and cultural heritage (eg. Farming traditions)
- Public art and performance
- Play structures designed by children
- Places for fun and socializing such as amphitheater, stages, more playgrounds and trails
- Safety of open spaces
- Meeting and gathering spaces
- Open spaces would be the centre of public education programs
- Community and cultural identity

Economy

- Financial sustainability
- Maintain and protect existing and future infrastructure
- Long term planning and follow through
- Communication via social media, schools and general awareness
- Physical and social access to the spaces

Environment

- Protection and restoration of ecosystems, natural habitat, history, viewplanes and beauty.
- Keeping undeveloped land in the area sacred and preserved
- Interpretive nature walks
- Education and stewardship



Innovations Gathering November 30th, 2011

What are the priority action areas?

Purpose

For the Innovations Gathering conceptual open space projects were prepared to provide a starting point for discussion. It introduced in a public meeting format 13 initiatives that could be considered action areas to shape the Open Space Plan. They included ideas about open space corridors for AT and Recreation, a cultural core for community identity, protection for the Estuary, enabling sustainable development.

The Innovations Gathering Focused on:

1. Pondering the future land use of the County of former Rehab Hospital lands
2. Raising the Red Barn
3. Identifying a Cultural Core
 - 4a. Looking at the Cole Harbour Place to Rainbow Haven Corridor
 - 4b. Helping with Old Lawrencetown/Old Miller Road Corridors
 - 4c. Considering the Highway #207 Image Route Corridor
5. Pondering Sustainable Development in the Cole Harbour Basin
6. Considering the future of the Cole Harbour Causeway and Salt Marsh Trail
7. Preparing Open Spaces: Cole Harbour Basin Plan
8. Preparing a Wayfinding Strategy
9. Considering access to the Estuary and the Coastal Heritage Provincial Park
10. Considering the health and the potential of the Cole Harbour Estuary
11. Evaluating the zoning, land use by-laws, and incentives

Participants were able to share their perspectives and knowledge of the community and to identify open space opportunities and constraints.

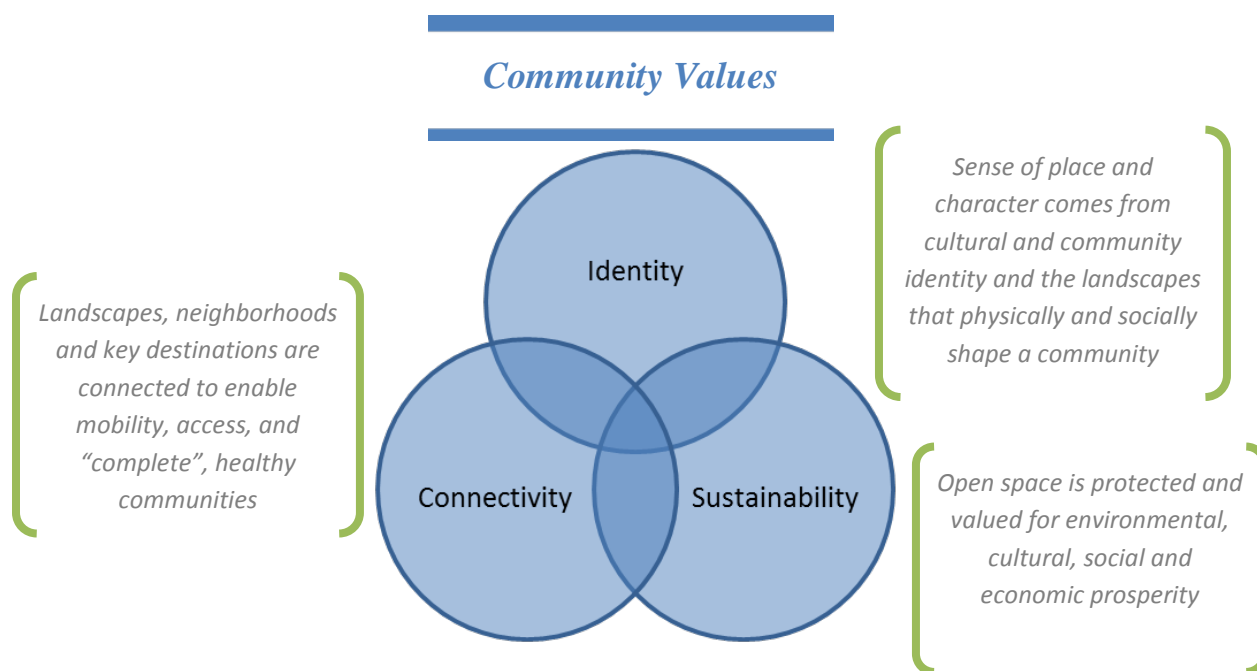
The core ideas and input received from the community was paired with additional open space information, technical expertise, a review of relevant plans and studies, and consideration of municipal objectives and priorities. The resulting Plan is a comprehensive, community-driven,



and implementable framework that will act as a pilot for open space planning in priority areas across the Municipality including the Regional Centre.

4.1.3 Community Values

At the heart of this Plan is a set of basic but fundamental core values which have been set by the community. These values are reflected in the Plan's goals and objectives and have helped to shape the entire planning framework. Whereas policies and recommendations may be fluid over time to adapt to changing needs and priorities there is an expectation that these core values will remain constant throughout the life of the Plan.





4.2 Open Space Analysis

At a regional open space systems level the Cole Harbour Basin reflects the regional pattern language – Belts, Wedges, Ribbons, Network, and Patchwork (Map18 Pattern Language). The Atlantic Ocean forms a defining belt; the Cole Harbour Estuary watershed forms a very clear wedge as it stretches inland well beyond the study boundary; the Estuary's shoreline, including the Coastal Heritage Park lands and the Bissett Road and Secondary Highway #207 street corridor forms another belt at a more community scale; the Little Salmon River riparian corridor is a primary ribbon that travels north/south; additional ribbons include the riparian corridors of Broom Brook, Robinson Brook, and Gammon Lake; in the adjacent Cow Bay watershed, the Bissett Brook and Bissett Lake riparian corridor also forms a ribbon. The network is made up of major street corridors including Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown Road, Main Street, Cow Bay and Dyke Road, Forest Hills Parkway, Ross Road, Mineville Road, Bissett Road and Caldwell Road. Network would not be complete without the former rail line now known as the Salt Marsh Trail and Shearwater Flyer Trail. The patchwork is made up of the various publically owned parks and conservation parcels.

Community consultation revealed that there is a perceived disconnect from the Cole Harbour Estuary and its impact on the economy, culture, and environment. With residential neighbourhoods like Forest Hills, Colby Village, Coleridge Estates, Keltic Gardens, Carter & Romans, Cow Bay, Cherry Brook there has been significant growth beyond the early historic boundaries. There is great sentiment for certain individual elements like the Home of Sydney Crosby, the Black Cultural Centre, Cole Harbour Place and the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park with the Red Barn and Salt Marsh Trail. The struggle seems to be connecting all the elements into a package in order to strengthen the awareness, and promote how great it is to live, work and play around the Cole Harbour Estuary.

Identity and Connectivity are two of the three community values carried through this project. Sustainability is the third. So in particular, strategic decisions for areas like the Marine Drive Image Route, Forest Hills open spaces, Bissett Lake Park, and the Little Salmon River corridor can help to raise confidence in Identity, allow for better Connectivity, and therefore present opportunities to help reach Sustainability Values.

In order to prepare a Planning Framework, analysis has taken place through three filters. This approach was used at a municipal systems level as well as an individual park by park level. The 3 filters are:

1. **Functional Analysis Tool** (Appendix 1) was created to measure land capability and HRM's open space portfolio suitability according to 5 main categories:
 - a. Identity
 - b. Heritage Conservation
 - c. Recreation
 - d. Natural Systems Conservation
 - e. Connectivity/Mobility
2. **The Spatial Analysis** (Appendix 2) is measuring a park's service delivery distance depending on its classification – 500 metres and collector road impedances for neighbourhood parks, 2 kilometres for community parks, and 5 kilometres for district parks. For this study 10 kilometres were used for Regional Parks although they essentially service the entire region. Of particular interest was the service delivery overlap. The spatial analysis was also used to measure the 500 metre walkability distance of all the parks regardless of classification.
3. **A Residential Unit Density Analysis** is a reflection of a housing unit count captured as part of the spatial analysis and provides a general awareness of demographics in family unit, age categories, and population counts.

4.2.1 Park Analysis

Key findings of the park analysis are found in the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) to assist in strategic decisions for lands. Site assessments were based on analysis of the functional, spatial and density filters. Conclusions included statements of high, moderate, or low land capability to perform well with respect to Identity, Heritage Conservation, Recreation, Natural Systems Conservation, and Connectivity/Mobility. This approach also revealed varying levels of service delivery overlap with similar classified parks. For example, 11 community parks (including school grounds) were recorded as being overlapped by 10 or more community parks with the 2 kilometre service delivery radius. These parks need to be analysed more closely for the cost benefit and need for outdoor recreation facility investments. Other findings revealed that 5 neighbourhood parks performed low in service delivery in either land function, spatial, and/or unit count and should be analysed further for municipal use. The results are clear – some properties have a higher strategic value than others and should be invested in accordingly.

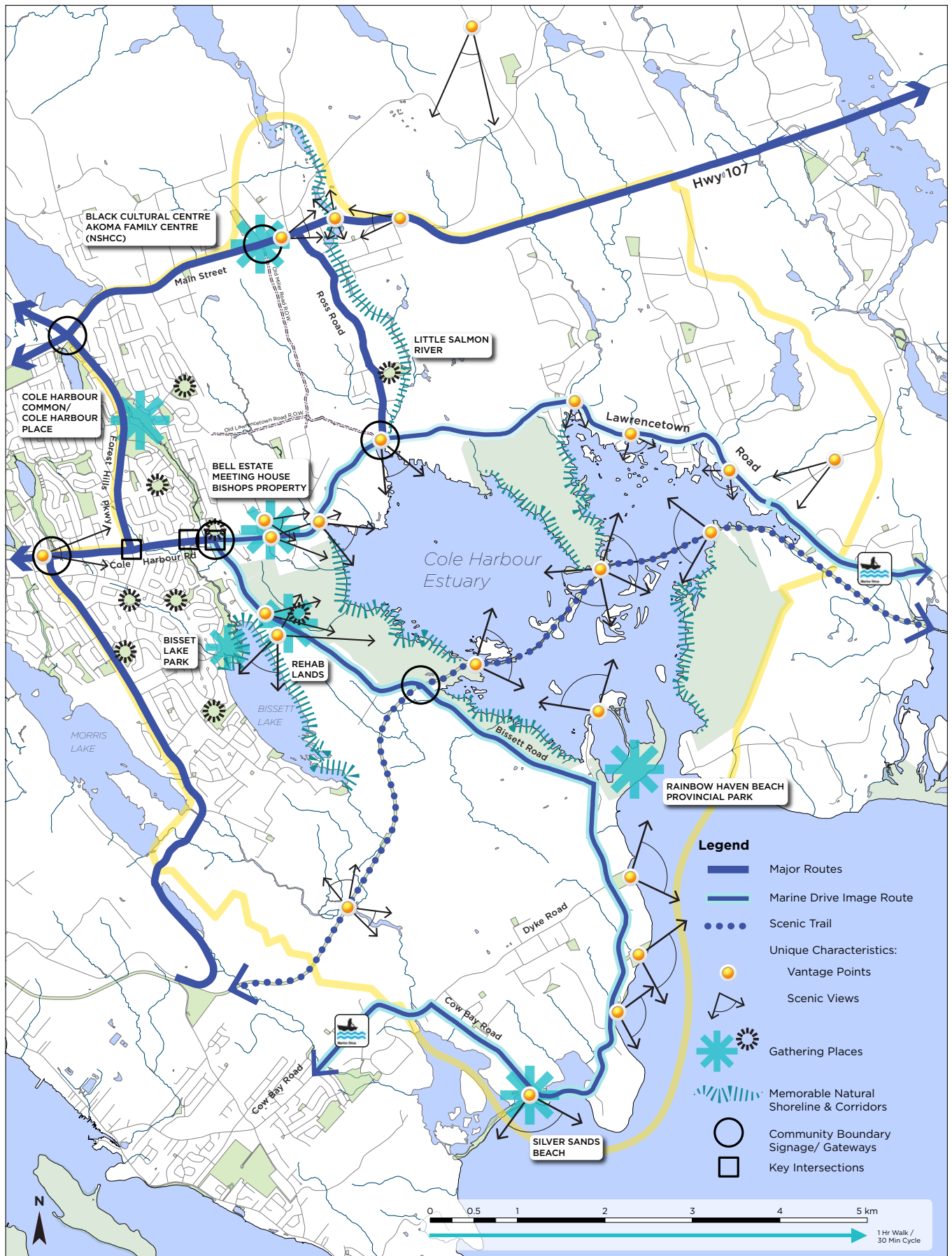
4.2.2 Open Space System Analysis

This approach has produced a series of Functional Analysis maps which illustrate the results described below.

Identity

Identity or sense of place, evaluates the land from the perspective of being memorable due to the presence of unique characteristics like views, size, natural or engineered features; familiar awareness or presence of location for the journey there like wayfinding signage; and for the sense of belonging once you have arrived. It evaluates the land's capability to present opportunity for social cohesion, facilitation of frequent visits for various lengths of time, and minimal nuisance to the neighbourhood like noise, lighting, traffic, etc.

Cole Harbour Heritage Park and Bissett Road affords high levels of social cohesion in a character landscape. Bissett Road design at the main entrance of the park struggles to accommodate all users of the road corridor. The arson destruction of the Red Barn has left a big void in the sense of place that was easy to describe for potential visitors.



Rainbow Haven Beach Provincial Park is the coastal beach gathering place in the summer months. Social cohesion is very strong and to the point where on-site parking facility in the park, the road network and intersections like Bissett/Cole Harbour Road leading visitors to the park are under significant pressure for solutions.

Open space landscapes that reflect identity throughout the Cole Harbour Basin include:

Key open space gathering places of Forest Hills, Cole Harbour Place, Black Cultural Centre, Cole Harbour Meeting House, Coastal Heritage Park, Bissett Lake Park, Rainbow Haven Beach Park, and Silversands Beach Park. Issues impacting identity include recreation facility quality (benches to ball fields), marketing and promotion (signage and wayfinding), synergies in land use design and construction (complete streets to complete parks), more public access to the gems (land acquisition), and health of the natural environment systems.

- a) **The Cole Harbour Estuary** - the healthy well-being of the estuary is paramount to the community's sense of place. The human ability to touch the water, dig the clams, witness a storm brewing, paddle the coves, and watch the eagles and herons fish. It is important for this ability to experience life around the estuary from a variety of vantage points; be it on foot, bicycle, horseback, or by car. The competition for space to witness and share these experiential assessments is growing relative to the positive marketing of this place. Consideration needs to be given to quality design, construction, and operation of the public corridors and gathering places that surround the estuary. Within the belt of the estuary sits a collection of unique features, vantage points with inspirational scenery.
- b) **The Little Salmon River** – the healthy well-being of the river is directly connected to the health of the estuary. This 4 kilometre north/south river corridor system is a direct link to the Lake Major Water Supply and has been popular for fishing. Tucked in behind Ross Road the most valuable identifiable glimpses of the river system is where Lawrencetown Road and Highway #107 cross over with concrete bridges. The industrial uses along the west side of the river tend to compromise the positive identity of the river with evidence of the occasional tire that has floated downstream into the estuary. The east side of the river corridor appears less threatened.
- c) **The Marine Drive Image Route** – as a provincially designated scenic route along [Nova Scotia's Eastern Shore](#) that closely follows the coast of the [Atlantic Ocean](#), the travelling experience plays a big role in how residents and visitors identify with Cow Bay, Rainbow Haven, Long Hill, and the Cole Harbour Estuary.
- d) **Gathering Places**
 - **Rainbow Haven Beach** – the social cohesion in a natural environment at the buckle of a belt that presents memorable experiences.
 - **Cole Harbour Place** – very visible along the Forest Hills Parkway, CHP has long been known for its ability to attract the community and beyond for its sports facilities as well as library institution and health and wellness clinic. It also has the ability to host major community events such as the Cole Harbour Harvest Festival.



- **Bissett Lake Park** – has strong identity with Colby Village residents for its passive recreation opportunities and ability to protect the natural systems of Bissett Lake. Some negative experiences exist with the wayfinding and car parking and sport tournament use.



- **Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park/NS Rehab Hospital Lands/Bissett Road** - when travelling south on Bissett Road you round the corner and this area opens up the identity. This area acts as the anchor for a cultural core with its inspirational scenery of the farm fields, forest, and estuary. Aside from the utility corridor clutter, Bissett road acts like a driveway through the park.



- **Cole Harbour Meeting House** – as the Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society's first project, in 1973, the former Methodist Chapel is a recognizable feature when travelling over Cole Harbour Road's Long Hill. Now designated a

provincial heritage property it offers opportunity for social cohesion in annual Harvest Services, exhibits, and special events like weddings but struggles with access and capacity.



- **Barbara Bell Estate** – the site offers excellent views from Long Hill toward the Estuary. Together with the CH Meeting House and Bishop’s property envelopes the Cole Harbour Road as a very identifiable portion of the Long Hill view corridor.



- **Black Cultural Centre** – offers a strong identity from its surrounding communities. There is evidence that this centre offers history that has been shaped by artifacts that remain central to so many people’s lives and there are efforts to create a place that is “alive and keeps moving”.



- **Silversands Beach Park** – at one time the home of a dance hall (1930s) this beach and look-off presents opportunity for social cohesion and surfing recreation. The beach which extends for a kilometre and a half was a popular destination for people from Dartmouth area by 1850. In the 1930s, a dance hall and canteen were built but unfortunately, over time, the Silver Sands Beach was being destroyed by the removal of sand for construction of the container piers in Halifax Harbour and to build the runway at CFB Shearwater Airport. Removal of sand left the beaches vulnerable to the erosion of the tides until the provincial government decided to step in and pass legislation to protect beaches from sand removal.



- e) **Community Gateways and Key Intersections** – the clear sense of place and knowing where you are is an identity feature worthy of investment.
- Entering Cole Harbour from Dartmouth on Cole Harbour Road at the intersection with Caldwell Road and Dorothea.



- Travelling along the front door to Cherrybrook on Main Street at the intersection with Cherrybrook Road and the Old Miller Road corridor.
 - Intersecting with Cole Harbour Road at Forest Hills Parkway, Perron Drive, Bissett Road, and Ross Road
 - Travelling along Bissett Road and entering the intersection with the Salt Marsh and Shearwater Flyer Trails at the border of Cole Harbour and Cow Bay communities.
 - Cole Harbour Road/Ross Road/Little Salmon River/Old Lawrencetown Road (Cole Harbour/Lawrencetown)
 - Forest Hills Parkway/Main Street
- f) **Long Hill** – the experiential assessment of travelers leaving the curb and sidewalk suburban settlement cresting the hilltop and entering the rural open space is critical to this character landscape identity. The Long Hill corridor plays host to an increasing diversity of travelers – pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists and competition for space is mounting. Experiencing the pasture land, farm buildings, and un-cluttered view of the CH Basin at different paces is critical to this open space function of identity.



g) **Corridors**

- Marine Drive Image Route (Bissett Road/Cole Harbour Road/Lawrencetown Road)
- Scenic Trail (Salt Marsh/Shearwater Flyer Trail)
- Major Routes of Cole Harbour Road, Forest Hills Parkway, Ross Road, Caldwell Road

h) Natural ecosystems corridors and shorelines

- Little Salmon River



- Cole Harbour Estuary



i) Scenic Views and Vantage Points

- Long Hill
- Rainbow Haven Beach Park & Silversands Beach Park
- Along the Cole Harbour Causeway section of the Salt Marsh Trail
- Along the Marine Drive where it touches the Estuary and Bissett Road along the Coastal Heritage Provincial Park/Rehab Lands
- Parks along Cow Bay Road
- Main Street through the Little Salmon River Valley

Heritage Conservation

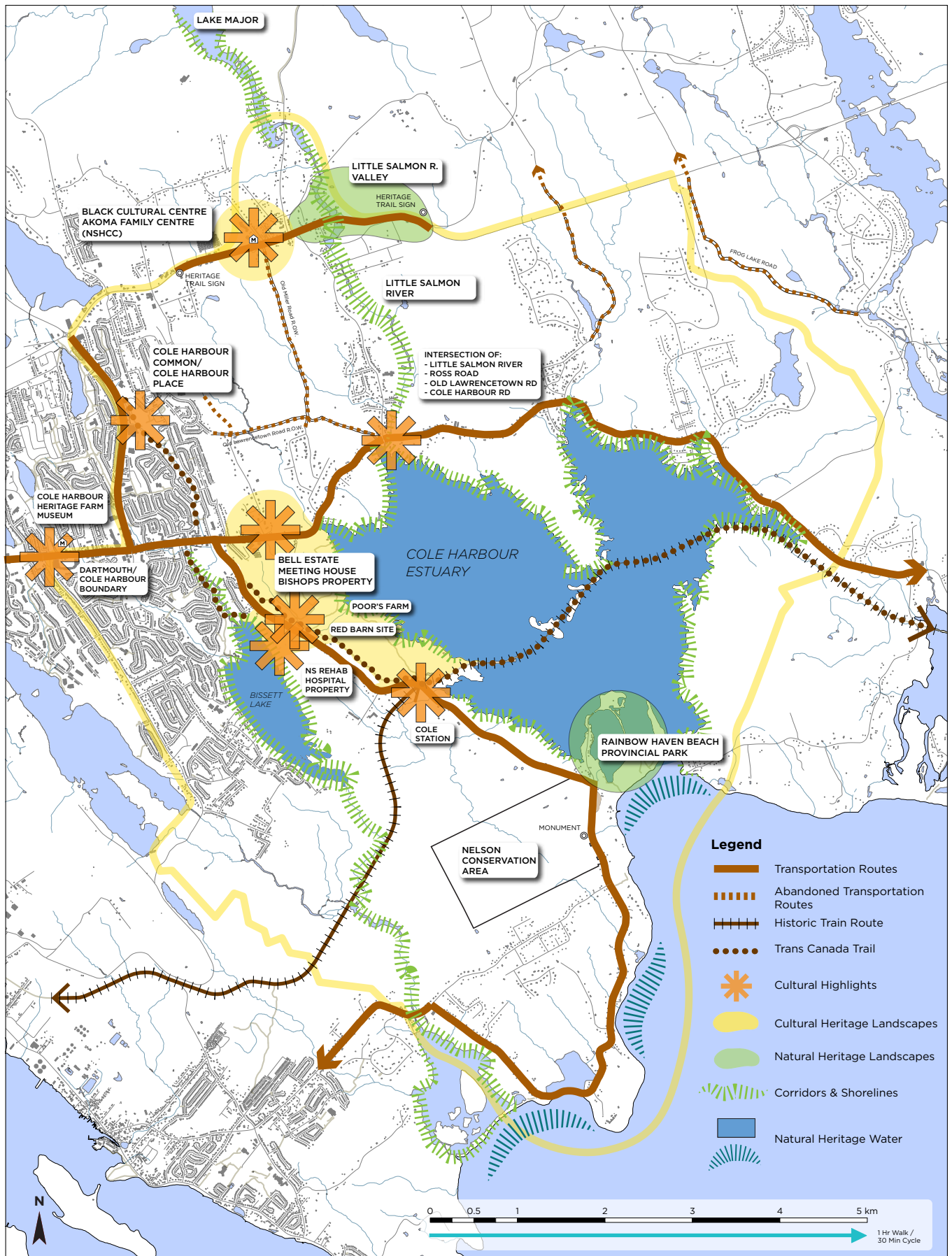
This analysis considers the value of open space based on its capability to support natural heritage or cultural heritage conservation function.



Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage presents examples of human landscape adaptation or evolution - when people alter their relationship to a habitat in order to make that habitat a fit place to live according to their shared values. For example: Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park - Forestry to agriculture to recreation. The Estuary - Fishing to transportation to recreation & fishing. Cole Harbour Place – forest, marsh, to hockey rink to a multi-purpose recreational and institutional campus. The Rail line – rail transportation thoroughfare connecting communities to a Greenway corridor with trails. Potential: Bissett Road – motorized transportation thoroughfare to complete street parkway. Rehab Lands – controlled institutional use to a pad ready site able to accommodate a variety of recreational, agricultural, and even residential uses.





The analysis revealed the following cultural heritage landscape elements:

- a) **The Cole Harbour Basin Cultural Core** - The area of the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and Red Barn foundation, western shore of the Estuary, Rehab Lands, Colonel John Stewart Elementary School, Bissett Road, Cole Harbour Meeting House, Bell/Davies/Bishop Estates, Long Hill, Bissett Lake Park & Conservation Area is a collection of evolving heritage landscapes. This evolving landscape contains these built legacies, natural legacies with inspirational scenery to frame what would be identifiable as a cultural core. Currently, this collection will continue to evolve as it is only threaded together with the Marine Drive Image Route and is not very well organized or promoted. Because of the design nature of Cole Harbour Road and Bissett Road access to this “Cultural Core” area tends to exclude family cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. The strong desire is to protect and promote the inspirational scenery and the seasonal agricultural landscapes and the key built features found within. It is important to preserve defining characteristics such as:
- The inspirational scenery of the estuary and its shorelines
 - The agricultural landscape of pasture and forest groves
 - The rural road corridor and grassed ditches
 - The scattered collection of social gathering and agricultural buildings



- b) **The former NS Rehab Hospital Property** - The former Rehab Hospital lands were selected and developed in large part to the isolated, tranquil and visually inspiring setting. The land use moved from the area known as the Poors Farm in the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park 1 kilometre northwest to the top of the watershed ridge and drumlin to the west. The now demolished hospital building itself was designed and built as a secure institution intended to protect those inside and out. Today an opportunity exists to show case this heritage landscape and connect people to it through modern design and construction.



- c) **The Cherrybrook Cultural Core** – the landscape of the Cherrybrook/Westphal/Prestons Community Boundaries contains the collection of social heritage features like the Black Cultural Centre, Akoma Family Centre (formerly the NS Home for Coloured Children NSHCC), Graham Creighton Junior Highschool, and New Beginnings Church. This collection adjacent to the Little Salmon River Valley warrants consideration for a Cultural Core recognition. It is important to preserve defining characteristics such as:

- The adjacent inspirational forested scenery of the Little Salmon River Valley
- The agricultural landscape of the former NSHCC
- The collection of social gathering places
- The labeled “Preston Heritage Trail” along Main Street/Highway #107
- The Old Miller Road Corridor to connect to the Cole Harbour Estuary



- d) **The Marine Drive Image Route** - along Cole Harbour Road and Bissett Road is a key corridor that connects many of the key cultural features like the CH Meeting House, Bishops Property, Red Barn site, Rehab Lands, Cole Station, and Rainbow Haven

Beach. Competition for use of the corridor is increasing with additional interest from cyclists and pedestrians.

