



COUNTY *of* ANNAPOLIS

NATURALLY ROOTED

Bridgetown Planning Area Document Review

Background

Winter 2026

Introduction

The review process for the Bridgetown Planning Area Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw has been underway since 2022. The review has involved the work of C+D Community Design consultants, Municipal Staff and the Bridgetown Planning Area Advisory Committee.

The review process consists of:

1. Ensuring the documents better align with the Annapolis County Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB)
2. Deciding which important policies from the current documents to retain
3. Making sure the plan meets all provincial rules and regulations and aligns with updated provincial goals and guidelines
4. Researching land-use planning best practices from other areas to identify potentially transferable policies and regulations
5. Asking the community for input to understand their current and future needs
6. Using community input as a guideline for the development of policies

In the spring of 2025 public engagement was held by C+D consultants in the form of an online survey and a public meeting. The original public engagement processes were based on the intent to expand the Bridgetown Planning Area boundaries further North and South and included responses and input from members of the public who are located within those expanded boundaries.

We are currently in the process of drafting new policies based on all the information received to date from the Bridgetown Area Advisory Committee, members of the public, research from C+D consultants and more. Significant background review and best practice research has already been completed.

Prior to beginning to draft policies we spent time reviewing all the information gathered during the public engagement processes that have been done to date. During this process **we identified areas where further input from the Bridgetown Planning Area's community members is needed. A decision was also made by Council on December 18th, 2025, to no longer expand the Bridgetown Planning Area boundaries** as had been previously discussed. This means that some of the information from previous public engagement processes is no longer relevant as it was related to the potential boundary expansion. For these reasons, we are **undergoing further engagement processes in the form of an online survey and various focus groups**. These will occur throughout the months of February and March 2026.

Commented [BB1]: can you please at the date of Council's decision?

The feedback collected from these engagement processes will be used to draft further policy for the Planning Area in a manner which best aligns with the goals and needs of the Planning Area residents.

Reasons for the Review and Updates

The Bridgetown Planning Area planning documents were originally created in 1999, and the most recent updates were minor amendments in late 2025. This means that the planning documents do not match the current reality of the community in terms of housing needs, growth and development needs, and the economic status of community members. The current documents also do not align with modern planning principles, updated provincial regulations and community and governmental priorities.

The current documents have strict policies around zoning, parking requirements and design, which limits the growth of the planning area. This means that new housing developments and businesses have been struggling to develop in the community. This has led to issues in past years in terms of attracting and retaining newcomers and a lack of services and businesses to support existing residents.

It should also be noted that one reason for this review is that it is mandated by the province. The provincial government requires that municipalities update their planning documents regularly to ensure that they best align with the present state of the Municipality and provincial requirements.

The **main areas of focus** that have been identified for this review are **Housing, Environmental Protection, Highway Development, and Business Opportunity**. Based on those areas of focus we are hoping to achieve the following through the updates:

- Maintain the Bridgetown Planning Area's historic charm
- Encourage the growth and diversification of housing resources available in the Planning Area
- Reduce unnecessary development restrictions
- Support historic building conversions (residential to small commercial uses) to preserve history while creating income opportunities
- Encourage diverse business types and tourism-related businesses to increase economic opportunities
- Improve stormwater management and climate resilience in new developments

- Reduce the impact of development on the environment
- Reduce the impact of natural disasters on housing and other infrastructure
- Encourage the development of a complete community
- Align with the goals of the community
- Increase readability and ease of use of the documents

Why We Engage

Engagement processes such as the ones being held for this process are an important component of the process of developing planning regulations. Having a diverse range of input from various community members and community groups provides us with a better understanding of needs and perspectives within the community.

Receiving the widest range of public input possible allows us to create planning regulations that align with what the community wants and work towards achieving the goals identified by community members. This makes for more equitable and more beneficial planning for the entire planning area.

Your feedback allows us to identify a vision for the Bridgetown Planning Area and use it to guide the updates!

The more feedback and input we receive from the public the more we can work to ensure that the future planning regulations benefit current residents, businesses owners and newcomers.

Further engagement processes will be held later in the review process too!

Main Points for Engagement

We are looking to engage the community in order to better understand the perspectives of community members on certain points. A lot of the areas of interest we have identified for further discussion focus on figuring out the main needs of the community and how we can work together to create strategies to meet those needs.

Some of the main areas we are looking for further input on include the following:

- Context of existing agricultural operations and accessory agricultural uses and desires/concerns around future regulation of such; especially livestock in residential areas

- What needs are present in the community in terms of temporary or fast housing (RVs, mini/mobile homes, tiny homes, etc.)
- Main needs in terms of housing types (accessible, rentals, multi-generational, etc.)
- Desired protections for old/historic homes and surrounding areas
- What is needed to better support specialty businesses
- What main environmental concerns do community members have
- Input on outdoor-focused/recreational/tourism businesses
- What are the main areas YOU feel the updates should focus on

Please complete the survey if you live in, own land in, work in or own a business the Bridgetown Planning Area and/or attend any focus groups you were notified of so we can receive a diverse range of perspectives! The map below shows the boundaries of the Planning Area in red.

