

# *Town of Annapolis Royal*



## **Presentation to Liveable Communities October 16, 2004**



**Presenters:**  
Trish Fry, Deputy Mayor  
Amery Boyer, CAO

**Location:**  
Niagara Falls, Ontario

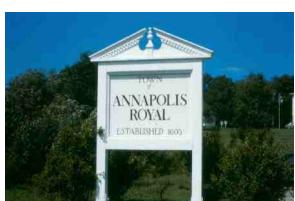
## **Introduction**

Ladies and gentlemen, International Panel of Judges, and distinguished guests. Good morning, my name is Trish Fry, and I'm the Deputy Mayor for the Town of Annapolis Royal. I'm joined here today by Amery Boyer, Chief Administrative Officer for the Town.



The Town of Annapolis Royal is in the southwestern part of Nova Scotia on the eastern coast of Canada. The Town lies along the Annapolis River just off the Bay of Fundy and is home to some of the highest tides in the world - the difference in water level between high and low tide at the Annapolis Royal wharf is about 30 feet on average.

Covering 230 hectares of land, 330 hectares including areas under water, Annapolis Royal is one of the smallest incorporated Towns in North America. The Town's population is under 600 people, although the Town is a service centre for an outlying population of some 10,000 people. To put it in perspective, the Town is less than 2 kilometres in any direction, a person can walk from one end to the other in 15 minutes, and there are only some 250 households.



The Town is governed by an elected Mayor and 5 Councillors with a permanent staff of 12 administering an annual operating budget of \$1.3 million dollars. We have our own police force of 2.5 men. Our crime rate is among the lowest per capita in the Province. A small Town still must provide the same services as a city, and most of the administrative functions are the same but on a smaller scale. But the big advantage in the small town is that you have a manageable number of people who are all willing to do their part. If you want to do a survey, you just go house to house and do it. We can easily reach out to virtually everyone to get opinions and educate people on new programs, and that makes our success rate on innovative projects very high.

## **A Rich History**



Archaeological sites have been unearthed which prove ancient native people, or Paleo Indians (ancestors of the Mi'kmaq), first occupied Nova Scotia as early as 11,000 years ago. The First Nations peoples were the custodians and traditional owners of the land, and for thousands of years, the southwest region of Nova Scotia was inhabited by the Mi'kmaq, who lived off the land and sea.



1604 saw the arrival of Sieur de Mons, Samuel Champlain, and their company of French explorers to the shores of the current Annapolis Basin. Upon entering the basin, Champlain remarked that this sheltered harbour was vast enough to safely anchor 1000 ships. So impressed was he by this harbour that he immediately named it Port Royal.



In the spring of 1605, after a disastrous winter on Ste Croix Island, the company returned to Port Royal where the Habitation was constructed. Thanks in large part to the welcoming friendship of the local Mi'kmaq population, the Habitation became a successful settlement and endured as the first permanent European settlement in Canada. 1606 saw two of the earliest and best-known European social events in Canadian history take place at Port Royal, the Order of Good Cheer and the Theatre of Neptune.



In the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the region was the focus of hostilities in the wars between Britain and France and changed hands several times until 1710 when it fell to the English for the final time. The Town faced a total of 13 attacks, more than any other place in North America. At this point, the geographical area of Annapolis Royal received its name in honour of Queen Anne.

As French settlers began to evolve into the Acadian people, the Port Royal region became the cradle of Acadian civilization and supported a thriving Acadian population until their expulsion from Nova Scotia in 1755. While Annapolis Royal is not a present day Acadian community, we continue to celebrate our Acadian roots with pride.

Tourism is a long-standing tradition in the area. When the Europeans first came to these shores, they were greeted by the local Mi'kmaq who taught them about the area and made them feel welcome. In this way, our tourism industry began here 400 years ago, and we have been welcoming visitors to our area ever since!