- e) **The Trans Canada Trail** – through the study area to date is a significant social heritage accomplishment with significant community volunteer efforts. Many gaps in the system still exist that need to be constructed to complete the vision of a linear legacy connected to the rest of Canada.
- f) **The Cole Harbour/Dartmouth Community Boundary** – at the intersection of Cole Harbour Road/Caldwell Road/Dorothea Street provides the traditional gateway between the two communities and presents a view to the Estuary. The public open space that contains the road intersection and the Settle Lake Park needs to better reflect this entrance into the Cole Harbour Basin of communities through landscaping, complete street intersection treatment and promotion.
- g) **The Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum** – isolated behind the commercial sector of Cole Harbour Road, this quaint collection of farm buildings is a wonderful representation of the cultural heritage but its setting has been encroached upon and has lost some of its inspirational charm.



- h) **Cole Harbour Place** - is a collection of more modern cultural with health, sport, institutional, and celebration features inside and out. The spatial relationship with the rest of the Forest Hills Park Campus (CH Highschool, Gordon Bell Annex, and Sportfields) needs to improve with mobility connections and open space use. This could include the establishment of an accessible trailhead connection from CHP to the Trans Canada Trail.
- i) **The former Rail-line complete with Cole Station and the Cole Harbour Causeway** - present an historical connection between Dartmouth and Musquodoboit and travels through the Estuary. The Causeway has presented compromise on the natural tidal flows and flushing action through the Estuary, but has apparently stabilized. Sea Level rise and natural weather conditions have been threatening the stability of the Causeway. The public's affection for the experience of travelling through the Estuary has been evident in public consultations and requests for financial investment. From a cost benefit analysis perspective, modern engineering and design need to be applied to strengthen the Causeway and ensure a healthy estuary.



- j) **The Red Barn** - is missed because of its display of agricultural traditions. It should be rebuilt. An excellent opportunity exists to design the building to maintain the original agricultural character but also meet modern diverse needs. Modern diverse needs usually translate into more investment and therefore construction financing needs to be closely considered and perhaps phased. The Province, as the owner, is playing a lead role in the Red Barn's design and reconstruction.



- k) **The Utility Corridors** – in particular the modern utility infrastructure's visual impact on the heritage landscape. NS Power's transmission line from Main Street to Eastern Passage will travel along HRM's street right of way through the proposed Cultural Core. It is clear that visible utility infrastructure can contrast with cultural heritage and identity values and therefore impact efforts for cultural heritage conservation. With the route alignment conceptually defined, obvious and subtle design elements of the infrastructure will need to be influenced by HRM. NSPI has agreed to consult with HRM on the design details. Discussions should start with pole location, spacing, color, and material.
- l) **The mouth of the Little Salmon River** – where it meets the Estuary is the landscape on which First Nations encamped while harvesting the bounties of the sea.



Natural Heritage

Natural heritage are landscapes that people have an affinity for. There is less concern for the natural processes within but the fact that they are there and can be freely enjoyed on a daily basis. Landscapes that display natural heritage include:

- a) **Rainbow Haven Beach** - forms the transition from Atlantic Ocean to Cole Harbour Estuary and is a very popular destination for summer time recreation and leisure that presents great opportunity to touch the ocean and experience this unique natural environment. It is important to conserve this natural legacy, understand and manage the human pressures such as car parking and rural residential settlement, and connect this park with complete streets and trails.
- b) **The Cole Harbour Estuary** - is a natural feature with a watershed area that stretches northward to include the Lake Major Water Supply area. For some time there has been concern over the health of the estuary with a public consensus that they desire a healthy estuary. There is a strong interest to be visually and physically connected to the estuary. Currently there is un-certainty in a coordinated effort to comprehensively plan the potential of the estuary – there is a need for a comprehensive land use vision.
 - It has been an important annual rejuvenation stop for migratory birds and fish.
 - The Estuary's scale is revealed where the Little Salmon River feeds it. The intersection of Hwy #207/Ross/Old Lawrencetown is placed within this unique natural environment. This intersection location and its approaches presents a wonderful opportunity to physically connect people to the Estuary.
 - It is important to conserve its defining characteristics such as:
 - i. The rocky shoreline and mud flats
 - ii. The ebb and flow of the tide
 - iii. The timing of the annual migration of fish and waterfowl
- c) **The Little Salmon River Corridor and Valley** – is a (shaping) natural heritage feature that feeds the Cole Harbour Estuary and connects with Lake Major. When considering the health of the Estuary one must also factor in the health of the Little Salmon River

Corridor. Visible where it leaves Lake Major, crosses Highway #107, and where it enters the Estuary at Cole Harbour Road/Ross Road intersection the riparian corridor needs better recognition for its role in shaping the human settlement pattern.

- d) **Bissett Lake System** – is just on the west side of the Cole Harbour Estuary watershed ridge. It is a shaping natural heritage feature which has been compromised with suburban development. Bissett Lake itself is well known for its natural heritage value but the watercourse feeding and draining the lake has less recognition. Bissett Lake Park with its Trans Canada Trail construction offers excellent opportunities for highlighting this natural heritage gem.
- e) **The Atlantic Ocean Surf Breaks** – at Rainbow Haven, Minutes Surf Break, and Silversands Beach.

Recreation & Leisure

Recreation – evaluates the quality of land for its ability to support recreation and leisure activities and strengthening of community, and its functional capability based on the land's carrying capacity and programming versatility.

The Cole Harbour Basin contains an abundance of public open space intended for recreation and leisure. From a systems level approach these areas have been analysed as recreation areas, clustering of scheduled sport amenities, recreation destinations, and recreation corridors.

Cole Harbour Common (formerly known as the Forest Hills Common) – as a component of the Bissett Corridor Ribbon the Common is a collection of sport facilities and civic centre (Cole Harbour Place), engineered stormwater and Cole Harbour Highschool. As a primary gathering place levels of social cohesion are very high, but improvements to open space synergies and programming elements could be made.

Strategic Recreation Areas

Areas that perform well in land character, land capacity, and program versatility include:

- a) **The Cole Harbour Common** area that contains Cole Harbour Place, Cole Harbour Highschool grounds, Gordon Bell Annex, Trans Canada Trail and a clustering of sportfields, sportcourts, skateboard ramps, and parking lots.
- b) **The Cherry Brook recreation area** - The Black Cultural Centre/NSHCC/Akoma Family Centre/New Beginnings Church site/Graham Creighton Junior Highschool Grounds.
- c) **The Cultural Core** area that contains the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park, NS Rehab Hospital Lands, Bissett Lake Park, Bissett Road, Colonel John Stuart Elementary School Grounds (on the review list in the HRSB Imagine our Schools Study), Cole Harbour Meeting House, Bishop's Property, Cole Harbour Road, and the Trans Canada

Trail. The area has high land character in its connection to heritage conservation and natural systems conservation; has high passive recreation capacity due to the diversity of parks and institutional land uses; and has moderate versatility due to its uniqueness of heritage conservation and natural systems conservation features.

- d) **The Salt Marsh/Shearwater Flyer Trailhead at Bissett Road** – has unique land character in the engineering of the former rail line; has capacity pressure due to narrow width of the corridor; and is limited to a trailhead function. Efforts need to be made to design Bissett Road to accommodate and prepare for this intersection and trailhead.
- e) **Rainbow Haven Beach Provincial Park** – has unique land character due to its contact with the Atlantic Ocean; has motorist capacity pressure due to its popular service delivery extent during key weekends in July and August (parking lots and road networks are strained); has limited capability for recreation program versatility due to its natural barrier beach formation.



- f) **Silversands Beach Park** – has unique character due to its contact with the Atlantic Ocean; has capacity pressure due to its small entrance and staging area; has limited capability for recreation program versatility due to its limited size.





Satellite “Hub” Clustering

A clustering or grouping of recreation amenities

a) The area School Grounds:

- **Astral Elementary and Junior Highschool Grounds** – unique land character as a large open space block in the centre of the Colby Village suburban neighbourhood with a connection to Bissett Lake; moderate capacity with entrances from Astral Drive (narrow frontage) and Lakeshire Crescent (local street); moderate versatility capability with leveled, serviced ground but narrow Astral Drive frontage and local Lakeshire Crescent frontage.
- **Caldwell Road Elementary School Grounds** (on the review list from the HRSB Imagine Our Schools Study) - unique land character as a large open space block along a collector road that runs between the Colby Village and Portland Hills neighbourhoods; moderate capacity with a main entrance on Caldwell; and high program versatility
- **Colby Village Elementary School Grounds** – the site is working moderately well in recreation capability and is in a high service density with 13 other community parks serving approximately 4106 households. Topography presents challenges to see and reach the 2 scheduled sport fields.
- **George Bissett Elementary School Grounds** – the site is working well in recreation capability and is a high service density with 15 other community parks serving approximately 3147 households. The play field is not scheduled.

- **Ross Road Elementary and Junior Highschool Grounds** – the site is working moderately in recreation capability and its service density is shared with 6 other community parks and serves a low 289 units within 2 kilometres. The scheduled sport field is challenged to meet all Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles due to its hidden location behind the school building.

b) **Community Parks** including:

- **Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool and Tennis Complex** – are working well in functional capability and are in a high service density with 11 other community parks. It provides unique recreation in the form of a supervised swimming pool and a fenced sport court area. There is potential to connect with Bissett Lake Park via the brook corridor.
- **Sunset Acres Park** – is working well in recreation capability and is in a high service density shared with 11 other community parks. It is sport themed with increasing scheduled use of the baseball field.

Recreation Corridors

- a) **Cole Harbour Place to Rainbow Haven** – has the potential to function very well as a recreation corridor linking Cole Harbour Common, the Cole Harbour Heritage provincial Park, Bissett Lake Park, Salt Marsh/Shearwater Flyer Trail, and the Atlantic Ocean at Rainbow Haven. Barriers exist in crossing Cole Harbour Road at Bissett Road and at Perron Drive, and in traveling along Bissett Road. Gaps in trail construction and modern trail design standards exist within the Cole Harbour Common. The Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association have been working diligently to complete the gaps and upgrade the trails.
- b) **Cole Harbour Common to Mineville** – is functioning well along the abandoned Old Lawrencetown Road Corridor from the neighbourhood of Forest Hills to Ritcey Crescent with the recently completed gravel trail constructed by the Lawrencetown Cole Harbour Trail Association. Their vision is to link to the Estuary and also Ross Road School, and the neighbourhoods of Keltic Gardens, Carter & Romans, Beach Breeze to Mineville. The route will be challenged with crossing Ross Road, running along existing neighborhood streets and land acquisition.
- c) **Cherrybrook to Cole Harbour Estuary and the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park** – has potential to function well along the abandoned Old Miller Road corridor. The route will be challenged when designing a crossing of Main Street and Cole Harbour Road and designing a complete streets solution to Cole Harbour Road.
- d) **Bissett Lake Park to Silversands Beach Park** – has potential when using a combination of local streets, existing trails in Bissett Park, acquiring additional land,

using a portion of the Shearwater Flyer Trail, crossing Dyke Road and a complete streets version of a portion of Cow Bay Road.

- e) **Forest Hills Parkway** – has the potential to, as a complete street, serve a linear recreation connection between Cole Harbour Road and Main Street with Cole Harbour Common in between.
- f) **Cole Harbour Road/Flying Point Salt Marsh Trail/Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park/Bissett Road loop** – has potential to present an excellent, high performing recreation corridor. Challenges are the completion of the modernization of the Cole Harbour Causeway to withstand natural environment pressures; complete street design of Cole Harbour Road from Bissett to Flying Point; improvements to the area of Cole Harbour Road/Ross Road/Little Salmon River as a trailhead; and construction of a new trail on the provincially owned Flying Point to connect Lawrencetown Road to the Salt Marsh Trail.





- g) **Caldwell Road** – currently performs moderately as a recreation corridor with 50 kilometre posted speeds, sidewalks on both sides, and bike lanes. There is inconsistency in the sidewalk construction (asphalt and concrete) and in the number of street trees. The modifications to the intersection of Caldwell and Cole Harbour Road have improved the conditions for pedestrians with additional concrete sidewalk on the east side.

Natural Systems Conservation

Natural Systems Conservation - the land is evaluated for its capability to support or be an integral component of an ecological system with evidence of flora, fauna, stationary and migratory, and hydrological elements.

From a watershed natural systems approach it is clear that the system runs north south while the human influence tends to run east west crossing key natural systems like the Little Salmon River corridor. Mitigation efforts such as bridges and culverts have been put in place to direct the freshwater and tidal surge in order to prevent damage to road and causeway infrastructure. Some of these efforts do however, fall short of providing for wildlife migration.

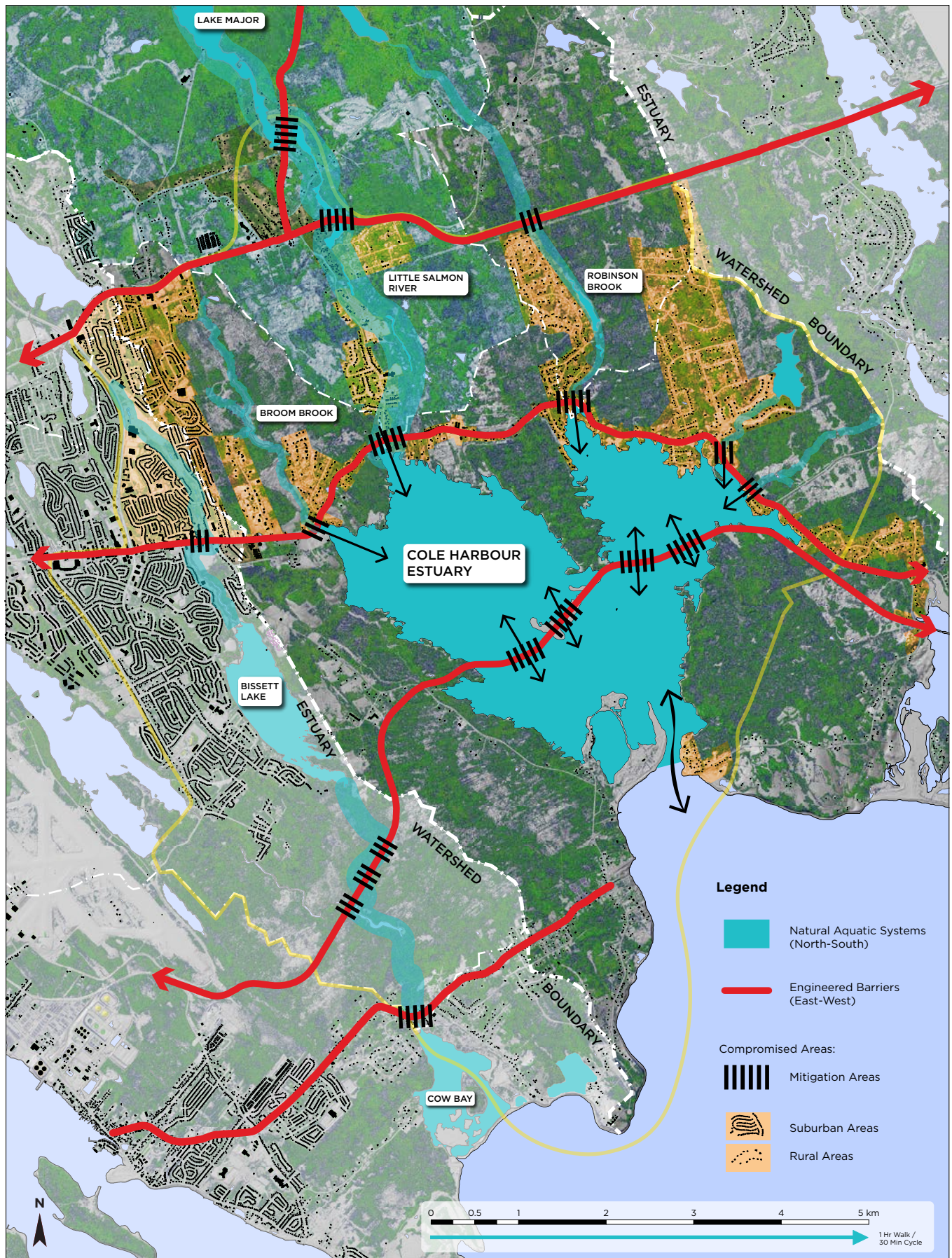
Human influence of residential and commercial land use has also compromised the natural system by affecting stormwater flow, wetland filtering capability, riparian buffer filtering capability, and water quality. There is an abundance of “citizen science” related to the estuary but no modern biological science.

- a) **The Cole Harbour Estuary Watershed** - Environmentally, modern data on the health of the Estuary and its tributaries is not available. To understand what the environmental quality of the estuary is and whether it is sustainable, an environmental study of the Estuary’s watershed is required. Natural effects like tidal flow, storm surge, and climate

need to be considered together with land use surrounding the estuary and upstream along the tributaries like the Little Salmon River. Government jurisdiction includes the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Provincially the Department of Natural Resources. The following list represents a recording of issues:

- Significant municipal, provincial, and federal policy exists to protect the Estuary but there is little modern ecological science of the current baseline status.
- There is a lack of coordinated effort to produce a scientific watershed study with the Estuary as the receiving water.
- Future Watershed Study terms of reference must identify the Estuary as the receiving waterbody.
- The natural north/south flow of the natural system via Little Salmon River, Robinson Brook, Broom Brook and the mouth of the Estuary at Rainbow Haven
- The flora & fauna migratory barriers of human settlement with roads, causeways, homes, institutions and businesses.
- The mitigation design solutions of the human settlement constraints on natural systems; ie. bridges, culverts, ditches, and pipes
- Stresses of suburban and rural development that compromise the watershed's natural systems capability.





- b) **The Little Salmon River Corridor** – as the main tributary to the Estuary, this riparian corridor natural system has been significantly compromised along its western shoreline with human settlement in the form of roads, homes and businesses. Barriers and engineered mitigation include:
- Lake Major Water Supply with the dam
 - Lake Major Road with the bridge
 - Highway #107 with the bridge
 - Lawrencetown Road (#207) with the bridge
 - The parallel Ross Road corridor of homes and businesses with rural density and minimal riparian buffer
- c) **The Cow Bay Estuary Watershed** – environmentally this watershed is on a smaller scale than the Cole Harbour Estuary and there has been a significantly higher amount of natural systems compromise and engineered mitigation efforts put in place. Bissett Lake and Bissett Run tributary are the most easterly component of the watershed. Not unlike the issues of the CH Estuary our analysis reveals:
- The health of Bissett Lake is uncertain
 - The natural system has been significantly compromised at the headwater with human settlement in Forest Hills. Downstream the compromise continues on the west side of Bissett Lake with Colby Village.
 - The assembly of municipal open space known as Bissett Lake Park performs very well in natural systems conservation.
 - A significant wetland system and high water table area exists between Bissett Lake and Cow Bay.



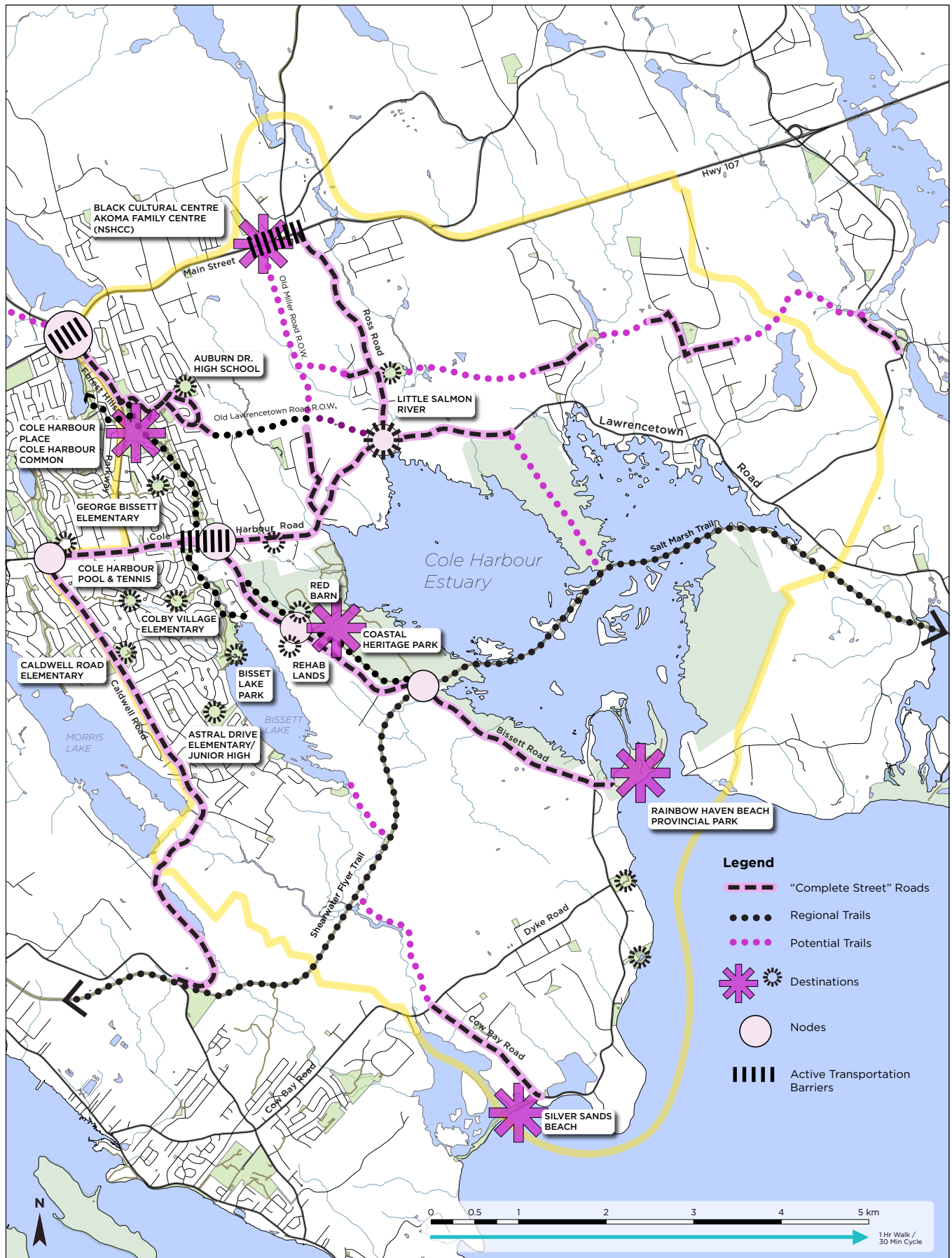
Connectivity & Mobility

Connectivity & Mobility (Context and Access) – the land is evaluated for its capability to function as part of a recreation and transportation network.

It appears that much of the public open space infrastructure including streetscapes have developed from an evolutionary process. Highway #207 started off as a coastal shoreline east west transportation link built by 20 soldiers in 1754. Decisions for major capital investment into a road for cars and trucks were made at a time of cheap fuel, cheap land, and less awareness of the car's influence on the natural environment. Today the concept of “complete streets” is taking hold in the United States which is leading to streetscape design that balances motorized and non-motorized forms of transportation and blends in natural ecosystems to create an open space environment people can get out of their cars and identify with.

Within the study area and in particular around the Estuary, there appears to be a weakness in how open spaces are currently connected and how accessible and walkable they are including:

- a) **The Cole Harbour Heritage Park** - could be accessible from Cole Harbour Road. The Evangel Pentecostal Church Property designed with its large parking lot, sideyard combined with the Cole Harbour Meeting House could present an opportunity for a designed and built park entrance within walking distance for several nearby neighbourhoods like Forest Hills, Ritcey Crescent, and Coleridge Estates. Partnership with land owners will be a pre-requisite.
- b) **Access to the Estuary** – at the junction of Cole Harbour Road/Ross Road/Old Lawrencetown Road/Little Salmon River.
- c) **Access to the Cole Harbour Heritage Park** – from Cole Harbour Road in the area of the Cole Harbour Meeting House.
- d) **The Trans Canada Trail** - The neighbourhoods of Colby, Forest Hills, Coleridge are adjacent to the Estuary and the parks that surround it. Design and construction of the existing trail and the road system need investment to overcome barriers and encourage walking and cycling. As a first step, the Bissett Run trail and bridge connection gives Colby Village improved identity with Bissett Road and the Coastal Heritage Provincial Park.
- e) **Bissett Road** - acts like a driveway through and to a park and forms part of this special place. It could be considered one of HRM's true “parkways” if it were designed and constructed with “complete streets” parkway standards





- f) **The Cole Harbour Road/Bissett Road/John Stewart Road/Perron Street intersection** - is a transition point between rural and urban; is a cross roads for destination decision making; and is a gateway to reach Rainbow Haven to the southeast, Cole Harbour Place to the northwest, and Lawrencetown Beach Provincial Park 14 kms to the east. Its current design although somewhat improved at Bissett Road is a barrier to creating a more accessible and walkable community. Destinations like Colonel John Stewart Elementary School, retail businesses on Cole Harbour Road, Coastal Heritage Park, Cole Harbour Meeting House, Cole Harbour Woodside United Church are all within a 10 minute walk for approximately 1000 households. Observations reveal that the design and construction of this intersection and its approaches present barriers to pedestrians and cyclists and motorist frustration is evident in the risk taking and accident statistics. It is also an intersection that receives dramatic spikes in use depending on the season and the use of Rainbow Haven Beach Provincial Park. The small grassed median and relocated push button crosswalk at Bissett has assisted in keeping eastbound Cole Harbour Road traffic at a reasonable speed and has provided pedestrians with some refuge. A “Complete Streets” policy and supporting Municipal Red Book design standards for driving lanes, geometry, turning movements, crossing distances, refuge islands, landscaping will all play a role in elevating this section of road from a barrier to a Gateway.
- g) **Strategic Regional, District and Community Destinations & Nodes** - that initiate conversation and offer places of civic pride are welcoming and at a human scale of the place extends to how people arrive and depart – baseline is the pedestrian. Each one of the routes to the above mentioned destinations have barriers to comfortable pedestrian access thereby stifling some civic pride. Barriers such as wide road crossings requiring school season supervision, lack of sidewalks, lack of marked cycling facilities, lack of wayfinding signage.
- h) **The Marine Drive Image Route** - designated on Bissett Road, Cole Harbour Road, Lawrencetown Road is a very popular travel corridor that is under pressure to accommodate the increasing competition for space by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike. It strings together a number of unique characteristics such as Silversands Beach, Rainbow Haven Beach, Salt Marsh/Shearwater Flyer Trail, Coastal

Heritage Provincial Park, NS Hospital Rehab Lands, Long Hill with the Cole Harbour Meeting House, Bell Estate, Bishop's/Davies' Property, Little Salmon River, and touches the shoreline of the Estuary with at least five picturesque vantage points.

i) **Destinations**

- Forrest Hills Common/Cole Harbour Place/Auburn Drive Highschool/Gordon Bell Annex Park
- Black Cultural Centre/Akoma Family Centre
- Rainbow Haven Beach Park
- Cole Harbour Heritage Park
- Silversands Beach Park
- Cole Harbour Meeting House
- The Red Barn
- NS Rehab Hospital Lands
- Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park
- School Grounds

j) **Nodes**

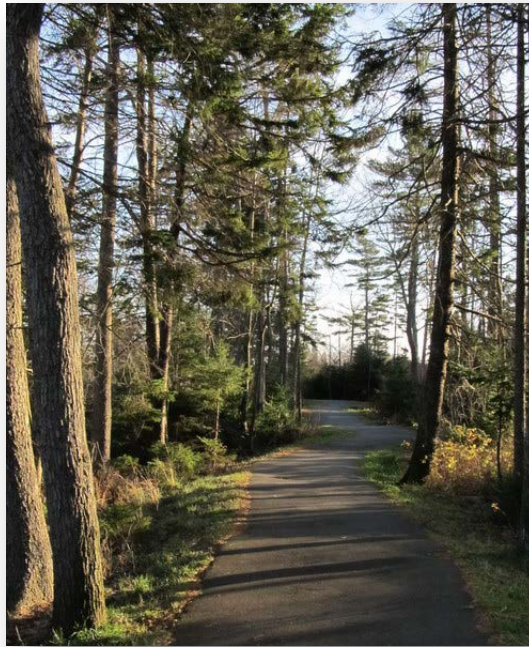
- CH Road/Caldwell Road/Dorothea Drive
- CH Road/John Stewart/Bissett/Colonel John Stuart Elementary School Park
- CH Road/Old Lawrencetown Road/Ross Road/Little Salmon River
- Red Barn site/NS Rehab Hospital Lands entrance
- Bissett Road/Salt Marsh Trail/Shearwater Flyer

k) **Complete Street corridors**

- Cole Harbour Road from Caldwell to Flying Point
- Bissett Road
- Caldwell Road
- Ross Road
- Forest Hills Parkway
- Auburn Drive/Hirandale Crescent, Glendale Drive, Schooner Drive, Trevor/Michelle/Doherty, Mineville Road (Partridge River to Candy Mountain Road)
- Old Miller Road
- Coleridge Court
- Cow Bay Road from Dyke Road to Silversands Beach Park

l) **Trail Corridors**

- Main Street/Forest Hills Parkway intersection to the Coastal Heritage Park via existing and planned Trans Canada Trail.
- Cole Harbour Common to Lawrencetown Lake via existing Old Lawrencetown, Old Miller Road Corridors, Ross Road School Park, and potential Keltic Gardens, Carter & Romans, Beach Breeze, and Mineville corridor.

