



# VISION NEW MINAS

Summary and Scenarios Report

July 7, 2021  
Updated  
September 9

UPLAND





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# 1 Introduction





## 1.1 Project Introduction

### *What is a Secondary Plan?*

A Secondary Plan is a “sub-plan” within the Municipal Planning Strategy for a specific area or community, in this case the Growth Centre of New Minas. A Secondary Plan provides detailed policies for land use and development in that specific area on topics that do not necessarily apply in the rest of the Municipality. A Secondary Plan recognizes the unique characteristics of the community, and helps to represent and reinforce those characteristics.

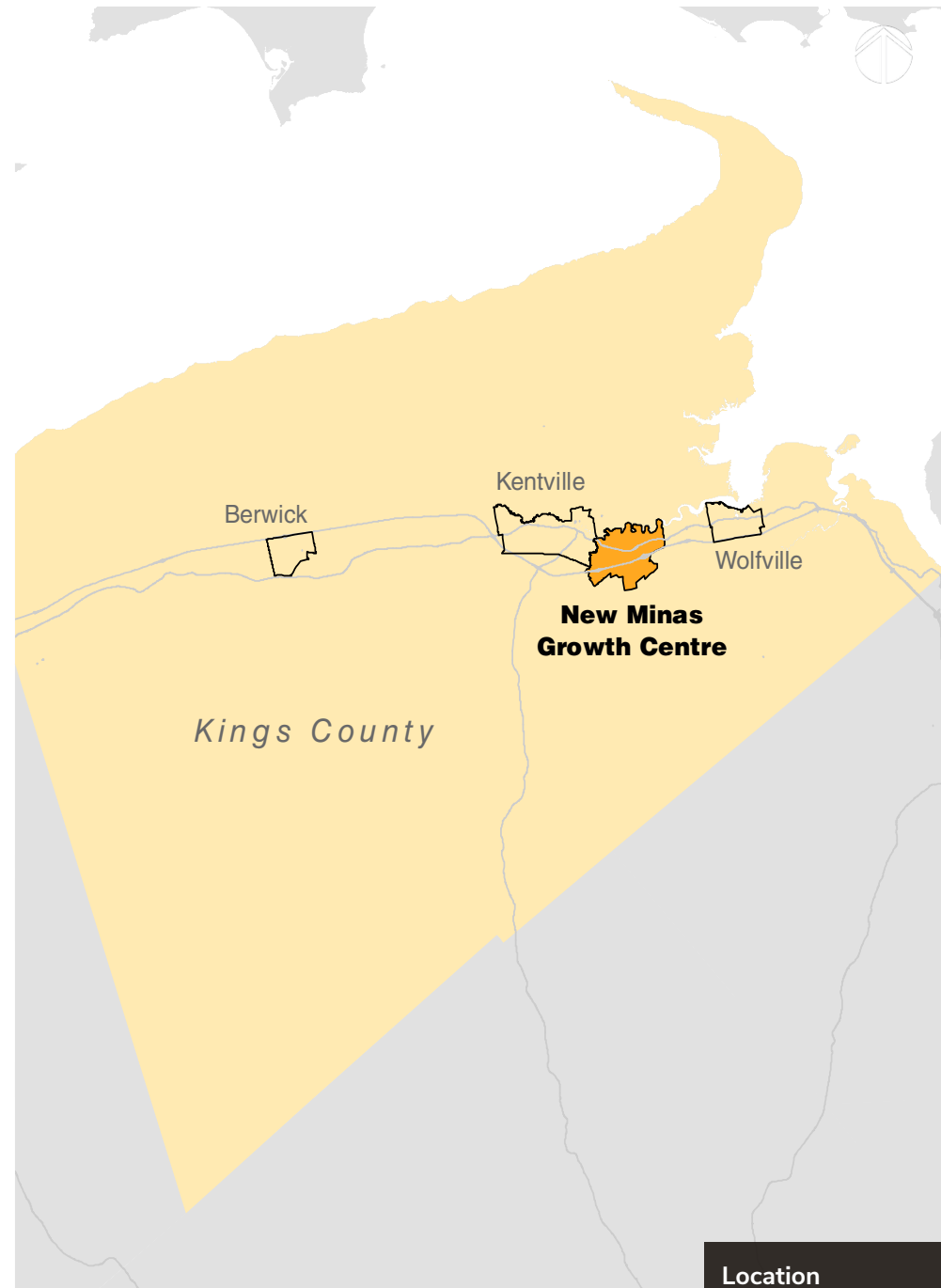
A Secondary Plan is enabled under the Municipal Government Act and is primarily implemented through the Municipality’s Land Use By-law and Subdivision By-law.

