

Development & Land Use

History

In the 1860s, Bridgewater began to experience significant growth, particularly near King Street. Compact development began sprouting up along both sides of King with buildings having very small setbacks from the street. King Street became the most prominent area in town since residents could access public, commercial, industrial, institutional, and entertainment uses in one centralized region. By the late 1800s, Bridgewater had several attractive buildings that gained recognition throughout the province, including churches, the courthouse, and a music hall (Sheppard, 2008).

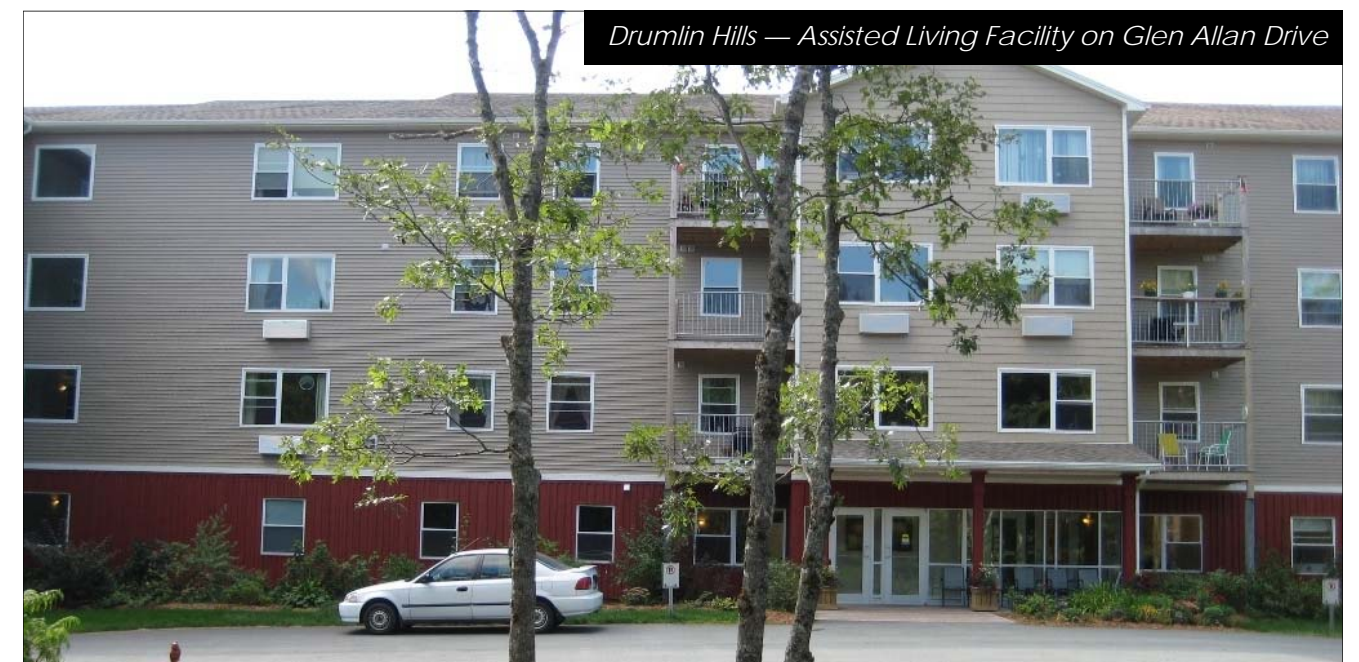
On January 12th, 1899, there was a fire that destroyed King Street, yet it consequently paved the way for the present day appearance of downtown Bridgewater. Following the fire, new buildings were constructed on the western side of King Street, leaving the east side open to provide ample access to the LaHave River (Sheppard, 2008). As the years past, construction continued to occur on the west side of King Street, although it was less compact than earlier development patterns.

During World War II Bridgewater had an influx of residents and began a building program that saw increased development on old town streets in the western part of town (DesBrisay Museum Trustees, 1967). In 1941, York, Alexandra and Dufferin Street were largely developed to support residential purposes. Between 1942 and 1965, new residential development spanned from York Street to High Street and also east of Cornwallis Street. From 1965 to 1970 Jubilee Road was extended and Exhibition Drive was constructed to allow further residential uses near the town's southern most border. The Bridgewater Industrial Park (now known as the Bridgewater Business Park) also opened in the northwest portion of town during this time.

Since the 1970s, most development has occurred on the east side of the River opposed to the west side. LaHave and North Street both increased their supply of commercial uses, becoming major retail destinations for Lunenburg County residents. Between 1980 and 1990 development in the Glen Allan neighbourhood began with the construction of the new hospital and various residential subdivisions. In the late 1970s, a land leased community named Eisenhauer Place was initiated off of North Street. By the early 1990s, Eisenhauer



Place was completed and a second land leased community, called LaHave Heights, was undertaken. During the past decade, Glen Allan Drive was extended to allow for further residential development in the southeast end of town, along with HB Studios Centre. With the growing population, residential development has been steady in Bridgewater, however, development trends have shifted in order to meet housing needs for retirees and seniors.



Development & Land Use

History (cont'd)

The map on page 25 displays the eras in which Bridgewater was developed. You can see that central Bridgewater was established very early. Most of the central core, and some primary street corridors, were developed prior to 1900, with further development occurring before World War I.

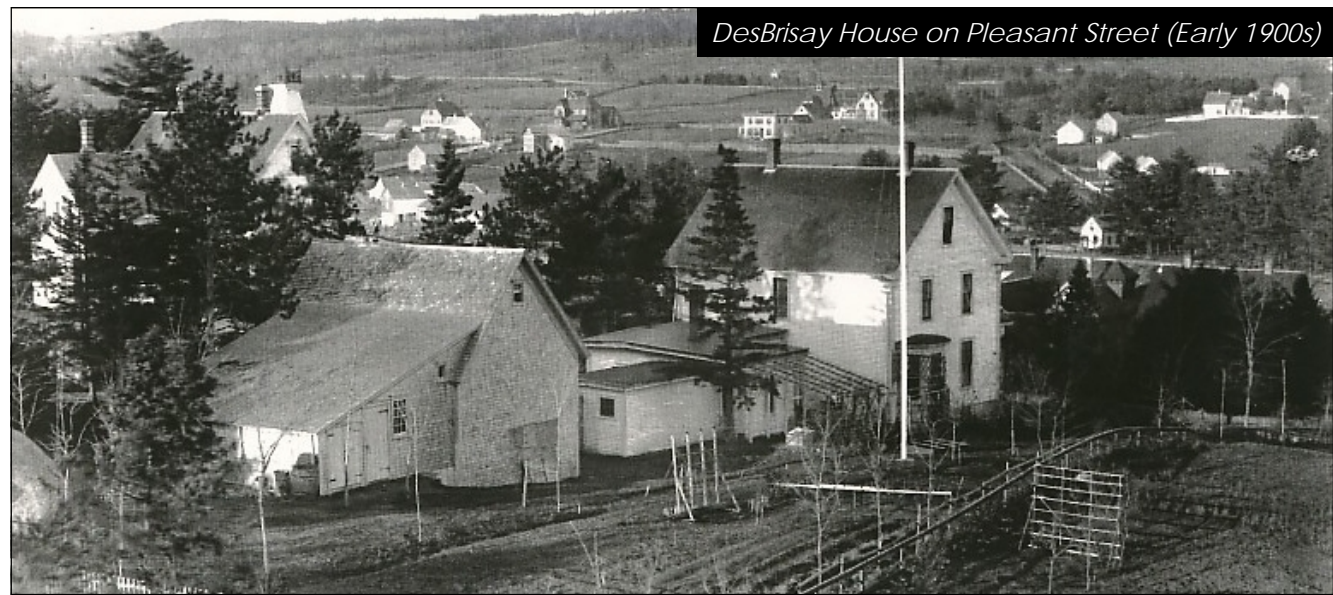
Between 1940 and 1960 there was growth in Bridgewater's west end, most of which occurred off of the Dufferin Street corridor. As well, some smaller scale developments were undertaken in the northwestern portion of town.

The 1970s-1990s brought about an era of more aggressive, and more diverse development. Significant developments occurred on the west side of the LaHave, one of which was the Bridgewater Industrial Park (now known as the Bridgewater Business Park). The Business Park's first tenant, Michelin, was the catalyst that spurred significant residential development in the 70s and 80s, including new neighbourhoods in the southwest. The east side of the LaHave became a popular growth centre during this era, as a significant number of suburban, commercial, and industrial projects were completed.

Since 2000, several major developments have taken place along the Glen Allan Drive extension. The town has also seen an influx of higher density residential development, including apartments and seniors housing.



Mixed Residential/Commercial Uses on Dufferin Street



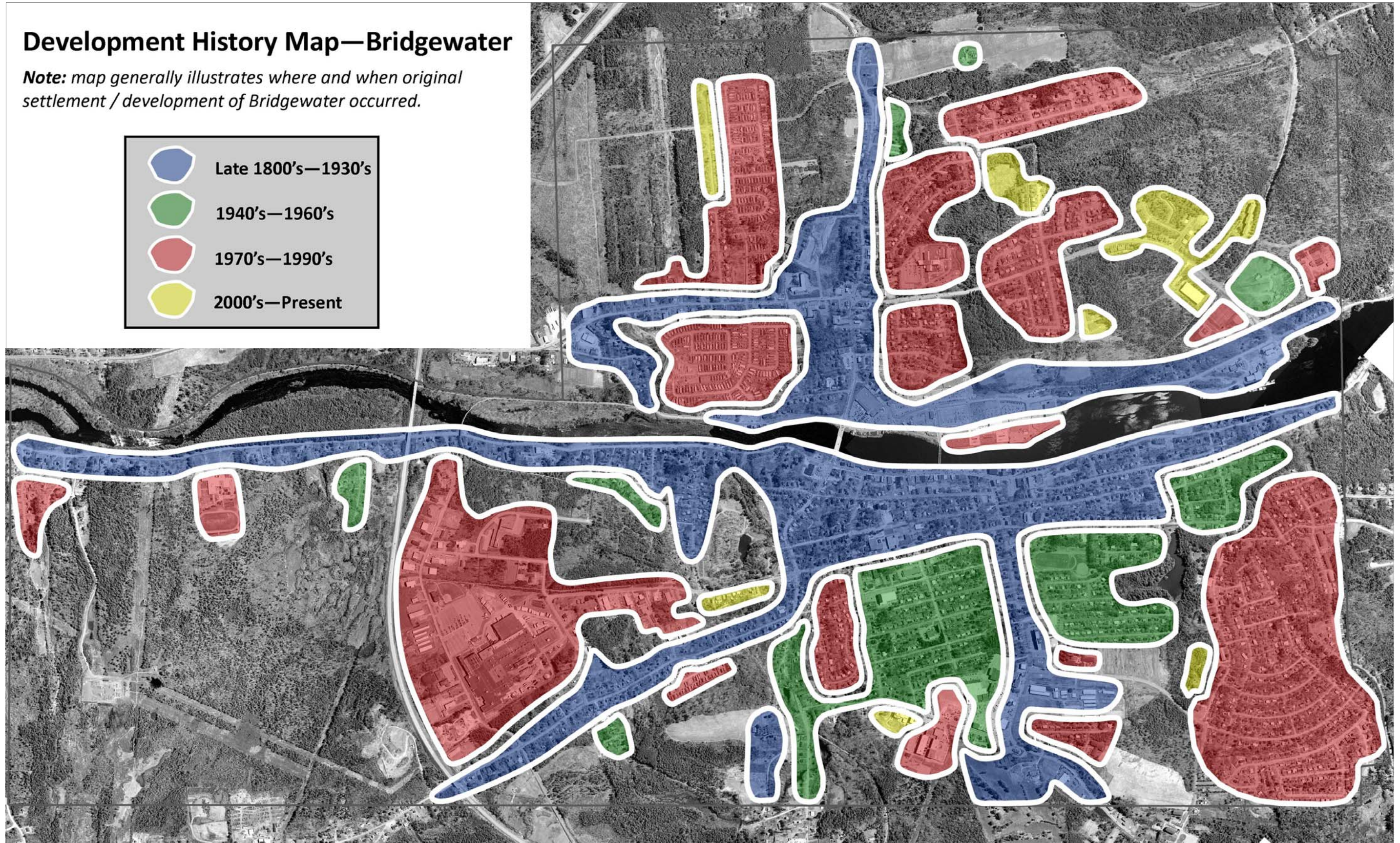
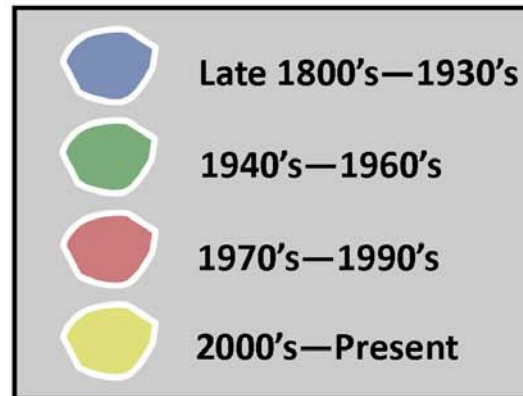
DesBrisay House on Pleasant Street (Early 1900s)



HB Studios Sports Centre on Glen Allan Drive

Development History Map—Bridgewater

Note: map generally illustrates where and when original settlement / development of Bridgewater occurred.



