

What We Heard Report

Community Open House

Proposed Expansion of The Villages of Long Lake

Event	Developer-hosted Community Open House
Location	Uniacke and District Firehall, 654 Highway 1, Mount Uniacke
Date and format	Tuesday, April 28, 2026, drop-in sessions from 3 to 5 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.
Attendance	27 people, based on the attendance recorded for both sessions

Prepared for the Municipality of East Hants

Prepared by Brighter Community Planning & Consulting



1. Quick summary

The Open House produced mixed but constructive feedback. Some attendees were supportive of the proposed expansion or interested in building in the community. Others raised clear concerns about the scale of growth, water supply, road safety, emergency response, construction impacts, trails, school capacity, and condominium governance.

The most repeated themes were:

Theme	Plain-language summary
Groundwater	Will there be enough water, and how will Level 2 testing confirm this?
Roads and traffic safety	How will existing roads, construction traffic, speeding, and intersections be managed?
Fire and emergency services	How will emergency access and fire protection keep pace with growth?
Financial responsibility	Who pays for services, and how do taxes, area rates, and condo fees fit together?
Condominium governance	How will shared infrastructure, resident control, reserve funds, and accountability be managed?
Planning and fit	How will density, trails, buffers, phasing, and community services be addressed?

Overall, the feedback shows a community that is not speaking with one voice. The strongest message was that people want plain-language explanations of the technical studies, clearer information about phasing and timelines, and a better explanation of who is responsible for municipal services, private infrastructure, and condominium governance.

2. Engagement overview

This event was organized and facilitated by Cottage Country and is not a part of the formal DA process. It was intended to give nearby residents and interested members of the public another opportunity to review information, ask questions, and speak directly with members of the project team.

There was no formal presentation. Information boards were placed throughout the room and project team members were available to discuss planning, roads and traffic, groundwater, financial impacts, servicing, environmental considerations, and project design.

What was provided	How feedback was received
Poster boards, a project trifold, a frequently asked questions handout, feedback forms, and an evaluation form.	Verbal comments to the project team, written feedback forms, and follow-up comments that could be sent by email.

3. What we heard by poster board

The following summary is organized around the poster board topics used at the Open House. Similar comments have been grouped together and identifying details have been removed.

Welcome and open house format

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees used the drop-in format to ask direct questions rather than make formal statements. • Several questions focused on where the application sits in the municipal approval process. • Some attendees asked about the timing of future decisions, including when lots may be available. 	<p>People wanted a clear explanation of process, timing, and next steps before the application proceeds further.</p>

Cottage Country future development area

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on the overall plan were mixed. Some attendees were supportive or interested in future lots. • Others raised concerns about density, fit with the existing Villages, school capacity, and the condition of East Uniacke Road. • There were questions about phasing, timelines, buffers between existing and new areas, and how trails would connect. 	<p>The concept plan is understandable at a high level, but people want more detail on phasing, buffers, trails, school impacts, and how the new areas would connect to the existing community.</p>

Hydrogeology and hydrology

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater quantity was one of the most repeated concerns. • People asked whether there would be enough water for the proposed development and how the Level 1 and Level 2 groundwater assessments work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One comment indicated that wells are about 200 to 250 feet deep, with some wells yielding about 1 imperial gallon per minute. • Water quality concerns included arsenic and iron, which attendees described as common local issues. • One attendee reported no groundwater level impacts near the lake during drought conditions. 	<p>People wanted a plain-language explanation of the groundwater assessment process, including what the Level 2 assessment will test, how many test wells are expected, and what would happen if low yields or water quality issues are found. The hydrologist who drafted the Level 1 assessment attended the open house and several comments from the public showed an appreciation to be able to ask more questions to the report’s author.</p>

Road network and traffic

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents raised concerns about existing road conditions, traffic safety, speeding, and intersection behaviour. • Questions were asked about road upgrades, public versus private roads, emergency access, and construction traffic. • Specific concerns included construction trucks, dust, noise, quarry truck traffic, and congestion on the 101-series route off ramp to Mt. Uniacke. • Several comments raised safety concerns for children, cyclists, scooters, pedestrians, and people using the roads for recreation. 	<p>Traffic capacity is only one part of the public concern. People are also focused on day-to-day road safety, driver behaviour, construction impacts, and safe movement for children and non-drivers.</p>

Benefits of the bare land condominium model and expansion

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions focused on how services are paid for and who is responsible for what. • People asked about the difference between municipal taxes, area rates, and condominium fees. • There were questions about policing, fire protection, roads, recreation, water, sewer, and how municipal services are prioritized. • At least one attendee asked about taxation and was directed to the financial analysis showing that the existing Villages are expected to be a net contributor to the municipal operating budget. 	<p>The financial impact was not a significant area of concern for many who attended</p>