New Minas is located in Nova Scotia’s Annapolis Valley. It is part of the Municipality of the County of Kings and is adjacent to the Town of Kentville. In the 2016 Census New Minas had a population of 4,231, making it the largest community in the Municipality.

New Minas is identified as a Growth Centre in the Municipality’s Municipal Planning Strategy. Growth Centres are communities that are sewer-serviced and where the Municipality encourages the bulk of growth to occur.

The Growth Centre of New Minas boundary mostly aligns with the boundary for the Village of New Minas. The Village is responsible—among other things—for implementing recreational programming and facilities, undertaking sidewalk maintenance, providing drinking water, and partnering with the Municipality for sewer servicing by being a part of the Regional Sewage Treatment System.

In November, 2019, Municipal Council adopted a new Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. These documents provide a comprehensive shared vision and approach to development within the Municipality. However, the broad scope of the new planning documents does not always reflect the unique nuances of individual communities.



Recognizing this, the new Municipal Planning Strategy provides policy direction for the development of secondary plans, which form part of the Municipal Planning Strategy and recognize the unique contexts, characteristics, and histories of individual communities through community-specific policy direction.

As a major population and service centre for the region, a secondary planning strategy for the Growth Centre of New Minas is a priority. The opening of the Granite Drive Interchange at the end of 2018 has shifted transportation patterns and enabled new development opportunities, while investments in community infrastructure such as the Louis Millett Community Complex, the new RCMP detachment, and the Harvest Moon Trailway have cemented New Minas as a great place to live, work, and play.

This Summary and Scenarios report provides a summary of the background analysis and public engagement that was conducted to inform the Secondary Plan for the Growth Centre of New Minas. It also includes preliminary development scenarios for consideration by the project Working Group and the public. Following the review of these scenarios, this report will be updated to include a preferred development scenario with additional refinement and details.

## 1.2 Planning Process

Vision New Minas includes a number of steps that have and will occur over this two-year process:

### Technical Studies + Site Analysis

The Village of New Minas commissioned a series of technical studies to provide a foundational understanding of conditions in New Minas and trends that might affect the community's future.

### Formative Engagement

The project team conducted preliminary engagement with residents, business owners, non-profits, community organizations, and other stakeholders to understand their vision for the future of New Minas, their current challenges, and potential opportunities that the Secondary Plan can help support.



### Draft Guiding Principles and Preliminary Development Concepts

This step provides tangible, spatially-based ideas as to how New Minas could look in the future. At this stage everything is still very conceptual and is intended solely to provide a focus for further analysis and public discussion.

### Preferred Development Concept

Public input will help refine the Guiding Principles and determine a “preferred development concept” to use as the basis of the Secondary Plan. The project team will refine the preferred development concept to a level of detail suitable for informing detailed land use policies and regulations.

### Draft Secondary Plan

The project team will write the Secondary Plan and related changes to the Land Use By-law (zoning, etc.) to carry out the intent of the preferred development concept.

### Draft Plan Review

Public review of the draft Secondary Plan will shape the final document.

**Final Draft Plan and Formal Approval Process** The Secondary Plan will go through the process for Municipal Plan and Land Use By-law amendments, including a Public Hearing at Council.

### Development

Once the Secondary Plan is in effect, market demand will drive development in alignment with the Plan. Full build-out will likely take decades.