Development & Land Use

Existing Land Uses

Most of Bridgewater's land area is being used for residential purposes. The west side of the river has a higher proportion of residential land compared to the east side, attributed to a large stock of older homes located south of the Centennial Trail. There is less residential land north of the Trail by comparison. The east side of Bridgewater is home to newer residential uses, including a number of subdivisions off of Glen Allan Drive.

Many commercial uses are located in Bridgewater's core along King Street, which is the oldest commercial area in town. Two additional primary streets, LaHave and Aberdeen Streets, support a large supply of commercial uses. Other commercial areas include Dufferin, High, and North Streets, which are all collector streets.

While the manufacturing and construction industry is Bridgewater's primary employment sector, it is interesting to note that very little land is actually used for industrial purposes. The Port of Bridgewater lands along the southeastern shore of the LaHave River is zoned for industrial land uses. All additional industrial land is located in the Bridgewater Business Park. As demonstrated on the map on page 27, you can see that over time the Business Park has developed as a mix of commercial uses, rather than traditional industrial uses.

Institutional land uses have been developed more centrally in town, rather than in the north and south ends. One exception is Parkview Education Centre, which is located on north King Street. Generally, smaller institutional uses are well integrated with surrounding uses, especially in the western end of town, including Bridgewater Junior Senior High School and old churches. Larger and newer institutions, like the Nova Scotia Community College and the South Shore Regional Hospital are located off of collector streets on both sides of the River.

Bridgewater has a large collection of parks, trails, recreation facilities, and naturally forested areas that comprise its total open space. Most recreation facilities are located west of the river and can be easily accessed by nearby residential areas. Two facilities are situated on the east side of the River; LaHave Ballfields and HB Studio Centre, which are both located on Glen Allan Drive. Multiple parks and playgrounds are located throughout town on both sides of the River, many of which are new and frequently used.

Little agricultural land uses remain in Bridgewater. There are only two small active agricultural areas in Bridgewater, one along the eastern boundary and the other along the western boundary. Several parcels of land are used for utility purposes, these include the Public Works Garage on St. Phillips Street, the Sewage Treatment Facility off of south LaHave Street, and the power station in the northwest portion of the town.

Much of Bridgewater's periphery is comprised of undeveloped, forested land that may be developed in the future. While most of this undeveloped land was designated for residential purposes in the mid 1990s, this Planning Review provides an opportunity to evaluate which land uses will best serve the community and complement surrounding land uses based on new planning objectives.

The following map is a current illustration of Bridgewater's existing land uses. The map shows the distribution of eight land uses, along with stand alone parking lots, which are shown in a light grey colour. You can see that individual uses are often segregated in specific areas of town, although the historic town centre (see inset map on page 27) successfully integrates a variety of land uses.

The following table shows the breakdown of Bridgewater's existing land uses by land area, along with the total percentage of land dedicated to each use. As you can see, 39.68% of Bridgewater is currently undeveloped or vacant occupancy, 55.92% is developed, and the LaHave River accounts for the remaining 4.40%. Residential is the largest land use by area, accounting for approximately 50.26% of all developed land.

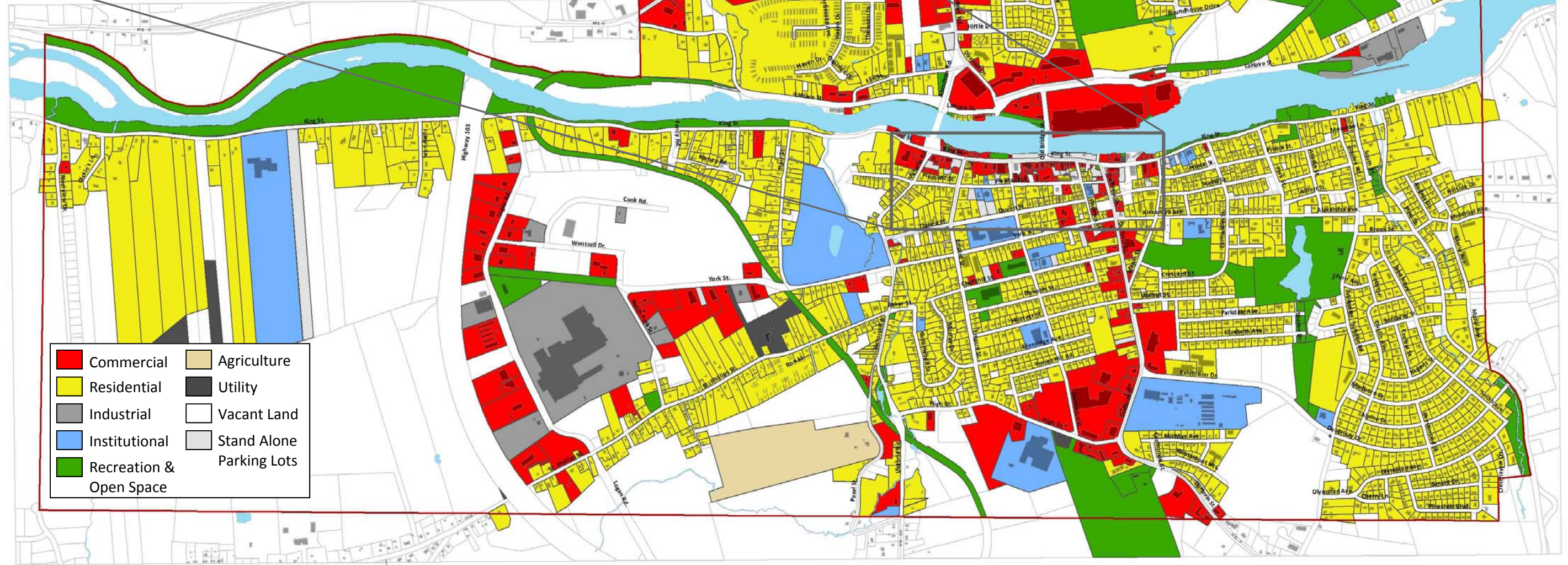
<i>Bridgewater's Existing Land Uses By Area</i>		
Land Use	Area (Ha)	Percentage of Total Land Use
Vacant	562.42	39.68%
Residential	398.43	28.11%
Recreation & Open Space	165.41	11.67%
Commercial	92.35	6.52%
LaHave River	62.42	4.40%
Institutional	61.62	4.35%
Agricultural	36.17	2.55%
Industrial	27.54	1.94%
Utility	8.92	0.63%
Parking Lots (Stand Alone)	2.23	0.16%
Total	1417.53	100%



Shipyards Landing (Recreation & Open Space)

Existing Land Uses

Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Historic Downtown

While King Street provides a mix of uses, the street gained its reputation as a commercial district and Bridgewater's centre in the early 20th century. During its early days, people from outside the community would flock to King Street for shopping and special events. King Street was the primary shopping destination until the 60s and 70s when plazas and malls began sprouting up in other areas of town. In more recent years, large-scale development near exit 12 off Highway 103 has significantly influenced local commerce. Commercial growth in these other areas has impacted Bridgewater's historic downtown in different ways, and today, King Street is no longer regarded as the *primary* shopping district in the region.

There has been some minor development along King Street since the 1990s, such as the King Street Plaza, and some recent enhancements along the riverside, including King Street Court. Though King Street continues to be a popular destination for residents on a daily basis, it will continue to face challenges with other areas in and around Bridgewater experiencing continued commercial growth.



The historic downtown hosts some of the densest and oldest development in town. Most building footprints along King Street have been relatively unmodified since the early 20th century and many buildings still maintain their original character. Lots are generally compact and building setbacks from the road are small, which together with a rich mix of compatible uses and close proximity to the LaHave River, creates a strong sense of place. Historic King Street is situated in the midst of a compact street grid and sidewalk system, which creates one of the most well connected and walkable areas in town.



While many towns invest millions to re-build downtowns with old fashioned character, Bridgewater is fortunate to have maintained much of their authentic main street for more than 100 years. Today, King Street remains a shopping destination, comprised of a number of local entrepreneurs, shops and offices. **To preserve and enhance King Street as a vibrant centre with historic appeal, efforts to reinforce its beauty, heritage, form and unique character should be explored.** Planning tools, including business improvement districts (BIDs), the promotion of complementary land uses nearby (e.g., high density residential) and improved land use controls should be carefully considered to help enhance the area's level of economic activity and aesthetic appeal.



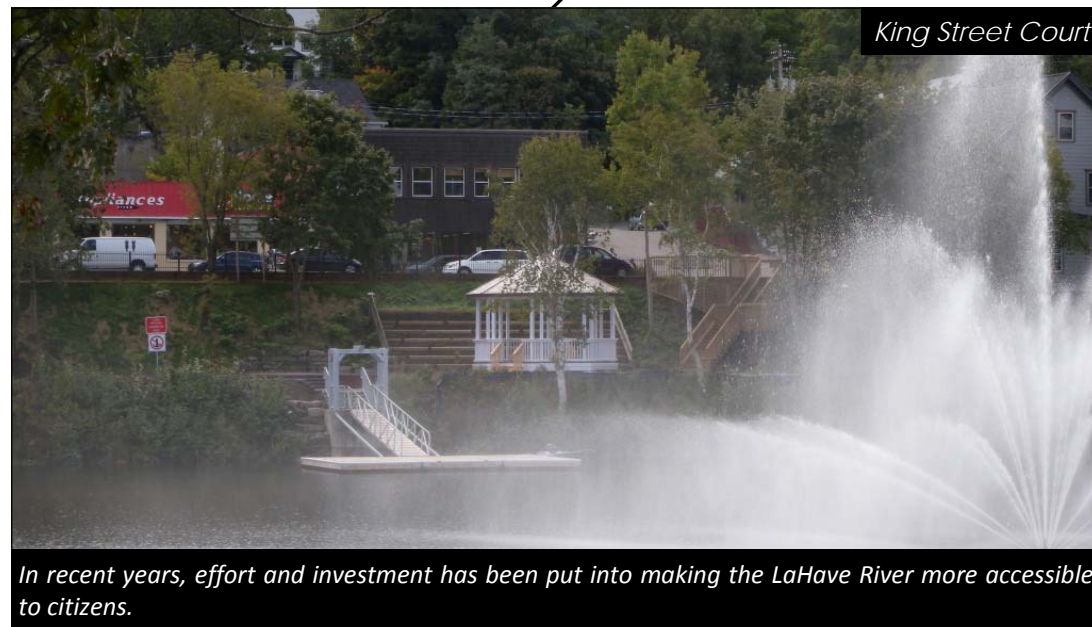
Development & Land Use

Public Property Along the LaHave River



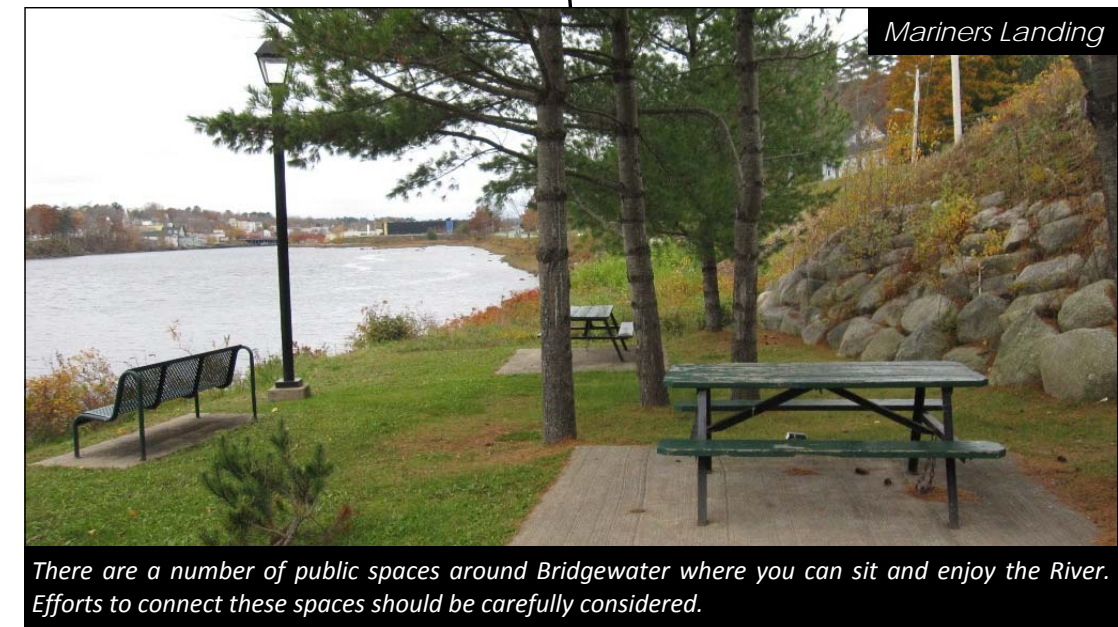


Notice that much of the property along the waterfront is private property. This makes it challenging to establish public access to the LaHave and to coordinate public development.



