



SECTION C3

Urban Design & Community Character

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The Village Core Zone was established in 1991 and was expanded upon with the adoption of the 2000 East Hants Official Community Plan. Policies were developed to address the overall quality of the development and the built environment in this zone. The protection and enhancement of the Village Core as a commercial “anchor” for the community is addressed by establishing basic urban design principles for community growth and by adopting design standards for new development.

The village cores typically consist of businesses with small footprints with local businesses catering to the public. In order to increase pedestrian activities in the cores, which will increase the volume of people on the streets and visiting these businesses, improvements are required to be made to the village cores. Design requirements as well as municipal investment in the streetscape will help to ensure well designed Village Cores, thereby increasing economic activity in these areas.

VC - Village Cores Policy Goal

Council’s goal is to take measures to protect the current and future viability and identity of the existing village commercial centers by ensuring that small-scale commercial development is

focused in the Village Core Zones. In order to enhance the role of the Village Core as an essential provider of goods and services within the community and to protect the existing built and natural character of the area.

- UD1.** Council shall establish the Village Core (VC) Designation for the purpose of allowing for a diverse mixture of retail, service, business, and residential uses in an environment serving both pedestrian and vehicle needs within an aesthetically pleasing, socially interactive streetscape serving both a local and a community-wide population.
- UD2.** Council shall implement the Village Core (VC) Designation through the Village Core (VC) Zone and that the purpose of the VC Zone is to allow for an appropriate intensity and diversity of commercial and residential development within an environment enhanced through design standards for buildings and sites, thus contributing to an attractive urban environment.
- UD3.** Council shall apply the Village Core (VC) Zone to the geographically defined village centers of Elmsdale, Enfield, Shubenacadie, Lantz, Mount Uniacke, and two areas in Milford, as indicated on the official Generalized Future Land Use Maps and Land Use Bylaw Zoning Maps.
- UD4.** Council shall establish provisions for the Village Core (VC) Zone under the Land Use Bylaw, including requirements for permitted uses, lot coverage and area, frontage, yard setbacks, height and floor area, storage, and above ground

residential use, minimum and maximum residential units, landscaping, parking, and building and site design.

- UD5.** Council shall adopt architectural and site design standards, for new buildings and alterations and additions to existing buildings within the Village Core (VC) Zone pursuant Form-Based Zone Requirements for the Village Core (VC) Zone of the Land Use Bylaw. Requirements will address building form, parking, landscaping, signage, walkways, established setback lines, site design, storage and display, and accessory buildings. These design requirements are a type of Form-Based Code sculpted to ensure the consistency of building, site and signage standards within a village core.
- UD6.** Council shall establish the Village Core (VC) Zone as site plan areas for the purpose of improving the overall quality and appearance of the development.
- UD7.** Council shall not require site plan approval where one commercial use is replaced with another commercial use of the same type of occupancy, unless that commercial use has not occupied the commercial space for longer than two years.
- UD8.** Council shall not require site plan approval where renovations are occurring for an existing single unit or two unit dwelling.
- UD9.** Council shall not require site plan approval where a residential use is replacing a commercial use in a building that was originally constructed as a residential building.
- UD10.** In order to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, where the Heritage Coordinator determines that an existing building has historical relevance, the gross floor area of the building deemed to have historical importance shall not be counted towards the total gross floor area or commercial floor area of the site.
- UD11.** Council shall require that no development permit shall be issued in the Village Core (VC) Zone unless all applicable standards under the Form-Based Zoning Requirements for the Village Core (VC) Zone of the Land Use Bylaw are met.
- UD12.** In order to encourage active Village Cores, Council shall consider multiple unit dwelling uses with no ground floor commercial component with a minimum of 8 dwelling units and a maximum 12 dwelling units. Ground floor units have to be designed to allow for easy conversion to commercial uses.
- UD12A.** *Council shall consider multiple unit dwelling uses with a ground floor commercial component with a minimum of 13 dwelling units and a maximum of 16 dwelling units.*
- UD13.** Council shall permit the conversion of existing buildings into multiple unit residential buildings with 10 units or less in the Village Core (VC) Zone.
- UD14.** Council shall consider a mix of commercial and residential uses on the ground floor provided that commercial uses are located facing the street, in the case of flanking yards commercial uses must front both streets.
- UD15.** Council shall consider multiple dwelling unit uses in excess of 12 units and up to a maximum of 20 dwelling units per 0.5 ha in the Village Core (VC) Zone by development agreement only, pursuant to the Village Core Form-Based Zone Requirements and to all applicable criteria under the implementing policies.
- UD16.** Council shall consider single use commercial uses in excess of 400 m² by development agreement, pursuant to the Village Core Form-Based Zone Requirements and to all applicable implementing policies.