Bare land condominiums 101

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several comments focused on how condominium corporations operate. • Concerns were raised about transparency, management, resident confidence, and transition of control from the developer to residents. • Some comments referred to challenges with the existing condominium corporation model and a lack of trust. • One suggestion was that a new condominium corporation should not be established until the existing boards and administrative processes are working properly. 	<p>For some residents, the main issue is not only the physical development. It is governance, accountability, and confidence in how shared infrastructure and common responsibilities will be managed.</p>

Natural features, open space, trails, and environmental considerations

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions were asked about trails, ATV use, existing trail connections, and whether ATV trails would be accommodated in the new areas. • Comments also asked whether buffers would be provided between the existing Villages and the proposed new development areas. • Environmental comments were linked to groundwater, wetlands, natural areas, and maintaining the rural character of the area. • Concerns about shortcutting through Sage Bush 	<p>People want a clearer trail and buffering plan, including how ATV access, existing informal routes, wetland protection, and future public or shared open space would be handled. It was recommended by some that the connection between the new development and Sage Bush should have a breakaway gate.</p>

About the developer

What people asked or said	Main takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some general support was linked to familiarity with the existing Villages and interest in future lots. • Concerns about trust were more often tied to condominium governance, service responsibility, and follow-through on infrastructure and communication. 	<p>Public confidence will depend less on general background information and more on clear follow-through, transparent governance, and practical answers to service, road, water, and emergency response questions.</p>

4. Cross-cutting themes

Several topics came up across more than one poster board. These themes are summarized separately because they were not confined to a single board.

Cross-cutting theme	What we heard
Fire and emergency services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People asked whether a fire station or substation would be built near Nature Drive. • Questions were raised about fire hydrants, emergency access, and how emergency response would work as the community grows. • The comments suggest that emergency response is a key public concern because of the rural location and scale of the proposed expansion.
Construction impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns included construction truck traffic, dust, noise, and quarry-related vehicle movement. • People want to understand how temporary construction impacts would be managed, not only how traffic would operate after full build-out.
Technical information and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several comments showed that people want the technical reports explained in plain language. • Some answers at the Open House were seen as uncertain where representatives had to rely on others for specialized technical detail. • People asked for clearer information on phasing, timelines, future approvals, and the role of future organizations or condominium corporations.

5. Feedback forms

A small number of written feedback forms were received. The comments were generally positive but still identified areas where more information would be helpful.

What was positive	What needs more information
Some written feedback indicated that attendees were satisfied with the session and found the hydrological information useful.	Feedback also requested more information about municipal service planning, rebuilding the tax base, timelines for later stages, and how future approvals or organizations may be involved.

6. Closing summary

The Open House provided an opportunity for direct discussion between residents and the project team. The comments do not point in one single direction. Some attendees were supportive or interested in the development proceeding. Others raised practical concerns that should be taken seriously as the application moves through the municipal process.

The main issues were groundwater quantity, traffic and road safety, emergency and fire services, construction impacts, condominium governance, density, trails, school capacity, and clarity about municipal service responsibilities.

The comments also show that people are asking for information in a clearer and more practical format. The technical studies matter, but residents also want to understand what those studies mean for their wells, roads, trails, taxes, emergency response, and daily life in the existing and future community. The open house format attended to provide this information in a clearer format and address this particular need.

Appendix A: Poster board topics

The Open House included poster boards on the following topics:

- Welcome to the Community Open House
- Cottage Country Future Development Area
- Hydrogeology and Hydrology
- Road Network and Traffic
- Benefits of the Bare Land Condominium Model and the Long Lake Expansion
- Bare Land Condominiums 101
- About the Developer
- Natural Features, Open Space and Environmental Considerations

Appendix B

Cottage Country representatives at Open House

Topic	Expert(s)	Company
Engineering and Land Development	Robert MacPherson, P. Eng	RMP Development Consulting Ltd
Traffic and Road Network	Roel Pangan and James Lockhart	Fathom Studio
Hydrology	François Gascon P. Eng	Strum Consulting
Planning	Chrystal Fuller, LPP, MCIP and Lauren Isabelle	Brighter Community Planning & Consulting
Financial / Local Government Specialist	Dr. Mark Gilbert*	N/A

*Dr. Gilbert was only able to stay for session 1



Welcome to the Community Open House

Proposed Expansion of The Villages of Long Lake

This open house is an opportunity to learn about the proposed expansion, review information about the site and planning process, ask questions, and share your feedback.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the proposal and share your input.