King Street Court

In recent years, effort and investment has been put into making the LaHave River more accessible to citizens.



Mariners Landing

There are a number of public spaces around Bridgewater where you can sit and enjoy the River. Efforts to connect these spaces should be carefully considered.

Development & Land Use

Commercial Uses

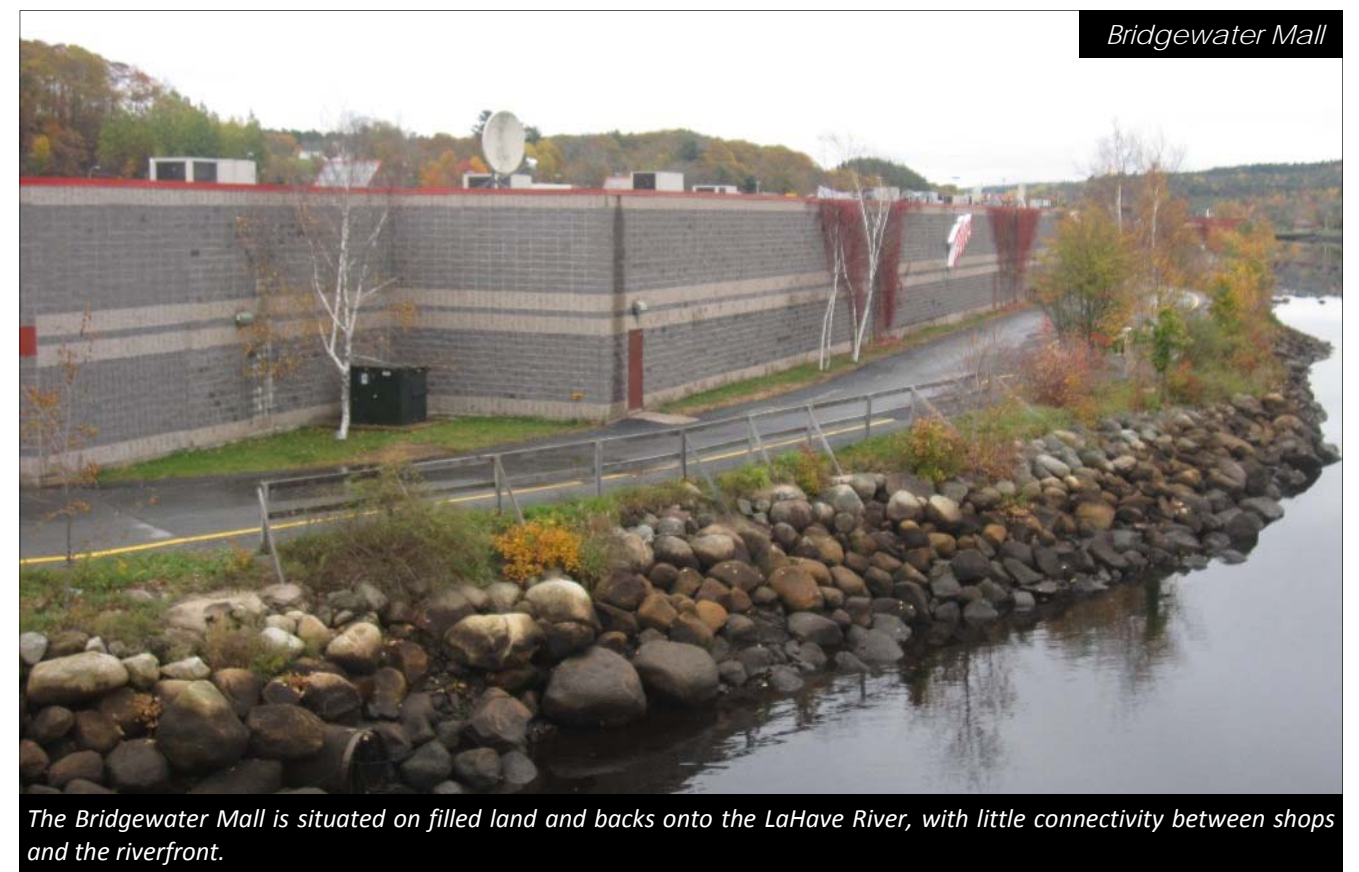
Commercial uses are situated throughout Bridgewater and are permitted under multiple land use zones, however, the town has four distinct commercial areas: King Street, LaHave Street, North Street, and Dufferin.

Bridgewater Plaza was the first major commercial development established away from the historic downtown area. The Plaza was built at the intersection of Dufferin and High Streets in the early 1960s. This development housed a number of commercial outlets and later attracted Canadian Tire from its King Street location in 1969 (NA, 1989). Today the Plaza is home to a number of mid-sized commercial tenants and offices. The majority of Dufferin Street now houses the town's supply of office space and mixed residential-commercial uses.

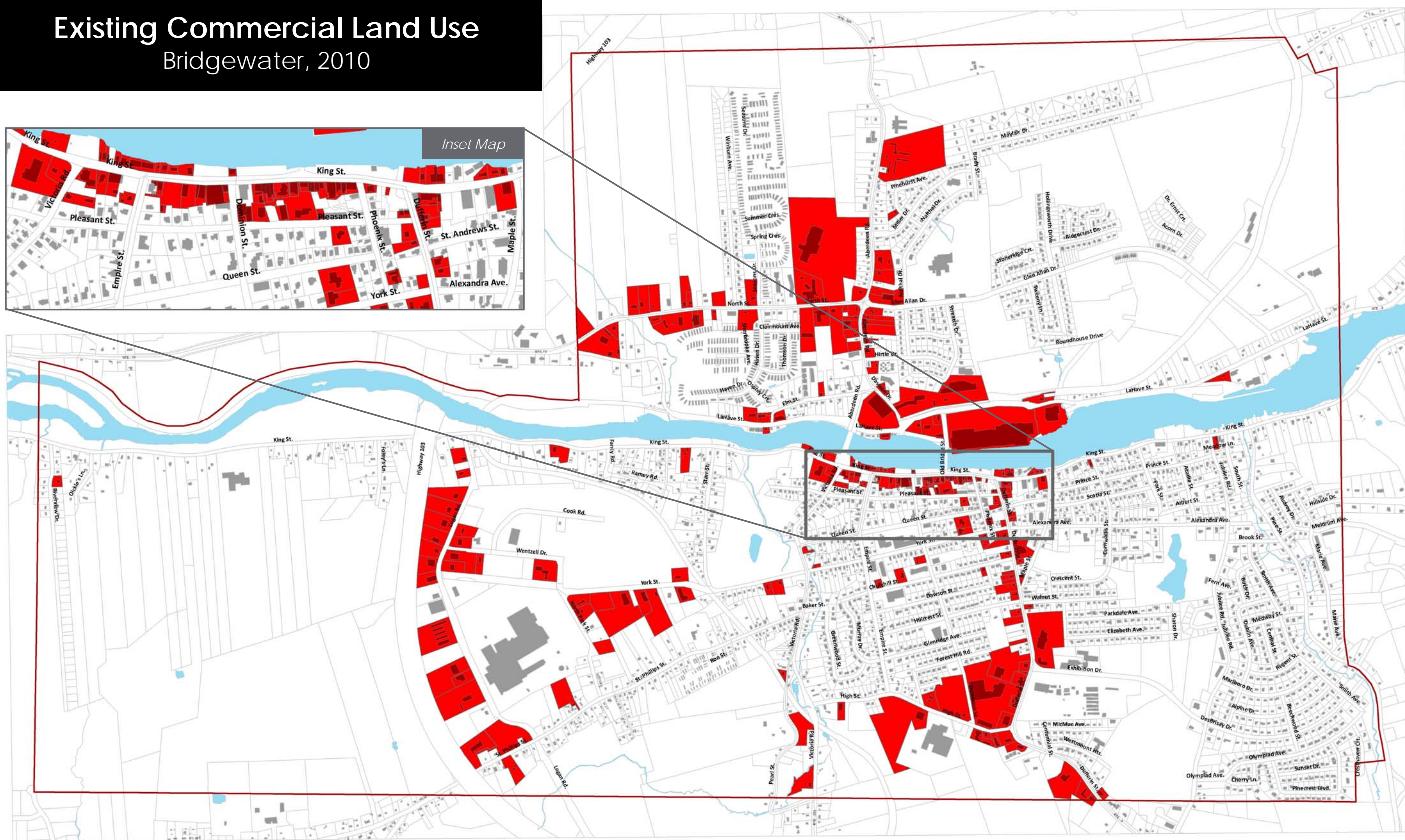
Construction on Bridgewater's first mall, the South Shore Mall, began in 1972 off of the Aberdeen Road and North Street intersection. The mall opened in 1974 with many retail outlets, a Save Easy, and Bridgewater Twin Cinemas. Previously, North Street's character was mainly rural in nature with some established agricultural uses along the street. Although it no longer exists, the South Shore Mall development helped shape North Street into its current form as a commercial corridor.



Construction began on the Bridgewater Mall in 1974, with the intention of complementing King Street while expanding the central business district (Wile, 2009). The mall originally held 34 stores, but a \$25 million dollar expansion to triple the size of the mall was undertaken in 1988. The expansion included the construction of the East Side Plaza on LaHave Street and a second commercial development called Riverside Court.



Existing Commercial Land Use Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Commercial Uses (cont'd)

Newer, larger commercial buildings on LaHave Street occupy much bigger lots than those along the King Street district. New buildings support more stores and have more surface parking to serve a large number of shoppers, which has helped to attract popular retailers to Bridgewater. These larger commercial uses provide goods to residents throughout the region, and therefore accommodate automobile users with large parking areas. In the downtown area, approximately 8.3 hectares are dedicated to paved parking spaces, representing approximately 26% of the total developable land. 30% of land on the east side of the River is used for parking lots, compared to 22% on the west side (refer to page 35). **It may be in town's best interest to explore design opportunities and planning tools to maximize the use of this precious downtown land, while ensuring accessibility for pedestrians and automobile users is not compromised.**

While the Bridgewater Mall has helped bring economic prosperity to the town, its location and design has also inadvertently reduced public access to the town's most prominent natural feature, the historic LaHave River. **On a going forward basis, it may be in the best interest of the town to establish clearly articulated planning objectives, policies and regulations regarding the riverfront in an effort to improve its public access and focus in Bridgewater's downtown over time, as the community grows and evolves.**



Former CN Rail Line, Current Site of Bridgewater Mall & Superstore(1969)



Commercial Uses on Dufferin Street



Parking at East Side Plaza on LaHave Street

Downtown Parking

Bridgewater, 2010

- Public Parking
- Private Parking



There are approximately 13.2 hectares (Ha) of developable land in Bridgewater's Historic Downtown area, 22% of which is occupied by dedicated parking lots. Across the River along LaHave Street, parking lots occupy 30% of developable land (28.6 Ha). These developable land area calculations are gross and therefore include all roads within the defined area.