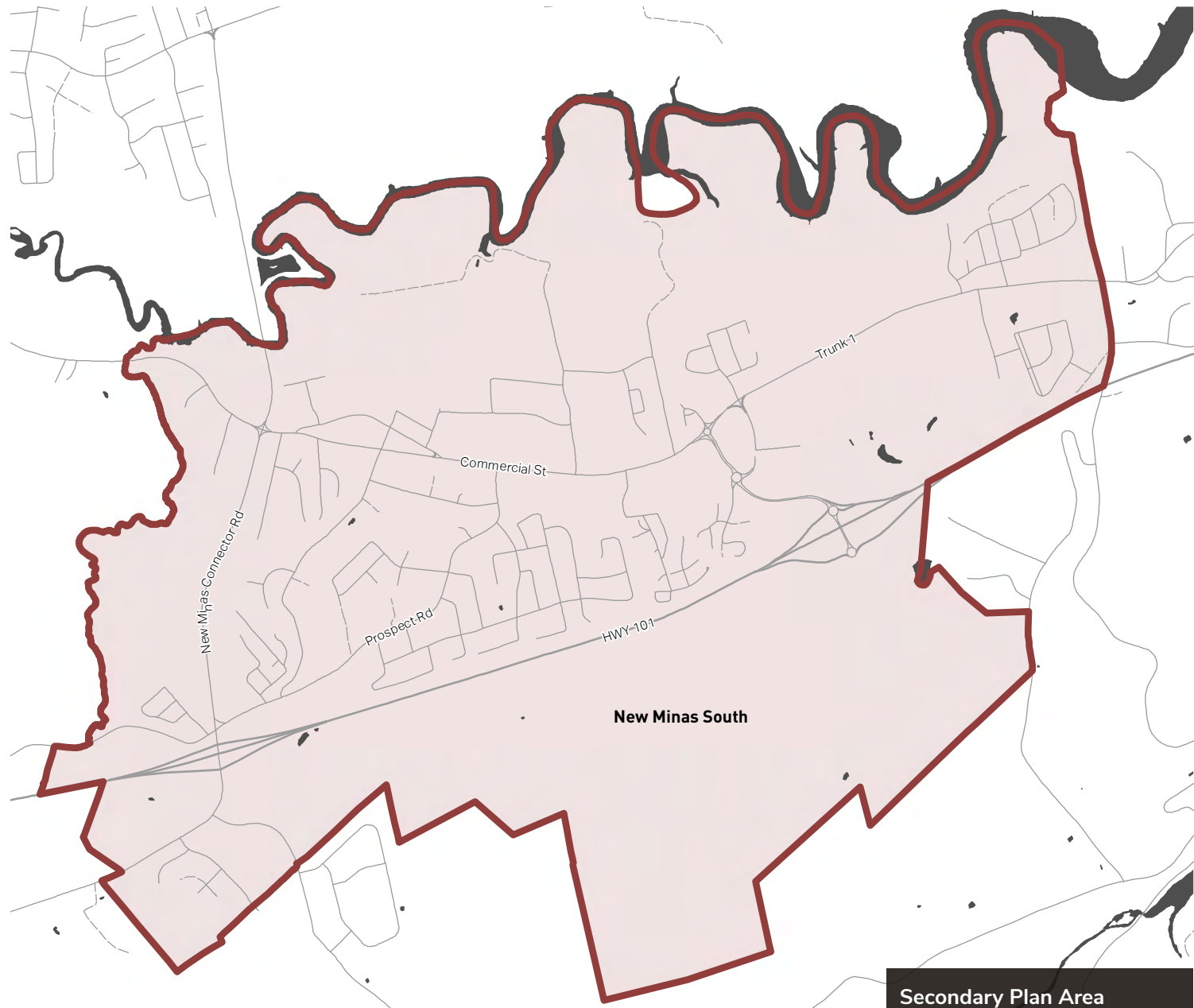


### 1.3 Planning Area

The Growth Centre of New Minas occupies an area of land of just over 3,500 acres located along Highway 101 and Highway 1 (Commercial Street) and adjacent to the Town of Kentville and the community of Greenwich. The northern border of New Minas is the Cornwallis River (Iijuktu'kwejk), towards which the majority of the land in New Minas slopes.

**The Established Area**, occupying an area of 2,544 acres, is primarily located north of Highway 101. It includes a wide mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses. Commercial Street is the major transportation route and serves as a commercial destination for the surrounding region.

**New Minas South (“Expansion Lands”)**, occupying an area of 983 acres, is located south of Highway 101 and east of New Canaan Road / Highbury School Road. This land was added to the Village of New Minas in 2013 and brought into the Growth Centre with the 2019 adoption of the new Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. The land is primarily undeveloped and the bulk of it is zoned New Minas Holding Zone pending the outcome of this Secondary Plan project.



# 2 Technical Studies





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## 2.1 Introduction

Developing a plan for the future requires a good understanding of existing conditions on which to base the starting point for the plan. It also requires consideration of potential trends. These trends give some shape to what may happen in the future. Planning efforts can then work to reinforce these trends if they are seen to be positive, or to counter them if they are seen to be negative.

The first stages of the Vision New Minas project included the development of four technical studies to build this foundational knowledge.

This included a market demand study, an urban design and active transportation study, a transportation study, and a servicing study. The technical studies were considered in combination with the site context and preliminary engagement results to form the Guiding Principles and development scenarios found later in this document.

This section summarizes the key points of the technical studies for ease of reference and to provide a clear picture of the factors influencing the development scenarios. However, the full reports include a wealth of information that cannot be captured in this summary, and readers are encouraged to explore them. The full reports can be found in the Documents Library at:

[www.visionnewminas.ca](http://www.visionnewminas.ca)

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## 2.2 Market Demand

The Market Demand Technical Study reviews the existing market conditions and provides 10-year demand forecasts for retail, office, accommodation, industrial, and residential development.