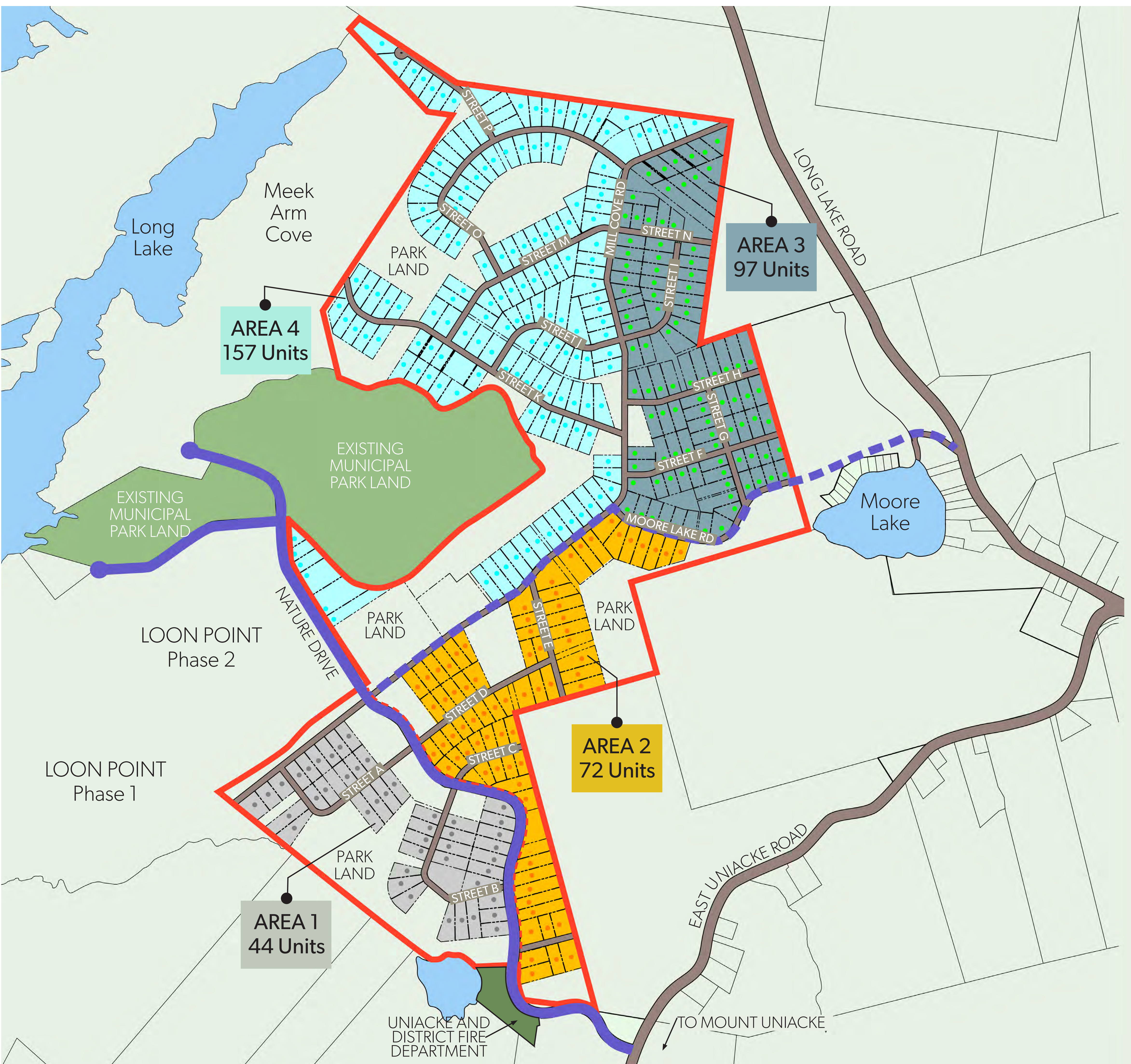
1.800.565.5263
team@cottagecountry.ca

Open House questions or comments can be sent to:
openhouse@brighterplanning.ca

Cottage  Country.ca[®]



Cottage Country Future Development Area



- Public Road
- Future Public Road

Hydrogeology & Hydrology



Hydrology is the scientific study of the movement, distribution, and quality of water including surface and groundwater.