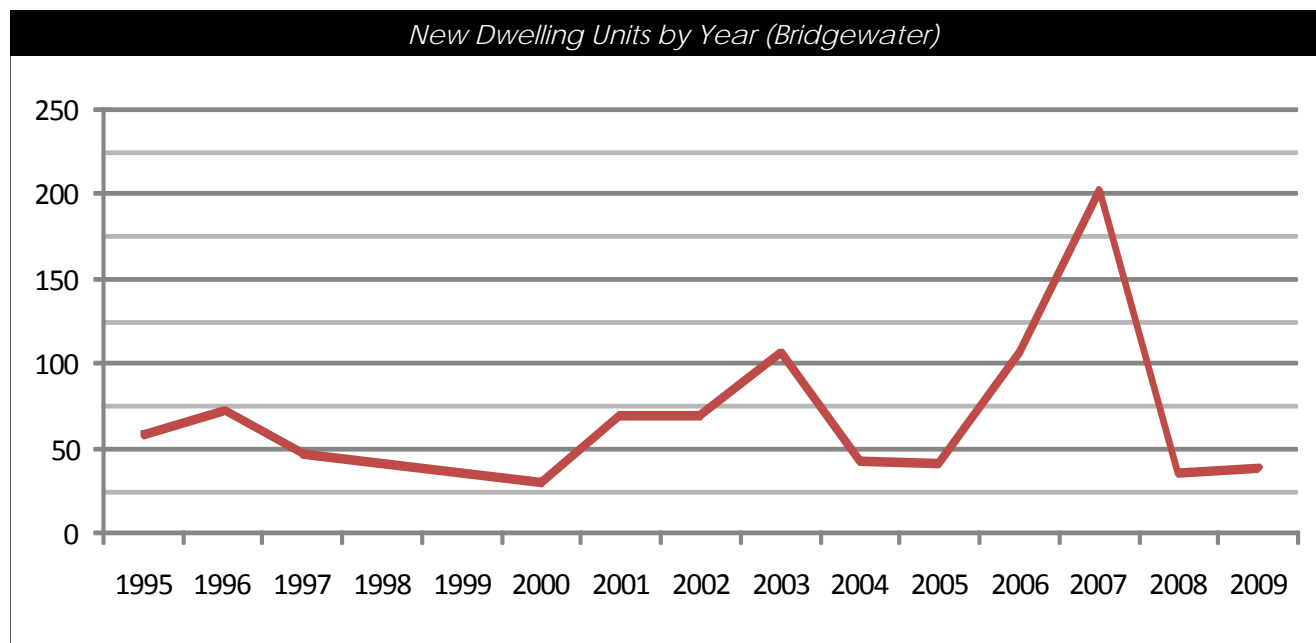
Development & Land Use

Residential Uses

By 1815, there were only five homes in the town. As Bridgewater grew, housing scattered along both sides of the LaHave River, but by the turn of the 20th Century, the west side became the most populated portion of town. These development trends continued until the end of the 1970s. By the 1980s, a significant shift in residential development patterns occurred, when the development of Glen Allan Drive on the east side of the River began to spur the majority of Bridgewater's new residential development. Much of the growth was fueled by new job growth, provided by big employers like Michelin and the South Shore Regional Hospital.

Bridgewater has a diverse range of housing options, including detached homes, semi-detached homes, townhouses, apartment buildings, and two land leased communities called Eisenhower Place and LaHave Heights. Recently, Bridgewater has seen a significant amount of construction of new housing projects, namely specialized residential housing designed for seniors. As the majority of our population ages (i.e., *baby boomers*), this trend is expected to continue, if not intensify.

The following chart shows the number of dwelling units that were constructed in Bridgewater over the past 15 years. Values include all housing units, ranging from a single detached homes to apartment units. The number of new units typically ranges between 35 and 70 per year, although there were noticeable increases in 2003, 2006, and 2007. These three years were characterized by a significant spike in new apartment units. Apartment development accounted for 48.6%, 74.8%, and 74.4% of the total annual dwelling unit starts in those years respectfully.



The town's oldest residential areas are characterized by their compact form. Between King and York Streets, a range of dwelling types are sited on a compact street grid with small lots and well maintained streets, sidewalks, and mature trees, which gives the area a well-connected, walkable, and comfortable residential character. Several multi-unit apartment buildings are situated in this area, which help to diversity housing options for citizens, and are within short distances to commercial and public amenities in the downtown.



There are a number of single detached dwellings along the northern portion of King Street. This area is characterized by longer and larger lots which are more consistent with rural and riverfront agricultural lots. Some homes have significant setbacks from the road and often are accompanied by secondary structures. Open storm ditches are used to direct storm water in some parts of this area. This mostly unplanned design results in low levels of residential unit density, greater distances to supply a range of services (e.g., water, sewer, garbage, postal, delivery, etc.), and it requires citizens to travel longer distances for various commercial and public amenities.

The southernmost residential neighbourhood, south of Jubilee Road, is characterized by a symmetrical, residential street pattern that was popular during the 1970s and 80s. This residential area has a fair degree of connectivity due to numerous north-south and east-west connections and the absence of cul-de-sacs. Development is organized, though less compact than the older residential areas near King Street. Since the area is almost solely residential in character, most residents in this area make vehicle trips to access commercial and public amenities in other areas of town.

Eisenhower Place and LaHave Heights are the town's two largest residential manufactured home parks. These two neighbourhoods are home to approximately 490 total units, with a gross residential unit density of approximately 15.9 units/hectare (see page 41). Eisenhower Place has a sole point of ingress/egress, Season's Drive, which is a long, narrow private road that provides access to a number of cul-de-sacs and crescents which house additional mini homes. While cul-de-sacs are desirable to some residents, they often result in significant connectivity, land use inefficiency and exclusivity problems. More north-south public road connections in this area of town would help to integrate Eisenhower Place into the rest of the community, and make the neighbourhood more accessible. LaHave Heights, the newest of the two manufactured home parks, has been developed according to current street design standards, and thus has a more uniform and urban character. Haven Drive, the single point of ingress into LaHave Heights, will eventually be extended to a second point of access on North Street.



Built Form Along Olympiad Avenue



Homes on North King Street



Manufactured Homes in LaHave Heights

Development & Land Use

Residential Uses (cont'd)

The Glen Allan area has a reasonably diverse supply of housing types, including detached homes, semi-detached homes, a modest supply of townhouses, and seniors housing. Most residential dwellings are in good condition, as most have been built in the last 20 years. The Glen Allan neighbourhood relies on only two main points of access – Aberdeen Road and LaHave Street, which limits accessibility to the area. Subdivisions extending off of Glen Allan Drive reflect a fairly standard post World War II North American subdivision design. **Though they vary somewhat, most subdivisions are characterized by single land use (i.e., residential), have a relatively low gross residential density, and are designed around quiet albeit disconnected streets.** The general street system and land use form in this area of town is fairly fragmented and inefficient. This is typical, especially when individual subdivisions are developed separately over time without a comprehensive planning approach.

Mayfair Heights - Bridgewater's eastern most residential subdivision - shares many characteristics with Season's Drive. This long, straight street provides access to numerous cul-de-sacs, leaving only one east-west road to connect residents to other areas of town. This location, street design, and the absence of amenities and public services make Mayfair Drive one of the more isolated and car dependent regions of Bridgewater.

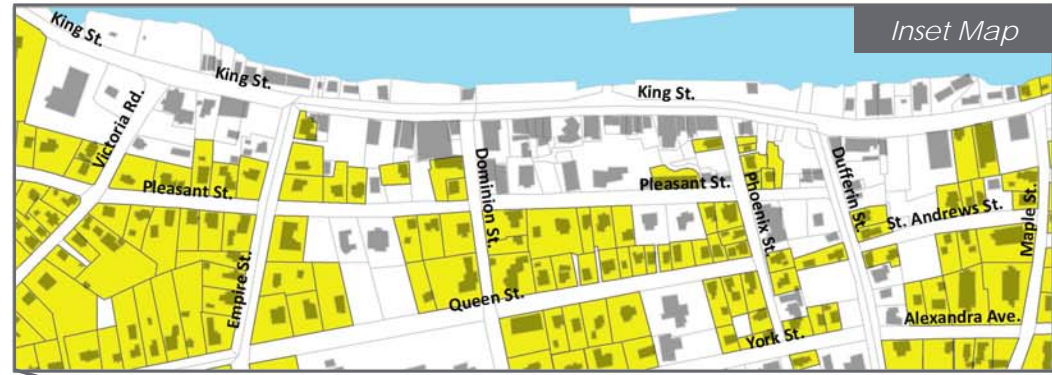


Townhouses on Glen Allan Drive

Range of Housing Styles (clockwise from top left): Detached Homes on York Street, New Semi-Detached Homes on Roundhouse Drive, Apartment Complex on Elm Street, and a High Density Apartment Building on Jubilee Road.



Existing Residential Land Use Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Residential Density

Residential density is an important calculation used by planners to evaluate the land use intensity of a given location. Land use patterns have a direct impact on various public infrastructure and service costs. Studies show that these costs tend to increase with dispersed development. In addition, there are also significant social and environmental costs. The more dispersed our development becomes, the more we rely on vehicles to move us from point A to B, resulting in lower personal activity levels, and greater greenhouse gas emissions.

As we build homes, workplaces, and shops, we must find or build a network of infrastructure to serve them. There are a number of categories that are typically built or maintained at public cost. These include neighborhood costs such as streets, water distribution lines and treatment, sewer collector lines and treatment, recreational facilities, parks, electricity lines, telephone lines, schools, emergency services (police, fire, and rescue), garbage collection and libraries. **Low density development costs more across all categories because it requires more infrastructure and more travel for service per unit. With more compact, planned growth, on the other hand, the need for new infrastructure and services can be reduced.** A recent City of Calgary study on this matter found that the more compact land use saves about a third in capital and operating costs for roads, transit services, water and wastewater, emergency response, recreation services and schools. (Litman, 2010).

On the following page is a Figure Ground map, showing the building footprints of every existing structure in Bridgewater. By looking at the map you can see which areas of town are characterized by compact development patterns. For instance, there is very dense development in the old part of town near King and Pleasant Streets, whereas areas such as Mayfair Drive and Glen Allan Drive are generally less dense because homes are spread out over larger land areas.