We host some 100,000 visitors a year to our community. We have more than 135 heritage buildings, some dating back to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. We are blessed with many natural attractions in the Town, including a fresh water marsh, salt marsh, the river, and a stunning view. The Town also is home to a number of built attractions which enhance the history of the area. These include Fort Anne National Historic Site, Historic Gardens, King's Theatre, a waterfront boardwalk, a Farmers' Market, museums, and a tidal power generating station. Festivals and events are designed for the most part to incorporate the Town's rich heritage. The Town has a healthy business district, an active visual and performing arts community, and residents and organizations in our community are proud of our participation in the Communities in Bloom Program.

Today, we plan to demonstrate how individuals and organizations in and around Annapolis Royal have worked together to build the largest concentration of heritage properties in Nova Scotia, to protect and enhance the natural landscape and environment, and to showcase our rich and diverse assets to the world through a thriving tourism industry while maintaining the small town atmosphere that makes our community a wonderful place to live.

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## **Part 1 - Enhancement of the Landscape**



The Town of Annapolis Royal was the 1999 provincial winner in the Attractions Canada Program. In addition, the Town's attractions have received their own awards of excellence, including the Historic Gardens who won the 2003 Crystal Award of Excellence presented by the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia and an Attractions Canada Provincial Award in 2002. Fort Anne is Canada's first administered National Historic Site and the main core of the town was designated a National Historic District in 1998 by the prestigious Historic Sites & Monuments Board of Canada.

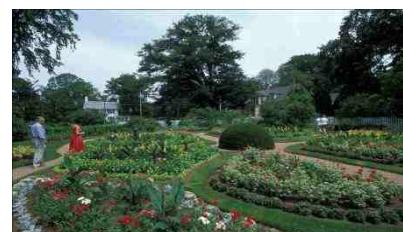
The small town atmosphere of Annapolis Royal, coupled with the multitude of natural and built attractions available to enhance the existing landscape and heritage, are what sets us apart from other communities. The features of Annapolis Royal, along with the attributes of the surrounding area, make the region a premier tourist destination in Nova Scotia.



The Historic Gardens is a 17 acre showcase of gardens that was developed in 1981. The Historic Gardens are based on the history of the area, with sections themed to the various eras of Nova Scotian history from First Nations through to modern times.



Some highlights include an Acadian section with La Maison acadienne, and accompanying garden, dykes, aboiteau, thatched roof and bake oven. The salt marshes of Allain's River are accessible to the public through a dyke walk. There is also a Governor's Garden based on designs from an 18<sup>th</sup> century governor's residence in Annapolis Royal, a Victorian Garden based on the affluent gardens of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and an Innovative Garden which showcases modern techniques and urban gardening.



A 2000 bush Rose Collection chronicles the development of roses through the ages. The Historic Gardens have become a highly acclaimed world class garden attraction and have certainly generated much enthusiasm in the area for gardening and property beautification.





A new attraction in Town, developed two years ago through a partnership between Ducks Unlimited and the Town, is the Annapolis Royal Marsh. The marsh was developed into a constructed wetland to serve as a tertiary sewage treatment facility. While the environmental benefits are many, this development enabled the interpretation of freshwater marshes and wildlife to an enthusiastic public. The project has been highly successful so far as a recreational area in both winter and summer, and in stage 2 will be “plugged in” to the sewage treatment system to serve its tertiary treatment capacity.



One of the oldest landscapes in town is the magnificent earthen fortifications of Fort Anne National Historic Site. As the fourth fort on this site, the present fort was built by the French between 1702 and 1708. The earthwork defences, which have survived, represent one of the best preserved earthen forts in Canada.

The Town’s boardwalk provides a nicely landscaped view of the Town’s waterfront. All the attractions strive to maintain a landscape appropriate to their site, and are very successful.



The Town itself has increased its efforts to beautify the Town through hanging baskets and enhancement of existing greenspace. All public lands are well maintained. As new sidewalks are laid, allowance is made for tree plantings. The Town, Board of Trade and Historic Gardens led the effort to have Annapolis Royal participate in Communities in Bloom for the first time in 2004. And we'll be participating again for certain – what a positive programme!