### **Residential**

The study notes that population growth in the area of New Minas has been strong in recent years, but that residential development within the boundaries of New Minas has been proportionally low. This is likely due to a dwindling supply of developable lands within the established area of New Minas.

The study projects population growth to continue, especially among older populations. This, combined with a heavy employment base in the service industries, suggests a future need for diverse housing options, including a range of rental and affordable options.

In considering demand for housing units, the study looks at two scenarios. The first is one in which constraints on developable land push some development to other communities in the area. In this case, the study expects a demand for 270 housing units over the next 10 years. The second scenario considers demand if there are no such constraints, predicting a need for 321 dwelling units over the coming decade. From a policy perspective, the study notes that there is little risk in identifying too much land for residential development;

if there is an oversupply of residentially-designated lands it will simply take longer for the lands to fully develop.

### **Industrial**

New Minas has some existing industrial lands north of Commercial Street, but they are limited in expansion potential due to land use restrictions that protect New Minas' drinking water supply. The study suggests that New Minas South could better accommodate industrial uses due to the less restrictive wellfield protections in this area, along with easy highway access. However, the study cautions that the marketplace for industrial lands is highly competitive in the region. Attracting industrial development would not just require the zoning of appropriate lands, but would need an active effort on the part of the Municipality and Village to entice industrial users.

### **Office**

The study notes that New Minas does not have an overly large or defined office presence. Office uses are instead a subcomponent of other land uses. Notable exceptions include the new medical services building and RCMP offices.

Based on expected population growth, the study anticipates demand for 18,000 to 20,000 square feet of new office space in New Minas in the next decade. However, concerted economic development efforts to attract a large office user could change these projections.

### **Retail**

New Minas is the regional retail and service hub for the Annapolis Valley, serving a trade area of over 100,000 people. The study projects that over the next 10 years demand for retail space in New Minas will grow by 100,000 to 120,000 square feet. This is based on trends in household spending growth, population growth, and retail employment.

The study suggests that much of this demand could be captured within existing vacancies and new construction along Commercial Street. The study recognizes there will be demand for commercial growth in New Minas South, both to service new development and because of the visibility and highway access at the Granite Drive Interchange. However, the study cautions against allocating too much land for commercial development because, unlike residential, an oversupply of commercial lands could lead to an exodus from existing areas and reduce investment in Commercial Street.

### **Accommodations**

In reviewing accommodations options, the study finds that New Minas is relatively well supplied, particularly over the next couple of years while the tourism industry rebounds from COVID-19. The study suggests that there is no need to specifically set aside lands for accommodation uses. Instead, existing and future commercial lands could absorb any demand for accommodation uses.



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## 2.3 Urban Design + Active Transportation

The Urban Design and Active Transportation ("UDAT") study explores the character of New Minas and the opportunities for supporting walking, cycling, and other methods of non-motorized travel. The study sets out five high level objectives for these topics:

1. Housing diversification
2. Make active transportation convenient
3. A walkable Commercial Street
4. Identity and pride of place
5. Protect natural systems and encourage trail development

### Urban Design

The study reviews the existing character of New Minas and establishes a set of characteristics that define the various types of development within the Established Area. The study then provides a large list of potential urban design principles and recommendations for planning regulations to help implement quality urban design in New Minas. These recommendations will be considered in more detail as the Secondary Plan project reaches a point where detailed policies and regulations are being developed.

Two notable recommendations that affect planning considerations at this stage of the project are to encourage mixed-use development along Commercial Street and for development there to include heights up to six storeys.

The study also notes the potential views from New Minas South to the Cornwallis River and the valley beyond, and encourages development patterns that take advantage of this asset.

### Active Transportation and Open Space

The UDAT study provides a functional hierarchy and design details for active transportation infrastructure, such as sidewalks and multi-use trails. It includes a series of specific recommendations for improving the active transportation network in New Minas, such as trail heads for the Harvest Moon Trail and pedestrian connections between neighbourhoods and key destinations.

Notable at this stage of the secondary planning process, the UDAT study recommends a series of parks, protected areas, and trails that take advantage of the river valleys and high points of land in New Minas South. The study also recommends a major active transportation route be established as part of the east-west collector road in New Minas South.

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## 2.4 Transportation

The Transportation Technical Study is broken into two phases.

**Phase 1** includes:

- A review of existing traffic data
- Collection of new traffic data at 16 key intersections
- A review of past studies
- Stakeholder interviews
- A review of collision data
- An evaluation of current intersection performance
- High-level recommendations for the road network in the Expansion Lands

The study team also utilized Phase 1 to construct the digital traffic model that will be utilized in Phase 2.