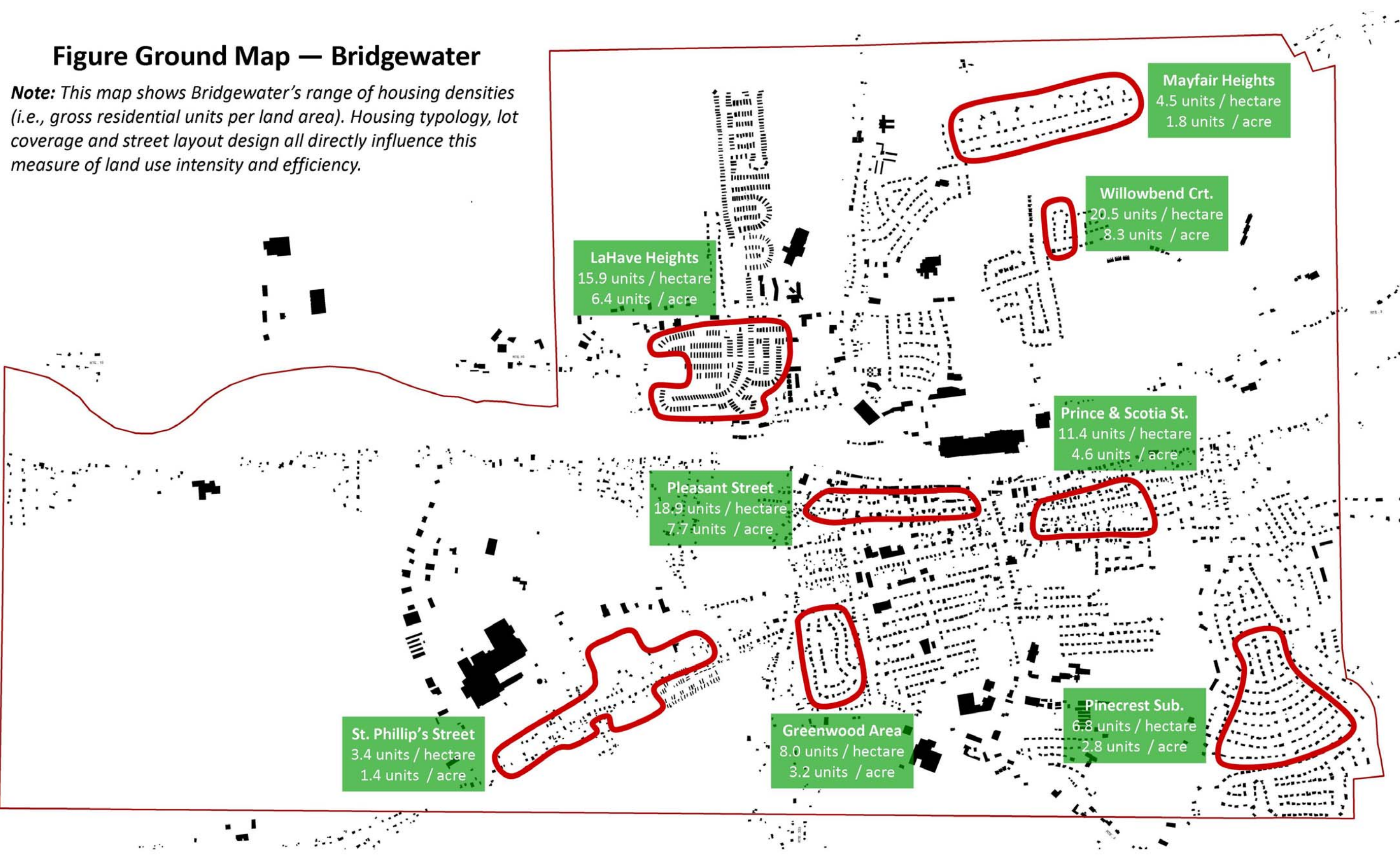
To better convey the level of density supported by various development patterns, gross residential unit densities were calculated for the highlighted regions. Planning staff counted dwelling units and used mapping software to calculate the development density for each of the delineated areas.



<i>Benefits of Compact Community Design</i>		
Economic	Social	Environmental
Reduced development costs	Improved transport options and mobility, particularly for non-drivers	Greenspace and habitat preservation
Reduced public service costs	Improved housing options	Reduced air pollution
Reduced transportation costs	Community cohesion	Reduced <i>heat island</i> effect
Economies of agglomeration	Preserves unique cultural resources (historic sites, traditional neighbourhoods, etc.)	
More efficient transportation	Increased physical exercise and health	
Supports industries that depend on high quality environments (tourism, farming, etc.)		

Figure Ground Map — Bridgewater

Note: This map shows Bridgewater's range of housing densities (i.e., gross residential units per land area). Housing typology, lot coverage and street layout design all directly influence this measure of land use intensity and efficiency.



Development & Land Use

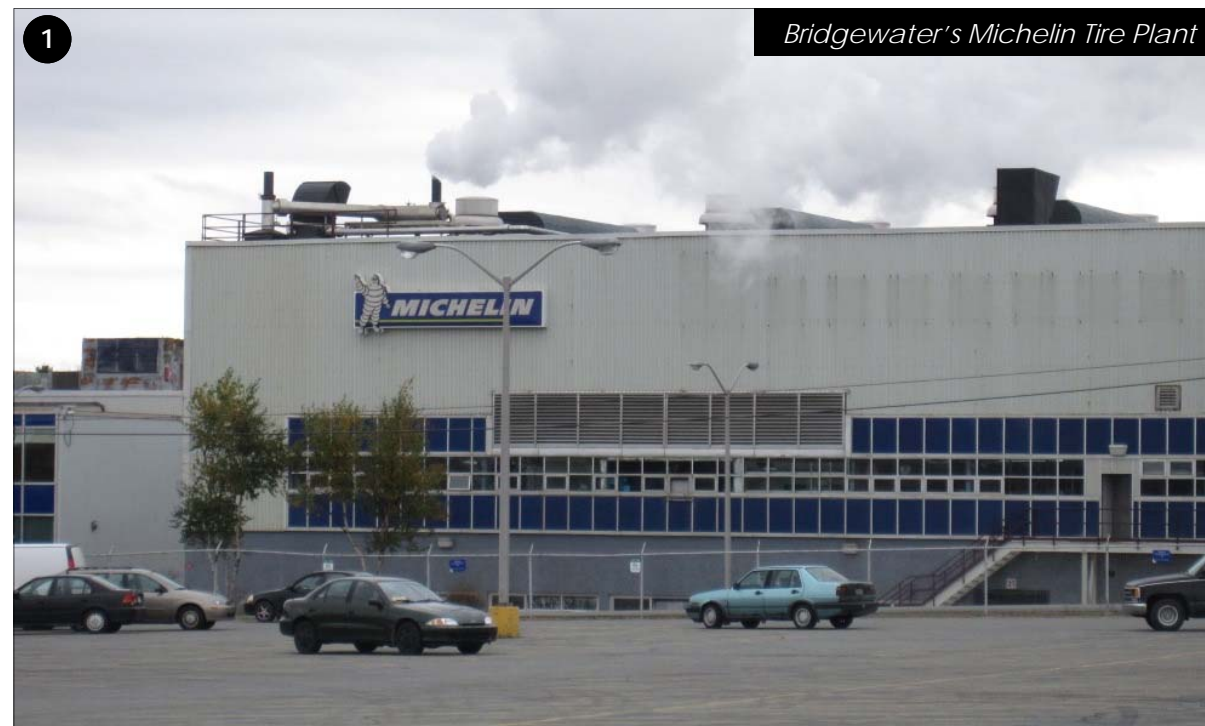
Industrial Uses

Prior to the 1970s, most of Bridgewater’s heavy industries were dispersed along the river in order to capitalize on the transportation benefits it provided. Today, industrial uses are clustered in the Bridgewater Business Park (previously known as the Bridgewater Industrial Park) in the north end of town, close to exit 13. During the late 1960s, consultants recommended the creation of dedicated industrial land in an effort to attract new businesses and stimulate economic growth. In 1969, the first parcel of land in the Business Park was purchased to accommodate the park’s first client – Michelin Tire Canada Ltd.

The 210 acre Business Park was the first appropriate location for large scale industrial manufactures in Bridgewater. After Michelin moved into the Park, new businesses followed. In 1985, the Business Park supported 16 manufacturing firms (Cunningham, 1983a). Industrial zoning in the Town of Bridgewater allows for a broad range of commercial developments as-of-right, which has lead to the diversification of land uses over time. There are currently 32 businesses located in the Park, the majority of which serve commercial or office purposes for organizations, such as Scotsburn Dairy Group, South Shore Regional School Board, and Nova Scotia Environment & Labour. The Bridgewater Business Park will also be the future home of the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre. The \$33.5 dollar facility will contain one ice surface, an aquatic facility, indoor walking track, public library, and multi-purpose space.

Industrial uses and large scale business uses typically occupy large parcels of land and have significant building setbacks. This design accommodates 24-hour commercial activity, including large truck deliveries and deployment, however, it isn’t well suited for pedestrians.

Bridgewater has long been regarded as an industrial town, given its history, the presence of Michelin, and the amount of land area zoned for industrial purposes. However, Bridgewater does not currently house many heavy industrial uses. **Much of Bridgewater’s industrial zones either support common commercial uses or are currently vacant. In fact, there are only 10 existing industrial uses at the present time, representing 27.54 hectares of land (or 12.07% of the total land area zoned for industrial uses). This raises the question; how much land area in town should be dedicated to industrial purposes when there appears to be low demand for industrial development?** The Planning Review will provide an opportunity to answer this question, and to examine long-term highest and best use opportunities for the Business Park.



Bridgewater’s Michelin Tire Plant



Commercial Use in the Bridgewater Business Park

Existing Industrial Land Use Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Institutional Uses

There are many different institutional uses located in Bridgewater, which provide a range of community services to citizens in the region. The town has a number of old churches that are still in operation, of which the oldest is the Holy Trinity Anglican Church which was built in 1858 on Alexandra Avenue. Bridgewater has two museums: The Desbrisay Museum and the Wile Carding Mill. Bridgewater's High School and Elementary School are located on Queen Street, while the Park View Education Centre is located on the northern end of King Street. Nova Scotia Community College's Lunenburg Campus is on High Street.

Bridgewater has had three hospitals over the years, starting with the old Dawson Memorial Hospital that served Bridgewater between 1920 and 1966. The current South Shore Regional hospital replaced the second Dawson Memorial Hospital, which was located on Dufferin Street, in 1988. Brookside Cemetery has been in existence since 1879. Lastly, the exhibition grounds have been located on Exhibition Drive since 1892 and is the location of the South Shore Exhibition and other special events throughout the calendar year.

Many of the town's institutional uses, such as the High School and the Elementary School, are well integrated in their neighbourhoods. Both schools exist within a traditional grid system that is both accessible and efficient because of effective street connections, walking routes, and the proximity of the surrounding residential land use. The same can be said of Bridgewater's old churches. The location of these historic landmarks influenced where residential development occurred in the town's early days, making them cornerstones of the community. These old churches, along with the newer United Church of Canada, continue to act as centre pieces in their residential neighbourhoods. Similarly, the Public Library on King Street functions as a public destination for the historic downtown.

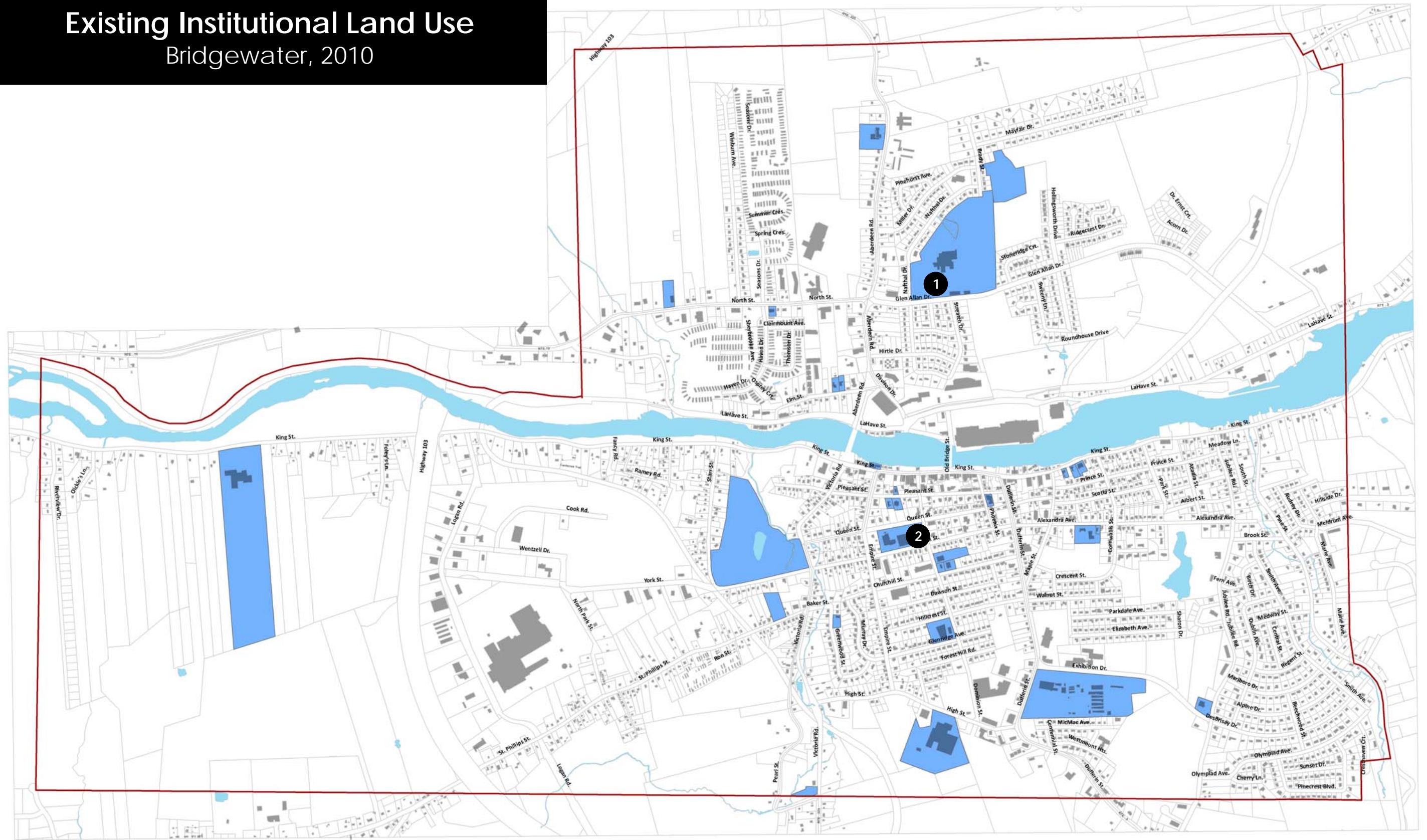
A number of newer institutional uses have been built outside of the downtown core, as their design often demands more land for contemporary building design and parking. Vehicular accessibility is often an essential consideration in their site planning as well. A large parcel of land was needed to support the new regional hospital in the 1980s, which was built off of Glen Allan Drive on the east side of the LaHave River. The majority of residents lived on the west side of the River at the time of the development, resulting in slightly longer travel distances for some patients, employees and other users living in town. However, since its development, most of the land surrounding the hospital has been developed for residential purposes. Another example is the Nova Scotia Community College building, which operated as the local vocational school between 1969 and 1991. This building was developed on a large parcel of land off High Street, a collector road on the west side of town. Large institutional uses often become centre pieces in their neighbourhoods, and depending on their use, can have significant impacts on the development of surrounding lands.