Church Street a few years ago was a dead end street and while it borders on the Farmers’ Market, the street had little character. Several businesses have settled in on Church Street and two years ago, with the blessing of the Town, decided to beautify their street. Gardens were put in along the streetside, and with donation of plant material and labour from various individuals and organizations including the Historic Gardens and the Town, the Church Street businesses created a beautiful commercial district. They did a terrific job.



Another success story is the playground. Several years ago, a group of citizens decided the Town playground needed rejuvenation and embarked on a fundraising campaign to acquire new and interesting equipment. A huge amount of

volunteer effort went into this, and with financial assistance from the Town and the Province, enough money was raised to redevelop the playground. The new equipment was installed, including a boat with climbing ropes and slides built by a local boatbuilder. And to make the space special, gardens were planted with child-safe plant material, again by donations and volunteer effort. Indeed a beautiful addition to the Town.



Businesses and homeowners in Annapolis Royal show great pride in their properties and many have done some great landscaping to enhance their heritage buildings. In particular, the Bed & Breakfasts have collectively gone to great lengths to enhance their properties. The downtown businesses have little greenspace to work with so instead have chosen to use window boxes and hanging baskets to add to their facades.



Institutions in Annapolis Royal, from the schools to the Health Centre, to the cemetery, all attempt to keep their properties up to a high standard. The green spaces are well kept, trees trimmed and new trees planted, flowers planted to add a splash of colour.



One of the Town's special attributes is the street canopy. We have a good mix of large trees including elms, chestnuts, maple, beech, ash, and oak. While we have been fortunate enough to have kept Dutch Elm Disease at bay for the time being, since elms are only a portion of our street canopy we won't be as hard hit as some communities who suffered from single species planting.

The Magnolia Society has planted many magnolias on public and private lands over the past five years. Their hope is to have a spring annual magnolia festival once the trees are sufficiently established. This type of Spring Festival will be of economic benefit to the area at a time of year when extra business is most needed.



Everyone is getting involved in tree planting, including developers, the schools, homeowners, the Town, the Gardens and the community





The Clean Annapolis River Project, an environmental group, in cooperation with the Town and several other partners has been planting native species of trees and shrubs in the areas adjacent to the Annapolis Royal Marsh. These are being planted along watercourses to provide stream bank stabilization, shading, filtration of run-off and wildlife habitat. In addition, the soil exposed when the engineered wetland was constructed has been planted with native grasses to stabilize the soils, prevent erosion and provide wildlife habitat.



***The Kerr Elm  
Winner - NS Big Tree 2003***

The Town has a Dutch Elm Disease Task Force, a group of “tree scouts” who have been taught what to look for and who will alert the Town of any sign of Dutch Elm Disease. All the elms have been inventoried and assessed for state of health. We will attempt to maintain a healthy elm population for as long as we can.

However, to allow for the possibility of the eventual demise of the elms, the Town has been strategically planting smaller trees for the past 20 years in places where the elms will eventually fall.

In addition, Town bylaws are in place that will allow the Town certain powers to deal with diseased or unsafe trees on public or private property. The Town also has a written policy to plant at least 10 new trees every year. As a student project, a Centre of Geographic Sciences student mapped all the street trees along St

George Street, the Town’s main street, and entered the information into the award winning Geographic Information System shared by the three towns in the County of Annapolis. This is but one layer of a GIS system the Town uses for all its infrastructure. In total, 573 trees were entered, including more than 80 common species.



The Town draws on professionals such as a Landscape Architect, Arborist, and retired Historic Gardens Horticulturist for advice, to ensure appropriateness of new plantings: design, species and size. We strive to plant “the right tree in the right place at the right time”.

The Town’s Land Use Bylaw includes a special “gardens” zone that protects designated areas in the Town such as the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens.