**Phase 2** will include:

- Modeling of development scenarios to determine potential traffic impacts
- Sensitivity testing on the development scenarios
- Conceptual transportation networks
- Phasing recommendations for the transportation network in the Expansion Lands
- Recommendations for priority projects to improve the transportation network
- Policy recommendations for access management and transportation demand management

Phase 1 of the study found that overall the existing New Minas transportation network is good, with few existing capacity constraints. Two intersections have turning lanes that experience capacity issues at peak hours - the New Minas Connector Road at Commercial Street and at the east-bound Highway 101 ramps.

The Phase 1 report notes that the traffic study done in support of the Granite Drive Interchange assumed development in the expansion lands in the amount of 2,630 residential units, a gas station, and a 5,000 square foot fast food restaurant.

It also notes that finalization of the east-west connector road route will likely require detailed field topographic mapping, an ecological study, and a study of potential fish habitat.



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## 2.5 Utility System Assessment

The utility systems assessment explored the existing water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater infrastructure in New Minas. The study team visually inspected and assessed the conditions of the existing utility systems. Another aspect of this assessment was to create hydraulic and hydrologic models to check the capacity of the water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems under present day loading conditions and to estimate future loading to accommodate planned development south of Highway 101.

The study includes numerous site-specific findings related to needed maintenance on individual pieces of infrastructure. However, from a planning perspective the following findings are more relevant.

### Drinking Water

Currently, the Village's water distribution network is comprised of nine wells that feed into two water storage tanks. These storage tanks then supply water to New Minas through a system of pipes of various sizes. The study team developed a computer model of the water system that took into account the various pipe, tank, and pump sizes. This model was then run based on two scenarios: present day (2020) and future development (2050).

Based on the findings of the model, there are no potential capacity issues of the existing water distribution system under current day loading conditions. Additionally, the model shows that the overall capacity of the existing water distribution system should be sufficient to accommodate future development. However, upgrades to the water storage tanks, booster stations, and additional wells would likely be required to meet the demands of the future development.

### Sanitary Sewer

The existing sanitary sewer network of New Minas is comprised of eight sub-networks where sewage flows downhill to lift stations (pumps) that then route the sewage via forcemains (pressurized pipes) to the Waste Water Treatment Plant north of Commercial Street. Like the water system, the study team developed a computer model of the sanitary sewer system and ran it under present day (2020) and future development (2050) conditions.

Under the present-day scenario, the model does not show any lift stations being under capacity and no forcemain upgrade requirements were identified. However, the model identified several sections of gravity pipe either at or above capacity and the report recommends upgrading of these sections.

Additionally, any development south of Highway 101 will need to tie into the existing system, and any gravity pipes between the tie-in point and the associated lift station will need to be upgraded. The report recommends two potential ties in points at the Granite Drive Extension and at New Canaan Road, with Granite Drive seen as the preferred option.

### Stormwater

The existing stormwater sewer system is comprised of a series of culverts that direct runoff for eventual drainage into the Cornwallis River. The study included the development of a computer model to simulate the hydrologic processes that occur in New Minas.

The model found that peak stormwater flow rates with future development differ considerably from the flow rates found under current conditions. This is to be expected as if the land is converted from its natural state, more run-off will occur.

As specified in the County of Kings Surface Water Design Manual, the predevelopment flow rates must be less than or equal to post-development conditions. Therefore, as the area to the south of Highway 101 is developed, additional stormwater infrastructure options will be needed to capture the increase in runoff (such as retention and/or detention ponds).