Historically, the Town has not attributed institutional designations to a property unless a specific development has been sought or approved for the site. As a result, institutional uses aren't necessarily distributed in a uniform or planned manner. **It may be useful for the Town to develop a strategy to plan for future institutional uses in Bridgewater, although site selection is often out of the municipality's control, as many institutions are developed and owned by the provincial and federal governments.**



Existing Institutional Land Use

Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Open Space

There are approximately 81 hectares of land dedicated to open space purposes in Bridgewater. The Town owns and operates 12 parks, four playgrounds, and four outdoor recreation facilities: Kinsmen Athletic Field, LaHave Street Ballfields, Bridgewater Swimming Pool, and the Bridgewater Tennis Club. Bridgewater is also home to the eight kilometer Centennial Trail that runs along the abandoned CNR railway.

Bridgewater has a diverse supply of open space, along with the potential to add more in future neighbourhoods. There is a mixture of recreational sites, naturally forested parks, and newly designed spaces. While the majority of open space is visually and functionally appealing, it lacks careful comprehensive planning that could connect it to the broader community and other existing open spaces. The Town does not have a comprehensive open space plan to site and guide new park development. In addition, the Town's current subdivision process contributes to an open space network that lacks connectivity, and in some cases, function. Current requirements are not effective in directing where and how this is to be done. As a result, developers typically focus on street design and how buildings will be distributed on the site before considering which land will fulfill their public open space dedication requirement.

A thoughtful and comprehensive approach to parks/trails planning and design, for both existing and future lands, would better serve the community's long-term needs. During the Planning Review the Town should develop a long-term vision for their open space and trails system, including objectives to maximize the potential for existing parks and the Centennial Trail, and to assist in determining where future open space should be located, including its intended function. In addition to open space, opportunities to maximize the use of the Centennial Trail system shall be explored. Bridgewater is extremely fortunate to have the Centennial Trail, which is an invaluable transportation and recreation system for users. Many communities spend decades and enormous resources to establish trail systems of this kind. Once the broader planning objectives for Town parks and trails are known, the Town's planning and subdivision regulations can be updated to help ensure the objectives are achieved over time.

For the purposes of this Report, and as illustrated on page 47, the Town's existing open space will be categorized as the Centennial Trail, active open space, or passive open space. Active open space describes an area that provides structured/designed recreation activities or programmed events. A playground is an example of active open space, so too is Shipyards Landing, which has a gazebo to host organized events and a boat launch to support recreational activity on the LaHave River. Passive open space, such as Woodland Gardens, includes naturally forested areas, and in some cases, informal trail systems that residents can use at their leisure.