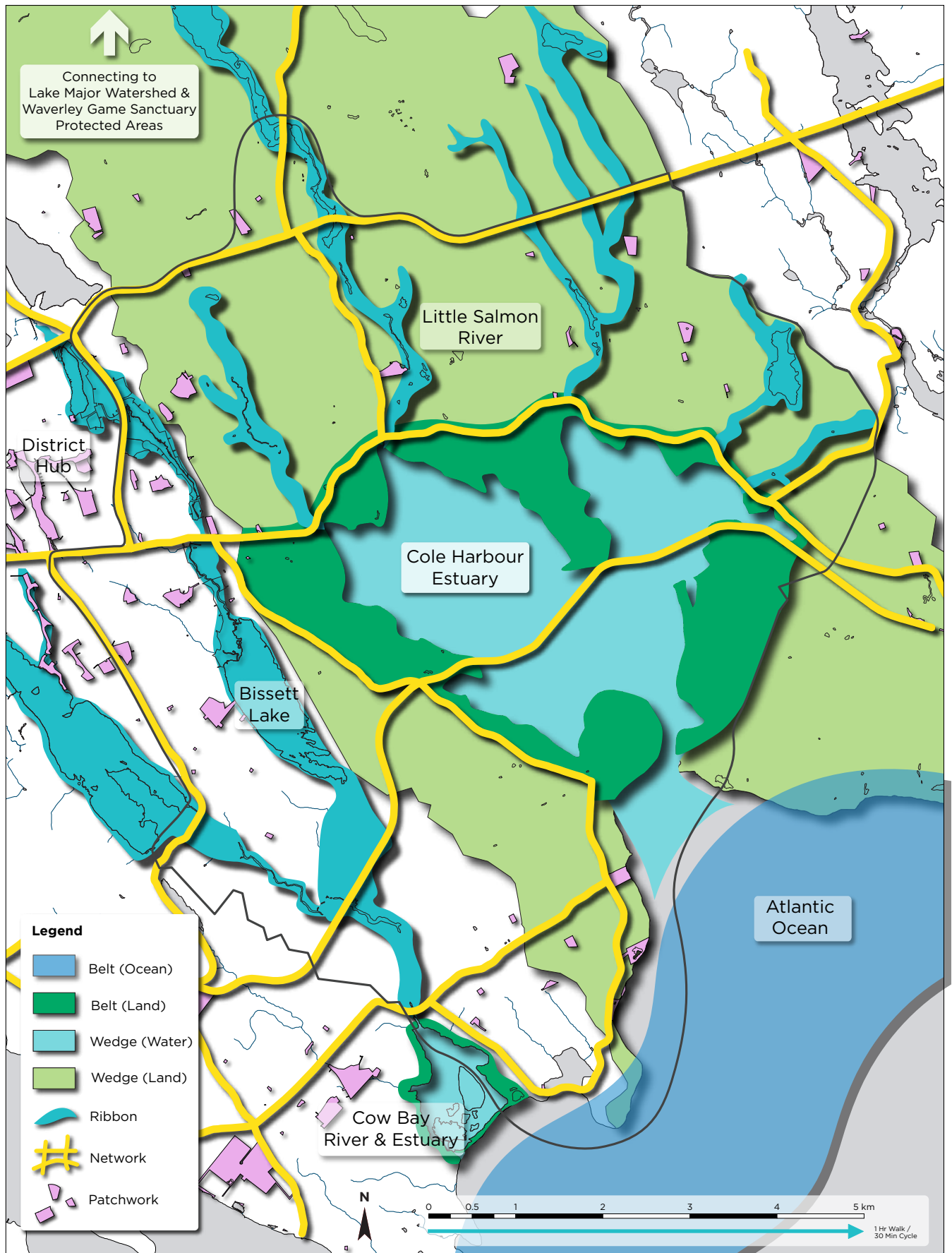


- Cherry Brook to the Cole Harbour Estuary/Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park via Old Miller Road/Old Lawrencetown Road Corridor potential
- Lawrencetown Road to the Cole Harbour Causeway via Flying Point Trail potential

m) **Active Transportation Barriers**

- Cole Harbour Road from Perron to Bissett Road
- Main Street/Forest Hills Parkway intersection
- Main Street/Cherrybrook Road/Old Miller Road intersection

In summary, by analyzing the major open space functions, concentrations and patterns have emerged which are highlighted through six open space focus areas within the study boundary.



CHAPTER 5 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

5.1 Information Synthesis

The analysis shows that many great community assets and open spaces already exist but are compromised by weak identity and connectivity and could be improved through strategic investment, good planning, careful development and design, and stewardship. Of interest is the finding that the natural systems tend to run north/south while human settlement and development tends to run east west creating physical barriers and design conflicts that should be addressed. Another observation is that there is a great quantity of public lands serving the area however the quality, especially in public parks, of some holdings is lower than is desired. Feedback from the public and HRM staff is that the large quantity of public lands and parks dilutes the municipality's ability to focus on quality with the resources available. There is a strong desire to create a focussed management plan.

During the synthesis process planning focus areas were identified to organize multiple open space planning and development issues and opportunities.

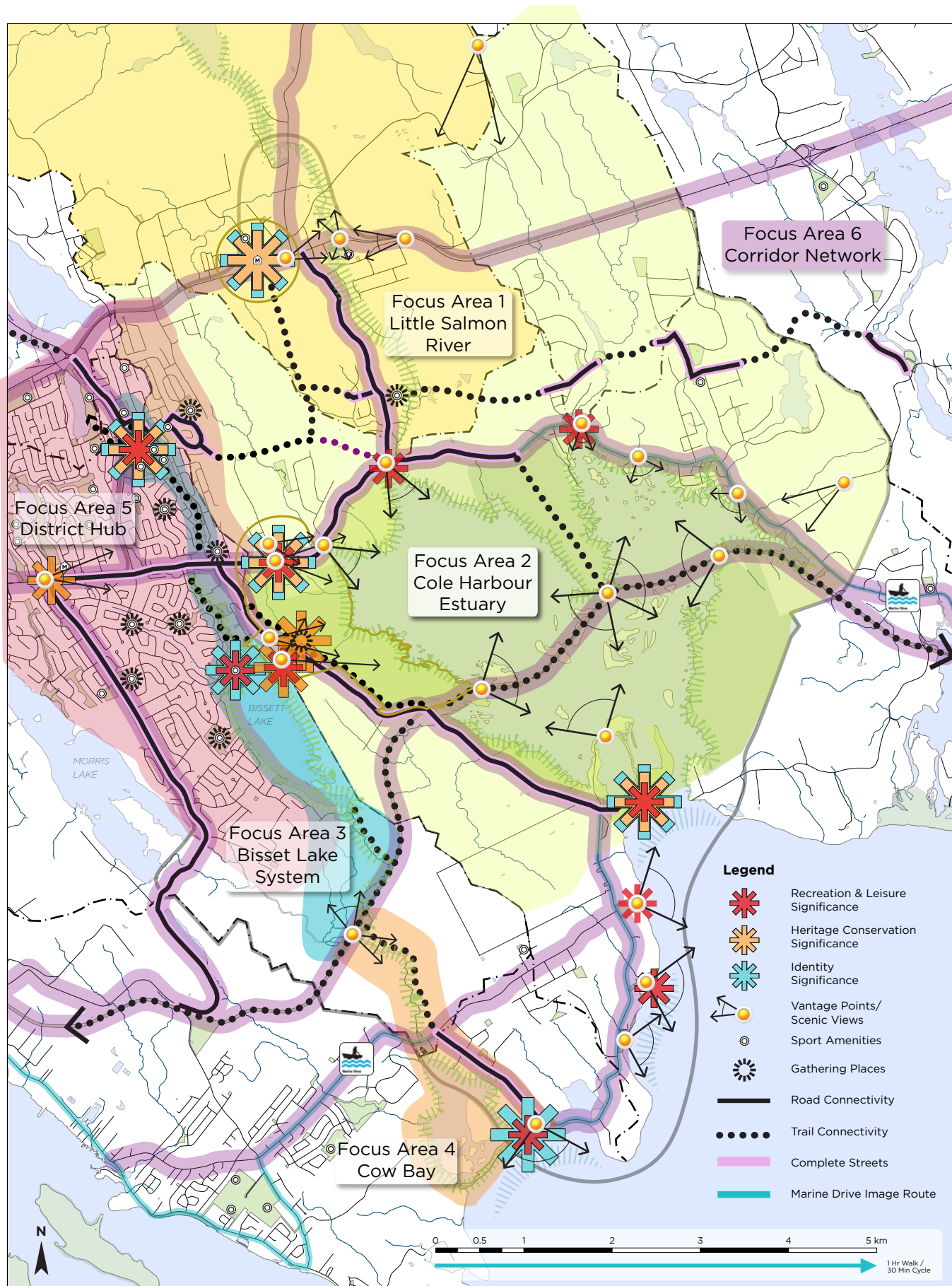
These six (6) focus areas are the foundation of the *Planning Framework* and are described as follows:

1. Little Salmon River Corridor – its watershed area
2. Cole Harbour Estuary – as the body of water and the surrounding “belt”
3. Bissett Lake System – Cole Harbour Common to Shearwater Flyer Trail Corridor
4. Cow Bay Estuary & Cow Bay River Corridor – as the Cow Bay River corridor, estuary, and surrounding “belt”
5. District Hub – as the neighbourhoods of Forest Hills and Colby Village
6. Corridor Network – as the streets and trails that connect landscapes and communities

5.1.2 Open Space Focus Areas

Focus Area 1: The Little Salmon River Corridor

The Little Salmon River Corridor and its watershed scores high in its capability to support Identity, Heritage Conservation, and Natural Systems Conservation. It requires a high level of protection and management. There exist mechanisms to protect intact environmentally sensitive areas such as a minimum 20 metre wide riparian and wetland buffer and design for sustainable human settlement through “low impact” development and conservation design. Low impact principles should also be applied to publically-owned lands, facilities, and infrastructure such as permeable surfaces; minimal ecological habitat alteration, water and soil recharge practices, and riparian buffer criteria.



Synthesis Planning Framework

Map 19

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

October 2013

Strategic directions include:

- Clear delineation and protective measures for the river's riparian corridors
- Support for low impact conservation design for development through future planning and regulatory review
- Where necessary public land acquisition of conservation areas
- Low impact design, construction, and management of public parks and corridors Highway #107, Lawrencetown Road, Lake Major Road bridge design to include riparian buffer distances to maintain diversity between interior and coastal ecosystems
- Ensure fish passage through to Lake Major
- Future planning boundaries to better reflect the watershed areas
- Ecological and cultural heritage conservation approaches for settlement within the corridor of the Little Salmon River
- Careful design and construction attention to the mouth of the Little Salmon River at the intersection of Cole Harbour/Ross/Old Lawrencetown Roads to reflect identity, heritage conservation, recreation, natural systems, and connectivity.

Focus Area 2: The Cole Harbour Estuary

The Cole Harbour Estuary and its shore direct watershed basin scores high in its capability to support identity, heritage conservation, recreation, natural systems conservation, and connectivity values. It requires a high level of protection. This includes ecological study and habitat protection, environmentally sustainable human settlement through conservation design principles and low impact passive recreation. Healthy tidal flow around the Cole Harbour Causeway and public awareness is also important.

Strategic directions include:

- Protection of the Cole Harbour Estuary and it's natural systems
- Ecologic and land suitability based watershed study with the estuary as the receiving waters triggered by settlement and or MPS review
- Promoting key views illustrating Natural and Cultural Heritage and Identity along the Marine Drive, Long Hill, NS Rehab Hospital Lands, Salt Marsh Trail through sensitive utility design, vegetation management, land acquisition, and future planning review opportunities
- Protection of the area of where the Little Salmon River meets the Estuary as critical to the health of the natural system and preservation of First Nation heritage
- Developing the concentration of natural and cultural open space assets at Long Hill and Bissett Road as a "Cultural Core"
- Strategic planning and re-development of the former NS Rehab Hospital Lands, utility corridor and road infrastructure design, in concert with the Cultural Core concept
- Create mobility connections between settlement areas and Rainbow Haven Beach Park
- Support for the Cole Harbour Causeway as an important cultural heritage asset
- Support the re-construction of the historic Provincial "Red Barn"

- Support better access and gateway improvements to the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park

Focus Area 3: The Bissett Lake System

The Bissett Lake System through the Forest Hills and Colby Village communities scores high in its capability to support multiple environmental, recreational, connectivity, cultural, and community design functions. There is a need for protection and management of its important and diverse ecological function including its function as a natural and human corridor.

Strategic directions include:

- Improvements and protection of Bissett Lake Park as a more passive recreation and nature park with connections to NS Rehab Hospital site, Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park, and Bissett Road
- Improvements to the Salt Marsh Trail including the creation of a “stacking loop trail system using public lands and right of ways.
- Protecting the eastern riparian zone of Bissett Lake through public land management and conservation design principles
- Investing in riparian buffer protection where the system crosses roadways.

Focus Area 4: The Cow Bay Estuary and Cow Bay River Corridor

The Cow Bay Estuary and Cow Bay River Corridor have high value in supporting identity, heritage, recreation, natural systems, and connectivity through assets like Silversands Beach Park, Cow Bay Estuary, the Marine Drive Image Route and the Cow Bay River

Strategic directions include:

- Improvements in the programming and operations of Silversands Beach Park as a surfing and passive recreation destination.
- Considering Cow Bay Road from Dyke Road to Silversands Beach Park as a complete street
- Trail corridor to connect the Shearwater Flyer Trail to Dyke Road and Cow Bay Road
- Increase the amount of public open space in support of providing better public access and amenities associated with existing public lands around the Cow Bay Estuary and Silversands Beach

Focus Area 5: The District Hub

The District Hub in the neighbourhoods of Forest Hills and Colby Village provides for local district and regional recreation opportunities. It has the capability to support Identity, Cultural Heritage, Recreation, and Connectivity with investment into strategic recreation clusters which

are well connected. There is a need to assemble a multi-functional and sustainable system of park hubs to support the recreation needs of the community.

Strategic directions include:

- Focus on quality of service at fewer sites by prioritizing capital and operating investment into parks associated with high capability lands.
- Reducing investment in low capability open space
- Divesting or re-purposing of redundant open space land
- Park planning for the Cole Harbour Common including Cole Harbour High School grounds, Cole Harbour Place grounds, Gordon Bell Annex grounds, Auburn Drive High School grounds, Auburn Drive complete street with a primary focus on active recreation.
- Repurpose Bissett Lake Park as primary park hub with a focus on passive outdoor recreation connectivity and natural systems conservation
- Creation of other more minor satellite hubs at Astral Drive Elementary/Junior Highschool, Caldwell Road Elementary, Colby Village Elementary, George Bissett Elementary, and Colonel John Stuart Elementary

Focus Area 6: The Corridor Network

The Corridor Network the streets and trails that link the communities, local destinations and public open spaces together have capability in Identity, Natural And Cultural Heritage Conservation, and Connectivity through the Marine Drive Image Route, the Trans Canada Trail, the Causeway, complete street, abandoned road corridors, riparian buffers, and estuary belts.

Strategic directions include:

- Promoting the concept that roads and trails are an important way which people experience open space and its values including identity, heritage and recreation.
- Supporting an HRM Complete Streets Policy
- Supporting HRM complete street design and construction guidelines
- Investing in improvement to key road intersections, such as the section involving Cole Harbour Road/Perron Drive/John Stewart/Bissett to create better connections for pedestrians and cyclists using a combination of road and trail system.
- Establishing Gateways at CH Road/Caldwell/Dorothea, CH Road/Bissett, Cole Harbour Road/Ross Road, Bissett Road/Salt Marsh Trail/Shearwater Flyer Trail
- Complete Streets design and construction of:
 - the Marine Drive Image Route from Rainbow Haven to Flying Point.
 - Cole Harbour Road from Perron Drive to Bissett Road.
- Marine Drive Image route from Dyke Road to Silversands Beach The desire to have a strong connection between Cole Harbour Place and Rainbow Haven with multiple choices in how to travel the corridor.

5.2 Policies & Recommendations

The policy framework in this Plan has been prepared to guide decisions which will impact or influence how open space resources in the Cole Harbour community are protected, developed and managed. The core values (Chapter 4) are inherent throughout the Plan and the goals, objectives, policies and recommendations together will guide implementation and decision-making. Future open space initiatives not specified in this Plan must also be supported by the policy framework contained in this Plan. This will ensure that open space investment and management decisions are objective-based and made with greater focus resulting in more sustainable outcomes.

GOAL 1: A multi-functional and sustainable open space system to support the recreation, leisure and transportation needs of the community and to foster community and economic sustainability.

Key Directions:

- Multi-values decision-making criteria
- Strategic public land portfolio and asset management
- Quality-focused parks network
- Open space hubs and multi-functional spaces
- Connected corridor network
- Plan for changing community needs

OBJECTIVE: A community-wide network of high-quality, equitably-distributed open spaces to serve the recreation, leisure and mobility needs of diverse neighborhoods and communities of interest

POLICY 1: Park land acquisition, outdoor facility development and land rationalization to address recreation and mobility needs within the open space system will be guided by the following decision-making criteria:

1. The HRM Park Classification System and policies under the HRM Regional Plan
2. Park Dedication Requirements under the HRM Regional Subdivision By-law including:
 - Parkland Classification & Service Delivery Criteria
 - Parkland Quality of Land Criteria
3. The (Composite Values) Functional Analysis Tool – Scoring Criteria for measuring land capability and suitability for
 - public service delivery
 - environmental and cultural protection
 - community design, using the following criteria:

- a. Identity** - “sense of place” measured by landscape character, user awareness, sense of security, opportunities for social cohesion, and quality of experience
- b. Heritage Conservation** – natural and cultural heritage elements measured by their quality and significance
- c. Recreation** - the capability of the land to support recreation and leisure activities based on land configuration, resilience (levels of use) and programming versatility
- d. Natural systems conservation** - the conservation capability or value of the land to support or be an integral component of an ecological system
- e. Connectivity & mobility** - the capability to function as part of a larger recreation and transportation network measured by accessibility, intersections, and barriers

4. Spatial & demographic evaluation to measure service delivery levels & community trends including identification of under-served or over-served areas with consideration for user access and factors limiting public use

5. Financial & operating resources to fund and sustain the investment for public programming and management

POLICY 2: Capital funding for implementation of the Plan will be determined through the multi-year capital budget process which will take into consideration the cost-benefit and impact of decisions including investment in high-use corridors and areas of fragmentation within the network, provision of park-lands in under-served areas, and service and programming efforts that improve the performance of high-capability parks and existing or potential open space hubs.

Recommendation 1: Improve and manage Bissett Park as a district park including:

- protection of natural areas and systems including its ecological setting in the Cow Bay watershed;
- low impact recreational programming and facility design and development including
 - re-design and development of the parking area to incorporate conservation design principles including storm-water management and aesthetics
 - review of sports fields prior to future recapitalization
- completion and management of a segment of the Trans Canada Trail corridor connecting to Cole Harbour Place, Colby Village, the former Rehab Lands, and Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park;
- low impact public access and enjoyment of Bissett Lake;
- protection and management of HRM-owned riparian areas along Bissett Lake with consideration for a 30 meter minimum riparian buffer;
- consolidation with the NS Rehab Hospital lands including trail connections and recognition of its importance to the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park

POLICY 3: Operational and service delivery levels will be reviewed for parks which are identified as having low functional capability and low recreational programming suitability based on demographic needs, spatial analysis identifying service levels, and land capability

Recommendation 2: Create value-added efficiencies in long-term operating costs for open space to improve service delivery focus and asset management including:

- durable and sustainable construction materials for development;
- construction standards that reduce long-term maintenance costs;
- control of invasive plant species through native tree and vegetation planting;
- park location, programming, and improvements that are appropriate for site conditions or constraints and environmental capacity;
- consolidation of programming where there is a demonstrated overlap in service delivery and supply of park-land

POLICY 4: Opportunities will be explored to improve HRM-owned community building facility lands and school grounds as key destinations and hubs within the open space network through enhanced corridor connections and outdoor recreation and leisure programming

Recommendation 3: Should the Caldwell Road Elementary School building, Colonel John Stuart Elementary School building, or other school buildings, become surplus to Provincial needs under the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) facility planning process⁸ the Municipality's property review process should include an analysis of the capability and suitability of the land as a consolidated open space hub including:

- accommodation of demonstrated community open space needs;
- opportunity to rationalize lands and outdoor facilities for consolidation or repurposing to diversify open space function, and enhance municipal service delivery and operational sustainability

Recommendation 4: Improve synergies between open space lands along the Forest Hills Parkway, Cole Harbour Place, Cole Harbour High, and Gordon Bell Annex lands and associated outdoor facilities toward potential consolidation as the "Cole Harbour Common" with consideration for:

- All of the lands encompassing the "Cole Harbour Common" in addition to the existing outdoor sport facilities, and the Trans Canada Trail
- Continuous and connected greenway and street corridors linking to transit stops on John Stewart and Arklow Drive, Auburn Drive High-School, surrounding neighbourhoods and services on Main Street, Forest Hills Parkway, and Cole Harbour Road;
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas (ESA's) identified by the municipality;
- Multi-functional programming to suit a diversity of ages and recreation interests;
- Parking and access and egress for all modes of travel including attractive and environmentally sensitive parking design;

The HRSB "Imagine Our Schools" Facility Planning Process

- Improvements to Auburn Drive right of way to meet competing shared use demands for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists;
- Analysis to determine potential consolidation of outdoor recreation facilities;
- Potential siting of regional sports-field facilities;
- The impacts of lighting, traffic and other elements on the surrounding community;
- The net impact of facilities and human use on the ecological and storm water engineering function of the land;

OBJECTIVE: A sustainable municipal portfolio of public open space lands strategically aligned with municipal planning, service delivery, and financial management objectives

POLICY 5: Municipally owned open space lands will be evaluated and rationalized as needed to identify essential and non-essential lands for strategic acquisition, disposal, or investment suitability for service delivery and conservation purposes.

Recommendation 5: The following lands should be considered for acquisition as significant cultural landscapes:

- Bishop's Property portions, in conjunction with the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and HRM-Provincial partnership
- Davies Property portions or easement

Recommendation 6: The following low capability park lands should be reviewed for repurposing or surplus as identified through the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) following a site performance audit and community needs assessment:

Community park:

- Keltic Garden Park
- Doherty Drive Park and Lisa Ann Drive Park

Neighbourhood park:

- Kerry Drive Park
- Michelle Drive Park
- Shrewsbury Road Park

Recommendation 7: The following high capability park lands should be considered for enhanced investment as identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) to improve service delivery, improve operational levels and efficiencies, and to diversify open space function and connectivity within the open space network:

Regional parks:

- Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park
- Cole Harbour Common
- Shearwater Flyer Corridor Park

District parks:

- Bissett Park as per Recommendation #1

- Cole Harbour High School grounds in conjunction with Cole Harbour Common
- Silversands Beach Park

Community parks:

- Auburn John Stewart Park
- Auburn Drive High School grounds in relation with Cole Harbour Common
- Astral Drive P-9 School Grounds
- Caldwell Elementary School grounds pending future potential school building surplus
- Colby Village Elementary School grounds
- Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool and Tennis Complex
- Colonel John Stewart Elementary School lands
- Cow Bay Road Park
- Gammon Lake Community Park
- George Bissett Elementary school grounds
- Gordon Bell Annex Building lands in conjunction with Cole Harbour Common
- Graham Creighton Junior High School grounds
- Ross Road P9 School grounds
- Schooner Drive Park
- Sunset Acres Park

Neighbourhood parks:

- Albany Terrace Park
- Beaufort Drive Park in conjunction with Forest Hills Parkway
- Cedar Crescent Park
- Sherwood Street Park
- Atholea Drive Park

Recommendation 8: Ongoing investment should be continued for the following park lands identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) to maintain current service levels:

Community park:

- Doherty Park
- Green Bay Park
- Cow Bay Lake Park and Ritcey Crescent Park for enhanced identity
- Schooner Drive Park in conjunction with future development

Neighbourhood park:

- Flandrum Hill Road Park with connections to Dyke Road
- Greely Court Park in conjunction with Forest Hills Parkway Streetscape
- George Cyril Drive Park
- Hollyoake Lane Park in conjunction with Colby Village Recreation Centre Park
- Killarney Crescent Park
- Laura Drive Park
- Parkedge Crescent Park
- Maplewood Drive Park
- Salmon River Drive Park

Recommendation 9: The following park lands should be retained primarily for conservation or to meet future strategic park development needs as identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) and existing outdoor recreation facilities should be maintained at minimum service levels until the end of the facility life-cycle or when community needs are assessed:

District park:

- Flag Pond Park

Community park:

- Brookview Drive Park
- Carolyn's Way Park
- Carlisle Park
- Ritcey Crescent Park
- William Ross Park

Neighbourhood park:

- Spruce Drive Park
- Astral Drive Park
- Autumn Drive Park
- Bass Court Park
- Chamberlain Drive Park
- Flandrum Hill Road Park
- Inglewood Crescent Park
- Lisa Ann Drive Park
- Parkedge Crescent Park
- Stirling Drive Park
- Travis Court Park
- Un-named Park (near Astral Drive)

POLICY 6: Open space programming will strive to create a balance between active and passive outdoor recreation to support multiple users and changing community demographics and to support the ecological function of the land as a component within the open space system.