# 3 Site Analysis





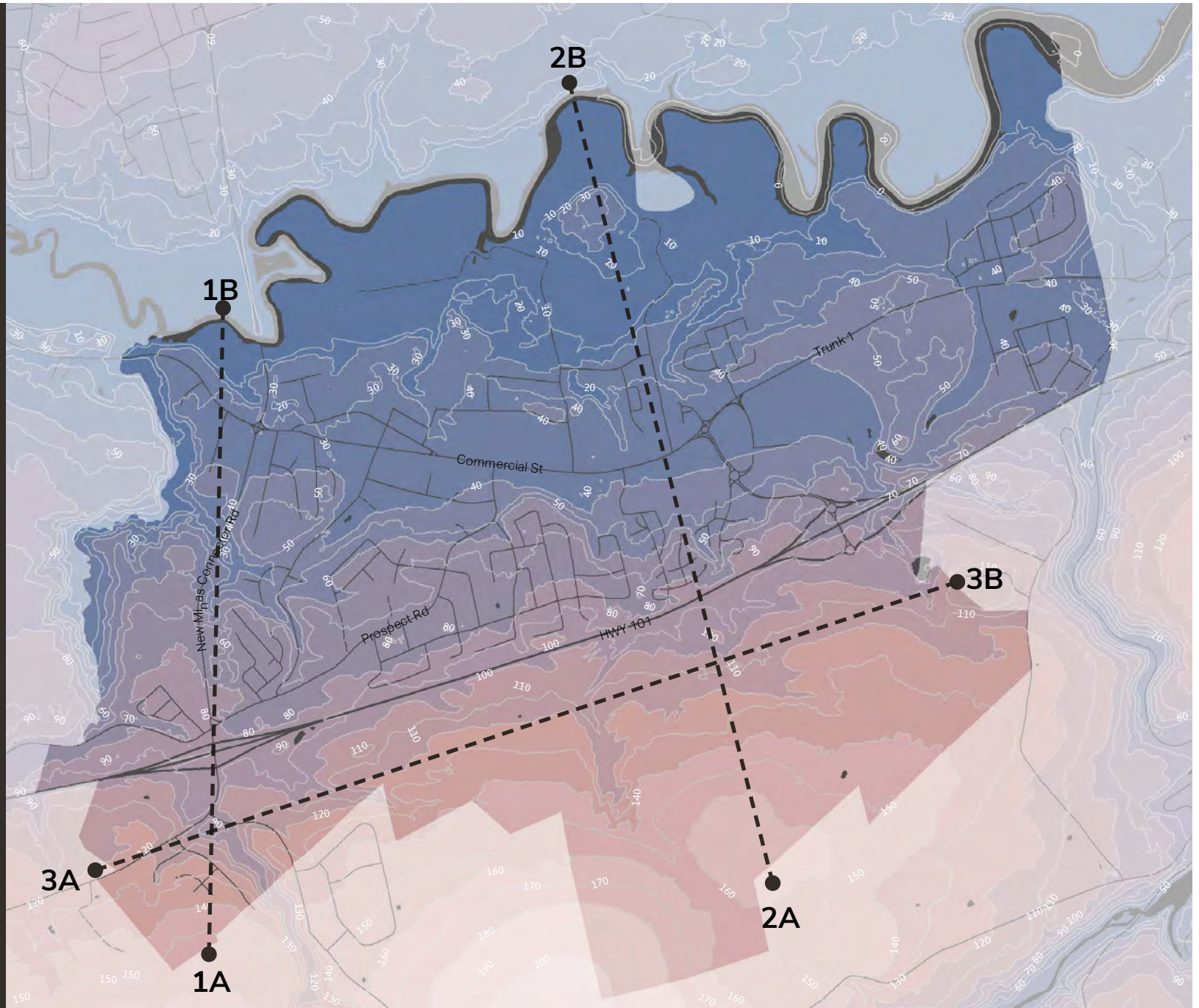
3.1 Study Area

The Growth Centre of New Minas offers a diversity of land uses, including a wide range of commercial uses along Commercial Street, well-established residential neighbourhoods, industrial operations, and recreational facilities. The area south of Highway 101 (“New Minas South”) is primarily undeveloped.