Groundwater & Water Supply

Homes in the proposed expansion are planned to be serviced by individual on-site wells and septic systems. A desktop level groundwater review has been completed to assess the water supply, groundwater recharge and the potential for well interference.

Next Steps

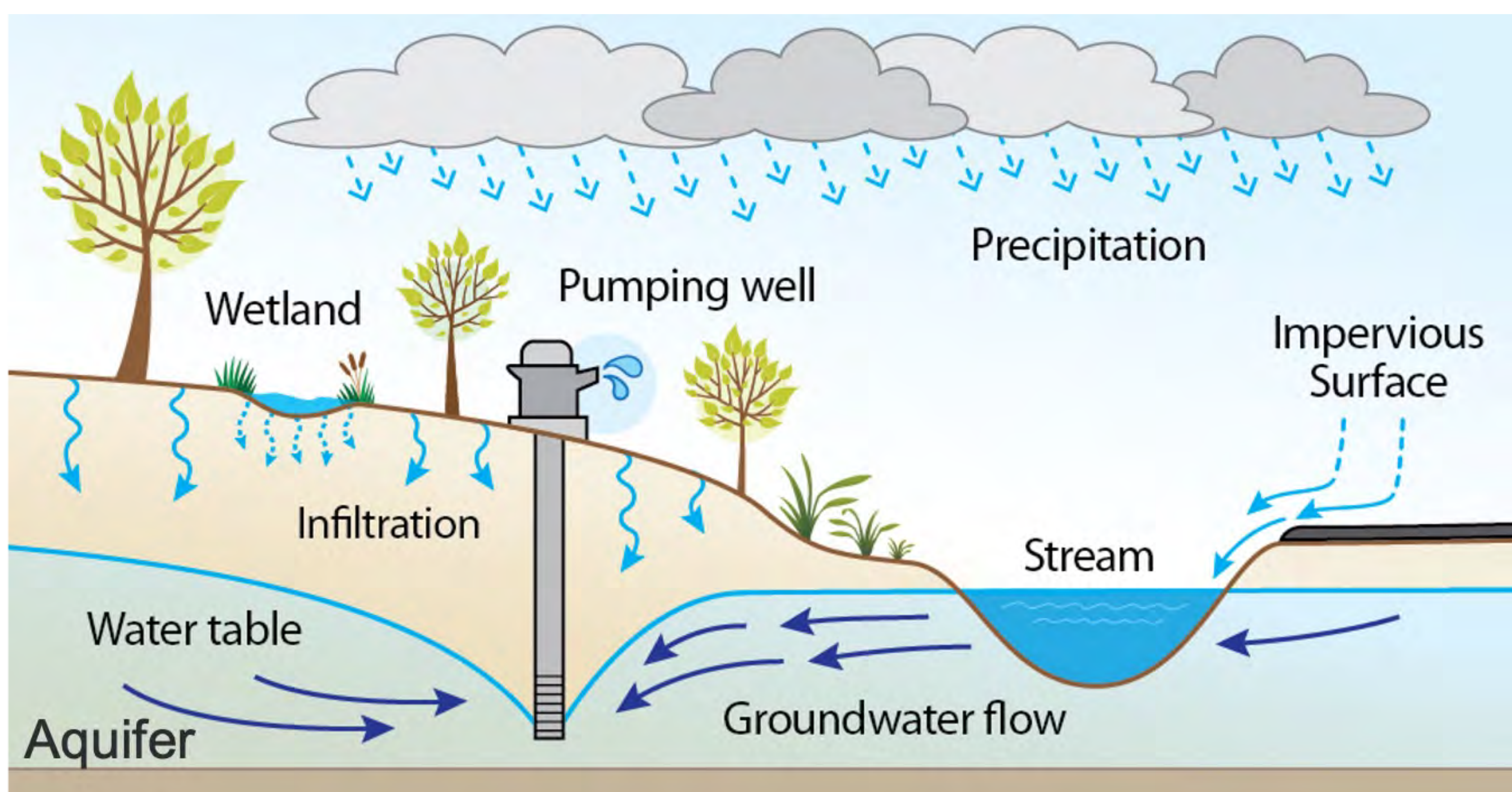
This is an important early step. A Level 2 Groundwater Assessment will be conducted, with a minimum of 10 test wells across the site.

What the Review Found

The 2026 Level 1 review concludes that **“sufficient potable water is available from groundwater to support the proposed development”**.

The Goal

To understand site conditions and support development design that manages water responsibly and minimizes adverse impacts on surrounding lands and water resources.



Road Network & Traffic



A Transportation Impact Study was completed to evaluate how traffic is expected to move to, from, and within the proposed expansion area. The study reviewed existing traffic volumes, access routes, and future full build-out conditions.