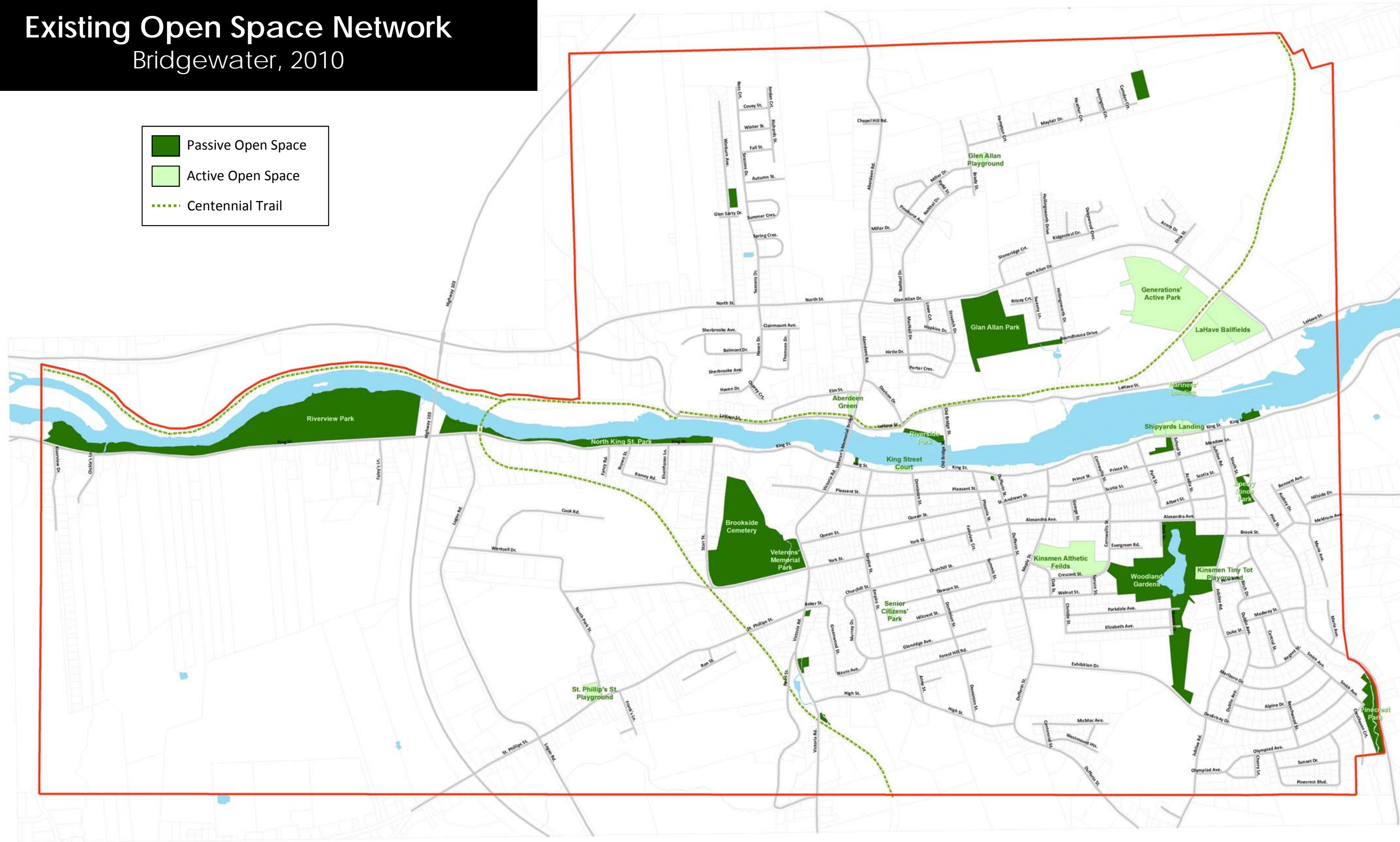
Town Pond in Woodland Gardens



Pinecrest Park

Existing Open Space Network Bridgewater, 2010

- Passive Open Space
- Active Open Space
- Centennial Trail



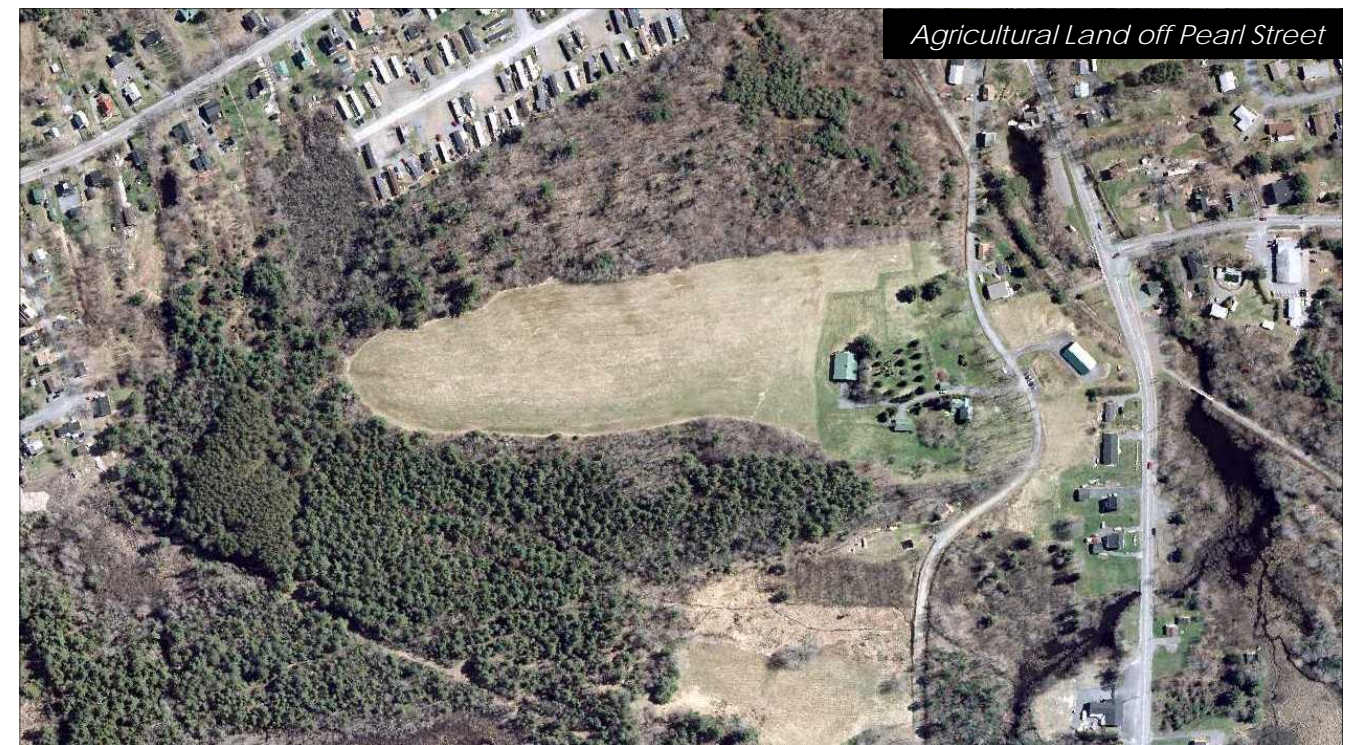
Development & Land Use

Agriculture

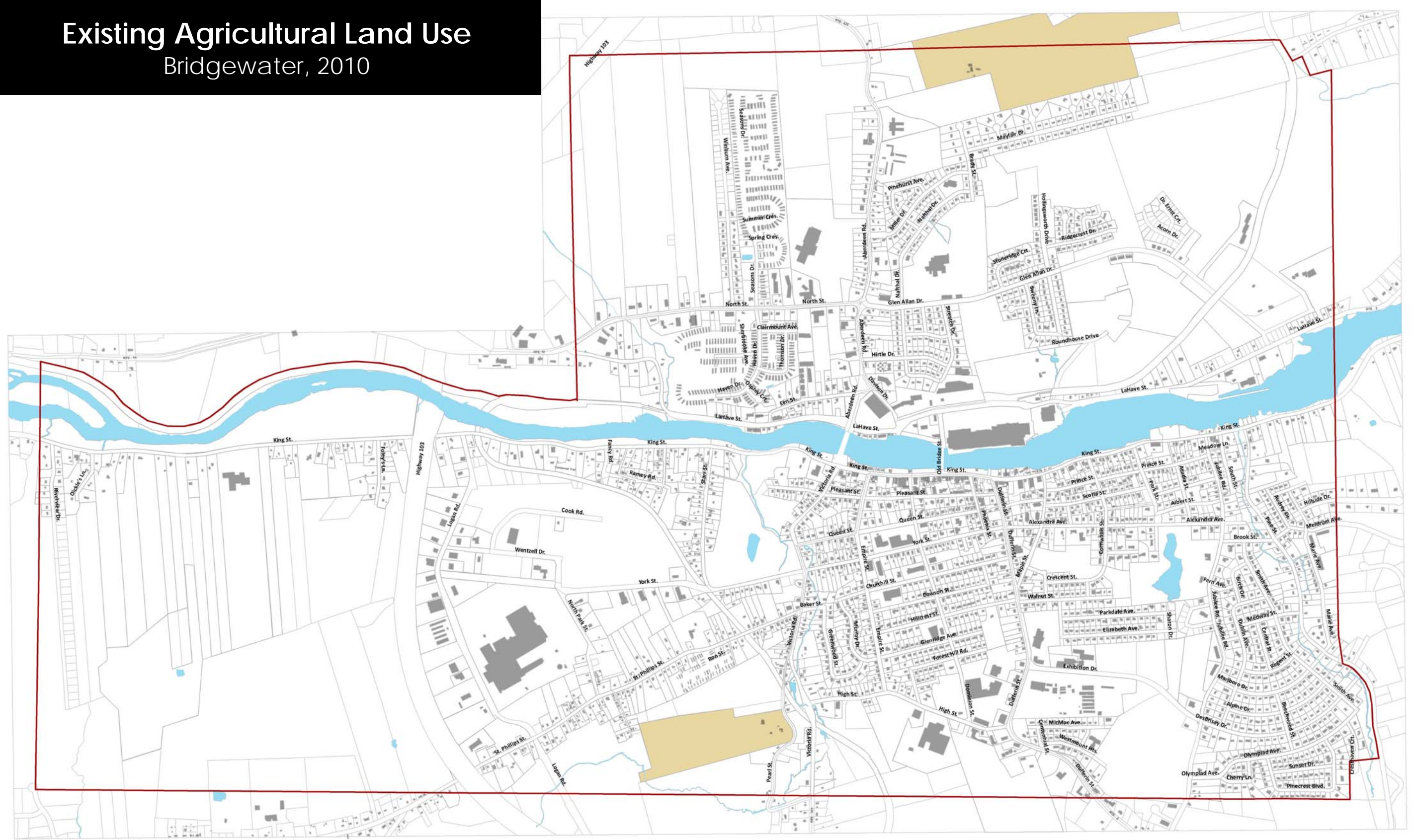
In the past, Bridgewater’s landscape included agricultural plots, as some residents depended on farming and resource based activities to support themselves and their families. Over time, local agricultural uses diminished as the town urbanized and the pressures of globalization on the farming industry increased. Roads such as North and LaHave Street used to provide access to some farm and resource land, but have now transformed into busy commercial corridors. Today, there is very little agricultural land within the town (2.55% of total land area). The town’s remaining agricultural plots are located near the eastern and western borders. Aside from these two areas, there are no significant agricultural producers in town.

These changes are not uncommon throughout Nova Scotia. Increasingly, changing market demands are pushing small scale farming operations out of urban areas throughout the province, and thus, fewer residents rely on small-scale farming and resource based activities in the immediate area as their primary source of income. However, as global agriculture is impacted by water shortages, pollution, depleting soil quality, rising energy costs, and insecure distribution systems, the protection of agricultural land in the region, and overall food production and security, will likely become important to the region’s long-term well-being.

During the last Planning Review, Town Council decided that it was important to permit some agricultural and resource based uses to exist under the Town’s Rural (RU) Zoning. The RU Zone allows for agricultural production, forestry activities, and single unit dwellings. Most of this zoning was limited to the north end of town, along with smaller areas adjacent to the two existing agricultural uses near the Town’s eastern and western borders. The future intended use of all of these lands was determined to be residential. **As part of this Review, Town Council will need to re-evaluate these areas of town to determine what is the highest and best use of this land, in consideration of current and emerging needs and new planning objectives.**



Existing Agricultural Land Use Bridgewater, 2010



Development & Land Use

Built Heritage

Due to the fine craftsmanship and dedication of early residents, Bridgewater now enjoys a diverse collection of old buildings that forms our built heritage. Currently, there are approximately 385 buildings in Bridgewater - most of which are homes - that were built prior to 1920. A variety of different architecture styles and features have influenced these buildings. Bridgewater's heritage homes are generally constructed from wood, which was the dominate building material during the 19th and early 20th century in Nova Scotia. Heritage homes typically incorporate multiple architectural styles instead of one distinct influence. Combining multiple influences is a common characteristic of 19th century architecture (Town of Bridgewater, 2010). **It is important to preserve Bridgewater's old buildings to foster a strong local identity and maintain the town's built heritage for future generations. Opportunities to preserve our built heritage also helps us to be more sustainable by minimizing energy, fuel, and resource needs.**

Architectural Styles

Many of Bridgewater's early homes were created using the Maritime Vernacular style that was brought to Nova Scotia by former New England residents. These homes are traditionally more modest than other styles, often reflecting their owners resources or needs in a community. However, newer Maritime Vernacular homes can be more detailed. This style has several character defining elements, such as a square/rectangular

plan, a central doorway, plain exteriors that are a singled or clapboard exterior. Maritime Vernacular influences were most common between 1830 and 1990 (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003 & Town of Bridgewater, 2010b).

Greek Revival (aka Classical) style was popular in Nova Scotia between the 1820s and 1860s (Town of Bridgewater, 2010b). Although various features of the Greek Revival style have been incorporated into buildings throughout the province, few pure buildings exist (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003). Greek Revival homes have a gently slopped gable roof and a symmetrical design. Some of the style's other notable features include an emphasis on straight lines, a pediment porch, a central door complemented by sidelights, and decorative classical features, such as columns or pilasters (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003 & Town of Bridgewater, 2010b).

Gothic Revival was the most frequent style used in Nova Scotia during the 19th century (from 1840 to 1890). It is also the most identifiable style because of its trademark pointed arched windows that help emphasize the vertical line. Other characteristics of this style include steeply pitched roofs, many narrow gables, and decorative tracery or trim (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003 & Town of Bridgewater, 2010b).



Fancy Maritime Vernacular Home on Maple



A Home Showing Several Greek Revival Traits



Gothic Revival Home on Aberdeen Road



Queen Anne Home on Scotia Street



Craftsman on Alexandra Avenue

Near the turn of the 20th century there was a shift away from Geek and Gothic architecture in favour of emerging styles. The Queen Anne style became popular between 1880 and 1910 as it appealed to the growing middle class who were looking for stylish, yet affordable homes (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003). Queen Anne homes had an asymmetrical form that was characterized by the presence of large bay windows, dynamic wall surfaces, steep roof pitches, tall chimneys, and gables along the front façade (Archibald & Stephenson, 2003).

While Queen Anne buildings tended to be large, many local residents preferred more modest homes which are typical of the Craftsman style. The Craftsman style grew from the Arts and Crafts movement that originated in England, but became famous in the United States. Craftsman homes typically have a full width veranda that may be partially enclosed as a sun porch. Other features of Craftsman homes are a gently sloping roof, broad gables, exposed rafter ends, and large right-angled columns. Windows are usually small, and may be grouped, while exterior detailing is influenced by Japanese styles (Archibald & Stevenson, 2003).

Development & Land Use

Bridgewater Heritage Properties

The purpose of Nova Scotia's *Heritage Property Act* is to protect built heritage that is of cultural or historical significance. Since its inception, just three Bridgewater properties have been municipally designated as historic places.

The Riverview Community Centre received its designation in 1986 and it was the first Bridgewater property to do so. This modest building was once used as a one-room schoolhouse. As such, it is a prime example of the architecture style used for small schools at the turn of the century. Constructed in 1888 and 1889, the Community Centre's value comes from its connection to the town's education history. Because of an increasing population, the building expanded in 1929 and continued to act as a school until 1976, when it became a community centre.



Bridgewater's Holy Trinity Anglican Church first opened its doors on June 12th, 1858. The church sits close to Alexandra Avenue and is accompanied by a small cemetery in the rear; both were municipally designated in August 1995. Holy Trinity's significance comes largely from its role as a place of worship and a community landmark for over one and a half centuries. Architecturally, the church incorporates many elements of the Gothic Revival style, including lancet windows, broad and batten cladding, and a steep gable roof. The building itself is structurally sound and it is comprised of original buildings materials, including the original wood trim (Nova Scotia Historic Places Initiative, 2010).

The Fairview Inn has been in operation since 1863, but the current version was constructed in 1916 after a fire burned the Inn to the ground. The flat roofed, three storey Inn has a two storey veranda and bold massing, which give the building a strong southern charm. The designation was awarded because Fairview Inn maintains its original style, building materials, and furnishings. The Fairview Inn is both Bridgewater's oldest running business and Nova Scotia's oldest operating inn (Nova Scotia Historic Places Initiative, 2010).

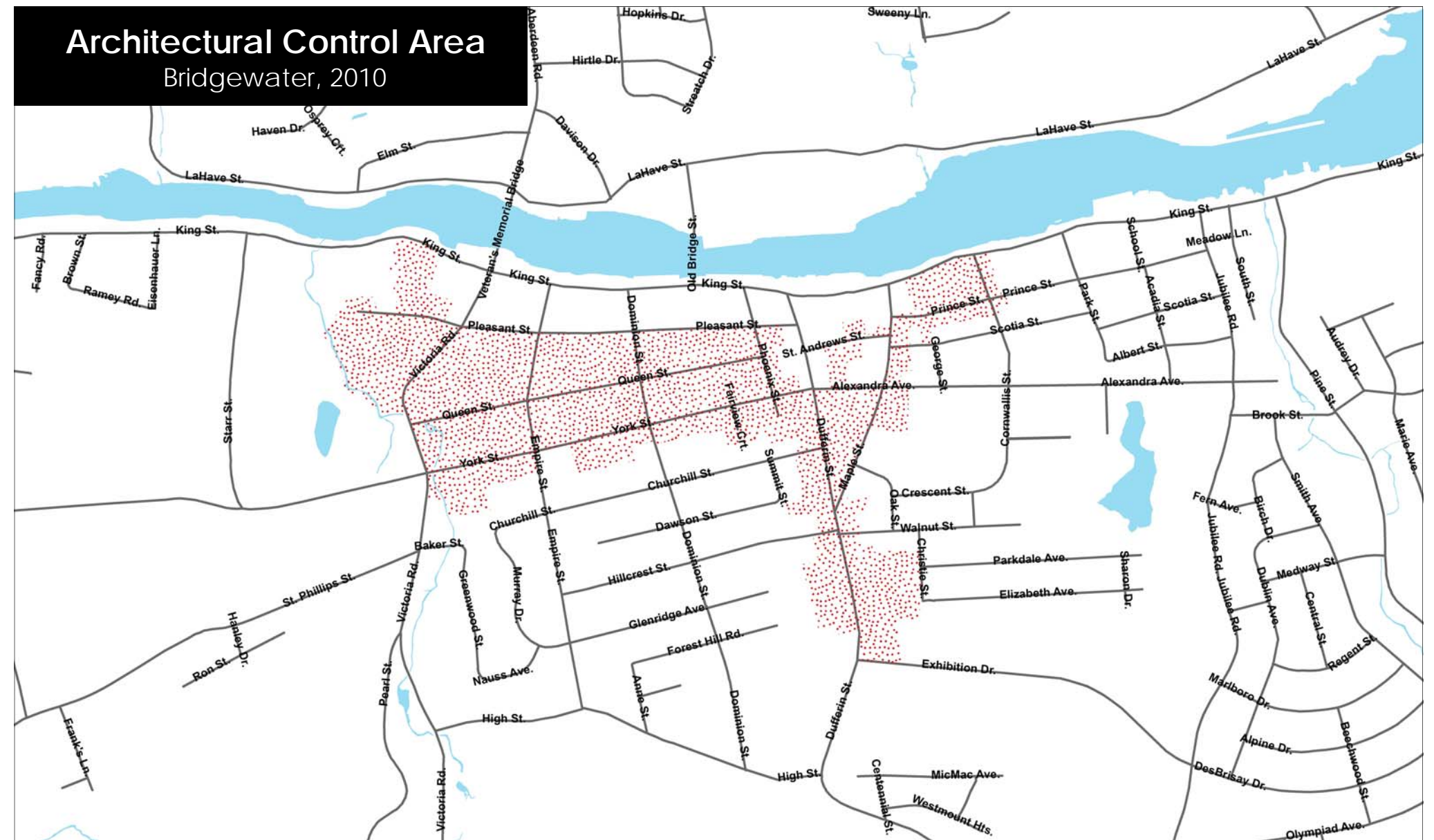


Architectural Control Area

Town Council has recognized the importance of preserving built heritage within Bridgewater. Council adopted the *Heritage Property By-law* in 1981, and one year later, they established a Heritage Advisory Committee under the Province's *Heritage Property Act*. More recently, in 1997, Council created the Architectural Control Area to help preserve the appearance of buildings in central Bridgewater's older areas.