## **Part 2 - Heritage Management**



Sinclair Inn

The Annapolis Royal region is one of the oldest areas of European settlement in North America which combined with the First Nations pre-contact history, creates a rich and diverse history.

Town Council and the community believe in the importance of:

- preserving the past while looking to the future
- encouraging community participation
- stewardship of our natural environment
- encouraging manageable and sustainable growth

In 1981, the Town received the Regional Award for Preservation of the Town of Annapolis Royal from the Heritage Canada Foundation. The main core of the Town was designated as a National Historic District in 1998.



The Town long ago recognized the value of its built heritage and began to explore ways and means of protecting it. Using the Town as a model, provincial legislation was developed in the 1970's which would see protection of heritage buildings throughout the province. The Town works within the legislation, in a proactive way, to ensure that renovations and new developments adhere to the goals for preserving our heritage. The Town's Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee reviews applications for any work and signage involving heritage properties in the Town and adjacent properties. Council recently approved the Committee's recommendation for a heritage incentive grant for appropriate maintenance of heritage properties. The Town's Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Strategic Plan also have significant heritage components.



Annapolis Royal has a number of very large heritage properties, such as the Queen Anne Inn. In order to provide viable alternatives for the survival of buildings such as these, allowances were made to allow commercial development in the form of accommodations in these buildings, even though they are located in predominantly residential neighbourhoods. The mix of uses has worked out well, and this policy has allowed many of these special buildings to be maintained in pristine condition, something likely not possible if they were to remain a single family dwelling.

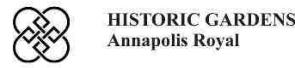




The various attractions in Annapolis Royal reflect the rich heritage and diverse culture of the Town. Fort Anne National Historic Site showcases Annapolis Royal's history as a garrison town and capital of Nova Scotia until 1749. The Annapolis Heritage Society maintains two of the more special historic buildings as museums and has various lectures and programmes on the area's history. One of these, the Sinclair Inn, also a National Historic Site, has examples of construction techniques spanning several centuries of local history. The Historic Gardens showcase gardening methods spanning more than 400 years and support various activities and programmes that allow visitors to learn more about the history of the area from a built or natural perspective.



There are a number of activities in Annapolis Royal that take the heritage experience to a new level. These include the Candlelight Graveyard Tour which remains popular after 12 years, the Candlelight Acadian Tour at the Historic Gardens which was successful in its inaugural season, "Stroll through the Centuries" Historic Walking Tours, various theatrical productions and vignettes based on different events in our history and a popular walking tour brochure which provides a brief history of many of the older buildings.



#### Candlelight Acadian Tours

Wednesday, August 18, 25 and September 1  
8:00 pm

Join bilingual interpreter Mike Chariton for a walk along the  
Gardens dyke; learn about pre-deportation Acadian life; and  
finish your tour with a song at la Maison acadienne.  
Space Limited.

Tour tickets \$5.00, available in advance.



Information 239-7010

Our waterfront played a key role in the area's development. It was the reason why the French Explorers settled here. The area quickly became a centre for commerce and trading, and remained so until the early 1900's. The remains of many wharfs can be seen along the waterfront at low tide. The historic business district was constructed on or near the water.

In July of 2004, the tall ship Europa left Le Havre, France with a crew of Acadians to retrace the voyage of Samuel Champlain and Sieur de Mons to Port Royal. They were greeted in Annapolis Royal by the Bear River First Nations in a birch bark canoe, as well as by hundreds of people who lined the waterfront.



2005 sees the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the permanent settlement of Port Royal, and plans have been underway for years to “celebrate 400 years of living and working together”. A year full of special activities is being planned such as:

- A re-enactment of the French Landing in 1605
- The People’s Story – interpretation of the relationship of the French and Mi’kmaq, as told from the First Nations perspective



- Musical Celebrations including performances by period troupe Musique 400, and an International Band Festival which will see the premiere of the Annapolis Royal Suite, a specially commissioned arrangement for 2005.