Recommendation 10: The ratio and type of sports-fields in the Cole Harbour Basin community should be reviewed through the HRM Community Facility Master Plan to determine service levels and operational requirements at the community and regional level

POLICY 7: When considering investment in new park lands, recapitalization or repurposing of outdoor recreation facilities a land capability analysis and spatial analysis will be conducted along with strategic directions for decision-making under the HRM Community Facility Master Plan and may include the following:

- Level of service:
 - *Are there any deficiencies or duplication in service delivery in the host neighbourhood, community, or district?*
 - *Will the investment deliver an enhanced level of public service?*

- *Will the investment achieve multiple open space objectives?*
- Spatial and environmental impact:
 - *How will the site support the open space system?*
- Demographics:
 - *Who lives and works here and what are the characteristics of various neighbourhoods and communities?*
 - *What kind of development is taking place and what are the projected trends?*
- Recreation trends & opportunities:
 - *Are there any significant emerging needs or trends that should be considered?*
 - *Are there other HRM programming and policy objectives and projects that should be integrated?*
- Financial assessment:
 - *What are the costs of doing the project vs. not doing the project?*
 - *Are there any financial risks that should be considered?*
 - *Is there multi-year capital and operating funding to adequately maintain and improve the assets to a minimum standard of service and asset management?*
- Community Recreation Needs:
 - *Is there a demonstrated need and community support for the project?*
 - *Are there partnership opportunities?*

Recommendation 11: Undertake a review of park development standards to reflect service delivery needs and provision of parkland within urban, suburban and rural communities through the development of future regional open space policy as directed through the HRM Regional Plan with consideration for:

- service delivery requirements which reflect the distinct needs and settlement composition of rural communities
- accessibility to pedestrian mobility corridors and intersections
- inclusion of natural vegetation areas suitable for passive recreation

POLICY 8: Where feasible the development of municipal open space should strive to incorporate multiple recreational, cultural, and environmental functions with consideration for the following:

- ability to serve more residents more equitably by providing a balance of programming and services to meet multi-age, multi-ability, culturally and community diverse users
- ability to retrofit and repurpose aging and under-used park infrastructure to address changing community needs
- supporting end-of-trip infrastructure for active transportation
- high level of attention to health and safety
- recognition of CPTED principles to balance safety and open space objectives
- attention to compatible passive and active recreation opportunities
- focus on appropriate levels of naturalization methods and operations of all sites
- high level of attention to pedestrian connections to and within the site

- low-impact design to protect environmental and cultural features including retention of native vegetation and trees, preservation of naturalized areas and habitat protection
- the inclusion of creative public art and artful landscape design elements
- quality of social experience and social cohesion through community celebration and gathering places

OBJECTIVE: A high quality network of corridors to provide recreational opportunities for a diversity of user needs, and to provide active transportation options for travel to work, home, service, and community destinations.

POLICY 9: Develop a primary and secondary system of trail and street corridors linking neighborhoods, parks, community centres, schools, transit stops, and commercial districts

Recommendation 12: Take measures to improve the following key corridors to increase connectivity and continuity within the open space network including:

- Black Cultural Centre to Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park including crossing Main Street and retention of the Old Miller Road ROW
- Cole Harbour Place to Cole Harbour Estuary including the Old Lawrencetown Road trail and crossing Cole Harbour Road
- Cole Harbour Place to Rainbow Haven Beach Park including the Trans Canada Trail through Forest Hills, crossing Cole Harbour Road, linking Bissett Lake Park, Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and incorporating the Bissett Road right of way.
- Cole Harbour Causeway and Salt Marsh Trail with emphasis on tidal flow and sea level rise
- Colby Village South to Shearwater Flyer Trail
- Marine Drive Image Route along Bissett Road to Rainbow Haven and along Cole Harbour Road from Bissett Road to Ross Road – and along Lawrencetown Road from Ross Road to Flying Point
- Flying Point connection between Marine Drive Image Route and the Salt Marsh Trail

POLICY 10: Open space will be considered as a critical element for building complete communities as walkable, attractive, service-oriented, and socially integrated places that foster vibrant commercial districts and stable neighborhoods.

Recommendation 13: Consider key active transportation connections and open space quality of the Cole Harbour Road commercial district as a means of improving the streetscape quality, safety and function of Cole Harbour Road as a multifunctional and welcoming street for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists, residents and visitors alike.

Recommendation 14: Encourage the development of an HRM “complete streets” policy, to design complete streets for all ages, abilities and modes of travel in conjunction with the HRM Regional Plan including design and construction standards under the HRM Redbook for street

ROW's that are important to the open space network with consideration for the following guidelines:

- improved connections between key zones of use and destinations such as home, work, shopping, schools, and community centres and parks
- repair of missing links and barriers to improve connectivity and continuity
- balance between motorized and non-motorized users through improvements such as coloured and/or textured pavement, mid-block pedestrian crossing and refuge islands, bicycle and pedestrian supporting amenities, safety and enforcement campaign, and creatively designed and integrated parking to balance the needs of drivers and walkers
- streetscape elements that enhance user experience and community identity including tree-planting, and street design that reflects the character and identity of the community including special recognition of cultural identity
- pedestrian priority connections leading directly to transit stops and other community-based destinations such as schools and recreation centres
- improvements to visually highlight key gateways into neighborhoods, districts, activity nodes and scenic image routes

Recommendation 15: Complete streets improvements should be investigated for the following key road corridors, intersections and gateways:

- Cole Harbour Road, Bissett Road, John Stewart Road intersection
- Cole Harbour Road Corridor from Bissett to Ross Road
- John Stewart Drive from Arklow to Cole Harbour Road
- Forest Hills Parkway
- Bissett Road, Salt Marsh Trail, Shearwater Flyer Trail intersection
- Bissett Road from Cole Harbour Road to the Salt Marsh Trail intersection
- Corridor gateways at:
 - Cole Harbour Road/Caldwell/Dorothea Drive intersection;
 - Ross Road/Cole Harbour Road/Lawrencetown Road/Old Lawrencetown Road/Little Salmon River intersection;
 - Bissett Road/Salt Marsh Trail/Shearwater Flyer Trail intersection
- Marine Drive image route

POLICY 11: Maintain and enhance both scenic and direct public access to the ocean and freshwater bodies including land acquisition of strategic waterfront property, planning policy and regulation, and public easements and partnership agreements.

Recommendation 16: Work collaboratively with the Province to establish additional access to the Provincially-owned Cole Harbour Estuary including access points at:

- Ross Road/Cole Harbour Road/Lawrencetown Road/Little Salmon River intersection
- Key areas along the Marine Drive Image Route - Cole Harbour Road
- Key areas along the Marine Drive Image Route - Lawrencetown Road

Recommendation 17: Work toward improved service delivery and programming in the following coastal parks and landscapes:

- Silver Sands Beach to improve public access
- Flag Pond Park Cow Bay to improve identity
- Marine Drive Image Route to improve and maintain scenic views including vegetation management within the road ROW

Recommendation 18: Engage with the Province to assess potential improvements to public recreation, access, and safety at the Rainbow Haven Beach component of the Cole Harbour – Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system

POLICY 12: Utilize the former NS Rehab lands on Bissett Road to achieve a balance of public open space and private development opportunities

Recommendation 19: Take measures to implement the following land suitability and development concept for the former Rehab lands:

- a.) Develop a phased interdepartmental project charter and capital budget to guide the implementation of the project
- b.) Retain essential lands needed for public open space in accordance with the following programming and development objectives:
 - multi-use recreational space including opportunity for both passive and active recreation components that are compatible with the cultural and environmental values of the site
 - the environmental protection and enhancement of Bissett Lake including:
 - Enhanced riparian buffering
 - Methods to address run-off, sedimentation and water quality
 - trail connections between Bissett Road, Colby Village and Forest Hills
 - active transportation connections crossing Bissett Road to the Cole Harbour Heritage Park
 - design guidelines for the proposed power transmission line including:
 - Location of the new lines on the west side of Bissett Road
 - Relocation of all existing and future utility lines to the west side of the Bissett Road right of way
 - Consideration of color, height and spacing of poles
 - consideration of how the property can protect and contribute to the proposed Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core”
 - protection of scenic views toward Bissett Lake, Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and the Estuary
 - recognition and interpretation of the history of the property as an important public institution with cultural value to the community
 - environmental remediation, as required, to address soil contamination from the former hospital institutional land-use
 - incorporation of storm-water management methods

- d.) Identify lands on the site which are surplus to Municipal requirements for consideration under HRM Administrative Order 50 respecting the Disposal of Surplus Real Property with consideration for the following:
- Incorporation of conservation design principles into future development plans to preserve environmental and cultural features of the landscape through open space preservation in accordance with the following:
 - maintain rural character
 - the net developable area to be retained as open space will coincide with regional conservation subdivision design requirements
 - protection of scenic views toward the estuary, trail corridors and connections, and protection of features of cultural or ecological value
 - options for the Halifax Water Commission lands with consideration for remediation of contaminated soils and servicing options to support market development

GOAL 2: An ecologically healthy system of lands and waters to support and sustain biodiversity and habitat protection and foster sustainable development, settlement patterns, and “complete” communities

Key Directions:

- Protecting the Estuary and watershed
- Ecological study and identification of conservation areas
- Low-impact development and public lands management
- Integration with MPS, LUB and subdivision regulation
- Balancing public service delivery and conservation objectives

OBJECTIVE: Take measures to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural systems of high ecological value and natural heritage including forested lands, meadows, coastal scrub, beaches and sand dunes, wetlands, freshwater lakes and streams, and important ecosystems within public parks

POLICY 13: Acquisition of lands and supporting natural systems for conservation purposes will be considered using the following criteria to determine which areas are most in need of protection:

- the site is undeveloped and largely undisturbed and supports a significant or at-risk native plant, land or aquatic wildlife habitat;
- the site is critical to the health of the Cole Harbour Estuary and Watershed;
- the site contains rare and important geological formations or natural features including significant undisturbed or at-risk riparian areas;

- the site is adjacent to a protected open space and if protected from development the areas together would support more valuable or more diverse habitat or ecological systems;
- the importance of the site within the larger open space system;
- open space funding capacity and the overall relative importance of the investment;
- the land has high capability to support low impact recreational use

POLICY 14: Municipally-owned open space which is important to the natural open space system including urban ecosystems should be protected through appropriate use restrictions and best management practice to ensure that effective conservation efforts are in place and environmental and ecological function is not compromised including:

- relocation or re-development of uses or activities where feasible which compromise natural ecosystems and significant natural features;
- low impact design and development to protect hydrologic functions;
- protection and reintroduction of flora or fauna to restore and improve habitat;
- protection of riparian areas for waterways that are significant to the estuary and watershed areas including retention or restoration of a greater than 20 metre riparian buffer;
- infrastructure such as fencing, culverts, or bridges to protect sensitive areas and facilitate mammal and fish migration;
- low-impact storm-water treatment and nutrient management;
- educational initiatives such as signage or communication to raise awareness of special practices, guidelines or regulations to protect sensitive areas;

POLICY 15: Trails and greenway corridors will be located, designed and constructed in a manner that does not impact the ecological viability and quality of important natural areas and ecological systems including sensitive riparian areas

Recommendation 20: When bridges and culverts are subject to renewal and upgrading, low-impact design and construction standards should be applied with special emphasis on wildlife and fish habitat and movement.

Recommendation 21: Consider land-use and administrative policy requiring that trails be located outside of the 1-10 year flood-plain

POLICY 16: Improve storm-water and nutrient management, and protection and restoration of native vegetation within parks and corridors where feasible to balance the natural ecological function and recreational use of the land

Recommendation 22: Implement the recommendations under the HRM Urban Forest Master Plan for public street tree planting and management within the Cole Harbour Basin area including Cole Harbour Road, Forest Hills Parkway, Caldwell Road and Colby Village community and consider street trees for Auburn Drive and Westphal

POLICY 17: The identification and designation of ecologically significant and environmentally sensitive areas and natural systems in the Cole Harbour Basin area will be implemented through the development of future Regional Open Space Policy including delineation of Green-Belting (green networks) and Public Open Space networks with consideration for the following:

- landscapes and natural areas that are important to the regional open space system including significant cultural and natural landscapes, natural corridors for wildlife, critical stepping stones for wildlife movement and habitat protection;
- the Cole Harbour Estuary and Little Salmon River watershed area;
- the Cow Bay watershed area;
- natural areas that are needed for shaping and managing regional growth and sustainable settlement patterns;

Recommendation 23: Undertake ecological scientific study to support the delineation of significant natural areas, ecological systems and corridors through regional open space planning efforts including:

- a Cole Harbour Estuary receiving waters watershed and land suitability study
- Little Salmon River watershed study;
- Cow Bay Estuary watershed study including Smelt Brook corridor;
- water quality and flow between Settle Lake, Bissett Lake and Silver Sands Beach including the effects of storm-water run-off into Bissett Lake;

OBJECTIVE: To achieve sustainable development patterns and built form that supports the long-term protection of natural areas and ecological systems

POLICY 18: Adoption of low impact development guidelines should be considered for rural subdivisions through future MPS and regulatory review to support the conservation and preservation of important natural areas and ecological systems with focus on:

- protection of the ecological function of the Little Salmon River & Broom Brook
- Sensitive treatment and protection of storm-water discharge areas;
- management of tree removal and native vegetation;
- mitigation of hydrology flow barriers including bridges and culverts;
- sensitivity of land-uses and built form;

Recommendation 24: Undertake an ecological impact study and land-use concept through future MPS review to identify at-risk natural systems and areas for remediation to repair ecological function with emphasis on critical riparian areas, watersheds, and beaches including:

- a review of land-use zoning to address incompatible commercial and industrial land uses along the Little Salmon River riparian buffer;
- residential development adjacent to Rainbow Haven Beach including investigation into the feasibility of closed system septic;

Recommendation 25: Consider a review of the boundaries encompassing the five municipal planning districts that surround the Cole Harbour Estuary with emphasis on watershed boundaries

POLICY 19: Dedication of public open space and privately-owned common lands through future conservation design development will consider the protection of primary conservation areas including environmentally sensitive areas (ESA's) and ecologically important lands, waters, and natural corridors, secondary conservation areas of rural, cultural and natural heritage importance, and mobility corridors connecting to the open space system as identified through the recommendations under this Plan and as identified through future ecological study

Recommendation 26: Recognize the Little Salmon River corridor and supporting riparian area as a conservation area for ecological protection under potential future conservation design development and use this Plan as a guideline for identifying areas of primary and secondary conservation. and connecting lands within the watershed should be considered as secondary conservation area

Recommendation 27: Incorporate low impact development principles into the design and construction of municipal infrastructure projects for enhanced environmental sustainability and open space function with consideration for the following:

- Special design of transportation and recreation corridors that compromise water flow including tidal flow barriers along the Cole Harbour causeway
- Storm-water and water run-off management such as a reduction in impervious surfacing, tree planting, swales, storm-water wetlands and vegetated filter strip

GOAL 3: A strong identity and sense of place through the recognition, protection, and enhancement of landscapes and open space features that have significant cultural value or importance to the identity of the community

Key Directions:

- Protecting community identity and cultural landscapes
- Recognizing and protecting concentrations of cultural assets
- Protecting the Long Hill view corridor
- Enhancing scenic views and community gateways
- Collaborate with the Province for public enjoyment of Cole Harbour Heritage Park

OBJECTIVE: Take measures to protect, manage, and celebrate cultural landscapes that are important to the Cole Harbour and regional open space system

POLICY 20: Landscapes representing important natural and cultural heritage of the Cole Harbour community including rural, agrarian and coastal heritage, may be considered for conservation through cultural landscape designation, land acquisition, land-use policy and

regulation, special management plans, conservation easements, and support for community stewardship efforts.

Recommendation 28: Protect the Long Hill scenic view corridor as an important cultural landscape within the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park including the following considerations:

- acquisition of critical lands within the view corridor including the Bishops property;
- cost-sharing with the Provincial Department of Natural Resources for land acquisition as part of the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park;
- retention of development rights on non-essential portions of the Bishops property;
- management of treed hedgerow to maintain critical view corridor;
- design and siting of the NSPI utility corridor to the north side of the Cole Harbour Road protect critical views;
- taxation exemptions for municipal servicing approved in 2001;
- cultural landscape designation through the HRM Heritage Property Program;

POLICY 21: The inventory, evaluation criteria and process for designating significant natural and cultural sites and landscapes will be determined through the “Model for Assessing Cultural Heritage Values in HRM” and the development of future Heritage and cultural policy under the direction of the HRM Regional Plan and could include the following elements:

1. Spatial organization & land patterns
2. Visual relationships
3. Circulation
4. Vegetation
5. Ecological features & landforms
6. Water features
7. Built features
8. Traditional practices
9. Land use

POLICY 22: Cultural landscapes and points of historic interest will be promoted for educational, awareness, and community identity purposes and to help foster community economic development.

Recommendation 29: Consider a marketing and promotion campaign to raise awareness of the Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core” as a community-wide and regional open space destination including interpretation of important natural and cultural heritage elements in conjunction with community and provincial partners

Recommendation 30: Recognize and protect heritage landscapes and landscapes within the Cow Bay community which are important to community identity including:

- Nelson Conservation Area Monument
- Cow Bay Community Hall and former school house

POLICY 23: The feasibility of formally recognizing and designating the concentration of cultural assets and cultural landscapes as the Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core” will be explored with consideration of the following culturally important landscapes:

- Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park, former Red Barn site, and Poor’s Farm.
- historic cemeteries on Bissett Road (part of Coastal Heritage Park site)
- Davies and Bishop Properties (portions) and Long Hill view corridor
- Cole Harbour Meeting House
- site of the former NS Rehabilitation Hospital
- Barbara Bell Estate site on Long Hill

Recommendation 31: Support the Province to facilitate the rebuilding of the provincially-owned historic Red Barn on the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park site including:

- supporting a working partnership between DNR, HRM, CH Rural Heritage Society, and CH Parks & Trails Association
- operation and management of the Red Barn site as an interpretation centre to the Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system including parking and trail-head infrastructure
- design guidelines to ensure the Red Barn is constructed to reflect the cultural identity of the community
- interpretation and celebration of rural, agrarian and coastal heritage
- special consideration for infrastructure design and construction including:
 - the proposed NS Power transmission line
 - “Complete streets” improvements to Bissett Road along Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park frontage
 - driveway entrances, parking lots, and public amenities which are designed to be sensitive to the cultural and rural character

Recommendation 32: Investigate the feasibility of a cultural core designation for the area comprising the Black Cultural Centre, Akoma Family Centre (former NS Home for Coloured Children Lands), and the intersection of Main Street, Cherry Brook and Old Miller Road

Recommendation 33: Consider participating in the facilitation of a Cole Harbour Basin Cultural Core stewardship group comprised of HRM, DNR, Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society, Cole Harbour Parks & Trails Association, Black Cultural Centre and other community stakeholders

Recommendation 34: Consider the Barbara Bell Estate property (PID# 40143158) located on Long Hill as a significant cultural landscape through the future cultural landscapes inventory under the HRM Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan and identify potential conservation mechanisms including cultural landscape designation and/or property acquisition.

OBJECTIVE: Improve and protect the quality and prominence of important gateways and scenic routes within the Cole Harbour Basin community to enhance community identity and improve visitor perception and open space experience

POLICY 24: Significant scenic routes and gateways will be identified and may be considered for capital investment opportunity under the multi-year capital budget to improve the quality of landscape and infrastructure elements that contribute to community identity and open space function.

Recommendation 35: Complete an inventory and mapping of significant view points, scenic gateways and image routes to enhance the Cole Harbour Basin corridor network including:

- Cole Harbour Road and Caldwell Road intersection;
- Cole Harbour Road and Bissett Road intersection;
- Ross Road and Cole Harbour Road intersection;
- Main Street between Cherry Brook Road and Ross Road;
- Bissett Road and Shearwater Flyer/Salt Marsh Trail intersection;
- Marine Drive Image Route (Hwy 207);

GOAL 4: Strategic and sustainable open space investment and asset management supported by proactive and integrated planning and decision-making and public and community stewardship

Key Directions:

- Collaborative decision-making criteria for enhanced service delivery
- Integrated land-use, transportation and open space planning and development
- Collaboration with utilities and agencies for infrastructure design and development
- Support for multi-stakeholder stewardship efforts

OBJECTIVE: Support the implementation of the Cole Harbour Open Space Plan through integrated open space, land-use, transportation, and facility planning and investment

POLICY 25: The acquisition and disposal of open space lands will be considered for meeting community service delivery needs, environmental or heritage conservation, or to shape community design using the following broad decision-making framework:

- Ecological & cultural considerations
 - watercourses and their riparian corridors
 - lands that are identified as part of an HRM regional “green-belt” system
 - lands which enhance the environmental function of corridors and parks
 - lands which are culturally significant to the community and/or the region and are at risk of being lost or compromised
- recreation considerations:
 - lands which help to achieve and/or improve a level of service for recreation

- lands that complement and enhance existing public open spaces and facilities including corridor connections, improved function of neighbourhood and community parks and open space lands that compliment or support existing facilities such as community centres, schools, sports facilities and other similar lands
- land which can improve public access to the water and help to better integrate the community with its' waterfront assets and coastal heritage
- connectivity & mobility considerations:
 - lands which are key to completing, repairing or connecting recreational, AT, or natural corridors with emphasis on barriers and gaps in the system
- financial considerations:
 - Investment in the land is strategic as the property has a high potential to be sold for development making it unlikely to be available for public open space in future
 - The land can be acquired at fair market value
 - Disposal of surplus land can result in a reassignment of funds for the enhancement and/or purchase of other public open space assets

OBJECTIVE: Develop and support community partnerships and collaborative efforts to guide the implementation of the Cole Harbour Basin open space plan with emphasis on community stewardship and civic pride initiatives.

Recommendation 36: Explore the development of a watershed conservation partnership between government, community, business and resident associations with emphasis on protection and management of the Little Salmon River and Cole Harbour Estuary watershed

POLICY 26: When planning for and carrying out municipal public works and utility installations or service upgrades, an assessment of the potential impacts on any existing open space and any opportunity to enhance open space function and use will be carried out to guide decision-making and coordinate investments.

Recommendation 37: Facilitate ongoing collaborative discussions and project management to create open space synergies for infrastructure projects including:

- NSPI Utility Corridor along the Bissett Road Image Route
- Municipal road and bridge projects
- stormwater infrastructure projects

Recommendation 38: Develop decision-making guidelines for the siting and installation of utilities on HRM-owned open space lands including:

- primary recreational function of the land must not be disturbed or compromised;
- construction must not compromise ecological systems, significant natural areas, or cultural landscapes;
- high attention to design quality to maintain the recreation, cultural, environmental and aesthetic values of the land;

- ongoing maintenance and management of utility infrastructure to foster ongoing public access and enjoyment of the lands
- opportunity to incorporate passive recreation and mobility corridors;
- opportunity to align utility corridors on public and private lands to protect scenic views and open space lands and waters

POLICY 27: HRM will seek opportunities for engagement and integrated decision-making with Provincial government, agencies, utilities, and community groups to incorporate open space objectives into planning and development initiatives and to foster collaborative relationships

Recommendation 39: Use the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan as a guiding document and management tool for future Municipal land-use planning in the Cole Harbour Basin area

POLICY 28: Promote parks and other public open space assets for improved recreational enjoyment and community benefit, to raise cultural and environmental awareness, and to foster community economic development.