The Architectural Control Area encompasses lands designated as either Restricted Commercial (RC) or Mixed Residential (MR) in the Town's Land Use By-law. The Control Area protects facades by ensuring that new buildings, accessory structures, or alterations to buildings older than 1920 are consistent with the established character of the area. Properties within this control area must follow the requirements for their respective zone, in addition to the Architectural Control Area requirements in the Town's Land Use By-law. The Land Use By-Law outlines features that effect the overall appearance of historic buildings, such as the architectural style, height, doors, windows, etc. If a home owner wishes to modify any of these features, they need a development permit from Town Hall. However, some home owners in the Architectural Control Area are unaware of the designation and the need to acquire a permit for such modifications.

If you compare the Architectural Control Area Map with the Development Era Map on page 25, you will notice that most of the town's oldest settlement areas are not subject to heritage control requirements under the Land Use By-Law, meaning that external character defining elements may be modified at any time. **During the upcoming Planning Review, Council should examine how best to preserve built heritage in Bridgewater. Some questions to explore include: should the Architectural Control Area be expanded to include other historically relevant areas, and what controls should be fixed versus flexible.**



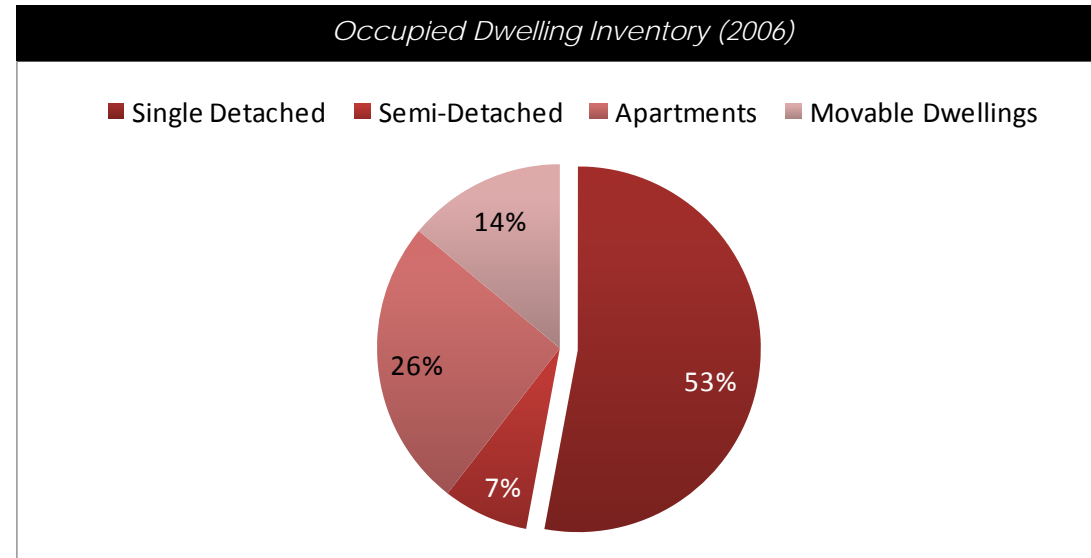
Housing

Housing Stock

In 2006, there were a total of 3,585 occupied private dwellings located inside town boundaries. This represents a 16% increase in occupied private dwellings since 1996. Approximately half of the total housing stock comes in the form of traditional detached dwellings, while apartment dwellings comprise 26% (Community Counts, 2010).

The growth in housing stock between 1996 and 2006 is mainly due to the increase in single detached and movable/manufactured dwellings. In this period the number of single detached dwellings increased by 13.8% whereas the number of movable dwellings increased by a staggering 69.5%. The number of occupied semi-detached/townhouse dwellings has remained constant during this time, though they have increased in recent years.

The average market value of a dwelling in Bridgewater was \$137,556 in 2006. This represents a 47% increase in value since 1996. During the same time period, Nova Scotia has experienced an 82.5% increase to \$158,000. Also in 2006, 67.6% of Bridgewater's population owned a private dwelling compared to 72% of Nova Scotia residents as a whole. Private dwelling owners in Bridgewater spend roughly \$738 a month in home payments compared to the \$595 spent by those who rent. On average Nova Scotia residents pay \$761 and \$671 respectively (Community Counts, 2010).



Housing Conditions

The majority of housing in Bridgewater is considered to be in good condition. According to Community Counts (2010), 66% of occupied dwellings require only regular maintenance, while 25% require minor repairs. 320 occupied dwellings, or 9% of the total housing stock, are in poor condition and require major repairs, compared to 10.2% in Lunenburg County and 9.5% in the province as a whole. **Notwithstanding this information, the interior quality of housing stock is not regularly evaluated and is therefore unknown.**

Rental Market

The vacancy rate for apartment rentals in Bridgewater is 2.4%, which is similar to the provincial vacancy rate of 2.8%. Vacancy rates under 3% tend to favour property owners because the shortage of supply means they can charge higher prices. The cost of apartment rentals in Bridgewater is much lower than the provincial average. This may be due to several factors such as income rates that are lower than the provincial average or the quality of rental units (Andrew, 2010). However, Bridgewater's newer, higher quality rental units are more expensive. **If the development market continues to be strong, the average cost of rental units will likely increase in the future.**

	Bachelor	One Bedroom	Two Bedroom	Three Bedroom
Bridgewater	\$382/mo	\$511/mo	\$628/mo	\$666/mo
Truro	\$446/mo	\$582/mo	\$749/mo	\$801/mo
Kentville	\$472/mo	\$540/mo	\$619/mo	\$695/mo
Nova Scotia	\$632/mo	\$694/mo	\$842/mo	\$1,000/mo

Affordability

Affordability is commonly measured by the number of households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. According to Statistics Canada, Bridgewater had 3,585 private households in 2005. **960 of these households, or 26.8%, spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.**

Approximately 1,300 of Bridgewater's private households rented as of 2006. 51% of renters are spending too much of their income on housing. Bridgewater's rates were much higher than those of the province (45%) or Lunenburg County (43%) (Statistics Canada, 2010). **This data suggests there is a need for more affordable housing options in Bridgewater.**

<i>Housing Affordability (2006)</i>		
	Renting Households Spending more than 30% of Their Income on Housing	Renting Households Spending more than 30% of Their Income on Housing
Bridgewater	26.8%	51.1%
Lunenburg	27.4%	40.0%
Amherst	30.0%	48.3%
Truro	30.0%	47.6%
Windsor	36.8%	59.3%
Yarmouth	32.9%	48.3%
Nova Scotia	22.6%	45.1%

On October 23rd, 2010 the Federal Government and the Province of Nova Scotia announced that they will provide \$32 million to renovate and construct 6,500 social housing units in the province. Approximately \$11 million of the total funding will add 82 new social housing units for low-income seniors and residents with disabilities. They also announced that Bridgewater’s social housing complexes for seniors will receive a portion of this funding. Roughly \$1.8 million dollars will be used to retrofit 847 units in the South Shore region (CMHC, 2010).

Homelessness

The rate of homelessness in Bridgewater has yet to be fully evaluated, however, the new *Inn from the Cold Bridgewater* program provides shelter to homeless individuals in the town between December and April. Approximately 80 volunteers operate the program from eight local churches. **During the 2009-2010 winter season the program provided 100 overnight stays to 15 individuals between the ages of 13 and 75 (Lunenburg County Community Fund, 2010), indicating that homelessness is a concern in Bridgewater.**

Affordable Housing Units

The South Shore Housing Authority (SSHA) is responsible for managing 365 public housing units in Lunenburg County - approximately 140 units are in Bridgewater - on behalf of the Provincial Community Services Office (Leger, 2010). The owner of LaHave Heights also provides manufactured homes that Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation consider to be affordable (CMHC, 2010).

The SSHA supports 11 single family rent subsidized homes, most of which are 3 bedroom homes, and 17 rental units of various types in Bridgewater. In these situations the SSHA enters into an agreement with a landlord who will offer homes at a rate tenants can manage. As part of the agreement the SSHA covers the remaining rental cost to ensure the landlord receives market value for their buildings. In the event that a unit requires repairs, the SSHA will cover up to 2 months rent if the unit remains vacant (Leger, 2010).

The housing complex at 66 Pleasant Street received funding from the Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Program to supply 13 social housing units; additional units will be added in phase two of the project. The program is funding the construction of new housing complexes in Nova Scotia, however, there are no ongoing projects in the South Shore as other regions have larger waiting lists for social housing. There are currently 143 requests on Bridgewater’s affordable housing waitlist (85 seniors, 33 families, and 25 non-elderly) individuals compared to 39 for the Municipal District of Lunenburg (Leger, 2010).

SSHA manages 4 senior housing complexes in Bridgewater that supply 124 affordable housing units. Westmount Manor on Atlantic Street, which is the largest affordable housing complex for seniors, provides 49 individual units. Pineview Apartments has 30 affordable units, Eastside Manor has 20 units, and Miller Manor has 25 units (Leger, 2010).



Community Services

Community Services

Bridgewater is home to a range of significant community services for people living within Lunenburg and Queens Counties. Some of these services include major government and public services, recreation facilities and areas, public schools and colleges, hospitals, and museums. These services provide obvious benefits to residents of Bridgewater and the area.

Many of these significant uses directly impact the neighbourhoods in which they are sited. Depending on the size and nature of the services, they can function as important anchors for activity, which may result in positive spin-offs for an area. For example, the development of South Shore Regional Hospital in the 1980's subsequently influenced a significant amount of compatible residential development on the east side of the LaHave River. Sometimes, certain community services may be disruptive to existing areas, and can negatively impact existing neighbourhood stability if they are inappropriately sited and designed. In other cases, certain services may become underutilized because of distance or accessibility issues not carefully considered in the planning stages.

The Planning Review process allows us to explore opportunities to help maximize the use of our existing community services, and also to consider effective strategies for siting new ones in the future.



Bridgewater Justice Centre



DesBrisay Museum



Bridgewater Police Station

Primary Community Services Map

Gov't / Public Services	Rec. Facilities / Areas	Public Schools / College
1 Service Nova Scotia	10 HB Studios Centre	20 NS Community College
2 Regional School Board	11 LaHave Ballfields	21 Bridgewater Elementary
3 Canada Post	12 Swimming Pool	22 Bridgewater Junior Senior High School
4 Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	13 Kinsmen Field	23 Parkview Education Centre
5 Town of Bridgewater	14 Exhibition Grounds	
6 Bridgewater Library	15 YMCA	
7 Service Canada	16 Bridgewater Arena	
8 Bridgewater Police	17 Bridgewater Curling Club	
9 Bridgewater Justice Centre	18 Future location of the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre	
	19 Michelin Social Club	
		Museums
		24 DesBrisay Museum
		25 Wile Carding Mill
		Hospital
		26 South Shore Regional Hospital