- Costume animation – a group of volunteers have been creating authentic period costumes for use in re-enactments and special events



In total, 25 individual community events have been planned for 2005. These celebrations will be throughout the region, and the Town has played a lead role, in partnership with neighbouring municipalities.



### **Part 3 - Environmentally Sensitive Practices**

As a leader in environmental practices, Annapolis Royal has introduced and supported many initiatives and strives to be a responsible steward of the local environment in all our decision making.



Several years ago, the Town of Annapolis Royal embarked on an ambitious waste reduction programme called Zero Waste 2005. The goal of the programme is to “zero in on zero waste” and eliminate waste in Town to every extent possible by 2005, the year of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

The Town has been on this waste reduction path for several years now and has a very successful programme in place which allows Town residents and businesses to comply with Provincial landfill bans in a responsible manner. We have a curbside recycling programme, and a series of composting solutions (including Earth Tubs, backyard composters, Green Cones and Neighbourhood composters, all of which are subsidized by the Town). Household hazardous waste, such as batteries and paint, and construction and demolition debris are managed through a regional organization called Valley Waste. The remaining residual garbage is collected curbside and shipped to a landfill. Our residents and

businesses have been very cooperative in these initiatives and our compliance rate is high.



Because of the high number of visitors to our Town each year, four stream waste receptacles were a key requirement in ensuring source separation from the general public. Rather than purchasing pre-fabricated units, we chose to design and construct wooden units for the Town to fit in reasonably with the heritage streetscape.

In 1998 Zero Waste 2005 was recognized under the United Nations 100 Global Best Practices Program, giving the Town international recognition.

In 2001, the Town was a “Best Practices” winner in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities

In order to determine our success and make any necessary improvements, Zero Waste 2005 will be undergoing a full review of the programme in the next few months. We will then be able to chart a course of action for the next 5 years.



In 2003, the Town introduced poop and scoop bag dispensers to help owners clean up after their dogs. This was reinforced with a public health bylaw which requires dog owners to clean up after their pets.

The Town is also a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Partners for Climate Protection Program. In partnership with the Clean Annapolis River Project, it has signed onto the One-Tonne Challenge to reduce gas emissions.

Rural transit is challenging. The municipalities of Annapolis County have co-operated in supporting an extension of King's Transit bus service from an adjacent County to serve our population. The Town also contributes to the Annapolis County Alternative Transportation Society to provide transportation services for those experiencing limited mobility.



The Town shares a well system with a neighbouring community and uses water meters to monitor usage and encourage conservation. The Town tests the potable water regularly to ensure water quality. Clean Annapolis River Project has provided water conservation advice and kits to households.

One of Clean Annapolis River Project's key areas of interest is the constant monitoring and eventual improvement of the health of the Annapolis River, which has a fecal coliform issue from the farmlands along the river valley.



The Town's sewage collection and treatment system provides service to neighbouring communities. 2005 will see a change to ultraviolet treatment from the present chlorination method and incorporation of the new Annapolis Royal Marsh as a Tertiary Sewage Treatment facility. Marshlands are nature's kidneys, and our treated effluent will be further purified as it passes through the marshland and into the river.



Renewable Resources – The Tidal Power Generating Station, owned by Nova Scotia Power, harnesses electricity from the powerful flow of the outgoing tides. Additionally, the Town has approved in principle the siting of a wind turbine for power in association with the tidal project. Nova Scotia Power demonstrated some good corporate citizenship in August of 2004 when a wayward whale found itself trapped above the



causeway in the part of the River which serves as a headpond for the Tidal Power Station. While “Sluice” the humpback whale became a local attraction and worldwide news, Nova Scotia Power shut down their turbine for the entire two week period in order to protect the wellbeing of this member of an endangered species. (Happily, Sluice eventually made his way safely back into open water).



