



# Key Issue Summary – Water Quality

Public Engagement Supporting Documents

Municipality of Annapolis County

February/March 2025



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## Introduction

C+D Community Design, a local consulting firm, was brought on by the County of Annapolis to help the East End Planning Area Advisory Committee review their Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) and the related Land Use Bylaw (LUB).

Our company has partnered with the East End Advisory Committee to conduct a thorough background study of the area. This involves reviewing the latest County Municipal Planning Strategy, new Provincial guidance on planning policies, and land use best practices tailored for rural regions.

Additionally, we have collaborated with the Committee to create a public engagement plan, ensuring that everyone has a voice in shaping the future of development in our community.

We are currently in the process of drafting new policies based on the valuable insights we've received from the East End Advisory Committee. [As part of this effort, we are reaching out to the community to gather feedback through surveys and conversations.](#) Your input is essential in crafting regulations that truly reflect the needs of our community.

Your voice matters in this process! Feedback collected from focus groups, town halls, pop-up events, and online surveys will directly influence our new visionary strategy for the community. [What you say truly counts!](#)

This summary report is a result of the discussions and direction received from the East End Advisory Committee on Economic Development.

## Background

The East End Planning Strategy, established in 2012, emphasizes local values and needs. By 2021, the population grew slightly to 3,049, mainly in areas with water and sewer services, while rural regions remain less populated.

C+D Community Design, a local consulting firm, was engaged by the County of Annapolis to assist the East End Planning Area Advisory Committee in reviewing their Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) and the associated Land Use Bylaw (LUB). Our company has partnered with the Advisory Committee to conduct a comprehensive background study of the area. This involves analyzing the latest County Municipal Planning Strategy, integrating new Provincial guidance on planning policies, and considering best practices for land use in rural regions.

We have also collaborated with the Committee to develop a public engagement plan, ensuring that all community members have the opportunity to engage in shaping the future of development in our region. We are currently drafting new policies based on valuable insights gathered from the East End Advisory Committee.

As part of this initiative, we are reaching out to the community to gather feedback through surveys and discussions, as your input is crucial for creating regulations that reflect our community's needs. Your voice matters in this process! Feedback from focus groups, town halls, pop-up events, and online surveys will directly influence our new visionary community strategy.

This summary report outlines discussions and guidance received from the East End Advisory Committee, focusing specifically on water quality. It addresses how to plan for new developments while protecting local waterbodies and preventing soil erosion.

Through the Municipal Planning Strategy, Council emphasizes the importance of water quality in the County of Annapolis. Their comprehensive goals aim to preserve natural habitats, protect water sources, and manage land use to minimize environmental impact. Key objectives include establishing and protecting valued environmental features, creating parks and conservation areas, ensuring compliance with Nova Scotia regulations, implementing watercourse protection buffers, prohibiting vegetation removal, enforcing an extreme slope policy (>30% slope), and identifying a wind resource area. These policies work together to safeguard water quality, manage flood risk, preserve agricultural land, and protect sensitive environmental areas.

The East End Advisory Committee is keen to enable more development and is considering less stringent water quality-related policies. Discussions at the committee level have included changing minimum lot area requirements subject to the approval of the Department of Environment, provided on-site services are obtained for the proposed development. Other considerations involve restricting high-risk activities within wetlands and wellhead protection zones, prohibiting heavy industrial development that could involve hazardous chemicals, assessing flood risk mapping, applying wetland conservation zoning, establishing similar buffer requirements to those in the County Strategy, controlling urban growth through service boundaries, requiring net-zero stormwater management plans for larger developments, identifying flood risk areas, incentivizing green infrastructure for stormwater management, and potentially requiring groundwater quality assessments.

A study by CBCL identified areas for future services, focusing on dense housing and larger business developments. The strategy prioritizes well-planned growth near interchanges and infill development surrounding larger communities. The East End encompasses lands around the Town of Middleton, bordering the Villages of Greenwood and Kingston. Coordinating planning for shared infrastructure with nearby communities is vital.

Additionally, lands surrounding Lily Lake are being incorporated into the East End planning area, with the County committed to safeguarding its water supply. Lily Lake was designated as a watershed in 1969 and serves as a backup water supply for the Town of Middleton. Strict zoning is essential to protect its water quality from industrial and agricultural activities.

The East End water supply is located within the Town of Middleton and draws from a sandstone aquifer. The area is divided into four wellhead protection zones based on contamination travel time, with Zone 1 having the highest level of protection. Current land uses around these zones include water supply, park and recreation, conservation, and agricultural uses.

Wetlands, protected by the Nova Scotia Wetland Conservation Policy, play a crucial role in controlling flooding, improving water quality, preventing erosion, enhancing biodiversity, and supporting ecosystem health.