Recommendation 40: Investigate the feasibility of designing and implementing a Municipal park promotional and way-finding signage system with emphasis on:

- directional & entrance signs
- web-based promotion
- interpretive signs and kiosks

5.3 Implementation Strategy

Recommendation	Phase	Alignments	Resources
<p>P1 Park land acquisition, outdoor facility development and land rationalization to address recreation and mobility needs within the open space system will be guided by the following decision-making criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The HRM Park Classification System and policies under the HRM Regional Plan</u> 2. <u>Park Dedication Requirements under the HRM Regional Subdivision By-law including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Parkland Classification & Service Delivery Criteria o Parkland Quality of Land Criteria 3. <u>The (Composite Values) Functional Analysis Tool – Scoring Criteria for measuring land capability and suitability for</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o public service delivery o environmental and cultural protection o community design, using the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identity - “sense of place” measured by landscape character, user awareness, sense of security, opportunities for social cohesion, and quality of experience b. Heritage – natural and cultural heritage elements measured by their quality and significance c. Recreation - the capability of the land to support recreation and leisure activities based on land configuration, resilience (levels of use) and programming versatility d. Natural systems - the conservation capability or value of the land to support or be an integral component of an ecological system e. Connectivity & mobility - the capability to function as part of a larger recreation and transportation network measured by accessibility, intersections, and barriers 4. <u>Spatial & demographic evaluation to measure service delivery levels & community trends</u> including identification of under-serviced or over-serviced areas with consideration for user access and factors limiting public use 5. <u>Financial & operating resources</u> to fund and sustain the investment for public programming and management 	OG	<p>HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP) – review of regional park standards</p> <p>HRM Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP)</p>	P&I, CR&S
<p>P2 Capital funding for implementation of the Plan will be determined through the multi-year capital budget process which will take into consideration the cost-benefit and impact of decisions including investment in high-use corridors and areas of fragmentation within the network, provision of parklands in under-serviced areas, and service and programming efforts that improve the performance of high-capability parks and existing or potential open space hubs</p>	OG	Multi-Year Budget based on Council Priorities	P&I TPW C&RS

R1 Improve and manage Bissett Park as a district park including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o protection of natural areas and systems including its ecological setting in the Cow Bay watershed; o low impact recreational programming and facility design and development including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o re-design and development of the parking area to incorporate conservation design principles including storm-water management and aesthetics o review of sports fields prior to future recapitalization o completion and management of a segment of the Trans Canada Trail corridor connecting to Cole Harbour Place, Colby Village, the former Rehab Lands, and Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park; o low impact public access and enjoyment of Bissett Lake; o protection and management of HRM-owned riparian areas along Bissett Lake with consideration for a 30 meter minimum riparian buffer; o consolidation with the NS Rehab Hospital lands including trail connections and recognition of its importance to the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park 	ST	Future use of Former Rehab lands Administrative Order Number 50 Respecting the Disposal of Surplus Real Property (Admin Order 50) Trans Canada Trail Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park	P&I C&RS TPW
P3 Operational and service delivery levels will be reviewed for parks which are identified as having low functional capability and low recreational programming suitability based on demographic needs, spatial analysis identifying service levels, and land capability	OG	R6, R9	TPW P&I
R2 Create value-added efficiencies in long-term operating costs for open space to improve service delivery focus and asset management including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o durable and sustainable construction materials for development; o construction standards that reduce long-term maintenance costs; o control of invasive plant species through native tree and vegetation planting; o park location, programming, and improvements that are appropriate for site conditions or constraints and environmental capacity; o consolidation of programming where there is a demonstrated overlap in service delivery and supply of park-land 	M		P&I TPW
P4 Opportunities will be explored to improve HRM-owned community building facility lands and school grounds as key destinations and hubs within the open space network through enhanced corridor connections and outdoor recreation and leisure programming	OG	CFMP	C&RS P&I
R3 Should the Caldwell Road Elementary School building, Colonel John Stuart Elementary School building, or other school buildings, become surplus to Provincial needs under the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) facility planning process the Municipality's property review process should include an analysis of the capability and suitability of the land as a consolidated open space hub including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o accommodation of demonstrated community open space needs; o opportunity to rationalize lands and outdoor facilities for consolidation or repurposing to diversify open space function and enhance municipal service delivery and operational sustainability 	MT	Admin Order 50 CFMP Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB)	P&I C&RS

<p>R4 Improve synergies between open space lands along the Forest Hills Parkway, Cole Harbour Place, Cole Harbour High, and Gordon Bell Annex lands and associated outdoor facilities toward potential consolidation as the “Cole Harbour Common” with consideration for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All of the lands encompassing the “Cole Harbour Common” in addition to the existing outdoor sport facilities, and the Trans Canada Trail ○ Continuous and connected greenway and street corridors linking to transit stops on John Stewart and Arklow Drive, Auburn Drive High-School, surrounding neighbourhoods and services on Main Street, Forest Hills Parkway, and Cole Harbour Road; ○ Protection of environmentally sensitive areas (ESA’s) identified by the municipality; ○ Multi-functional programming to suit a diversity of ages and recreation interests; ○ Parking and access and egress for all modes of travel including attractive and environmentally sensitive parking design; ○ Improvements to Auburn Drive right of way to meet competing shared use demands for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists; ○ Potential siting of regional sports-field facilities; ○ The impacts of lighting, traffic and other elements on the surrounding community; ○ The net impact of facilities and human use on the ecological and storm water engineering function of the land; 	ST	<p>Admin Order 50</p> <p>HRM CFMP</p> <p>HRM Active Transportation (AT) Plan</p>	C&RS P&I
<p>P5 Municipally owned open space lands will be evaluated and rationalized as needed to identify essential and non-essential lands for strategic acquisition, disposal, or investment suitability for service delivery and conservation purposes</p>	OG	<p>Admin Order 50</p> <p>Municipal Service Needs</p>	P&I
<p>R5 The following lands should be considered for acquisition as significant cultural landscapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bishop’s Property portions, in conjunction with the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and HRM-Provincial partnership ○ Davies Property portions or easement 	ST	<p>Provincial Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR)</p> <p>HRM Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan</p>	P&I C&RS DNR
<p>R6 The following low capability park lands should be reviewed for repurposing or surplus as identified through the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) following a site performance audit and community needs assessment:</p> <p><u>Community park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keltic Garden Park ○ Doherty Drive Park and Lisa Ann Drive Park <p><u>Neighbourhood park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kerry Drive Park ○ Michelle Drive Park ○ Shrewsbury Road Park 	ST	<p>CFMP</p> <p>Community needs assessment</p> <p>Admin Order 50</p>	C&RS P&I

<p>R7 The following high capability park lands should be considered for enhanced investment as identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) to improve service delivery, improve operational levels and efficiencies, and to diversify open space function and connectivity within the open space network:</p> <p><u>Regional parks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park ○ Cole Harbour Common ○ Shearwater Flyer Corridor Park <p><u>District parks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bissett Park as per Recommendation #1 ○ Cole Harbour High School grounds in conjunction with Cole Harbour Common ○ Silversands Beach Park <p><u>Community parks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Auburn John Stewart Park ○ Auburn Drive High School grounds in relation with Cole Harbour Common ○ Astral Drive P-9 School Grounds ○ Caldwell Elementary School grounds pending future potential school building surplus ○ Colby Village Elementary School grounds ○ Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool and Tennis Complex ○ Colonel John Stewart Elementary School lands ○ Cow Bay Road Park ○ Gammon Lake Community Park ○ George Bissett Elementary school grounds ○ Gordon Bell Annex Building lands in conjunction with Cole Harbour Common ○ Graham Creighton Junior High School grounds ○ Ross Road P9 School grounds ○ Schooner Drive Park ○ Sunset Acres Park <p><u>Neighbourhood parks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Albany Terrace Park ○ Beaufort Drive Park in conjunction with Forest Hills Parkway ○ Cedar Crescent Park ○ Sherwood Street Park ○ Atholea Drive Park 	<p>ST/ MT</p>	<p>CFMP</p> <p>HRSB</p> <p>HRM Active Transportation Plan</p> <p>Provincial DNR</p> <p>By-law P600</p>	<p>P&I C&RS TPW</p>
<p>R8 Ongoing investment should be continued for the following park lands identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) to maintain current service levels:</p> <p><u>Community park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Doherty Park ○ Green Bay Park ○ Cow Bay Lake Park and Ritcey Crescent Park for enhanced identity ○ Schooner Drive Park in conjunction with future development 	<p>OG</p>	<p>HRM By-law P-600 Respecting Municipal Parks</p>	<p>C&RS TPW P&I</p>

<p><u>Neighbourhood park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Flandrum Hill Road Park with connections to Dyke Road o Greely Court Park in conjunction with Forest Hills Parkway Streetscape o George Cyril Drive Park o Hollyoake Lane Park in conjunction with Colby Village Recreation Centre Park o Killarney Crescent Park o Laura Drive Park o Parkedge Crescent Park o Maplewood Drive Park o Salmon River Drive Park 			
<p>R9 The following park lands should be retained primarily for conservation or to meet future strategic park development needs as identified under the Park Evaluation Table (Appendix 3) and existing outdoor recreation facilities should be maintained at minimum service levels until the end of the facility life-cycle or when community needs are assessed:</p> <p><u>District park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Flag Pond Park <p><u>Community park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Brookview Drive Park o Carolyn's Way Park o Carlisle Park o Ritcey Crescent Park o William Ross Park <p><u>Neighbourhood park:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Spruce Drive Park o Astral Drive Park o Autumn Drive Park o Bass Court Park o Chamberlain Drive Park o Flandrum Hill Road Park o Inglewood Crescent Park o Lisa Ann Drive Park o Parkedge Crescent Park o Stirling Drive Park o Travis Court Park o Un-named Park (near Astral Drive) 	OG	CFMP HRM Green-belt & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP)	TPW C&RS P&I
<p>P6 Open space programming will strive to create a balance between active and passive outdoor recreation to support multiple users and changing community demographics and to support the ecological function of the land as a component within the open space system.</p>	OG		C&RS P&I
<p>R10 The ratio and type of sports-fields in the Cole Harbour Basin community should be reviewed through the HRM Community Facility Master Plan to determine service levels and operational requirements at the community and regional level</p>	ST	CFMP 2012 CH Recreation Needs Assessment	C&RS TPW

<p>P7 When considering investment in new park lands, recapitalization or repurposing of outdoor recreation facilities a land capability analysis and spatial analysis will be conducted along with strategic directions for decision-making under the HRM Community Facilities Master Plan and may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level of service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Are there any deficiencies or duplication in service delivery in the host neighbourhood, community, or district?</i> ➤ <i>Will the investment deliver an enhanced level of public service?</i> ➤ <i>Will the investment achieve multiple open space objectives?</i> ○ Spatial and environmental impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>How will the site support the open space system?</i> ○ Demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Who lives and works here and what are the characteristics of various neighbourhoods and communities?</i> ➤ <i>What kind of development is taking place and what are the projected trends?</i> ○ Recreation trends & opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Are there any significant emerging needs or trends that should be considered?</i> ➤ <i>Are there other HRM programming and policy objectives and projects that should be integrated?</i> ○ Financial assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>What are the costs of doing the project vs. not doing the project?</i> ➤ <i>Are there any financial risks that should be considered?</i> ➤ <i>Is there multi-year capital and operating funding to adequately maintain and improve the assets to a minimum standard of service and asset management?</i> ○ Community Recreation Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Is there a demonstrated need and community support for the project?</i> ➤ <i>Are there partnership opportunities?</i> 	OG	CFMP HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP)	C&RS P&I TPW
<p>R11 Undertake a review of park development standards to reflect service delivery needs and provision of parkland within urban, suburban and rural communities through the development of future regional open space policy as directed through the HRM Regional Plan with consideration for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ service delivery requirements which reflect the distinct needs and settlement composition of rural communities ○ accessibility to pedestrian mobility corridors and intersections ○ inclusion of natural vegetation areas suitable for passive recreation 	ST	HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP)	P&I
<p>P8 Where feasible the development of municipal open space should strive to incorporate multiple recreational, cultural, and environmental functions with consideration for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ability to serve more residents more equitably by providing a balance of programming and services to meet multi-age, multi-ability, culturally and community diverse users 	OG	CFMP 2012 CH Recreation Needs Assessment	P&I C&RS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ability to retrofit and repurpose aging and under-used park infrastructure to address changing community needs ○ supporting end-of-trip infrastructure for active transportation ○ high level of attention to health and safety ○ recognition of CPTED principles to balance safety and open space objectives ○ attention to compatible passive and active recreation opportunities ○ focus on appropriate levels of naturalization methods and operations of all sites ○ high level of attention to pedestrian connections to and within the site ○ low-impact design to protect environmental and cultural features including retention of native vegetation and trees, preservation of naturalized areas and habitat protection ○ the inclusion of creative public art and artful landscape design elements ○ quality of social experience and social cohesion through community celebration and gathering places 		HRM AT Plan	
P9 Develop a primary and secondary system of trail and street corridors linking neighborhoods, parks, community centres, schools, transit stops, and commercial districts	OG	HRM AT Plan/ Transit Plan HRM Green-belt & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GOSP)	P&I Metro Transit
R12 Take measures to improve the following key corridors to increase connectivity and continuity within the open space network including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Black Cultural Centre to Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park including crossing Main Street and retention of the Old Miller Road ROW ○ Cole Harbour Place to Cole Harbour Estuary including the Old Lawrencetown Road trail and crossing Cole Harbour Road ○ Cole Harbour Place to Rainbow Haven Beach Park including the Trans Canada Trail through Forest Hills, crossing Cole Harbour Road, linking Bissett Lake Park, Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park and incorporating the Bissett Road right of way. ○ Cole Harbour Causeway and Salt Marsh Trail with emphasis on tidal flow and sea level rise ○ Colby Village South to Shearwater Flyer Trail ○ Marine Drive Image Route along Bissett Road to Rainbow Haven and along Cole Harbour Road from Bissett Road to Ross Road – and along Lawrencetown Road from Ross Road to Flying Point ○ Flying Point connection between Marine Drive Image Route and the Salt Marsh Trail 	MT/ LT	HRM AT Plan	

<p>P10 Open space will be considered as a critical element for building complete communities as walkable, attractive, service-oriented, and socially integrated places that foster vibrant commercial districts and stable neighborhoods.</p>	<p>OG</p>	<p>Secondary Planning Strategies</p> <p>Complete Streets Policy</p>	<p>P&I TPW</p>
<p>R13 Consider key active transportation connections and open space quality of the Cole Harbour Road commercial district as a means of improving the streetscape quality, safety and function of Cole Harbour Road as a multifunctional and welcoming street for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists, residents and visitors alike.</p>	<p>MT</p>	<p>HRM AT Plan</p> <p>Complete Streets Policy</p> <p>Municipal Service Design Standards for Streets (HRM Redbook)</p> <p>Secondary Planning Strategies</p>	<p>P&I TPW</p>
<p>R14 Encourage the development of an HRM “complete streets” policy, to design complete streets for all ages, abilities and modes of travel in conjunction with the HRM Regional Plan including design and construction standards under the HRM Redbook for street ROW’s that are important to the open space network with consideration for the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ improved connections between key zones of use and destinations such as home, work, shopping, schools, and community centres and parks ○ repair of missing links and barriers to improve connectivity and continuity ○ balance between motorized and non-motorized users through improvements such as coloured and/or textured pavement, mid-block pedestrian crossing and refuge islands, bicycle and pedestrian supporting amenities, safety and enforcement campaign, and creatively designed and integrated parking to balance the needs of drivers and walkers ○ streetscape elements that enhance user experience and community identity including tree-planting, and street design that reflects the character and identity of the community including special recognition of cultural identity ○ pedestrian priority connections leading directly to transit stops and other community-based destinations such as schools and recreation centres ○ improvements to visually highlight key gateways into neighborhoods, districts, activity nodes and scenic image routes 	<p>ST</p>	<p>HRM AT Plan</p> <p>Municipal Service Design Standards for Streets (HRM Redbook)</p>	<p>P&I TPW</p>

<p>R15 Complete streets improvements should be investigated for the following key road corridors, intersections and gateways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cole Harbour Road, Bissett Road, John Stewart Road intersection ○ Cole Harbour Road Corridor from Bissett to Ross Road ○ John Stewart Drive from Arklow to Cole Harbour Road ○ Forest Hills Parkway ○ Bissett Road, Salt Marsh Trail, Shearwater Flyer Trail intersection ○ Bissett Road from Cole Harbour Road to the Salt Marsh Trail intersection ○ Corridor gateways at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cole Harbour Road/Caldwell/Dorothea Drive intersection; ○ Ross Road/Cole Harbour Road/Lawrencetown Road/Old Lawrencetown Road/Little Salmon River intersection; ○ Bissett Road/Salt Marsh Trail/Shearwater Flyer Trail intersection ○ Marine Drive image route 	MT/LT	HRM AT Plan Municipal Service Design Standards for Streets (HRM Redbook)	P&I TPW
<p>P11 Maintain and enhance both scenic and direct public access to the ocean and freshwater bodies including land acquisition of strategic waterfront property, planning policy and regulation, and public easements and partnership agreements.</p>	OG		P&I
<p>R16 Work collaboratively with the Province to establish additional access to the Provincially-owned Cole Harbour Estuary including access points at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ross Road/Cole Harbour Road/Lawrencetown Road/Little Salmon River intersection ○ Key areas along the Marine Drive Image Route - Cole Harbour Road ○ Key areas along the Marine Drive Image Route - Lawrencetown Road 	ST/MT	Provincial DNR	P&I
<p>R17 Work toward improved service delivery and programming in the following coastal parks and landscapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Silver Sands Beach to improve public access ○ Flag Pond Park Cow Bay to improve identity ○ Marine Drive Image Route to improve and maintain scenic views including vegetation management within the road ROW 	MT/LT		P&I TPW
<p>R18 Engage with the Province to assess potential improvements to public recreation, access, and safety at the Rainbow Haven Beach component of the Cole Harbour – Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system</p>	ST	Provincial DNR	P&I DNR
<p>P12 Utilize the former NS Rehab lands on Bissett Road to achieve a balance of public open space and private development opportunities</p>	ST	Admin Order 50 Municipal Service Needs	P&I

<p>R19 Take measures to implement the following land suitability and development concept for the former Rehab lands:</p> <p>a.) Develop a phased interdepartmental project charter and capital budget to guide the implementation of the project</p> <p>b.) Retain essential lands needed for public open space in accordance with the following programming and development objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ multi-use recreational space including both passive and active recreation components that are compatible with the cultural and environmental values of the site; ○ the environmental protection and enhancement of Bissett Lake including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhanced riparian buffering ○ Methods to address run-off, sedimentation and water quality ○ trail connections between Bissett Road, Colby Village and Forest Hills ○ active transportation connections crossing Bissett Road to the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park ○ design guidelines for the proposed power transmission line including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Location of the new lines on the west side of Bissett Road ○ Relocation of all existing and future utility lines to the west side of the Bissett Road right of way ○ Consideration of color, height and spacing of poles ○ consideration of how the property can protect and contribute to the proposed Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core” ○ protection of scenic views toward Bissett Lake, Cole Harbour Heritage Park and the Estuary ○ recognition and interpretation of the history of the property as an important public institution with cultural value to the community ○ environmental remediation, as required, to address soil contamination from the former hospital institutional land-use ○ incorporation of storm-water management methods <p>d.) Identify lands on the site which are surplus to Municipal requirements for consideration under HRM Administrative Order 50 respecting the Disposal of Surplus Real Property with consideration for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Incorporation of conservation design principles into future development plans to preserve environmental and cultural features of the landscape through open space preservation in accordance with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintain rural character ○ the net developable area to be retained as open space will coincide with regional conservation subdivision design requirements 	<p>ST</p>	<p>Nova Scotia Power (NSPI)</p> <p>Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC)</p> <p>Provincial DNR</p> <p>HRM Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan</p>	<p>P&I C&RS</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ protection of scenic views toward the estuary, trail corridors and connections, and protection of features of cultural or ecological value ○ options for the Halifax Water Commission lands with consideration for remediation of contaminated soils and servicing options to support market development 			
<p>P13 Acquisition of lands and supporting natural systems for conservation purposes will be considered using the following criteria to determine which areas are most in need of protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the site is undeveloped and largely undisturbed and supports a significant or at-risk native plant, land or aquatic wildlife habitat; ○ the site is critical to the health of the Cole Harbour Estuary and Watershed; ○ the site contains rare and important geological formations or natural features including significant undisturbed or at-risk riparian areas; ○ the site is adjacent to a protected open space and if protected from development the areas together would support more valuable or more diverse habitat or ecological systems; ○ the importance of the site within the larger open space system; ○ open space funding capacity and the overall relative importance of the investment; ○ the land has high capability to support low impact recreational use 	OG		P&I
<p>P14 Municipally-owned open space which is important to the natural open space system including urban ecosystems should be protected through appropriate use restrictions and best management practice to ensure that effective conservation efforts are in place and environmental and ecological function is not compromised including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ relocation or re-development of uses or activities where feasible which compromise natural ecosystems & significant natural features; ○ low impact design and development to protect hydrologic functions; ○ protection and reintroduction of flora or fauna to restore and improve habitat; ○ protection of riparian areas for waterways that are significant to the estuary and watershed areas including retention or restoration of a greater than 20 metre riparian buffer; ○ infrastructure such as fencing, culverts, or bridges to protect sensitive areas and facilitate mammal and fish migration; ○ low-impact storm-water treatment and nutrient management; ○ educational initiatives such as signage or communication to raise awareness of special practices, guidelines or regulations to protect sensitive areas; 	OG		P&I TPW
<p>P15 Trails and greenway corridors will be located, designed and constructed in a manner that does not impact the ecological viability and quality of important natural areas and ecological systems including sensitive riparian areas</p>	OG	HRM AT Plan Municipal Service Design Standards for Streets (HRM Redbook)	P&I TPW

R20 When bridges and culverts are subject to renewal and upgrading, low-impact design and construction standards should be applied with special emphasis on wildlife and fish habitat and movement.	OG	Municipal Service Design Standards for Streets (HRM Redbook) HRWC	P&I TPW
R21 Consider land-use and administrative policy requiring that trails be located outside of the 1-10 year flood-plain	ST	HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPSP)	P&I
P16 Improve storm-water and nutrient management, and protection and restoration of native vegetation within parks and corridors where feasible to balance the natural ecological function and recreational use of the land	OG	HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPSP)	P&I TPW
R22 Implement the recommendations under the HRM Urban Forest Master Plan for public street tree planting and management within the Cole Harbour Basin area including Cole Harbour Road, Forest Hills Parkway, Caldwell Road and Colby Village community and consider street trees for Auburn Drive and Westphal	ST	HRM Urban Forest Master Plan	TPW
P17 The identification and designation of ecologically significant and environmentally sensitive areas and natural systems in the Cole Harbour Basin area will be implemented through the development of future Regional Open Space Policy including delineation of Green-Beltting (green networks) and Public Open Space networks with consideration for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o landscapes and natural areas that are important to the regional open space system including significant cultural and natural landscapes, natural corridors for wildlife, critical stepping stones for wildlife movement and habitat protection; o the Cole Harbour Estuary and Little Salmon River watershed area; o the Cow Bay watershed area; o natural areas that are needed for shaping and managing regional growth and sustainable settlement patterns; 	ST	HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPSP) Provincial DNR HRWC	P&I
R23 Undertake ecological scientific study to support the delineation of significant natural areas, ecological systems and corridors through regional open space planning efforts including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o a Cole Harbour Estuary receiving waters watershed and land suitability study o Little Salmon River watershed study; o Cow Bay Estuary watershed study including Smelt Brook corridor; o water quality and flow between Settle Lake, Bissett Lake and Silver Sands Beach including the effects of storm-water run-off into Bissett Lake; 	ST	HRM Green-beltting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPSP) Lake Major Watershed Adv. Board NS Env. Act/ Environ. Assess. Act/ NS Wetland Cons. Policy	P&I

<p>P18 Adoption of low impact development guidelines should be considered for rural subdivisions through future MPS and regulatory review to support the conservation and preservation of important natural areas and ecological systems with focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o protection of the ecological function of the Little Salmon River & Broom Brook o Sensitive treatment and protection of storm-water discharge areas; o management of tree removal and native vegetation; o mitigation of hydrology flow barriers including bridges and culverts; o sensitivity of land-uses and built form; 	ST/ MT	<p>Regional Plan Secondary Plans</p> <p>Regional Subdivision Strategy</p> <p>HRWC</p> <p>Lake Major Watershed Adv. Board</p>	P&I
<p>R24 Undertake an ecological impact study and land-use concept through future MPS review to identify at-risk natural systems and areas for remediation to repair ecological function with emphasis on critical riparian areas, watersheds, and beaches including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o a review of land-use zoning to address incompatible commercial and industrial land uses along the Little Salmon River riparian buffer; o residential development adjacent to Rainbow Haven Beach including investigation into the feasibility of closed system septic; 	LT	Secondary Plans	P&I
<p>R25 Consider a review of the boundaries encompassing the five municipal planning districts that surround the Cole Harbour Estuary with emphasis on watershed boundaries</p>	MT	<p>Regional Plan 10 year review</p> <p>Lake Major Watershed Adv. Board</p>	P&I
<p>P19 Dedication of public open space and privately-owned common lands through future conservation design development will consider the protection of <u>primary conservation areas</u> including environmentally sensitive areas (ESA's) and ecologically important lands, waters, and natural corridors, <u>secondary conservation areas</u> of rural, cultural and natural heritage importance, and mobility corridors connecting to the open space system as identified through the recommendations under this Plan and as identified through future ecological study</p>	MT/ LT	<p>Regional Plan</p> <p>Regional Subdivision Strategy</p>	P&I C&RS
<p>R26 Recognize the Little Salmon River corridor and supporting riparian area as a conservation area for ecological protection under potential future conservation design development and use this Plan as a guideline for identifying areas of primary and secondary conservation. and connecting lands within the watershed should be considered as secondary conservation area</p>		<p>Regional Subdivision Strategy</p> <p>HRM Green- belting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP)</p>	P&I C&RS
<p>R27 Incorporate low impact development principles into the design and construction of municipal infrastructure projects for enhanced environmental sustainability and open space function with consideration for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Special design of transportation and recreation corridors that compromise water flow including tidal flow barriers along the 	ST	HRM Green- belting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP)	P&I TPW

<p>Cole Harbour causeway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm-water and water run-off management such as a reduction in impervious surfacing, tree planting, swales, storm-water wetlands and vegetated filter strip 		HRWC	
<p>P20 Landscapes representing important natural and cultural heritage of the Cole Harbour community including rural, agrarian and coastal heritage, may be considered for conservation through cultural landscape designation, land acquisition, land-use policy and regulation, special management plans, conservation easements, and support for community stewardship efforts.</p>	OG	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	P&I C&RS
<p>R28 Protect the Long Hill scenic view corridor as an important cultural landscape within the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park including the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acquisition of critical lands within the view corridor including the Bishops property; cost-sharing with the Provincial Department of Natural Resources for land acquisition as part of the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park; retention of development rights on non-essential portions of the Bishops property; management of treed hedgerow to maintain critical view corridor; design and siting of the NSPI utility corridor to the north side of the Cole Harbour Road protect critical views; taxation exemptions for municipal servicing approved in 2001 cultural landscape designation through the HRM Heritage Property Program; 	ST	Provincial DNR Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	P&I C&RS
<p>P21 The inventory, evaluation criteria and process for designating significant natural and cultural sites and landscapes will be determined through the “Model for Assessing Cultural Heritage Values in HRM” and the development of future Heritage and cultural policy under the direction of the HRM Regional Plan and could include the following elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial organization & land patterns Visual relationships Circulation Vegetation Ecological features & landforms Water features Built features Traditional practices Land use 	ST/ MT	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
<p>P22 Cultural landscapes and points of historic interest will be promoted for educational, awareness, and community identity purposes and to help foster community economic development.</p>	OG	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
<p>R29 Consider a marketing and promotion campaign to raise awareness of the Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core” as a community-wide and regional open space destination including interpretation of important natural and cultural heritage elements in conjunction with community and provincial partners</p>	MT	Provincial DNR CH Rural Heritage Society CH Parks & Trails Association	C&RS P&I CC

R30 Recognize and protect heritage landscapes and landscapes within the Cow Bay community which are important to community identity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Nelson Conservation Area Monument o Cow Bay Community Hall and former school house 	ST/M T	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
P23 The feasibility of formally recognizing and designating the concentration of cultural assets and cultural landscapes as the Cole Harbour Basin “Cultural Core” will be explored with consideration of the following culturally important landscapes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park, former Red Barn site, and Poor’s Farm. o historic cemeteries on Bissett Road (part of Coastal Heritage Park) o Davies and Bishop Properties (portions) and Long Hill view corridor o Cole Harbour Meeting House o site of the former NS Rehabilitation Hospital o Barbara Bell Estate site on Long Hill 	ST/M T	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
R31 Support the Province to facilitate the rebuilding of the provincially-owned historic Red Barn on the Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park site including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o supporting a working partnership between DNR, HRM, CH Rural Heritage Society, and CH Parks & Trails Association o operation and management of the Red Barn site as an interpretation centre to the Cole Harbour-Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Provincial Park system including parking and trail-head infrastructure o design guidelines to ensure the Red Barn is constructed to reflect the cultural identity of the community o interpretation and celebration of rural, agrarian and coastal heritage o special consideration for infrastructure design and construction including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the proposed NS Power transmission line o “Complete streets” improvements to Bissett Road along Cole Harbour Heritage Provincial Park frontage o driveway entrances, parking lots, and public amenities which are designed to be sensitive to the cultural and rural character 	OG	Provincial DNR CH Rural Heritage Society CH Parks & Trails Association	C&RS P&I
R32 Investigate the feasibility of a cultural core designation for the area comprising the Black Cultural Centre, Akoma Family Centre (former NS Home for Coloured Children Lands), and the intersection of Main Street, Cherry Brook and Old Miller Road	ST/M T	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
R33 Consider participating in the facilitation of a Cole Harbour Basin Cultural Core Stewardship group comprised of HRM, DNR, Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society, Cole Harbour Parks & Trails Association, Black Cultural Centre and other stakeholders	MT		C&RS P&I