While one purpose of the Annapolis Royal Marsh project is to process waste water, this goal can only be achieved if the wetland is a healthy biological unit. This requires a diversity of aquatic plants and animals upon which higher life forms feed. The wetland is renewing and protecting the indigenous plants and animals of the region. The wetland is also a very strong magnet that attracts more mobile creatures due to the availability of water, food and shelter. For example, in 2004 a family of red foxes was successfully raised in the adjacent wild lands. The area attracts numerous species of duck and other aquatic wildlife including some very uncommon visitors like Great Egret, Black Rail and Yellow-Crowned Night Heron. All four species of swallows are present even though their numbers are declining in some parts of Nova Scotia. To increase nesting opportunities for cavity nesters such as Tree Swallows, over two dozen specially designed nest boxes were installed around the outside of the wetland. Preliminary review indicates that these nest boxes are experiencing a 75 per cent occupancy. Assuming an average clutch size of three, 75 to 100 young Tree Swallows are raised annually.



The constructed wetland has become a major attraction and has made nature very accessible to residents and visitors. The local schools are starting to incorporate field trips to the wetland into their program of study.



In May of this year, the Town partnered with the provincial Department of Transportation for the removal of an old truss railway bridge. The creosote timber was recycled for use in repairing other bridges. The unique metal tags identifying each piece of Douglas fir used in the construction of the bridge were saved and given to the Annapolis Heritage Society.

## **Part 4 - Community Involvement**

The people of Annapolis Royal are very involved in their community, one of the benefits of being such a small town. There is no shortage of volunteer opportunities in Annapolis Royal. There are many service groups, four churches, a Health Centre, two schools and various community project committees. Most of the attractions are operated by independent non profit organizations.



As well, the community is invited at every opportunity to help shape the Town's development. This includes the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, strategic planning, and planning for public spaces such as the playground, the Farmers' Market and the Church Street mall. In fact, the restoration/development which revitalized the Town in the late 1970's was spearheaded by an interested group of citizens as was the initial effort to protect Fort Anne in 1917.

The Town attempts to keep the public informed through Town Hall meetings, regular newsletters mailed and e-mailed to businesses and residents, the Town website, and personal contact.



Church Street Beautification and Playground Rejuvenation are prime examples of the community at work!

Other key examples include:

- Crossroads Community Play was an outdoor theatrical presentation which took place in various venues in town and required participation from many in the community.
- In Fort Anne there is a remarkable heritage 12 foot tapestry depicting the history of the area and involved the handiwork of hundreds of volunteers including Queen Elizabeth.



- Every year, 70-100 community volunteers help the Historic Gardens staff with their annual spring clean-up

Virtually every festival and event happens only through the hard work of community volunteers. The Jazz Society holds a Jazz Festival every year.



Most of these volunteers are involved in several community groups which creates a very rich volunteer base.



#### **Performing Arts Groups**

- King's Theatre Society
- Annapolis District Drama Group
- Young Company Productions
- Annapolis Royal School Bands
- Annapolis Basin Community Band

We have a strong performing arts community, the focal point of which is King's Theatre, a multi disciplinary theatre which features a broad range of entertainment. The Theatre holds a summer film festival each year.



#### **Visual Arts**

- Annapolis Region Community Arts Council
- Studios & Shops
- Artists & Craftspeople

The Annapolis Royal Region is home to a very vibrant visual arts community at the centre of which is the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council. The Arts Council hosts a Paint the Town and an Arts Festival every year.



#### **Heritage**

- Annapolis Heritage Society
- Historical Association of Annapolis Royal
- Port Royal 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Society

Members of our community have a keen interest and pride in our heritage and actively support membership in various heritage organizations. The Annapolis Heritage Society hosts a Victoria Day Weekend and a Victorian Christmas each year.



#### **Gardening**

- **Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens Society**
- **Champlain Garden Club**
- **Magnolia Society**

Gardening is a passion for many residents and organizations in Annapolis Royal as evidenced by what you see when you enter our Town.



#### **Environment**

- **Annapolis Field Naturalists Society**
- **Clean Annapolis River Project**

Several organizations assist the Town in preserving its environmental assets for the enjoyment of future generations.