UD17. Council shall consider the following by development agreement in the Village Core (VC) Designation, subject to the criteria of the implementing policies and the Village Core Form-Based Zone Requirements:

- a) VC uses beyond 835 m² of gross floor area;
- b) Major and minor drinking establishments;
- c) Automobile service stations and drive-thru restaurants are required to conform with the Village Core Form-Based Zone Requirements; and
- d) Places of worship and public buildings that do not meet the Form-Based Zone Requirements but will contribute to the vitality and overall goal of VC Zone.

UD18. Council shall permit all existing single unit or two unit dwellings in the VC Zone to be renovated and enlarged, no new single unit dwellings shall be permitted, unless the single or two unit dwelling is located on a flag lot and is located to the rear yard of an existing commercial structure facing the 'main' street.

UD19. In order to encourage ground floor commercial development Council shall permit the Development Officer to consider zoning bonuses related to height requirements of buildings in the VC Zone.

UD20. Council shall use the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2012, or the most updated version thereof, general use groups and descriptions as the official listing for permitted uses in the Village Core Zone, unless otherwise indicated in the applicable zone, and furthermore, the Development Officer shall use the complete (NAICS) to identify and further clarify specific permitted uses.

UD21. Council shall utilize site plans in the Village Core (VC) Zone, pursuant to

the Municipal Government Act, for the purpose of ensuring that proposed development does not impact negatively on the built and natural environment, and that such development enhances the overall character of the existing community. Council shall address the following matters through the site plan approval process:

- a) The location of structures on the lot.
- b) The location of off-street loading and parking facilities.
- c) The location, number, and width of driveway accesses to streets.
- d) The type, location and height of walls, fences, hedges, trees, shrubs, ground cover, or other landscaping elements necessary to protect and minimize the land use impact on adjoining lands.
- e) The retention of existing vegetation.
- f) The location of walkways, the type of surfacing material, and all other means of pedestrian access.
- g) The type and location of outdoor lighting.
- h) The location of facilities for the storage of solid waste.
- i) The location of easements.
- j) The grading or alteration in elevation or contour of land, and provision for the management of storm and surface water.
- k) The type, location, number, and size or signs or sign structures.
- l) The design and layout of the building(s).
- m) Provisions for the maintenance of any of the items referred to in this Section.

UD22. In order to address on-site parking challenges in Shubenacadie, Council shall

enable alternative parking requirements
for areas of the Village Core (VC) Zone.

MC - Mixed Use Centre

Policy Goal

Council's goal is to foster a consistent, walkable medium-scale growth pattern in Enfield's growing mixed use centre. To foster mixed used development, commercial space will be required on ground floors of new buildings.

In the past, Council has permitted a number of developments in this area by comprehensive development district, or development agreement. This policy aims to bring predictability, and enact urban design requirements to enable a walkable, human-scaled, mixed use main street centre.