R34 Consider the Barbara Bell Estate property (PID# 40143158) located on Long Hill as a significant cultural landscape through the future cultural landscapes inventory under the HRM Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan and identify potential conservation mechanisms including cultural landscape designation and/or property acquisition.	MT/L T	Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan	C&RS P&I
P24 Significant scenic routes and gateways will be identified and may be considered for capital investment opportunity under the multi-year capital budget to improve the quality of landscape and infrastructure elements that contribute to community identity and open space function.	ST		P&I TPW
R35 Complete an inventory and mapping of significant view points, scenic gateways and image routes to enhance the Cole Harbour Basin corridor network including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cole Harbour Road and Caldwell Road intersection; o Cole Harbour Road and Bissett Road intersection; o Ross Road and Cole Harbour Road intersection; o Main Street between Cherry Brook Road and Ross Road; o Bissett Road and Shearwater Flyer/Salt Marsh Trail intersection; o Marine Drive Image Route (Hwy 207); 	LT		P&I TPW C&RS
P25 The acquisition and disposal of open space lands will be considered for meeting community service delivery needs, environmental or heritage conservation, or to shape community design using the following broad decision-making framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Ecological & cultural considerations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ watercourses and their riparian corridors. ➤ lands that are identified as part of an HRM regional “green-belt” system ➤ lands which enhance the environmental function of corridors and parks ➤ lands which are culturally significant to the community and/or the region and are at risk of being lost or compromised o <u>recreation considerations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lands which help to achieve and/or improve a level of service for recreation ➤ lands that complement and enhance existing public open spaces and facilities including corridor connections, improved function of neighbourhood and community parks and open space lands that compliment or support existing facilities such as community centres, schools, sports facilities and other similar lands ➤ land which can improve public access to the water and help to better integrate the community with its’ waterfront assets and coastal heritage o <u>connectivity & mobility considerations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ lands which are key to completing, repairing or connecting recreational, AT, or natural corridors with emphasis on barriers and gaps in the system 	OG	CFMP	P&I C&RS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>financial considerations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investment in the land is strategic as the property has a high potential to be sold for development making it unlikely to be available for public open space in future ➤ The land can be acquired at fair market value ➤ Disposal of surplus land can result in a reassignment of funds for the enhancement and/or purchase of other public open space assets 			
R36 Explore the development of a watershed conservation stewardship group between government, community, business and resident associations with emphasis on protection and management of the Little Salmon River and Cole Harbour Estuary watershed	ST	Lake Major Watershed Adv. Board	P&I
P26 When planning for and carrying out municipal public works and utility installations or service upgrades, an assessment of the potential impacts on any existing open space and any opportunity to enhance open space function and use will be carried out to guide decision-making and coordinate investments.	OG		TPW HRWC NSPI P&I
R37 Facilitate ongoing collaborative discussions and project management to create open space synergies for infrastructure projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NSPI Utility Corridor along the Bissett Road Image Route ○ Municipal road and bridge projects ○ stormwater infrastructure projects 	OG	NSPI HRWC	P&I TPW
R38 Develop decision-making guidelines for the siting and installation of utilities on HRM-owned open space lands including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ primary recreational function of the land must not be disturbed or compromised; ○ construction must not compromise ecological systems, significant natural areas, or cultural landscapes; ○ high attention to design quality to maintain the recreation, cultural, environmental and aesthetic values of the land; ○ ongoing maintenance and management of utility infrastructure to foster ongoing public access and enjoyment of the lands ○ opportunity to incorporate passive recreation and mobility corridors; ○ opportunity to align utility corridors on public and private lands to protect scenic views and open space lands and waters 	ST	HRM Green-belting & Public Open Space Priorities Plan (GPOSP) HRWC	P&I TPW NSPI HRWC
P27 HRM will seek opportunities for engagement and integrated decision-making with Provincial government, agencies, utilities, and community groups to incorporate open space objectives into planning and development initiatives and to foster collaborative relationships	OG		P&I
R39 Use the Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan as a guiding document and management tool for future Municipal land-use planning in the Cole Harbour Basin area	MT/ LT	Secondary Planning Strategies	P&I

P28 Promote parks and other public open space assets for improved recreational enjoyment and community benefit, to raise cultural and environmental awareness, and to foster community economic development.	MT/ LT		C&RS P&I
R40 Investigate the feasibility of designing and implementing a Municipal park promotional and way-finding signage system with emphasis on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o directional & entrance signs o web-based promotion o interpretive signs and kiosks 	MT/ LT		CC

ST = Short Term 1-5 Years	P&I = Planning & Infrastructure
MT = Medium Term 6-10 Years	C&RS = Community & Recreation Services
LT = Long Term 11-15 Years	TPW = Transportation & Public Works
OG = Ongoing	CC = Corporate Communications



Appendix 1: Functional Analysis Tool – Scoring Criteria

Functional Analysis Tool - Scoring Criteria

1. Identity (sense of place) – evaluates the land from the perspective of being memorable due to the presence of unique characteristics (views, size, features), familiar awareness or presence of location (ease of way-finding) for the journey there, and for the sense of belonging once you have arrived. It evaluates the land's capability to present opportunity for social cohesion, facilitation of frequent visits for various lengths of time, and minimal nuisance to the neighbourhood (noise, light, traffic, etc.). Sense of place is the combination of qualities that are experienced through perception and remembered and shared through interpretation of sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. These shared experiences create identity and identity creates place.

A. Neighbourhood Significance – evaluates the land for its ability to be memorable throughout the neighbourhood (within 500 metre radius).

- 0 – Unique characteristics do not exist, awareness of location is low, nuisance issues are obvious and sense of belonging is low. The land presents opportunity for social conflict and likely has difficulty attracting people.
- 1 – Few unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is good but nuisance issues are obvious and sense of belonging is low. The land presents few elements for social cohesion and it likely attracts only infrequent use.
- 2 – Some unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is moderate, nuisance issues are probably moderate and a sense of belonging is moderate. The land presents elements to facilitate social cohesion and can attract moderate use regularly.
- 3 – Several unique characteristics exist, awareness of the location is obvious, nuisance issues are likely low for adjacent neighbours, and the sense of belonging is strong. The land presents many elements to facilitate social cohesion and attracts moderate to high use from the neighbourhood.

B. Community Significance – evaluates the land for its ability to be memorable throughout the community (within 2 km radius).

- 0 – Unique characteristics do not exist, awareness of location is low, nuisance issues are obvious, and sense of belonging is low. The land presents elements for social conflict and likely has difficulty attracting people.
- 1- Few unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is good but, nuisance issues may be obvious and sense of belonging low. The land presents few elements for social cohesion and is likely attracts only infrequent use from people within the community.
- 2- Some unique characteristics exist awareness of location is moderate, nuisance issues are probably moderate, and sense of belonging is moderate. The land presents elements to facilitate social cohesion and can attract moderate use from residents within the community.
- 3 – Several unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is obvious, nuisance issues are likely low, and sense of belonging is strong. The land presents many elements to facilitate social cohesion and attracts moderate to high use from within the community and beyond.

C. District Significance – evaluates the land for its ability to be memorable throughout the district (within 5 km radius).

- 0 – Unique characteristics do not exist, awareness of location is low, nuisance could be an issue and there is little sense of belonging. The land presents elements for social conflict and likely has difficulty attracting people.
- 1- Few unique characteristics exist, awareness of location good, but nuisance issues may be a problem and sense of belonging is low. The land presents few elements for social cohesion and likely attracts only infrequent use from people within the district.
- 2- Some unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is moderate, nuisance issues are probably moderate and sense of belonging is moderate. The land presents several elements for social cohesion and attracts moderate use from people within the district.
- 3 – Several unique characteristics exist, awareness of its location is obvious, nuisance uses are likely not a problem and sense of belonging is high. The land presents many elements for social cohesion experience and attracts moderate to high use from within the district.

D. Regional Significance - evaluates the land for its ability to be memorable throughout the region and beyond (5 km + radius).

- 0 – Unique characteristics do not exist, awareness of location is low, nuisance could be an issue and there is little sense of belonging. The land presents elements for social conflict and has difficulty attracting people.
- 1- Few unique characteristics exist, awareness of its location is good, but nuisance issues may be a problem and sense of belonging is low. The land presents few elements for social cohesion and attracts only infrequent use from residents within the region.
- 2- Some unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is good, nuisance issues are moderate and sense of belonging is moderate. The land presents several elements for social cohesion and attracts moderate use from people within the region.
- 3 – Several unique characteristics exist, awareness of location is obvious, and sense of belonging is high. The land presents multiple elements for social cohesion experience and attracts moderate to high use from within the region.

2. Heritage Conservation – evaluates the land for its capability to perform a natural heritage function (natural influence of Landscape Character for their native forest, natural watercourse, natural water resource, geological values) or perform a cultural heritage function (human influence of Gathering Places for their recreation, educational, institutional, transportation, agricultural, spiritual, settlement value)

A. Natural Heritage

- 0 – no evidence of indigenous features.
- 1 – minor evidence of indigenous features such as native Acadian forest, small sized wetland, natural water course, shoreline, rock outcrop.
- 2 – moderate evidence of indigenous features such as native Acadian forest, moderate sized wetland, natural water course, shoreline, rock outcrop.
- 3 – significant evidence of indigenous features such as native old growth forest, migratory bird wetland, natural water course, shoreline, rock outcrop affording inspirational scenery.

B. Cultural Heritage

- 0 – no evidence of social gathering places, K-roads, look offs, cemeteries, foundations, buildings, nautical, agricultural, recreational, transportation based.
- 1 – minor evidence of social gathering places, K-roads, look offs, cemeteries, foundations, buildings, nautical, agricultural, recreational, transportation based.
- 2 – moderate evidence of social gathering places such as K-roads, look offs, cemeteries, foundations, buildings, nautical, agricultural, recreational, transportation based.
- 3 – significant evidence of social gathering places such as historic land grants, K-roads, look offs, cemeteries, foundations, buildings, nautical, agricultural, recreational, transportation based.

3. Recreation – evaluates the quality of land for its ability to support recreation and leisure activities and strengthening of community, and its functional capability based on the land's carrying capacity (resilience) and programming versatility (depending on trends and fashions).

A. Land Character: evaluates the dimensions, road frontage, location, topography, hydrology, vegetation.

- 0 - The land does not meet standard and is not suitable for public recreation and leisure programming
- 1 – the land is sub-standard but can be engineered for intended public recreation and leisure programming.
- 2 – the land meets standard requirements for intended public recreation and leisure programming
- 3 – the land exceeds standard requirements for intended public recreation and leisure programming.

B. Land Capacity (resilience): evaluates the land for its ability to sustain (accommodate) a range of visitation intensities on a regular basis while satisfactorily serving its intended purpose and avoiding over-crowding.

- 0 – the land capacity is very low and could be decommissioned.
- 1 – the land has the ability to accommodate a limited number of visitors at one time while still serving its intended purpose. Crowding may become a concern.
- 2 - the land has the ability to accommodate a moderate number of visitors at one time while still serving its intended purpose. Crowding is unlikely.
- 3 - the land has the ability to accommodate high levels of use at one time while still serving its intended purpose. Crowding is not a concern.

C. Program Versatility: evaluates the land for its ability to accommodate a variety of programs and be easily repurposed depending on recreation trends and fashions

- 0 - the land is not versatile and not easily repurposed.
- 1 – the land has low versatility and can only accommodate 1 or 2 programs at one time depending on demographic profile and current trends and fashions. Not easy to repurpose.
- 2 – the land has moderate versatility and can accommodate 2 or 3 programs at one time depending on demographic profile and current trends and fashions. Possible to repurpose.
- 3 – the land is very versatile and can accommodate 3 or more programs at one time depending on demographic profile and current trends and fashions. Easily repurposed.

4. Natural Systems Conservation - the land is evaluated for its capability to support or be an integral component of an ecological system. Evidence of flora (forest, meadow), fauna, stationary and migratory (mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird), and hydrological (watercourse, water resource, aquatic animals) elements. *Note that given enough time, disturbed land will recover and succeed into a natural system.*

- 0 – The land does not present an area to allow for natural habitat succession due to land use program intensification and does not integrate low impact design principles for natural habitat (forest, stream day-lighting), and is entirely manicured.
- 1 – the land integrates few areas (approx. 25%) for natural habitat succession due to land use program intensification, does not integrate low impact design principles, and is mostly manicured. Largely an isolated land patch.
- 2 – the land integrates areas (approx. 50%) for natural habitat succession due to land use program intensification, integration of low impact design principles, and is only partially manicured. Land is likely to function as part of a larger natural system of lands and and/or waters.
- 3 – the land integrates many areas (50% plus) for natural habitat succession, integrates low impact design principles, and has few manicured areas. Land is an integral component of a larger natural network of lands and/or waters.

5. Connectivity/Mobility (Context and Access) – the land is evaluated for its capability to function as part of a recreation and transportation (pedestrian, cyclist, transit, motorist) network.

- 0 - the land is not connected, and lacks context with adjacent public open space due to barriers (private property, highways) and configuration (narrow road frontage, flag lot). Low public use is probable.
- 1 – the land is not well connected with a limited number of transportation modes, but does not have a well-defined main entrance and some limited potential for greater connectivity. Some barriers like private property may exist. Minimal public use is probable.
- 2 – the land is well connected and an integral part of a patchwork system context connected via sidewalks, walkways, trails, and road ways accessible by several transportation modes and has well-defined main and secondary entrances. Moderate to high public use is probable.
- 3 – the land is well connected an integral part of a linear corridor system context that is accessible by many transportation modes and has main, secondary and tertiary entrances. Intersection design is critical. High public use is probable.

Typology-based Criteria Weighting

A weighting scheme based on open space typology was prepared to reflect the importance of particular criteria to the function expected or desired for a specific open space typology.

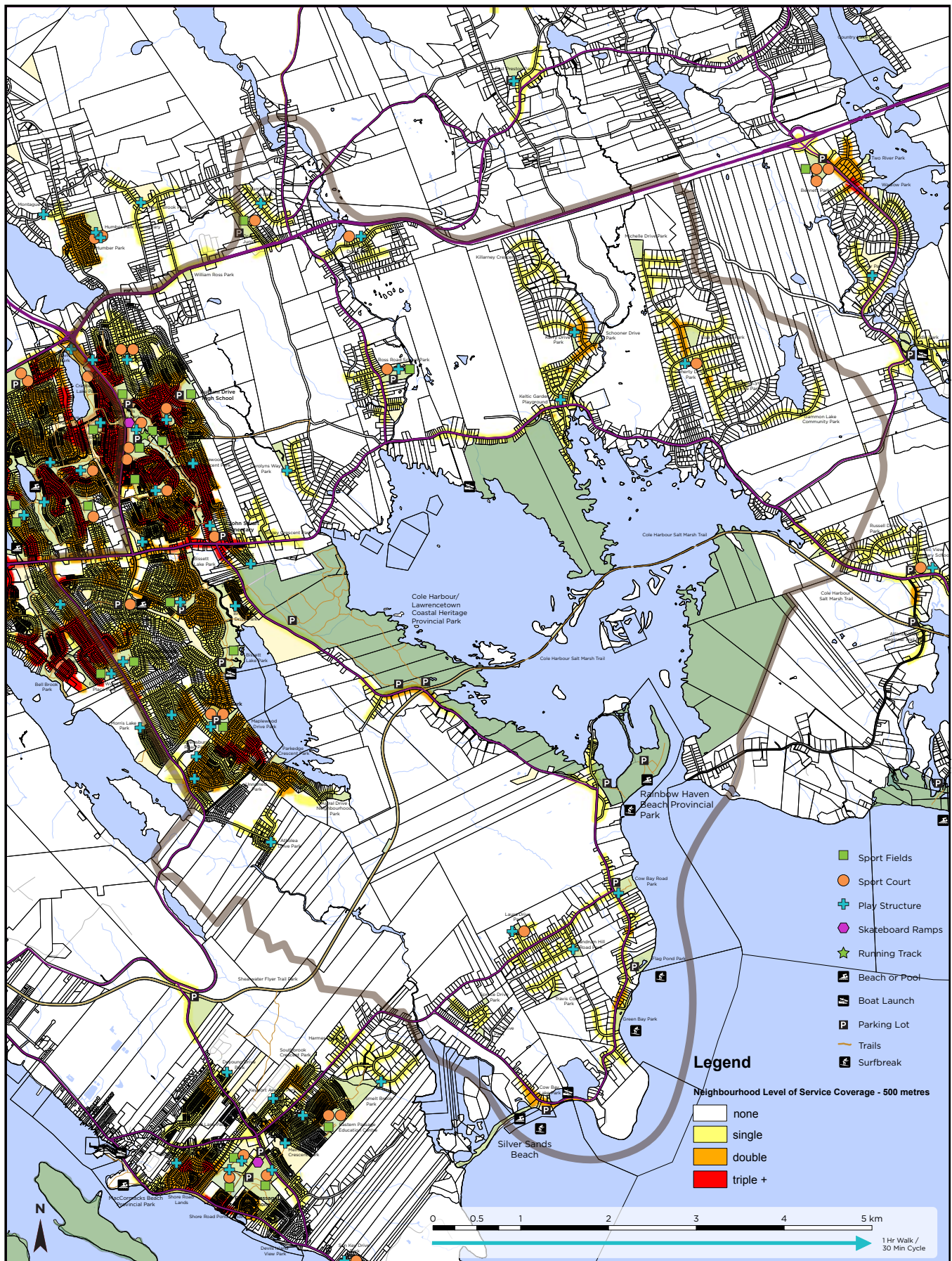
- 3: this criterion defines this type of open space, and/or is critical to how this type functions.
- 2: this criterion exists in this type of open space, but is not a defining characteristic.
- 1: this criterion is not important in defining this type of open space.

Functions		Public Open Space						
		Neighbourhood Park	Community Park	District Park	Regional Park	Schools Yard	Conservation Area	Buffer
1. Identity	a. Neighbourhood Significance	3	2	1	1	3	1	1
	b. Community Significance	1	3	2	1	3	1	1
	c. District Significance	1	1	3	2	2	1	1
	d. Regional Significance	1	1	2	3	1	1	1
2. Heritage Conservation	a. Natural heritage	1	2	2	3	2	3	2
	b. Cultural heritage	2	2	3	3	2	1	2
3. Recreation	a. Quality of Land	3	3	3	2	3	1	1
	b. Capacity (resilience)	3	3	3	2	3	3	1
	c. Program versatility	3	3	3	2	3	1	1
4. Natural Systems Conservation		1	2	2	3	2	3	3
5. Connectivity/Mobility		3	3	2	2	3	1	2

Access (ownership and control) - Scoring Criteria multiplier to evaluate the land from a perspective of year round public access.

- 1.0 – Yes/No – Residents have access and control over access. The land is owned by municipal government and the public has the control to access the land without permission, but in accordance with local by-laws.
- 0.75 – Yes/No – Residents have limited access and control over access. The land may be owned by a public agency (institution, utility), but the public has limited access and control due to imposed time constraints, gates, and user fees.
- 0.5 – Yes/No – Residents do not have access and control over access. The land is owned by a private agency (institution, utility) and residents require the permission of the owner, and may be required to pay user fees to access the land.

Appendix 2: Service Delivery Spatial Analysis Maps



Analysis











Public Recreation Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

October 2013

[illegible]

-  Sport Fields
-  Sport Court
-  Play Structure
-  Skateboard Ramps
-  Running Track
-  Beach or Pool
-  Boat Launch
-  Parking Lot
-  Trails
-  Surfbreak

art



Forest Hills
Commons



Cole Harbour
District High School



George Bisset
Elementary

Col John Stuart
Elementary

Bissett
Lake Park

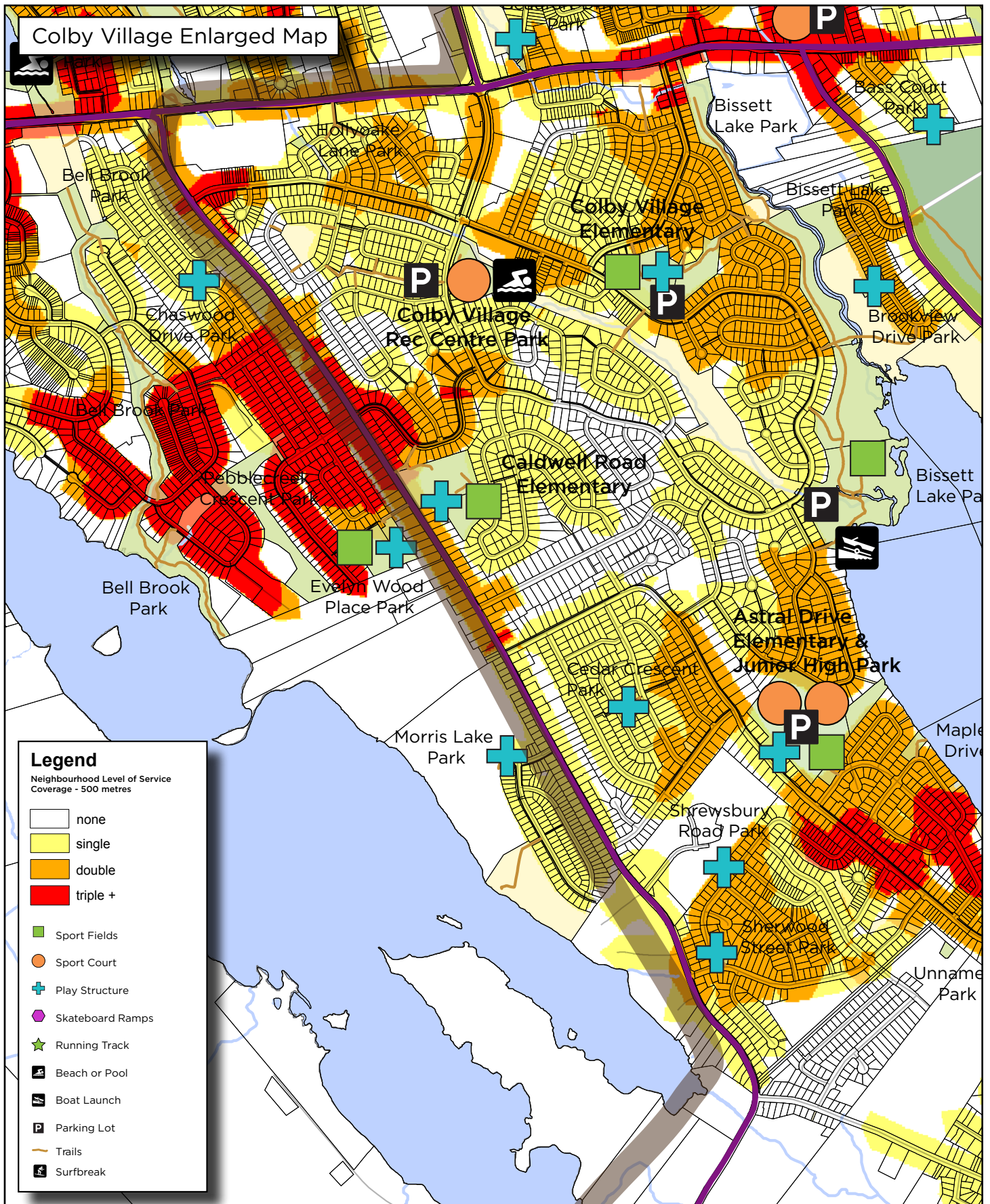


A map of Bass Court Park, showing a yellow rectangular area with a black border. The text "Bass Court Park" is written in black inside the rectangle. A small blue square is located at the bottom right corner of the rectangle.

Open Spaces

Cole Harbour Basin

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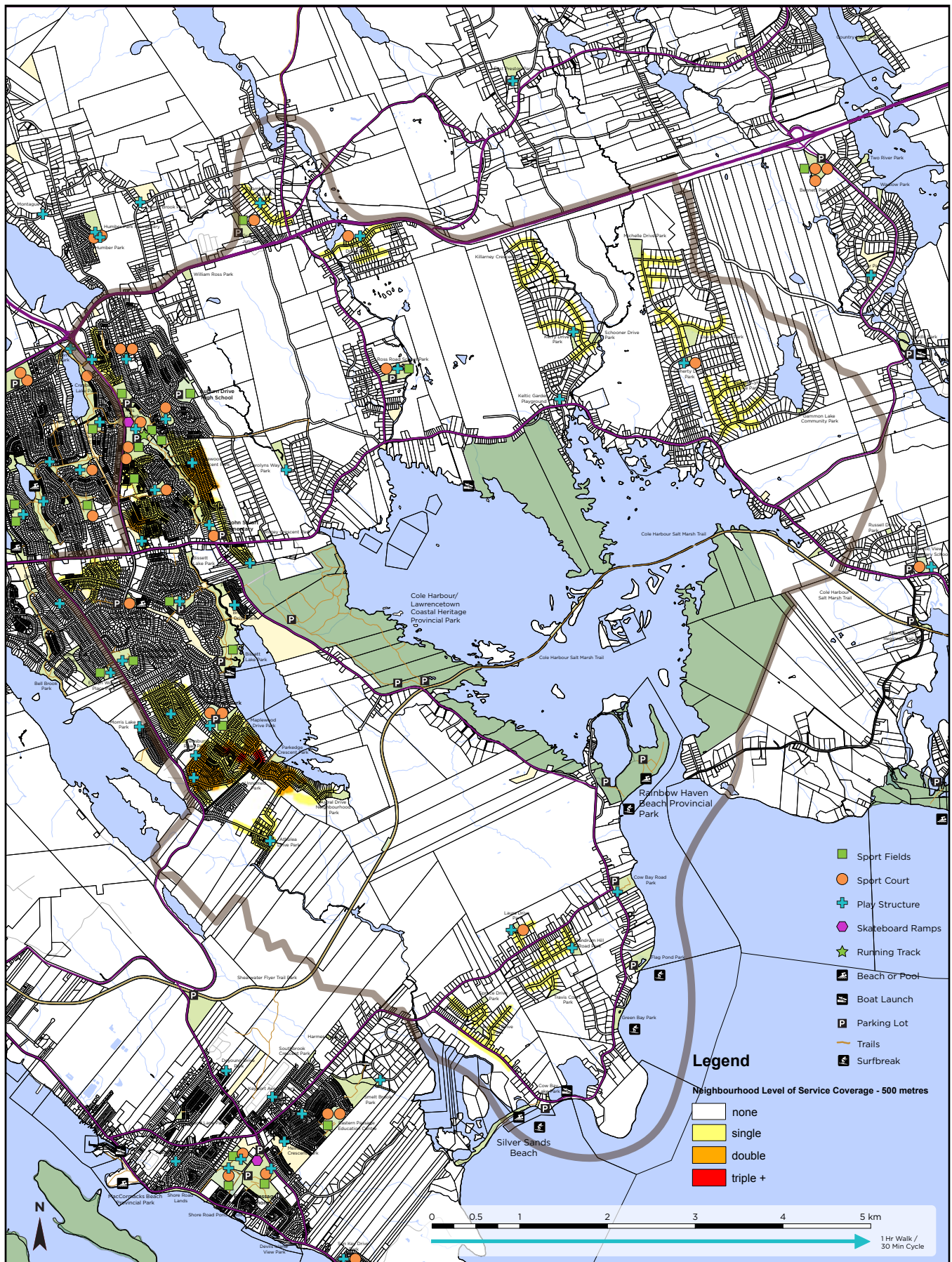
Analysis