# ELEVATION



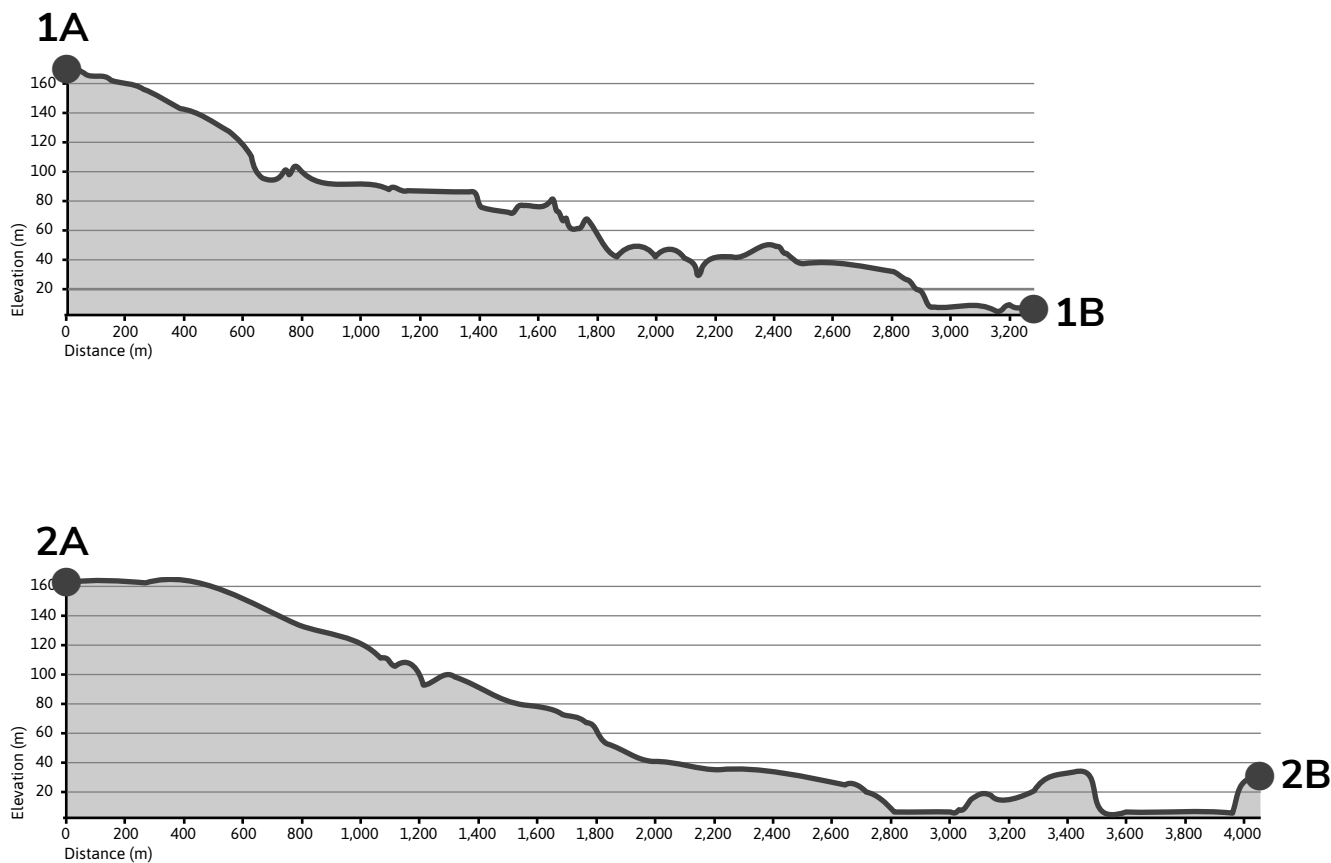


3.2 Topography

New Minas is located at the southern edge of the Annapolis Valley floor, nestled between the Cornwallis River and the South Mountain. The transition between valley floor and the mountain means the topography in this location is quite varied; elevations range from approximately sea level at the river to over 200 metres just south of the New Minas boundary.

The main business area, Commercial Street, is located on some of the flattest lands in the community, at an elevation of approximately 35 metres. South of Commercial Street the land slopes upwards towards Highway 101. This sloping area contains many of the existing residential neighbourhoods in New Minas, with streets often aligned to respond to the sloping conditions.

North of Commercial Street the land slopes down relatively quickly before flattening out into the historic floodplain of the Cornwallis River.