Internal Roads

The development is planned to have entrances at Nature Drive and Long Lake Road.

Most internal roads are expected to be private roads, with Nature Drive as a public road.

Planned upgrades include improvements to Mill Cove Road and Moore Lake Road, as well as intersection improvements to support safe circulation and emergency access.

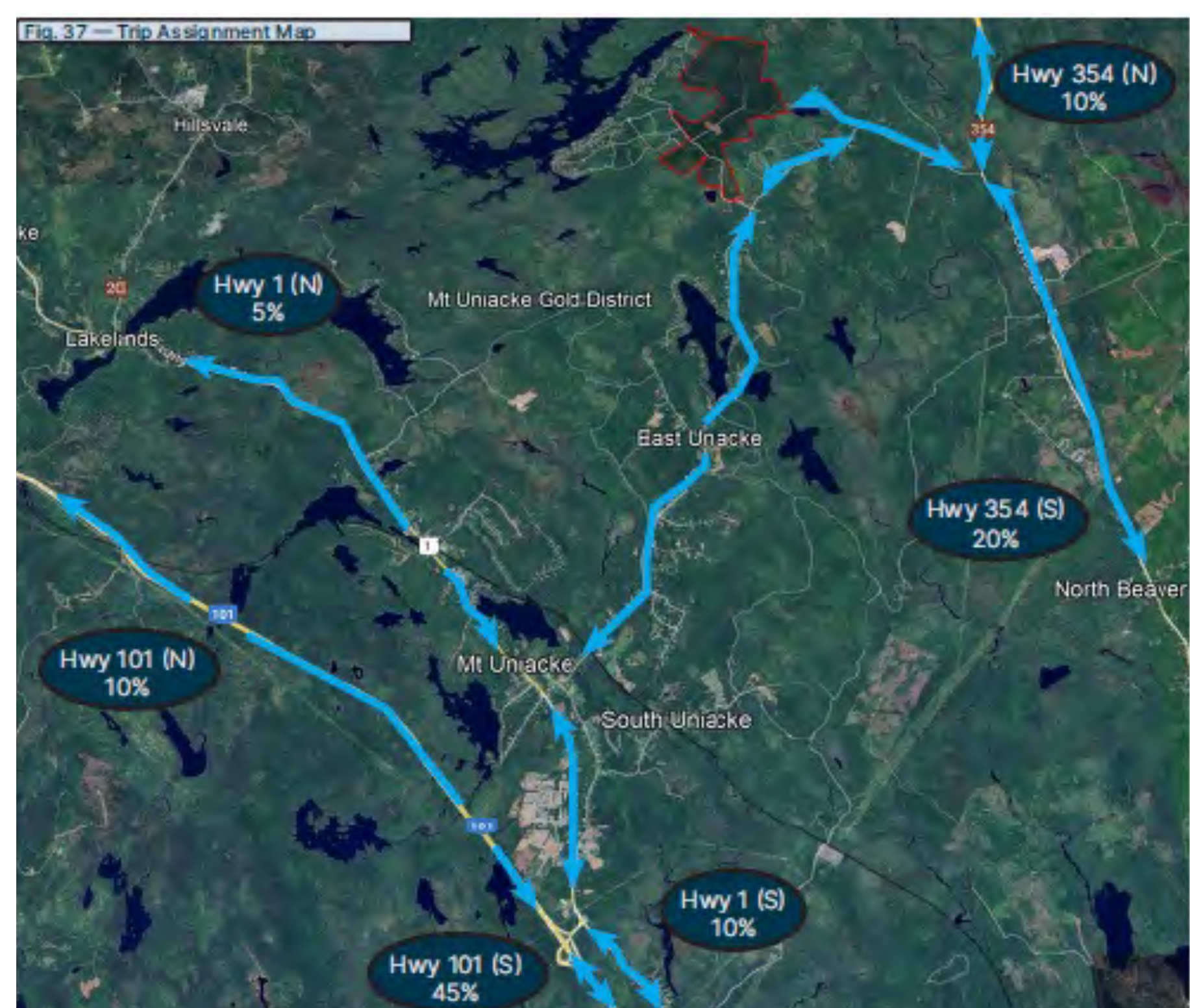
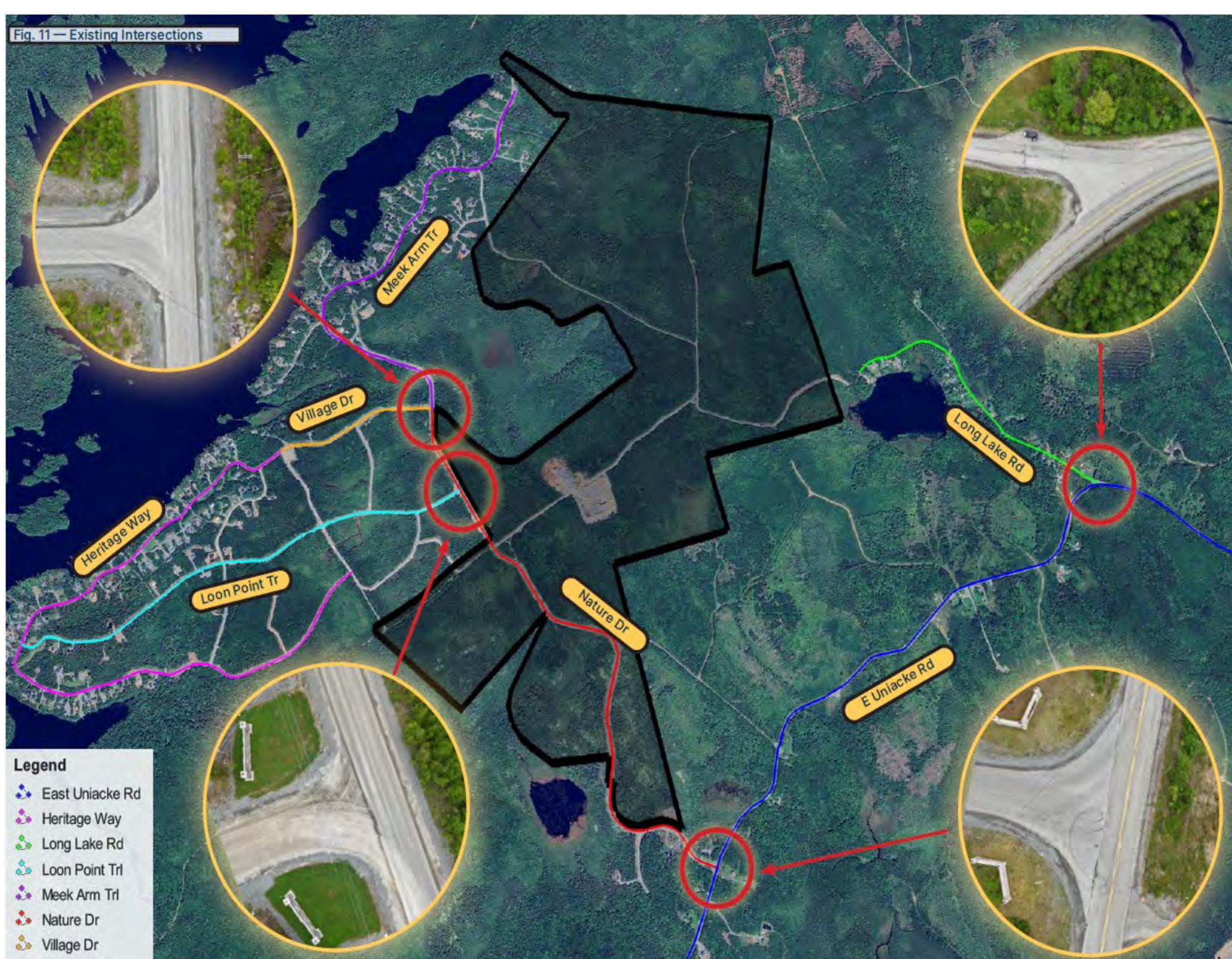
External Roads