Public Recreation Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

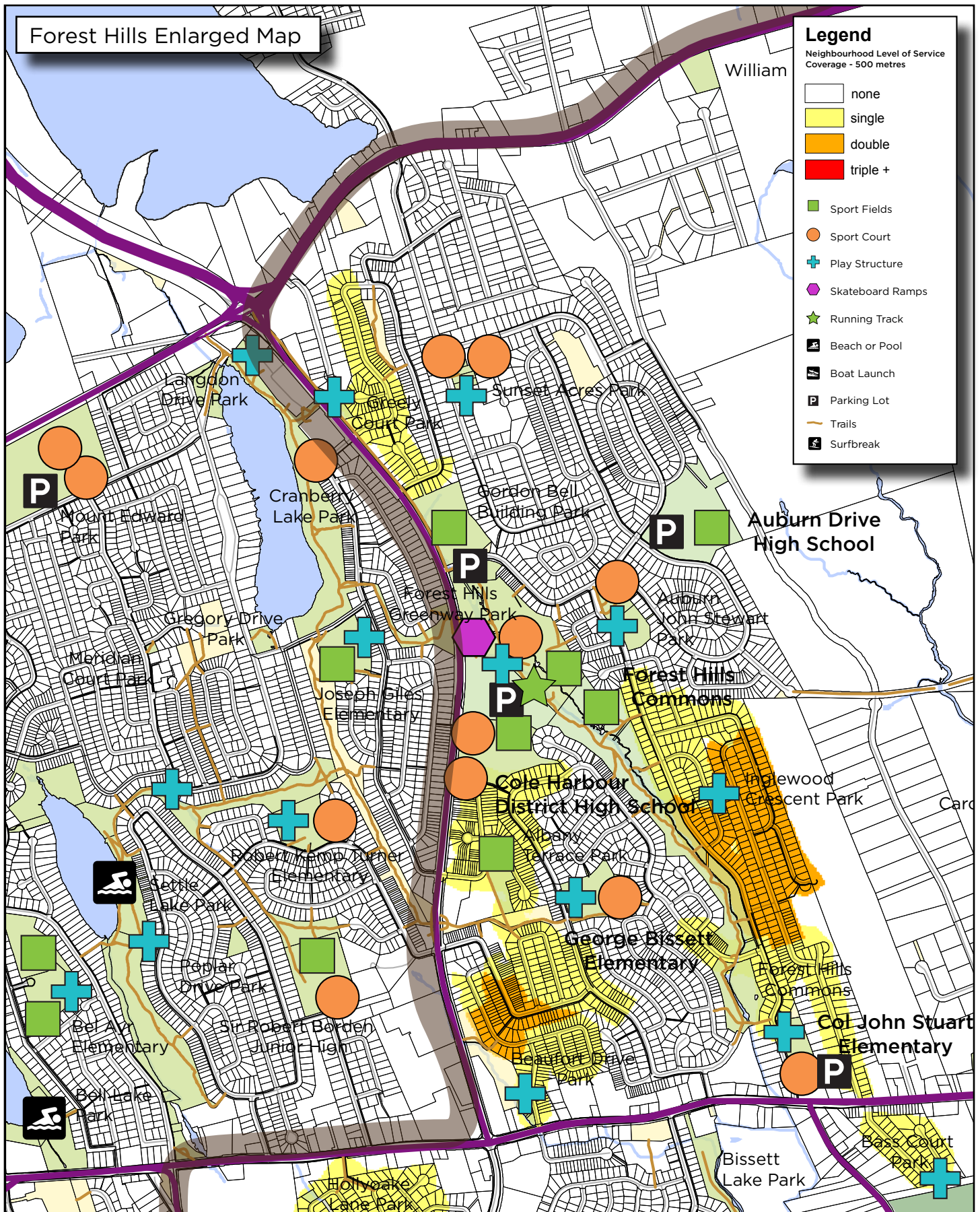
October 2013



Analysis Neighbourhood Park Service Delivery

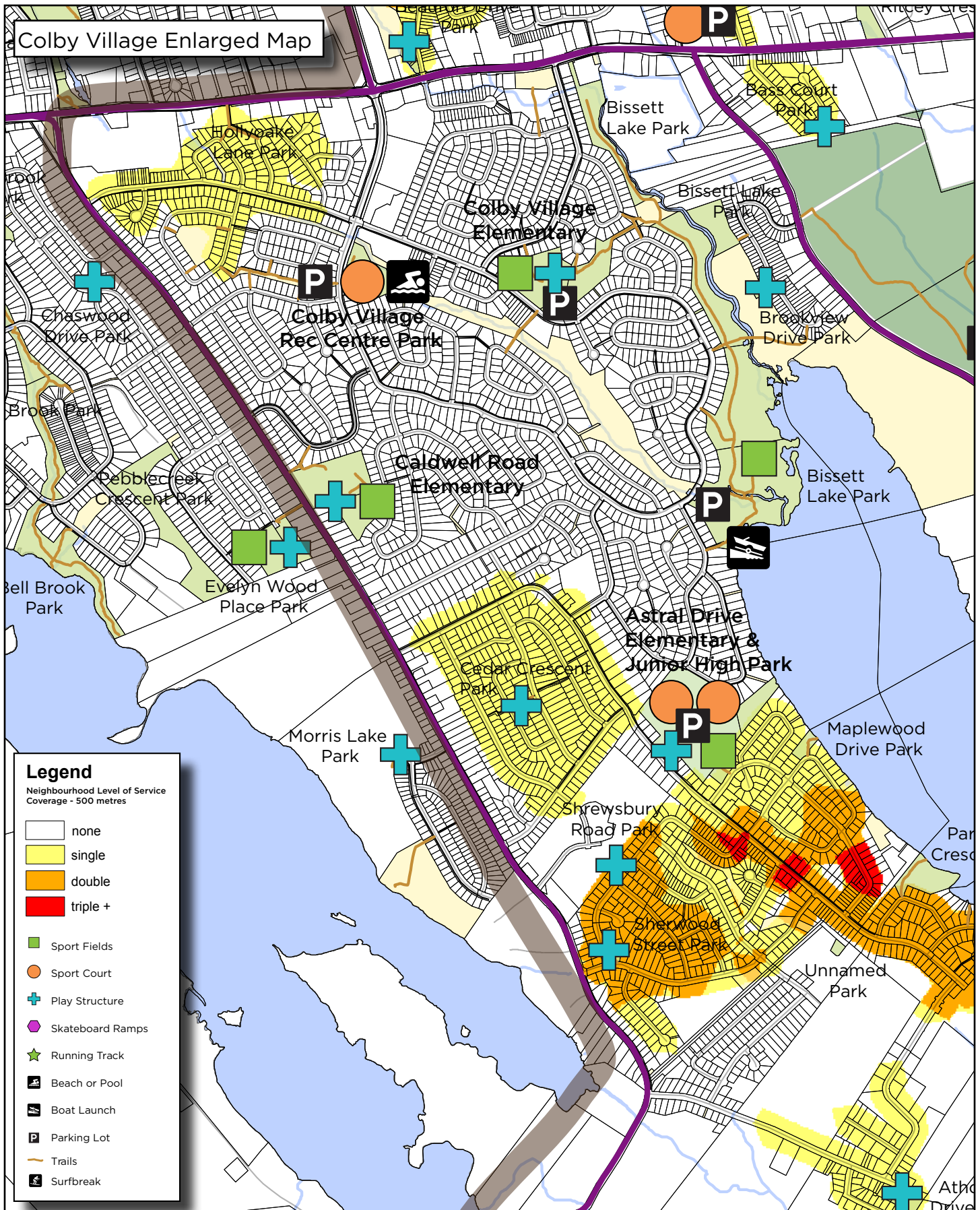
Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

October 2013



Analysis
Neighbourhood Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
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October 2013



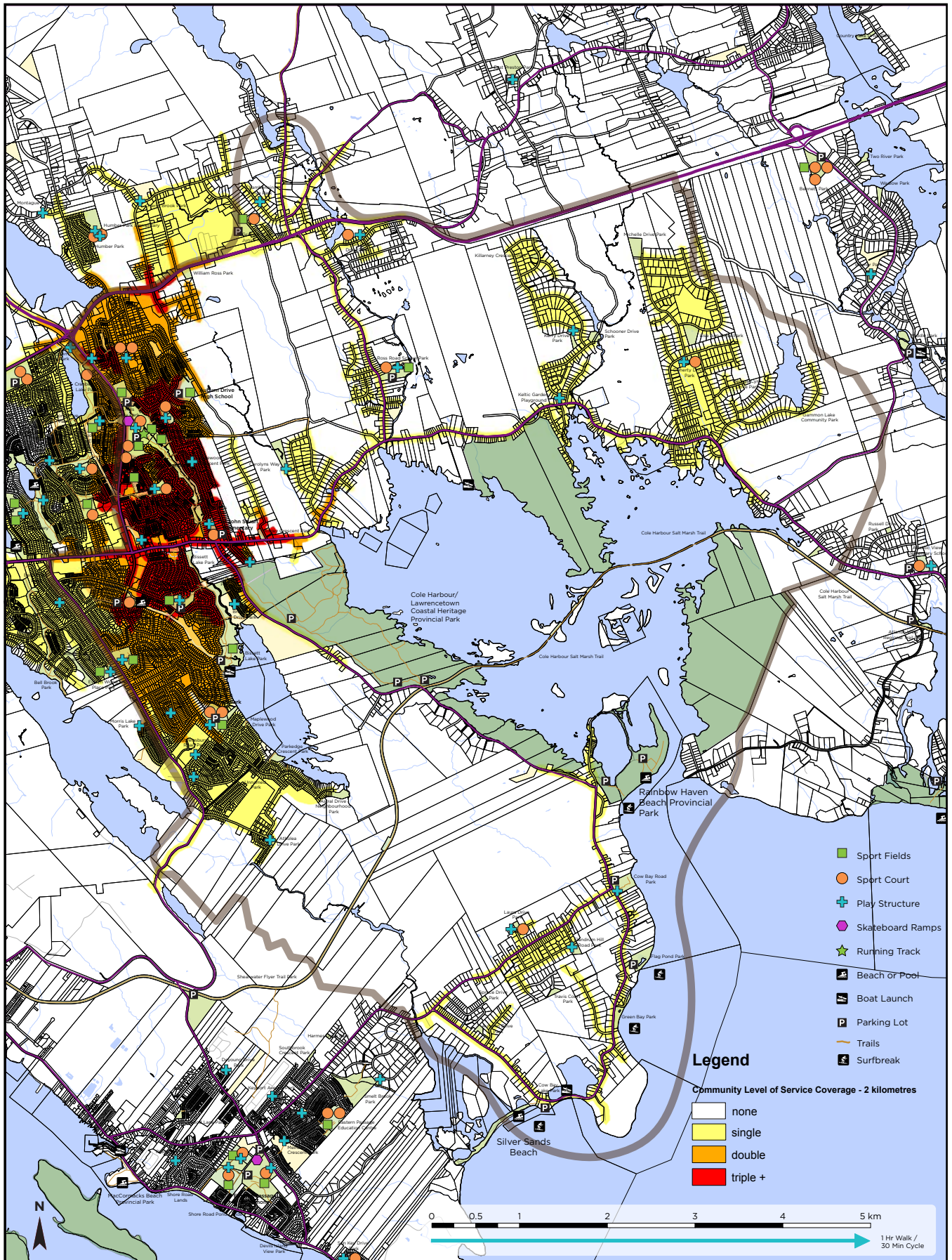
Analysis

Neighbourhood Park Service Delivery

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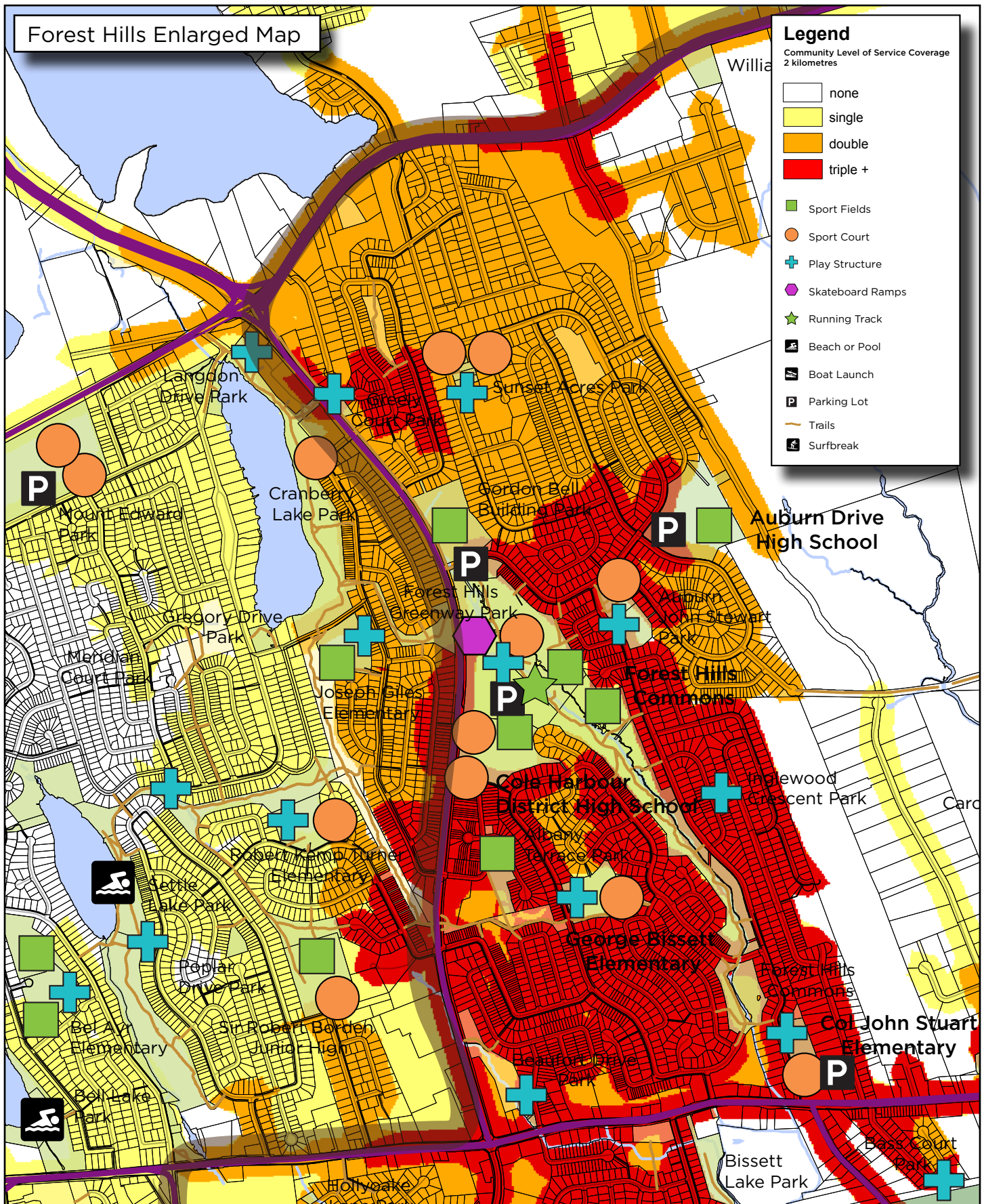


Analysis

Community Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
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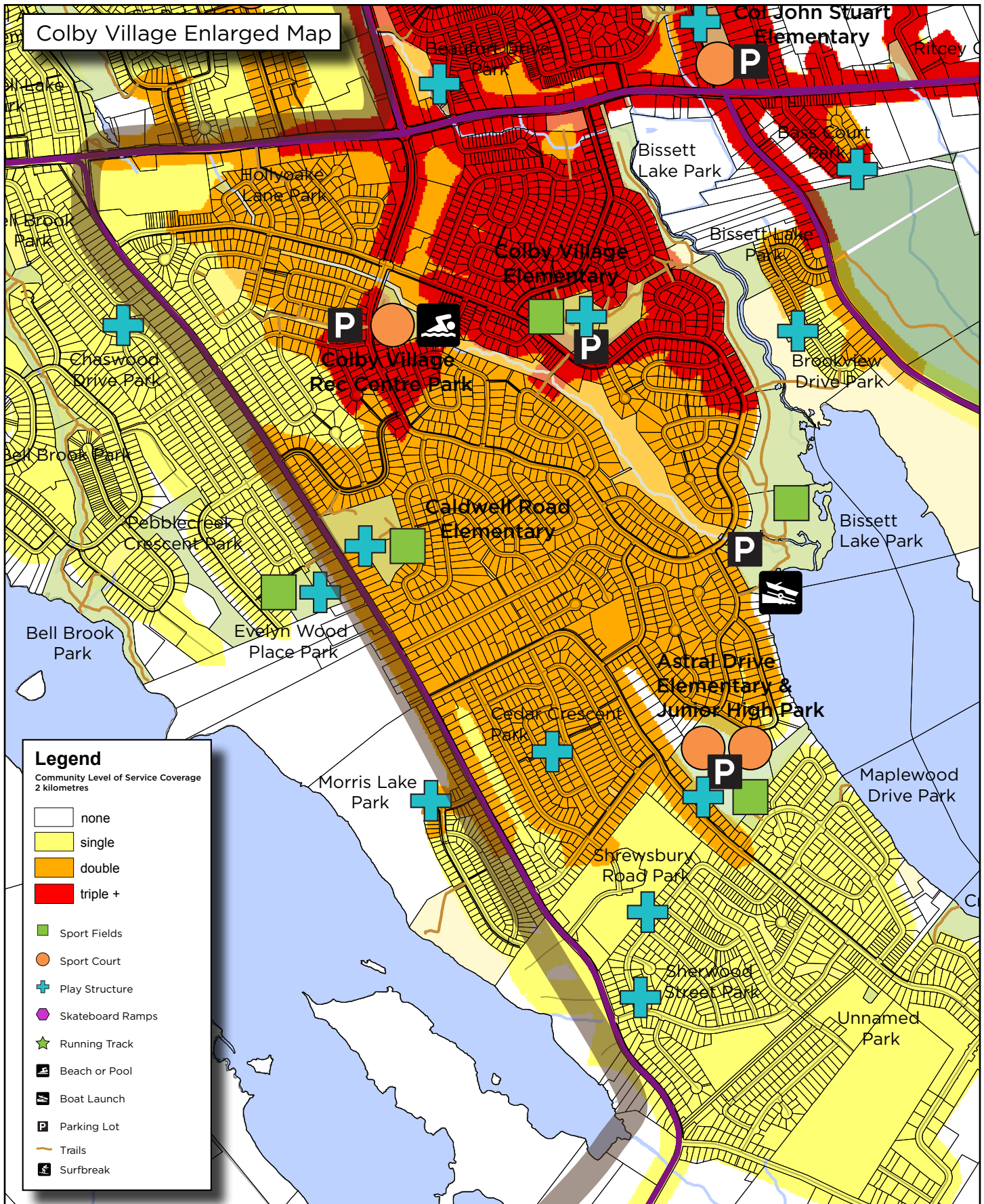


Analysis
Community Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

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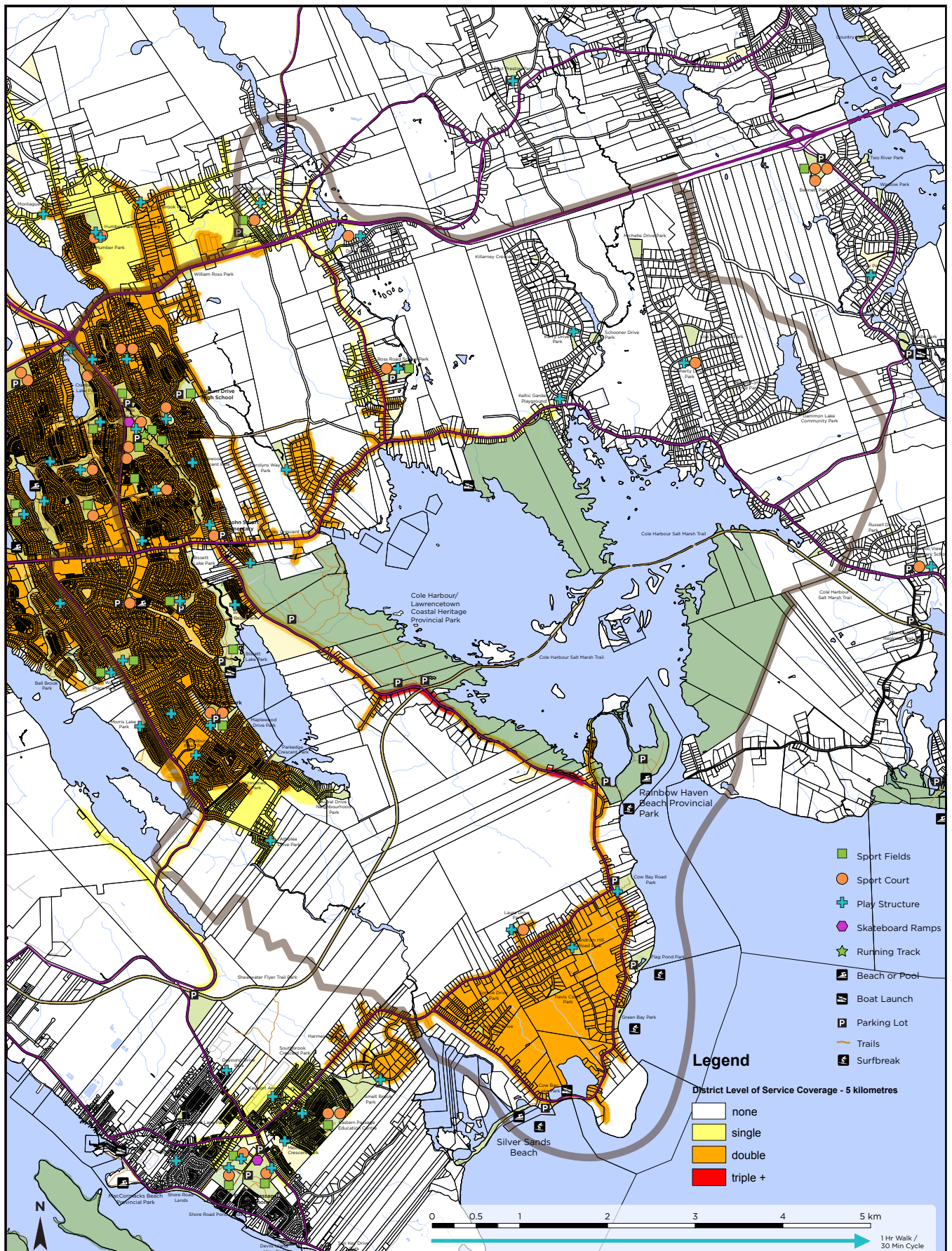
Analysis

Community Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin

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Analysis

District Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
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Forest Hills Enlarged Map

Legend
 District Level of Service Coverage
 5 kilometres

- none
- single
- double
- triple +

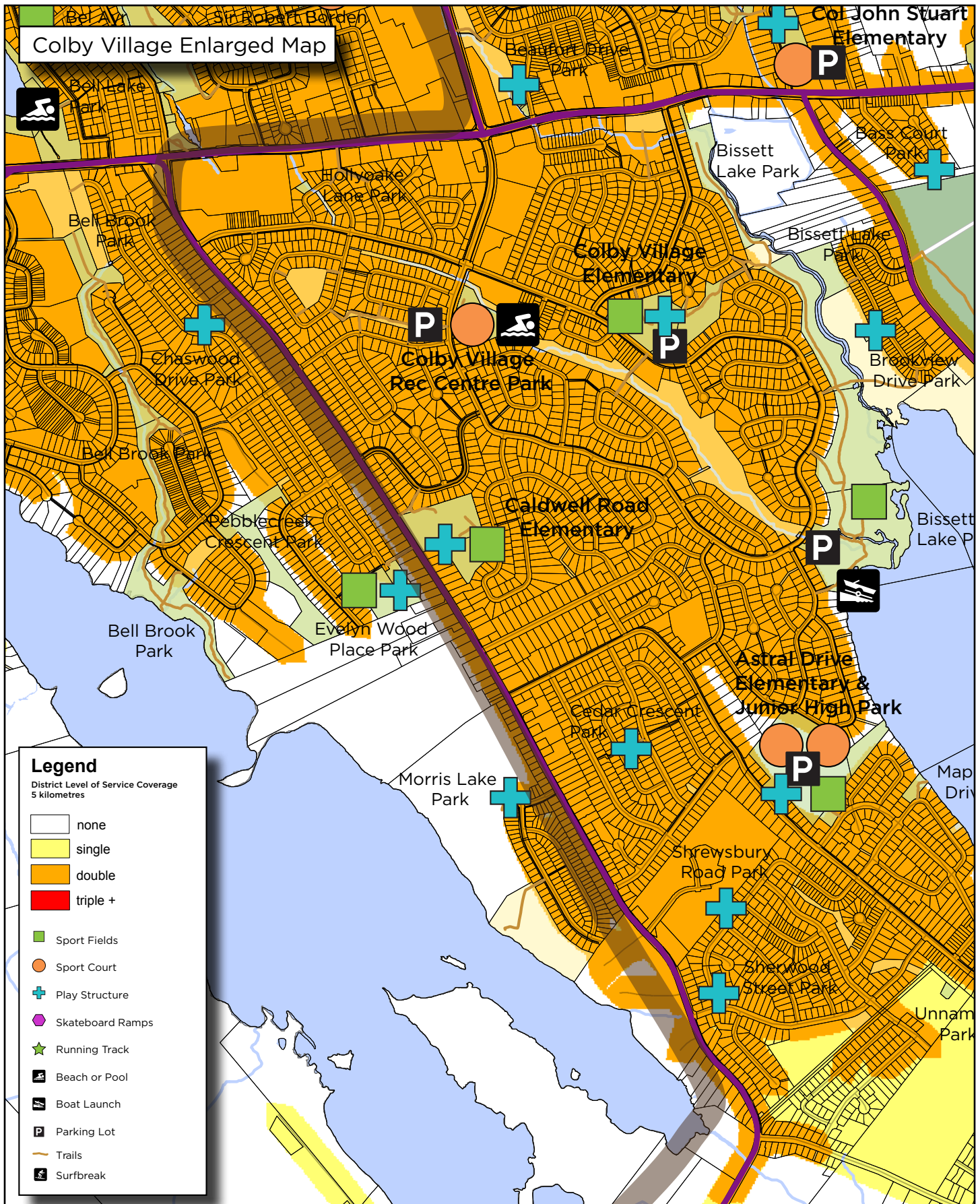
Facilities:

- Sport Fields
- Sport Court
- Play Structure
- Skateboard Ramps
- Running Track
- Beach or Pool
- Boat Launch
- Parking Lot
- Trails
- Surfbreak