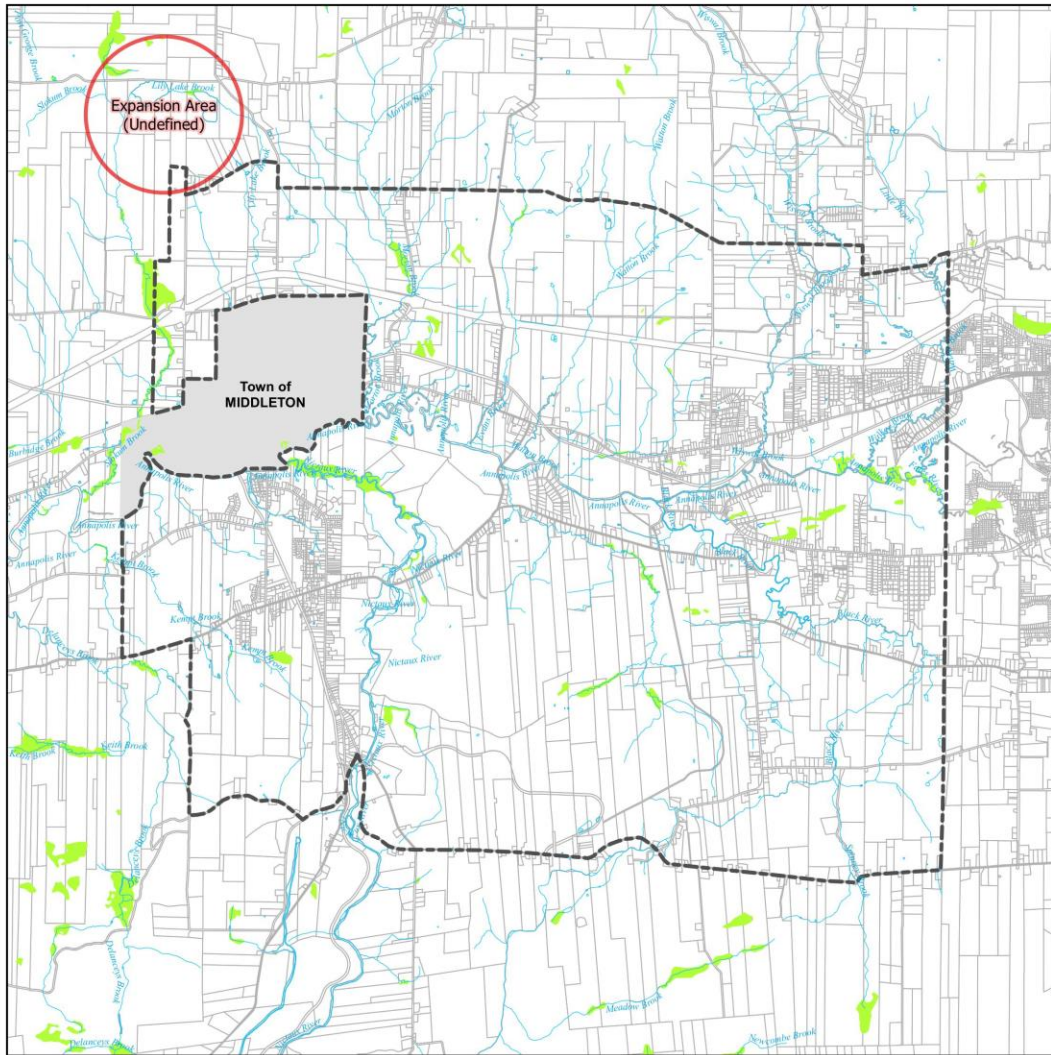
Protecting source drinking water is essential for public health, water quality, and community well-being. Effective protection measures, including riparian zone restoration, streambank stabilization, and best practices in stormwater control, will be important land use regulations to consider.

### Context

The East End Area Advisory Committee (AAC) reviewed research and suggestions about water quality, housing, farming, and economic growth. They developed new ideas and requested policies to balance development while protecting farmland, water, and natural resources.

The Committee has decided to involve the community in discussions about Housing, Watercourse Buffers (known as Setbacks), Agriculture, and Economic Development. Updates, like this one, will be shared as references for the public survey and upcoming Open Houses.

Community feedback will guide the AAC in creating policies and land-use rules to present to the Council of the County of Annapolis for adoption. There will be more opportunities for public participation in the next step of this process.



**Legend**

-  East End Planning Area Boundary
-  Streams & Brooks
-  Protected Marshlands
-  Environmental Constraints
-  Wetlands
-  Property Data July 2024

**Watercourses & Wetlands**

East End Planning Area



COUNTY of ANNAPOLIS  
NATURALLY ROOTED

1:75,000



## **Protecting Water**

The East End Area Advisory Committee (AAC) has evaluated research and recommendations concerning water quality, housing, agriculture, and economic growth. They have formulated proposals and requested policies that aim to balance development with the preservation of farmland, water, and natural resources.

The Committee is dedicated to engaging the community in discussions about housing and watercourse buffers, commonly referred to as setbacks.

## **Watercourse Buffers (Setbacks)**

To be properly prepared for the increasing severity of weather events caused by climate change, the East End Area Advisory Committee is seeking public input on a recommendation to enlarge the buffer area from 7.6m (25ft) to 15.2m (50ft). This change aims to prevent erosion, flooding, and pollution during severe weather events, thereby enhancing water quality.

## Public Question

### Watercourse Setbacks

A watercourse is a lake, river, stream, ocean, wetland, or other body of water. Interior watercourses (vs coastal) are primarily fed by underground spring or by rain/snow.

1. How do you feel about an increase of watercourse (definition) setbacks from 7.6m (25 ft) to 15.2 m (50 ft)? (In favour, Not in favour, In favour with conditions)
2. Comments (text response)