The proposed development will connect to the wider road network through East Uniacke Road.

Traffic is expected to distribute mainly to Highways 101, 1 and 354 (Beaver Bank Road).

Both the Nature Drive and Long Lake Road intersections with East Uniacke Road are expected to continue operating at good levels of service.

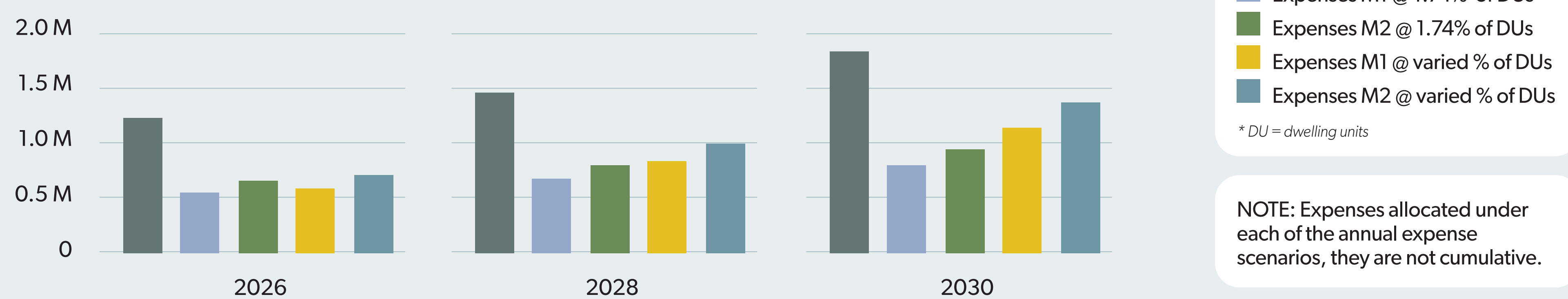
“Existing regular traffic volumes are quite low. This study further shows that even under full build out conditions, overall traffic volumes remain relatively low” (2025 TIS)



Benefits of the Bare Land Condominium Model & the Long Lake Expansion

The proposed expansion of The Villages of Long Lake is intended to add new housing, shared amenities, and community infrastructure in a form that supports both residents and the broader municipality.

Impact on Municipal Finances: Projections related to The Villages



Benefits to the Municipality

New tax revenue from growth. A financial assessment found in all scenarios tested that revenues exceed allocated costs.

Developer funded infrastructure reduces municipal burden, including ensuring private roads meet Municipal private road standards.

Properties with dwellings in The Villages have an average assessed value of \$492,354 which is higher than the municipal average.

Condo corps are required to establish reserve funds, which reduces risk for long term infrastructure maintenance.

Benefits to Community Life

Parks, trails and open space: Multiple outdoor park spaces connected by trails, occupying 25 ha. There is lake access and a planned pickleball court. Developer donated 250 acres of parkland.

Space for local services: Proposing two mixed-use areas, intended to provide commercial services such as live-work units, day-care, and other local services for residents.

Support for emergency service: Land and capital contributions for a future fire substation.

Benefits to Residents and Future Buyers

- ➔ Range of price options with low entry point (\$299,000) up to over \$1,000,000.
- ➔ Attainable for a first-time homebuyer, who could move up within the same community.
- ➔ Owners are empowered in decision making through involvement in the condominium association.

Bare Land Condominiums 101



Not all condominiums are apartment buildings!

A bare land condominium is a type of community where each owner has a detached home on an individual lot with a PID, while shared features are managed collectively through a condominium corporation.

In this type of community

- Residents own and maintain their own home and lot.
- Shared features such as private roads, trails, open space, and amenity areas are owned collectively.
- Community standards are guided by the condominium corporation's bylaws and declarations.
- Residents have a say in how the shared community is managed.



Own your land, share the lifestyle!

Why choose this model?

Gentle Density: Avoid the extremes of “urban sprawl” strips or overcrowded city blocks, opting for a balanced approach that fits the environment.

Stability & Investment: Maintenance standards preserve property values and strong appreciation as well as resale potential.

Privacy & Nature: Owners enjoy large, tree covered lots that offer increased privacy compared to traditional high-density developments.


Eco-Friendly Infrastructure: Our design minimizes the footprint on forests and land, featuring maintained and serviced septic systems and environmentally conscious layouts.

Access to the Great Outdoors: The community framework provides shared high-end amenities, including:

- Private boat launches and docks
- Extensive park and trail networks
- Professionally maintained common green spaces

About the Developer

Local Roots.
Lasting Impact!



"From our family to yours: We truly care about our client's vision, and we custom build their dream. Realizing these dreams has, and always will be, the cornerstone of our business."

Cottage Country is a Nova Scotia company that has been building homes and developing rural communities since 1971. Founded by Bruce McDow, the company has grown from a small family business into a long-standing developer of lake and country communities across the province. Mr McDow created Canyon Point Resort in 2006, the first bare land condominium in Nova Scotia. Today, three generations of the McDow family are involved in the business.