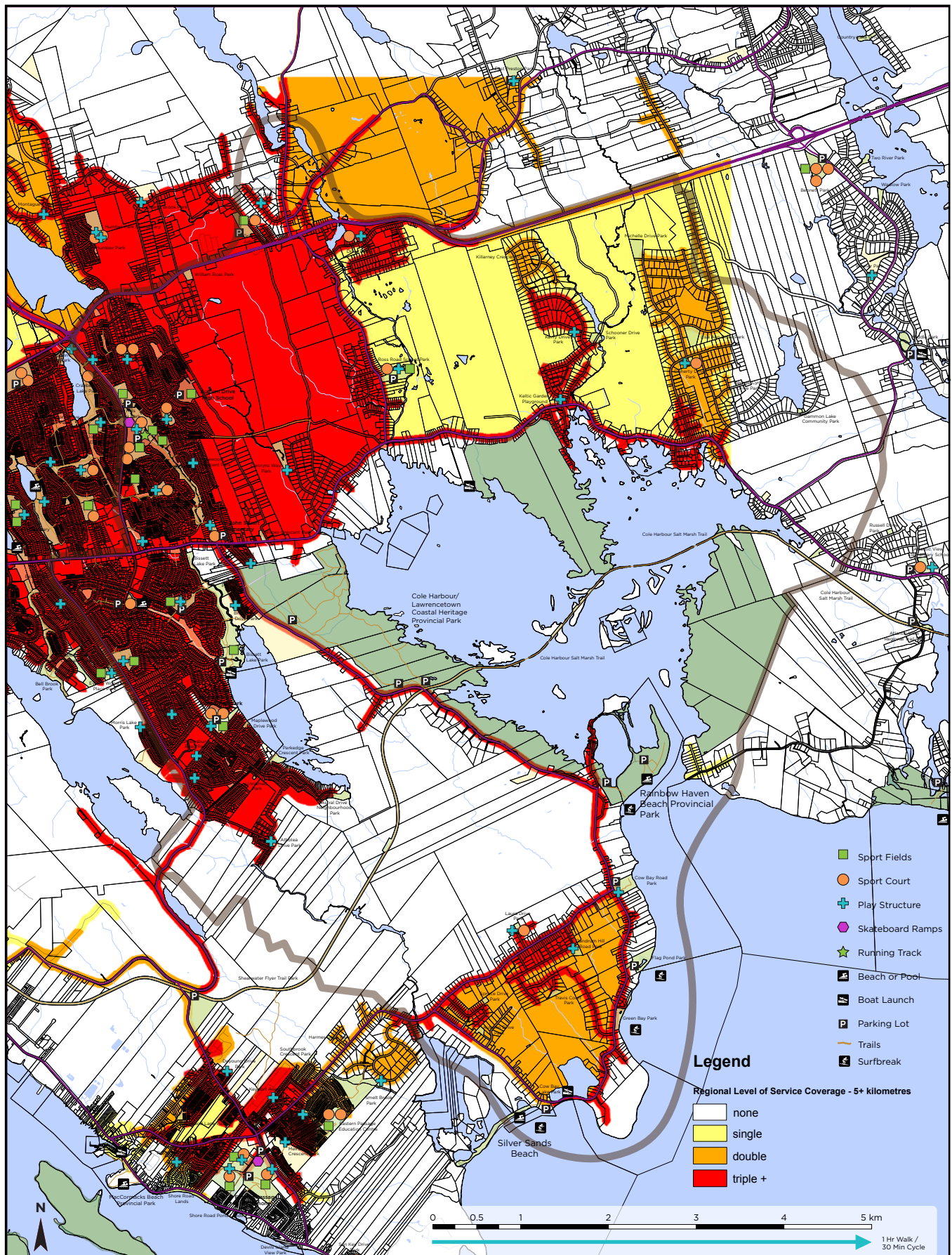
Map Labels:

- William R
- Sunset Acres Park
- Greely Court Park
- Cranberry Lake Park
- Gordon Bell Building Park
- Auburn Drive High School
- Forest Hills Greenway Park
- Forest Hills Commons
- Cole Harbour District High School
- Inglewood Crescent Park
- Carolyns Park
- George Bissett Elementary
- Col John Stuart Elementary
- Bissett Lake Park
- Bass Court Park
- Holyoake
- Bel Air Elementary
- Bel Lake Park
- Poplar Drive Park
- Sin Robert Borden Junior High
- Robert Kemp Turner Elementary
- Meridian Court Park
- Gregory Drive Park
- Woom Edward Park
- Langdon Drive Park

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
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Analysis District Park Service Delivery



Analysis Regional Park Service Delivery

Open Spaces
Cole Harbour Basin
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Appendix 3: Park Evaluation Table

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Albany Terrace Park - 1988	5168-N		367	*			High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance Identity and Recreation capability. Connectivity could be improved in relation to Forest Hills Common, Cole Harbour Highschool, and George Bissett Elementary School.
Astral Drive P-9 School - 1980/1982	5022-C	483-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5038-C, 571-C, 5155-C, 5035-C	2424	*			High landcapability. Working well in recreation capability and connectivity. High service density. Opportunity to improve community significance with closer relationship with community recreation promotion/signage.
Astral Drive Park - 2012	5212-N	1067-N, 1061-N	71		*		High land capability. Working well in Natural Systems Conservation and Recreation capability. Well positioned for neighbourhood level Connectivity with access to Bissett Lake and to Shearwater Flyer Trail. Avoid duplication of service with Un-named park (1061-N).
Atholea Drive Park - 1976/2000	89-N		76	*			High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance Identity and Recreation service capability.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Carolyn's Way Park - 1989	982-C	2952-C, 100-C, 5035-C, 5038-C, 571-C, 5016-C, 483-C, 5155-C	138		*		High land capability. Working well in natural systems conservation and connectivity capability. Low service density. Best capable for corridor recreation and connectivity use. Opportunity for improvements to recreation and connectivity with land acquisition and trail construction to link to Old Lawrencetown Road Trail Corridor.
Cedar Crescent Park - 1981	176-N		285	*			High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance identity and land character for recreation. Note high service density in relation to recreation facility lifecycle. Opportunity for inclusion of a recreation needs assesment and promotion via signage
Chamberlain Drive Park - 1987	1241-N		37		*		High land capability. Moderate functional ability, low in service density. Well positioned parcel suitable for neighbourhood level active recreation. Connectivity to Cherrybrook community needs to be improved.
Colby Village Elementary School - 1978	5038-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 571-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C, 217-C, 982-C	4106	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance and connectivity. Moderate in recreation capability. High service density and community park overlap. Opportunity to improve connectivity with Bissett Park via signage and road crossings.
Cole Harbour Common - 1978+	104-R	1-RNS, 5177-R	46,465	*			High land capability. Working well in functional capability. Opportunity to absorb Gordon Bell Building Park Cole Harbour Place land, and Cole Harbour Highschool into the Forest Hills Common. Priority for higher quality recreation and active transportation facility investment. Opportunity for

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Auburn Drive Highschool - 1992	5096-C	5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 5127-C, 571-C, 217-C, 5173-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	1986	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance and recreation capability. Opportunity for improvements to connectivity via future settlement to the east.
Auburn John Stewart Park - 1991	100-C	982-C, 217-C, 5173-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5155-C, 5038-C, 5127-C, 483-C, 571-C, 5035-C, 5164-C	2793	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance and recreation capability. High service density. Review recreation investment in context with Forest Hills Common and 10+ Community Parks. Opportunity for improvement in Connectivity via a sidewalk along John Stewart Drive, and a trail connection to Hirandale Crescent.
Autumn Drive Park - 1980	1091-N	1053-N	87			*	Low land capability. Working well in natural heritage conservation and natural systems conservation. Service overlap with Spruce Drive Park (1053-N)
Bass Court Park - 1991	778-N		46		*		High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance Identity. Well positioned to merge with adjacent road reserve and serve neighbourhood level Connectivity to Coastal Heritage Park.
Beaufort Drive Park - 1990	29-N		201	*			High land capability. In context with Forest Hills Parkway and Cole Harbour Road. Working well in neighbourhood and community identity, Recreation capability, Natural Systems and Connectivity. Look for opportunities to expand recreation and natural systems conservation services plus connectivity to Forest Hills Parkway. Change park classification to Community Park.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Bissett Lake Park - 1983/1987/2010	88-D	5021-D, 1084-D, 5167-D	15,979	*			High land capability. Working well in heritage conservation, natural systems conservation and connectivity. Moderate in district significance and recreation capability due to narrow road frontages and potential neighbourhood nuisances. High service density and moderate with district park overlap. Opportunity to review sport field usage and consider ball field relocation to active recreation hub such as Caldwell Road School Park.. Opportunity to improve identity with repurpose investment toward passive recreation and natural systems conservation.
Brookview Drive Park -1998	2952-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 5039-C, 982-C, 5155-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5035-C, 5164-C, 100-C, 571-C, 217-C	801			*	High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance and connectivity capability. Service density misleading at Community Park scale. Currently functioning at a neighbourhood park scale. Opportunity for strong relationship to Bissett Park (88-D). Opportunity for improvements to Connectivity via a trail/boardwalk connection to Trans Canada Trail. Strong opportunity to absorb this park into the Bissett Lake District Park.
Caldwell Elementary School - 1963/1982	5039-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 571-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	3705	*			High land capability. In the "For Review" category of the HRSB Imagine our Schools Study. Moderate in community significance but also district significance with frontage on Caldwell Road. Working well in sport recreation capability. HRSB list for school building review. Opportunity to improve recreation capability with sport field merge and building removal. Opportunity for review of sport field needs.
Carlisle Park - 1993	5218-C	5022-C	1893		*		Moderate land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance, recreation capability and connectivity.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Cole Harbour Heritage Park - 1987	1-RNS	104-R, 5177-R	45,183	*			High land capability. Working very well in functional capability. Opportunities for improvement to identity and heritage conservation with Bissett Road complete street design, Utility corridor relocation to west side of Bissett Road, and rebuilding the Red Barn as a Park Centre. Opportunity to improve connectivity by
Cole Harbour Highschool - 1983	5021-D	88-D, 5167-D	15,308	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance, recreation capability and connectivity. Opportunity to improve regional significance by incorporating into Forest Hills Common assembly and potential master plan
Cole Harbour Outdoor Pool & Tennis Park - 1978	483-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 982-C, 5038-C, 5164-C, 571-C, 217-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	5281	*			High land capability. Working well in functional capability. High service density. Providing unique recreation in swimming pool and sport courts. Opportunity to improve Connectivity in context with overlapping Community Parks and adjacent HRM conservation areas.
Colonel John Stuart Elementary School - 1959	5155-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 982-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 5016-C, 217-C, 5035-C, 100-C, 571-C, 5173-C	2840		*		High land capability. In the "For Review" category of the HRSB Imagine our Schools Study. Working well in community significance, recreation capability and connectivity. High service density and community park overlap. Opportunity to improve Identity by creating a strong link with Trans Canada Trail system along John Stewart drive (Complete Street potential).
Cow Bay Lake Park - 1980	90-C	1035-C, 1085-C	90		*		Moderate land capability. Limited recreation capability in context with Silversands Beach Park (1084-D). Low service density. Distinguishable with overlap parks because of lake access. Opportunity to improve Identity and Connectivity in context with association with Silversands Beach Park. Potential

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Cow Bay Road Park - 1978	1035-C	90-C, 1085-C	170	*			High land capability. Working well in functional capability. Low service density. Opportunities to improve Identity, Natural Heritage, Recreation, <u>Natural Systems Conservation, and Connectivity.</u>
Doherty Drive Park - 1988	795-C	4002-C, 393-C, 18-C	310		*		Moderate land capability. Working well in community significance and recreation land character. Review further investment in context with Lisa Ann Drive Park (727-N)
Flag Pond Park - 2010	5167-D	88-D, 5021-D, 1084-D	777		*		Moderate land capability. Working well in natural heritage and natural systems conservation. Low service density. Moderate district park overlap. Moderate in district significance due to narrow street frontage. Consider opportunitites for additional land acquisition to increase road frontage. Opportunities to improve district significance with increase in <u>marketing and promotion.</u>
Flandrum Hill Road Park - 1987	1051-N		38	*			High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance Identity, recreation land capability and natural systems conservation. Has capacity to increase recreation development and connectivity with future residential settlement to the south. Consider changing park classification to Community Park.
Gammon Lake Community Park - 2008/2012	4002-C	795-C, 393-C	154	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance and natural systems conservation. Opportunity for improvements in Identity with signage and promotion and in Recreation with <u>parking, trail, and access to Gammon Lake</u>

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
George Bissett Elementary School - 1978	5035-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 982-C, 5155-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5035-C, 5164-C, 100-C, 571-C, 217-C, 217-C, 5173-C	3147	*			High land capability. Working well in community significance, recreation capability and connectivity. High service density and community park overlap. Opportunity to improve Identity with investment in signage and connecting trails.
George Cyrill Drive Park - 1997	797-N		74		*		High land capability. Working well in connectivity capacity. Identity could be improved with more landscape maintenance along the entire frontage and increase trail width.
Gordon Bell Building Park -1978	5164-C	5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5127-C, 571-C, 217-C, 5173-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	3841	*			High land capability. Opportunity to increase Identity and Recreation capability when merged into Forest Hills Common. Connectivity would improve with Complete Street treatment of Auburn Drive. Consideration for a Forest Hills Common Masterplan.
Graham Creighton Junior Highschool - 1967	5127-C	5096-C, 5164-C, 5016-C, 217-C, 5155-C, 100-C	550		*		High land capability. Moderate in functional capability. Low service density. Opportunity for improved Identity and Heritage Conservation with investment in streetscape connections to the Black Cultural Centre and Akoma Centre. Opportunity for improvements to recreation capability when review for recreation facility supply on overlapping community parks.
Greely Court Park - 1978	143-N		77			*	Moderate land capability. Working moderate in connectivity with Forest Hills Parkway. Recreation capacity can be diverted to Forest Hills Common. Moderate capacity in natural systems conservation with forest habitat. Consider repurpose to a component of Forest Hills Parkway Streetscape.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Green Bay Park - 1978	1085-C	90-C, 1035-C	196	*			High land capability. Working well in heritage conservation, recreation capability, natural sytems conservation and connectivity. Low in service density. Opportunity for improvements to Identity and Natural Systems Conservation via marketing and promotion and sensitive facility connections to church and ocean.
Hollyoake Lane Park - 1978	396-N		215			*	Moderate land capability. High service density. Low recreation resilience and versatility capability. Potential opportunity in Connectivity with strong linkage to Colby Village Rec Centre Park (483-C). Potential opportunity in land acquisition to connect to Cole Harbour Road or improve existing walkway connection.
Inglewood Crescent Park - 1984	496-N	5217-N	275			*	High land capability. Working well in connectivity between two streets. Low in remaining functional ability, high service density. Potential duplication in service with Stirling Park (5217-N) and Auburn John Stewart Park (100-C). Maintain Connectivity with trail connection to Cole Drive. Divert recreation to Stirling and Auburn John Stewart Parks.
Keltic Garden Park - 1982/1985	393-C	795-C, 4002-C, 5016-C, 18C	392			*	Low land capability. Moderate in community significance. Low in service density. Review further investment in context with overlapping parks. Consider for surplus.
Kerry Drive Park - 1996	5015-N		60			*	Low land capability. Low functional ability, low service density. Potential duplication in service with Schooner Drive Park (18-C). Redirect investment in Recreation to Schooner Drive Park. Review for redundancy and surplus potential.
Killarney Crescent Park - 1997	1409-N		57		*		Moderate land capability. Working well in Natural systems conservation. Moderate functional ability, low in service density. Require recreation and natural systems conservation Needs Assessment.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Laura Drive Park - 1981	503-N		10		*		Moderate land capability. Moderate in functional ability, very low in service density. Maintain current service levels. Opportunity for improved Identity, Recreation, and Connectivity with future development to the north.
Lisa Ann Drive Park - 1991	727-N		46	*			High land capability. Working well in functional ability, low in service density. Investment opportunities need to be relative to decision on Doherty Drive Park (795-C). Consider changing park classification to Community Park relative to decision on Doherty Drive Park.
Maplewood Drive Park - 1989	957-N	3601-N, 1067-N, 1061-N	235		*		Moderate land capability. Moderate in functional ability, high in service density. Invest in review relative to Bissett Park (88-D), Parkedge Crescent Park (1067-N).
Michelle Drive Park - 1993	1410-N		36			*	Low land capability. Low functional capability with the exception of Natural systems conservation. Low service density. Area is served by Doherty Drive Park (795-C) and potentially Lisa Ann Drive Park (727-N) if changed to Community Park status. List in portfolio review and consider for surplus.
Parkedge Crescent Park - 1996	1067-N	5212-N, 1061-N, 957-N	179		*		Moderate land capability. Working well in natural systems conservation. Limited opportunity in Recreation due to low program versatility. Include in recreation Needs Assessment relative to Bissett Park (88-D), Maplewood Park (957-N), Astral Drive Park (5212-N)
Ritcey Crescent Park - 1978	571-C	5022-C, 5096-C, 2952-C, 5039-C, 982-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 5016-C, 217-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	2114		*		High land capability. Working well in Connectivity capability. Moderate in community significance due to neighbourhood entrance location and popular winter use for snow sports. High service overlap. High service density. Opportunity for improvements in Identity with signage and better curb appeal maintenance.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment
		Spatial	Density	Functional			What does this all mean?
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Ross Road P-9 School - 1970	5016-C	982-C,5055-C, 5127-C, 393-C, 571-C, 5173-C	289	*			High land capability. Working well in heritage conservation and natural systems conservation. Low to moderate in Identity and recreation capability due to narrow street frontage and site design. Low service density. Opportunities for improvement in Recreation, Identity and Connectivity with modern site planning and community vision for trail corridor connections and a community hub.
Salmon River Drive Park -1980	1416-N		57			*	Moderate land capability. Low service density in context with Ross Road School Park. Low in program versatility due to small size. Low in neighbourhood significance due to limited visibility on approaching the park. Opportunity for increased landscape maintenance along the entire frontage. Functional limitations due to small size. Possible to change park classification to Community Park.
Schooner Drive Park - 1988/2008	18-C	795-C, 393-C	322		*		High land capability. Working well in heritage conservation and natural sytems conservation with access to Robinson Brook and the K Road. Opportunity to improve Connectivity with future <u>residential development and road connections</u> .
Shearwater Flyer Corridor Park - 1978, 2003	5177-R	104-R,1-RNS	43,249	*			High land capability. Working well in heritage conservation (formal train route) and connectivity (Caldwell Road to the Estuary). Opportunities to improve recreation with capital investment. Remain sensitive to natural systems conservation.
Sherwood Street Park - 1992	3602-N	3601-N, 1061-N	200		*		High land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance identity and recreation land character. High service density with overlap context. Review investment in context with overlapping neighbourhood parks (3601-N) and (1061-N)

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Shrewsbury Road Park - 1984	3601-N	3602-N, 1061-N, 957-N	257			*	Low land capability. Very low functional capability. High service density in context with overlapping neighbourhood parks. Potential for redundancy.
Silversands Beach Park - 2003	1084-D	5167-D	2126	*			High land capability. Working well in district significance and heritage conservation. Low in recreation capability due to narrow property, high popularity, and limited space to accomodate. Opportunities to improve to regional significance with marketing and promotion of connectivity with other oceanfront parks and additional land acquisition to increase recreation capability.
Spruce Drive Park - 1985	1053-N	1091-N	39			*	Low land capability. Low functional ability with the exception of natural systems conservation. Low service density. Potential for higher Connectivity score with adjacent residential development.
Stirling Drive Park - 2007	5217-N	496-N	266	*			High Land capability. Working well in neighbourhood significance, recreation capability and connectivity. High service density. In context with Forest Hills Common and future residential settlement to the east high opportunity in park development with active and passive recreation facilities at a neighbourhood scale. Pad ready.
Sunset Acres Park - 19??/2005	217-C	5096-C, 2952-C, 5038-C, 483-C, 5164-C, 5127-C, 571-C, 5173-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	2083	*			High Land capability. Working well in community significance and recreation capability. High service density. Sport themed with increasing scheduled use. Opportunity to improve Recreation and Connectivity with modern facility development and with sidewalks along Hillsboro Drive.

Park Evaluation Table

Park Name	Park ID & Class.	Analysis Filters					Site assessment What does this all mean?
		Spatial	Density	Functional			
		Overlap Service Level N-500m, C-2000m, D-5000m, R-5000+m (contributes to single, double, triple+)	Unit Count	Pass (>60)	Marginal (40-59)	Fail (<40)	
Travis Court Park - 1997	1037-N		22			*	Moderate land capability. Low functional ability except for natural systems conservation. Low service density. Future Connectivity potential relative to private development. May become redundant when competing with Flandrum Hill Park (1051-N).
Un-named Park - 1999	1061-N	5212-N, 957-N, 1067-N, 3602-N, 3601-N	322			*	Moderate land capability. Without a constructed road it has low functional ability with the exception of natural systems conservation. Potential high service density. High service density overlap with 5 neighbourhood parks. Functional ability will increase with potential residential development.
William Ross Park - 1999	5173-C	5096-C, 5164-C, 5127-C, 5016-C, 217-C, 5155-C, 5035-C, 100-C	331		*		High land capability. Working well in recreation capability, moderate in community significance and connectivity due to context on Main Street Highway #107. Low service delivery due to Main Street commercial context. Opportunity to improve functional capability in context with overlapping

Appendix 4: Public Engagement

Join the process for the Cole Harbour Open Space Plan:
a project intended to guide future investment into the
public realm of parks, watercourses, and streetscapes.



Your city
your ideas!

OpenSpace: ColeHarbour

1. Planning with Stakeholder Group - September 22, 2-4pm

Work with leaders and organizations from the area to design the process of the consultations, including the invitation, design of events and the ongoing social media campaign.

2. Visioning Gathering - October 22, 2-4pm

A large gathering bringing together the public and other stakeholders, introducing discoveries made so far and engaging the public to build a vision for region.

3. Innovation Gathering - November 30th, 7-9pm

Large gathering engaging the public and other stakeholders in specific areas of concern identified by the public in the Vision Gathering and by the HRM technical team through research.



Sept 22
2-4pm

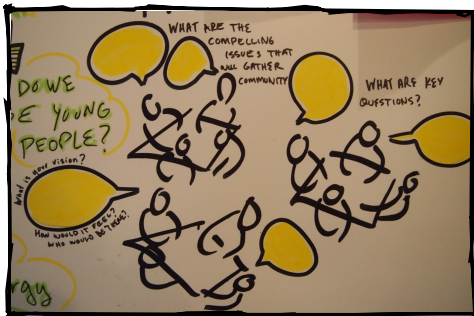
Which fun, productive meetings are you joining? RSVP!



HOW CAN WE HOST PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS THAT GATHER THE COMMUNITY AND THEIR OPINIONS?

The purpose of this meeting was to work with leaders and organizations from the area to design the process of the Open Spaces public consultations. We talked through key questions that will bring the community together, how to invite people and which musicians and artists we could involve to support the event. The session was not focused on the content of the consultations, it was for designing how the consultation process will unfold. The key outcomes of the fun and productive meeting were:

- ☒ A shared vision and approach for the consultations
- ☒ Articulated key issues and questions that will gather the community
- ☒ Stakeholders committed to supporting the invitation, engagement and events



Vision!

Festival Energy
Engages Youth
Social Themes
Big Venue
Reflects the Community
Interactive
Gathers information to influence decision makers



Key Questions ..?

What does the future of development look like?

What is your future vision for the Cole Harbour Basin area?

How can we balance development and natural environment?



Going Forward ...

Invitation and Creative Public Engagement

Traditional Media

Atmosphere and Design of Events

Social Media, Online Wizardry and Live Streaming

Open Spaces Cole Harbour Basin

Cole Harbour • Cow Bay • Lawrencetown • Westphal

VISIONING GATHERING

WHAT IS OUR COLLECTIVE VISION FOR OPEN SPACES IN THE COLE HARBOUR BASIN?



The purpose of this meeting was to bring together the public and other stakeholders, introducing discoveries made so far, and engaging the public to build a vision for the open spaces of the region. In addition to residents - participants included city councillors, HRM staff, local business owners, trails and recreation groups, and more. In collaborative conversations we explored key questions that surfaced a vision for the future of Cole Harbour Basin's open spaces. The key outcomes of this gathering were:

- ✓ A shared vision among participants
- ✓ Articulated key issues and questions to help HRM Technical Team further develop the plan
- ✓ Ideas to help guide HRM decisions of investment in public open spaces in the community and region

KEY PRINCIPLES GUIDING THIS WORK

Build community and civic pride
Support diverse perspectives and ways of participating
Integrate expert input, interactive
Be honest and transparent
Engage the public on issues that they can change and influence
Focus on the collective public voice through gathering themes from across the region

GOING FORWARD ...

Join us online at the website, facebook, and twitter

Who could you engage in your community with the big yellow speech bubbles?

Complete the online survey

Innovation Gathering: November 30th, 7-9pm at Cole Harbour Place

INTRODUCTION AND FRAMING

Peter Bigelow of HRM Real Property and Planning briefly highlighted the opportunity this project creates: to build a strong vision and plan around our open spaces before further development knocks at the region's door.

District Councillor Lorelei Nicoll welcomed everyone and shared her enthusiasm for this participatory planning process and the possibilities a strong vision can create for open spaces in the Cole Harbour Basin.

Rob Jahncke helped define open spaces by providing examples and introducing the three pillars that create a foundation for the development of Cole Harbour Basin's Open Spaces Plan: Environment, Culture, Economy.

WHEN DOES THE COMMUNITY COME ALIVE?

In pairs, participants reflected on times they have felt community spirit and connection in the open spaces of the Cole Harbour Basin - from Rainbow Haven Beach to Salmon River to the pocket park and playground on John Stewart Drive. Participants were asked to think about connectivity between these spaces, the streetscapes, or views as they walk, bike or drive around the Cole Harbour Basin.

It was unanimous: Community in the Cole Harbour Basin is alive! People feel a strong connection and relationship with the open spaces in the region. They strongly value history, community and land protection. Participants spoke to specific living cultural examples including Heritage Farm and The Cole Harbour Harvest Festival.

WHAT DO THESE SPACES NEED TO BECOME FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN TO TREASURE THEM?

Many perspectives met in a series of World Café conversations. Thinking not just weeks and months - but generations - into the future, what about these spaces does your community enjoy the most? How will they have changed and how will they have stayed the same?

The community believed these open spaces need to be maintained, protected and restored with a focus on wildlife, habitat, the estuary buffer, keeping areas undeveloped and protecting the natural beauty. Physical access to open spaces is essential as these areas are used by ATVer's, cyclists, walkers, dog-walkers, and horseback riders.

The open spaces are key in attracting visitors and residents to the area. Who will maintain the spaces that are not municipally owned when the current land owners are gone?

WHAT THEMES WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE YOUR LEGACY?

ENVIRONMENT

- Protection and restoration of ecosystems, natural habitat, history, viewplanes and beauty
- Keeping undeveloped land in the area sacred and preserved
- Interpretive Nature Walks
- Education and stewardship

CULTURE

- Connectivity and access to open spaces: public transit, trails, roadways, parking, sidewalks, bike lanes
- Open spaces should be multi-use, multi-purpose, multi-generational
- Protecting the history and cultural heritage (eg. farming traditions)
- Public art and performance
- Can play-structures be designed by children?
- Places for fun and socializing such as amphitheater, stages, more playgrounds and trails
- Safety of open spaces
- Meeting and gathering spaces
- Open spaces could be the centre of public education programs
- What is our community and cultural identity?

ECONOMY

- Financial sustainability: can sustainable development support this community?
- Maintaining and protecting existing and future infrastructure
- Long-term planning and follow through
- Communication- Social media, education, awareness
- Physical and social access to the spaces



Join us online at www.PLANthebasin.ca