

Atlantic Gateway Opportunity for Milford Station

February 2009

What is the opportunity?

There is an opportunity for the Municipality of East Hants to develop an inland port in Milford Station. This is only a concept at this point, but it has the potential to be very rewarding for the community.

An inland port is a location, usually in a more rural area, where facilities are developed to help with the movement of goods from one form of transportation to another, such as from rail to truck. It is also referred to as an integrated intermodal facility.

As one example, products arriving on container ships in the Port of Halifax could travel by train to an inland port, where they could be transferred to trucks to be taken anywhere in North America.

Inland ports often attract large distribution and manufacturing companies to the area.

Why do we think an inland port would be successful in Milford Station?

The Municipality of East Hants hired consultants to prepare a report that looked at potential opportunities for East Hants to benefit from the Atlantic Gateway Initiative.

The report, called "Atlantic Gateway Strategy Opportunity Assessment" concluded that

"there is an immediate opportunity to commence the planning for a new intermodal logistics centre along CN's mainline at an inland location that offers a rural setting in close proximity to Halifax with the potential to assemble large tracts of land."

An intermodal logistics centre is often referred to as an inland port. The report stated that Milford Station is an ideal location to provide an inland port for the Port of Halifax.

What would the development of an inland port mean for the surrounding communities?

The proposed inland port would attract manufacturing and distribution companies that would create jobs and increase the commercial tax base for the municipality.

If there aren't enough businesses in a community, money for services needs to come mainly from property taxes. The consultants' report indicates that an inland port could significantly increase the municipality's commercial tax base. These new tax dollars could be used to maintain the residential tax rate or to invest in services and other improvements for the community.

We understand that local residents will be impacted by any development. This may be concerning for people who see their homes on or near the potential location for the facility. The municipal councilor for Milford, Willy Versteeg, has been meeting

individually with these residents to provide information and to hear their concerns. Public information meetings are also being planned.

It is important to note that this is still just a concept. Through the community engagement process, the concept will evolve.

What does the concept involve?

The concept for the proposed facility is shown in a diagram on the attached aerial photo. It involves relocating the CNR mainline to the east parallel to the existing mainline, for a distance of approximately 3,000 metres. The inland port facility would then be developed between the relocated mainline and Highway 2. The facility would be connected to Highway 102 by way of a proposed new road and interchange on Highway 102. Spin-off economic development would be located around the new interchange and along the new road.

What's next?

Municipal Council has approved a motion that directs staff to work with the community of East Hants to consider the opportunity to develop an inland port at Milford Station.

The community consultation and impact assessment will look at how we can integrate community needs and expectations into the physical planning and operation of the proposed facility.

Your Municipal Council is asking for public comment on the concept at this time, and is committed to continuing public involvement if it is decided to proceed. Detailed plans will be developed later in the process.

What was the motion approved by Council?

The wording of motion approved by East Hants Municipal Council on February 25, 2009 is as follows:

As Council recognizes a significant potential opportunity surrounding the Atlantic Gateway Initiative which could mean substantial benefits for the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of East Hants, Council directs staff, in consultation with the community of Milford and all citizens of the municipality, to consider all aspects of the development of an integrated intermodal facility at Milford Station and report back to Council as soon as possible.

Where can more information be found?

You can find more detailed information on the Municipality of East Hants website at www.easthants.ca , at the Colchester/East Hants Regional Library, or by calling 1-888-883-4355.

A public information meeting will be held in March. The meeting will give the community a chance to learn more about the concept of an inland port in Milford Station, to talk about opportunities and challenges, and to establish a community advisory group for the proposed project.