Policy Statements

- UD23.** Council shall establish the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation for the purpose of allowing for a diverse mixture of medium-density commercial business, and residential uses in an environment serving both pedestrian and vehicle needs within an aesthetically pleasing, socially interactive streetscape serving both a local and a community-wide population.
- UD24.** Council shall implement the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation through the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone and that the purpose of the (MC) Zone is to allow for an appropriate intensity and diversity of commercial and residential development within an environment enhanced through design standards for buildings and sites, thus contributing to an attractive urban environment.
- UD25.** Council shall apply the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation & Zone to the communities of Elmsdale & Enfield as indicated on the Official Generalized Future Land Use Maps and Land Use Bylaw Zoning Maps.
- UD26.** Council shall maintain a positive urban residential character, and streetscape in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone through requirements regarding the following matters: minimum lot sizes, frontage requirements, build-to-area requirements, stepback requirements, yard requirements, maximum lot coverages, transparency requirements, the number of dwelling units permitted, the maximum ground floor finish level, maximum street-facing building length, maximum building size, and maximum lot coverage.
- UD27.** Council shall adopt architectural and site design standards, for new buildings and alterations and additions to existing buildings within the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone in the Land Use Bylaw. Requirements will address building form, articulation requirements for long buildings, roofs, siding & windows, screening, access, parking and pedestrian comfort. These Form-Based zoning requirements are to ensure the consistency of building, site and signage standards within a zone.
- UD28.** Council shall regulate height restrictions in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone and will enable different height limits in different areas of the Mixed Use Centre Zone where deemed appropriate to foster compatibility with surrounding uses.
- UD29.** Council shall consider multiple building development proposals in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone subject to design requirements created to ensure adequate spacing between buildings.
- UD30.** Council shall consider Two Dwelling Unit Residential (R2) Zone and Townhouse (R2-T) Zone uses subject to the requirements of those zones in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone. No site plan application is required for these forms of development.
- UD31.** Council shall consider uses by site plan approval within the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone for the purpose of improving the overall quality and appearance of development. The following uses shall not require site plan approval in the Mixed

Use Centre (MC) Zone:

- a)** Two Dwelling Unit Residential (R2) Zone Uses
- b)** Lawfully Existing Uses
- c)** Open Space (OS) Zone Uses

UD32. Council shall consider the following by development agreement in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation, subject to the criteria of the implementing policies:

- a)** Drinking establishments, major (Cabaret or Lounge)
- b)** Developments having more than the maximum number of primary buildings permitted.
- c)** Drive-thru restaurants
- d)** Institutional uses that do not meet the form-based zone requirements but will contribute to the vitality and overall goal of MC Zone.

UD33. Council shall utilize site plans in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone, pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*, for the purpose of ensuring that proposed development does not impact negatively on the built and natural environment, and that such development enhances the overall character of the existing community. Council shall address the following matters through the site plan approval process:

- a)** The location of structures on the lot.
- b)** The location of off-street loading and parking facilities.
- c)** The location, number, and width of driveway accesses to streets.
- d)** The type, location and height of walls, fences, hedges, trees, shrubs, ground cover, or other landscaping elements necessary to protect and minimize the land use impact on adjoining lands.

- e)** The retention of existing vegetation.
- f)** The location of walkways, the type of surfacing material, and all other means of pedestrian access.
- g)** The type and location of outdoor lighting.
- h)** The location of facilities for the storage of solid waste.
- i)** The location of easements.
- j)** The grading or alteration in elevation or contour of land, and provision for the management of storm and surface water.
- k)** The type, location, number, and size or signs or sign structures.
- l)** Provisions for the maintenance of any of the items referred to in this Section.

Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) Designation

Meeting the challenges faced by a growing community such as East Hants requires innovation and flexibility. This can be achieved through the Comprehensive Development District (CDD) and development agreement process. Through this process, the Municipality is able to be more flexible with respect to road standards, architectural design, and other aspects of development. Such agreements also assist in ensuring the creation of quality, livable neighbourhoods.

The CDD process will also enable the Municipality to negotiate and implement urban design principles for large developments. Due to their size, these developments have the potential to shape the character of their communities.

Policy Goal

Council's goal is to establish an avenue for the consideration of relatively large scale mixed use and phased development proposals using the Comprehensive Development District tool. These developments should create a development conducive to active transportation through human-scaled developments designed to create visual interest at street level. Developments are also permitted and encouraged to use creativity through alternate roadway standards and new urbanism development principles.