Our Town is home to a large number of festivals and events, most of which involve tremendous community involvement from planning to implementation. A Jazz Festival, a community band festival, a summer theatre festival, the Natal Day Festival, and the Beaujolais Nouveau Uncorking are just some of the annual activities.



Looking ahead to 2005, there are already twenty-five festivals and events included in the schedule.

Town Council values the efforts of the community volunteers and recognizes them at various events including our Annual Volunteer Recognition ceremonies, Community Appreciation Days and this year, a special end-of-season reception to reward our 2004 community volunteers.



## **Part 5 - Planning for the Future**



All the Town's planning activities work to integrate heritage, environment and sustainability. The Town's Strategic Plan that was developed in 2002 through community consultation, keeps staff and Councillors "on board" with the underlying goals so that all decisions are based on these principles. A status report on progress against the plan is prepared annually for Council and forms the basis for review of the Chief Administrative Officer's performance. The next scheduled review of the plan will be in 2006 when, once again, public meetings will take place.

The Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw is scheduled for review every 5 years with community input to ensure that everything remains relevant. Outlying communities are also invited to feed into the process since they work and shop in the Town and therefore have a vested interest in our plans.



Nova Scotia Tourism recognizes the Annapolis Royal area as one of the prime provincial destinations. The Board of Trade and the Town have indicated to the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council that we are initiating the process to become one of the 5 or 6 provincially designated tourism destination areas in the Province. The provincial goal is to double tourism revenues in the Province through strategic investment.

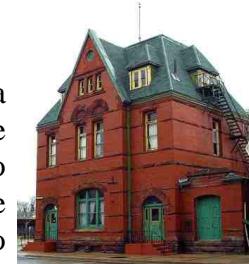


The Town's \$2 million dollar Perimeter Trail Project is seen as the next phase of development for the Town. It links together all of the Town's considerable built heritage, its many trails and sidewalks, the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens, King's Theatre, Fort Anne, the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council, the Town's waterfront boardwalk, and its business district. At the same time, the project would expand walking, cycling, and in-line skating within the Town and provide for a much needed outdoor pool and skateboard park. This is consistent with Town plans to achieve the Active Town designation. Finally, this project would also contribute to a significant increase in visitor services, including a year-round Visitor Information Centre, public washrooms and parking.





It can be very challenging in a heritage district, to deal with signage for attractions, businesses and home occupations. Over the coming months, the Town will be hosting several Town Hall meetings to review existing signage policies and procedures and to make any needed changes.

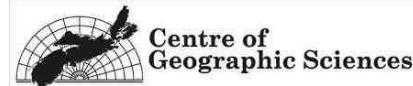


The Town also has plans to work with Nova Scotia Heritage to develop a handbook for the restoration of heritage homes, a heritage property database that will link to the Canadian Heritage Inventory through the Province, and to migrate the Town's extensive hard copy data to the new system. There are also another 42 heritage properties awaiting registration over the next two years.



The Town has plans to eventually bury all wires in the historic part of the Town, and any new development projects or infrastructure are engineered to allow for underground wiring.

The three Towns in Annapolis County have recently purchased a license for Cityworks software that will allow all three towns to track work orders electronically and to inventory all equipment, parts and materials required for preventive maintenance on infrastructure such as water and sewer mains and laterals. The new software is integrated with the Town's GIS system which already contains all of the Town's maps and infrastructure information. The system will allow the Town to identify the need for replacement before system failure and has the potential to save the Town a lot of money over time. The shared GIS system received industry recognition with the ESRI Canada President's 2003 Award of Excellence.



Finally, Council and staff endeavour to research and incorporate best practices through participation in programs such as Communities in Bloom and Liveable Communities.

As the community is poised to celebrate 400 years of living and working together in 2005, we realize that we are stewards of our environment and our heritage. While we enjoy it today, it is a legacy that we have inherited and it is our responsibility as a community not only to maintain what we have, but to enhance it for future generations.



**Our sincere thanks to the following  
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