Experience in East Uniacke

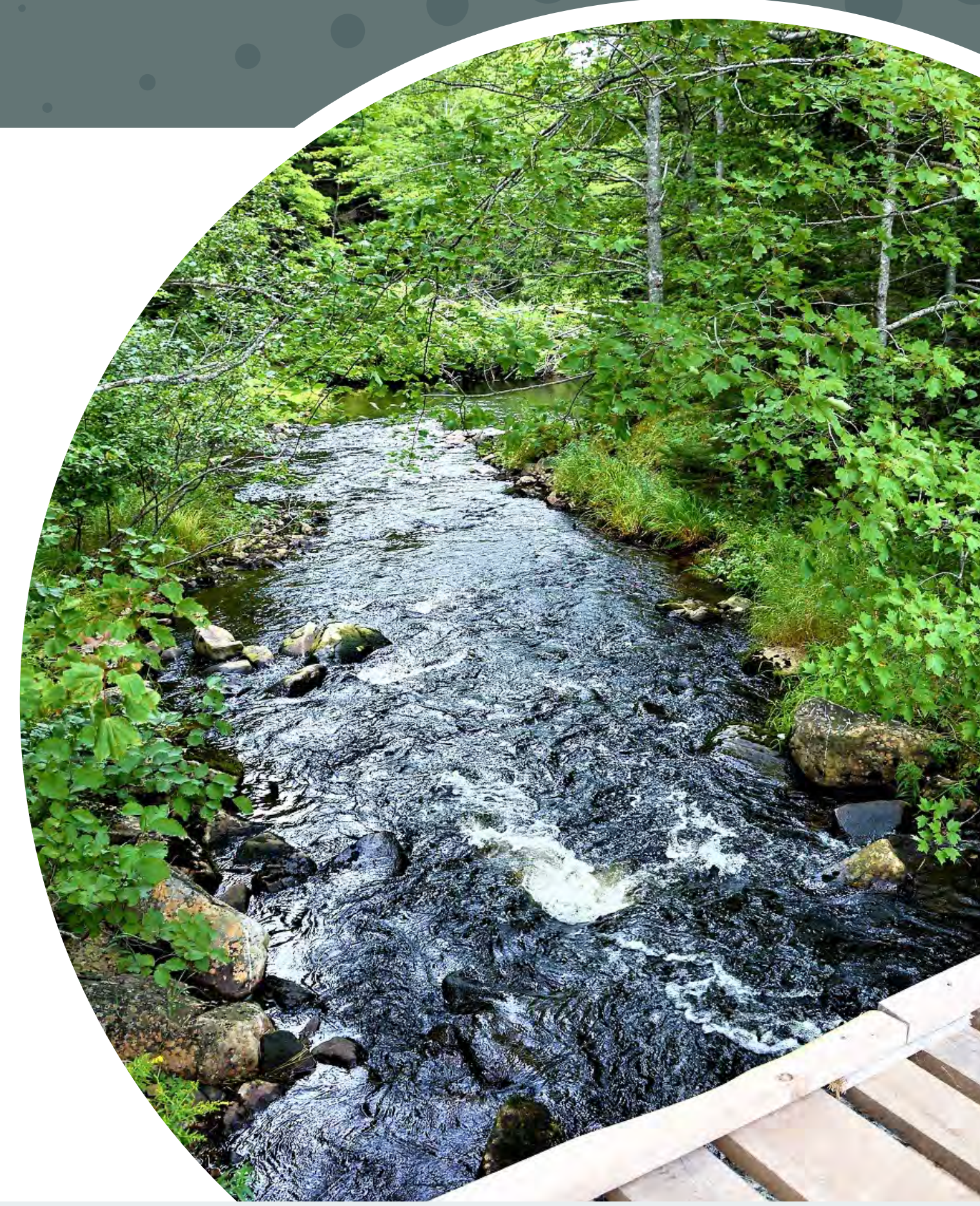
Cottage Country has already developed the existing phases of The Villages of Long Lake. This proposal is intended to expand the established community.

Community-building Approach

The company philosophy is to create communities with the least impact on the land and forest. Cottage Country is guided by a long-term, family-centred approach.

Natural Features, Open Space & Environmental Considerations

- ➔ Numerous existing recreational trails with planned expansions.
- ➔ Multiple outdoor park spaces connected by trails, occupying over 25 hectares.
- ➔ Development designed to avoid impacting wetlands, retain natural areas and reduce disturbance to wildlife where possible.
- ➔ Existing Condo Corp bylaws and DAs mandate lake buffers as well as restrict tree cutting by owners.
- ➔ Proposal was created with attention to groundwater, drainage, wetlands and natural features.



Why does open space matter?

Recreation opportunities
Maintain rural character
Groundwater recharge
Trail connections
Protects natural features

Wetlands & Watercourses

Delineation has been completed on part of the lands. The rest will be as weather permits. The concept plan may be adjusted based on the final results.

"I'm a great lover of the rural way of life. I felt it was important to show people living in urban areas the quality of life we have in rural Canada."

– Bruce McDow