UD34. Council shall establish the Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) Designation with the intention of designating specific large parcels of land as described in this Strategy. Permitted within each WCCD site will be the ability implement a variety of land uses, including residential development comprised of varying densities, and institutional, open space and commercial uses.

UD35. Council shall consider the enactment of the Walkable Comprehensive

Development District (WCDD) provisions as outlined in this section for specified sites. The sites below shall be designated and zoned Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD).

- a)** Lands of Clayton Developments Ltd., Lantz. Lands of approximately 103 ha around the area of the East Hants Sportsplex and the Maple Ridge Elementary School.
- b)** Lands of Armco Developments Ltd., Lantz. Lands of approximately 159 ha at the northeast end of the district of Lantz between Highway 102 and Highway 2.

UD36. Council shall consider the enactment of the Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) provisions as outlined in this section for specified sites. The sites identified on the Generalized Future Land Use Maps shall be designated Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) and the existing zoning shall remain in place until such time as the landowners come forward with a proposal to enable the Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) Zone through a development agreement.

UD37. Council shall consider the enactment of Comprehensive Development District (CDD) mechanism by development agreement subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.

Criteria for Entering into a Development Agreement for a WCDD

Policy Goal

To clearly outline criteria for the consideration of development agreements in Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) areas, to ensure the best interests of the Municipality and the community are protected, and to ensure the proposed development



within Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) areas is appropriate in terms of its timing, content, appearances, and design. Finally, to ensure that the proposed WCDD is a human-scaled, mixed use development, supportive of visual variety and interest for active transportation users.

Policy Statements

UD38. Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for a WCDD in satisfaction of the following policies.

UD39. Council shall not consider Mini-home communities within the WCDD Zone or designation to be compatible with the residential character of those areas.

UD40. Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for an WCDD where the WCDD is consistent with the intent and policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy and no one development within the WCDD shall compromise or overwhelm the walkable, mixed use residential development focus of the WCDD.

UD41. Council shall consider entering into a development agreement for a WCDD where the WCDD is not premature or inappropriate in terms of:

- a) The financial capability of the Municipality to absorb any costs relating to the development.
- b) The adequacy of any proposed, expanded, or improved Municipally approved central water and wastewater systems to support the WCDD.
- c) The adequacy of existing and proposed active transportation and automobile distribution networks within and adjacent to the WCDD, including the manner in which proposed roadways within the development are linked with streets of adjacent developments to provide for a cohesive, grid-like network of local and collector streets.
- d) The adequacy of school, recreation, and community facilities to accommodate development.
- e) The potential for the development

to landlock or reduce subdivision potential of adjacent parcels.

UD42. Council shall consider the extent to which the proposed phased development provides for efficient pedestrian movement into, out of, and within the development, especially between commercial and residential neighbourhoods.

UD43. Council shall consider the extent to which, where applicable, proposed pedestrian routes link up with existing sidewalks, active transportation routes and walking trails on abutting lands to provide for a cohesive network of same.

UD44. Council shall consider the relative comfort and design of streets and buildings to promote a development conducive to active transportation by means of human-scaled developments, visual variety and interest for active transportation users.

UD45. Council shall require that the development of any Walkable Comprehensive Development District (WCDD) only be considered through development agreements which shall specify:

- a) The type of land use zoning classification(s) proposed and locations of development(s) within the WCDD site.
- b) The general phasing of the development relative to the distribution of the specific land uses within all or a portion of the WCDD site.
- c) The distribution and function of proposed community facilities, amenity space, playgrounds, and public land uses.
- d) Architectural controls, site controls, and stormwater controls, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following are examples: controls

for external appearance and design of structures; yard and setback variations; berms, buffers, screens, fences, recontouring, and landscaping treatments; maximum lot coverage; and stormwater controls;

- e) Matters regarding subdivision of lands within the WCDD including the quality, quantity and placement of proposed open space.
- f) For residential, community, and business uses, matters addressing maintenance of the development(s) and hours of operation when appropriate;
- g) Any other matter relating to the development's impact upon uses within the WCDD, uses adjacent to the WCDD, and uses within the general community, based upon the intent of this strategy.
- h) Matters identified as: unsubstantial; uses not requiring a development permit, and; the basis for discharging the agreement upon completion of the development or phases of the development.

Lantz Comprehensive Development District.

Policy Goal

To develop a proactive approach to development in the Lantz Growth Reserve Area a Secondary Planning Strategy has been completed for land which includes this Growth Reserve Area plus additional land adjacent to the Garden Meadows Subdivision and Garden Road. Policies and Regulations developed as a result of the Secondary Planning Strategy will help to guide development in creating a complete community which meets the needs of new and existing residents and businesses within East Hants.

Policy Statements

- UD46.** *Council shall establish the Lantz Comprehensive Development District (LCDD) future land use designation, which will be placed on land between Highway 102 and the Garden Meadows Subdivision, Belnan.*
- UD47.** *Council shall establish the Lantz Comprehensive Development District (LCDD) Zone, whose purpose shall be to retain existing development opportunities of the Rural Use (RU) Zone, until such a time that new policies for the area are developed which will realize the intent of the Lantz Comprehensive Development District (LCDD) future land use designation.*
- UD48.** *Council will develop comprehensive land use policies and regulations for the area designated as Lantz Comprehensive Development District (LCDD) in the next full review of the Municipal Planning Strategy, unless it is determined that it is in the best interest of the municipality to develop the policies sooner.*
- UD49.** *Council will consider the Transportation Network Plan as prepared by FBM and englobe through the Lantz Secondary Planning Strategy which includes the transportation network, active transportation and future connections to the existing road and highway network.*
- UD50.** *Council have identified constraints to the future development of the Lantz Comprehensive Development District (LCDD) which will need to be investigated prior to any future development within the LCDD designated land. The constraints include:*
- *The need for a new vehicular bridge crossing the Nine Mile River connecting the lands to Highway 214; and*

- *The need for a comprehensive Infrastructure Master Plan*

General Development Policies

Outdoor Storage & Display Policy Goal

Outdoor storage or outdoor display is a necessary component for some businesses.

Some commercial and industrial uses, such as car dealerships and lumber yards, require large quantities of storage space. It is not economical to construct large buildings for the storage of these goods, and outside storage is often the only alternative.

Outdoor storage is highly land consumptive and may be aesthetically unpleasing, therefore it will be regulated in size or limited to certain zones.

Policy Statements

- UD51.** Council shall limit outdoor storage within certain zones, and may place regulations regarding outdoor storage.
- UD52.** Council shall limit outdoor display within certain zones, and may place regulations regarding outdoor storage.

Signs Policy Goal

Signs have an impact on the appearance of communities. Signs can also create safety hazards by interfering with visibility and regulatory signage. Signs will be regulated by the Municipality in order to mitigate negative impacts of signs on community character.

Policy Statements

- UD53.** Council shall establish regulations in the Land Use Bylaw regarding the type, number, size and location of signs.
- UD54.** Council shall establish regulations regarding the illumination of signs, and

digital signs.

Parking

Policy Goal

The automobile continues to be the dominant mode of transport in East Hants. To ensure the orderly development of the municipality Council shall regulate off-street parking for new development.

Policy Statements

UD55.Council shall establish parking

requirements within the Land Use Bylaw which will require minimum on-site parking based on land use type and intensity.

UD56. Council shall establish minimum specifications for off-street parking areas.

UD57.Council shall establish landscaping requirements for off-street parking areas.

UD58. Council shall require that all development proposals that may impact vehicle access to a public street be subject to the approval of the Municipal Engineer, or the provincial traffic authority.

Policy	Amendment Date	Description
UD12A	June 25, 2025	Permit a maximum of 16 dwelling units in the VC Zone with a commercial component.
Lantz Comprehensive Development District. Policies UD46 to UD50 (Note - previous policies UD46 through to UD53 have been renumbered to UD51 through to UD58).	November 26, 2025	New Comprehensive Development District created for the Lantz Growth Reserve Area.