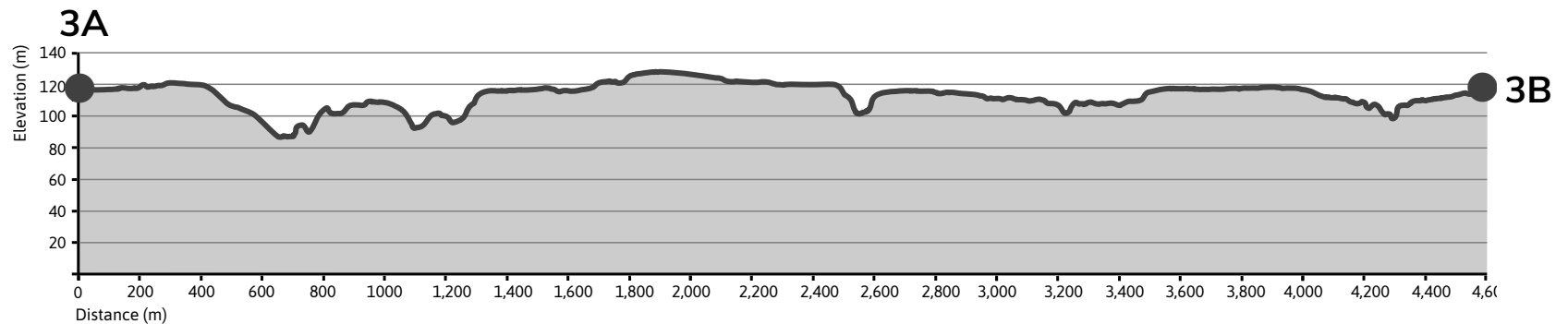


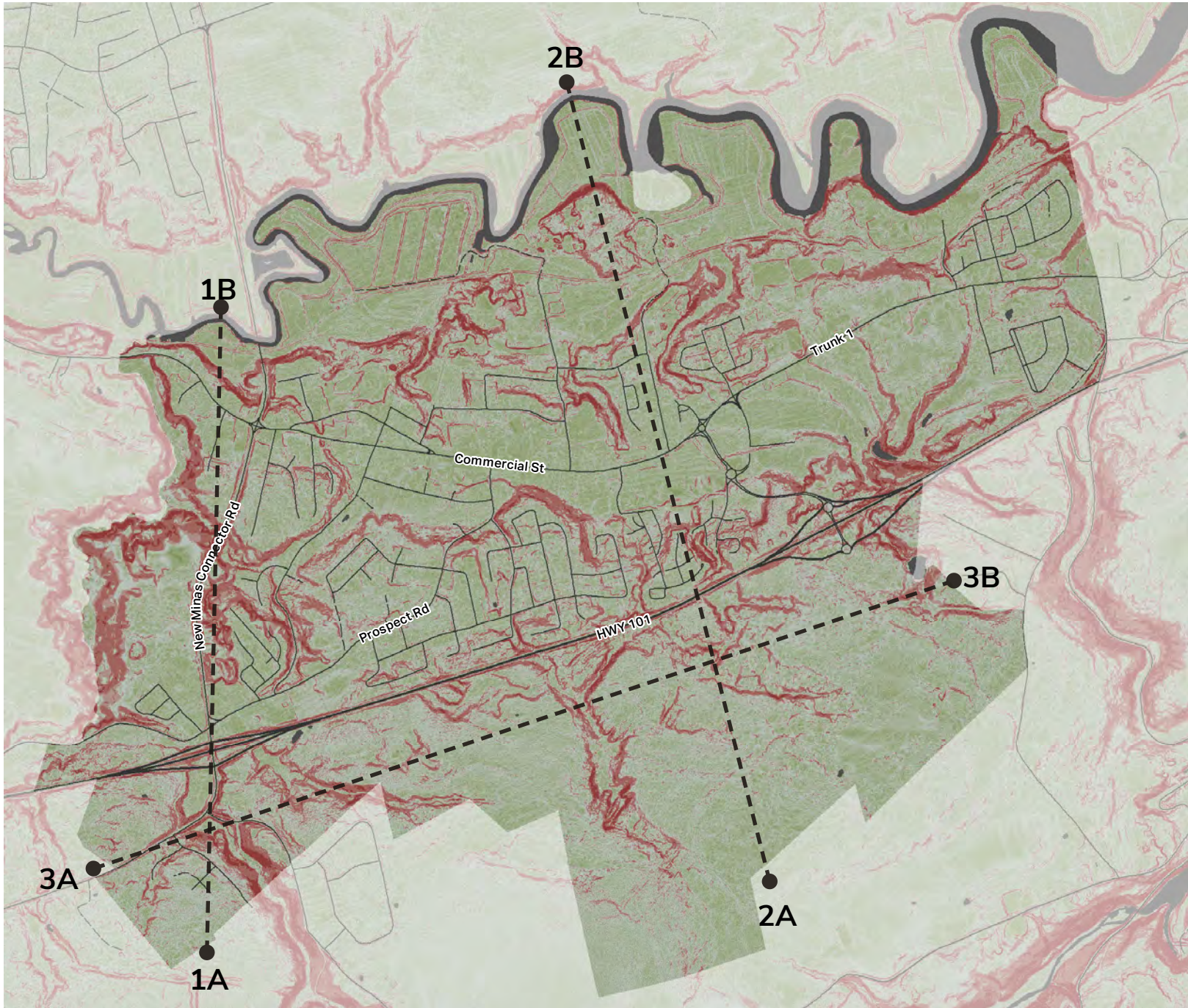
South of Highway 101 the landscape begins to slope in earnest, with the elevation quickly transitioning from approximately 85 metres at the highway to as high as 200 metres. This presents a landscape with excellent views of the Annapolis Valley and North Mountain, but will require careful design when it comes to stormwater management in order to avoid excessive flow speeds.

When viewed in an east-west direction, New Minas South is a much more consistent elevation. The main topographic features are the various river valleys. These areas tend to be sensitive to disturbance by human development and also create challenges for roads and servicing. They are also exceptionally

beautiful (with many examples of waterfalls and old growth hemlock forest) and present an opportunity for nature-based recreation.

The varied topography and river valleys of New Minas mean that there are many areas within the community that feature steep slopes. While small, localized areas of steep slopes can be addressed through grading during development, large areas of slopes greater than 20 percent can be hazardous to development and require extensive engineering to be usable. They also tend to be sensitive to disturbance and susceptible to erosion. Development should generally be discouraged in these areas.





SLOPE

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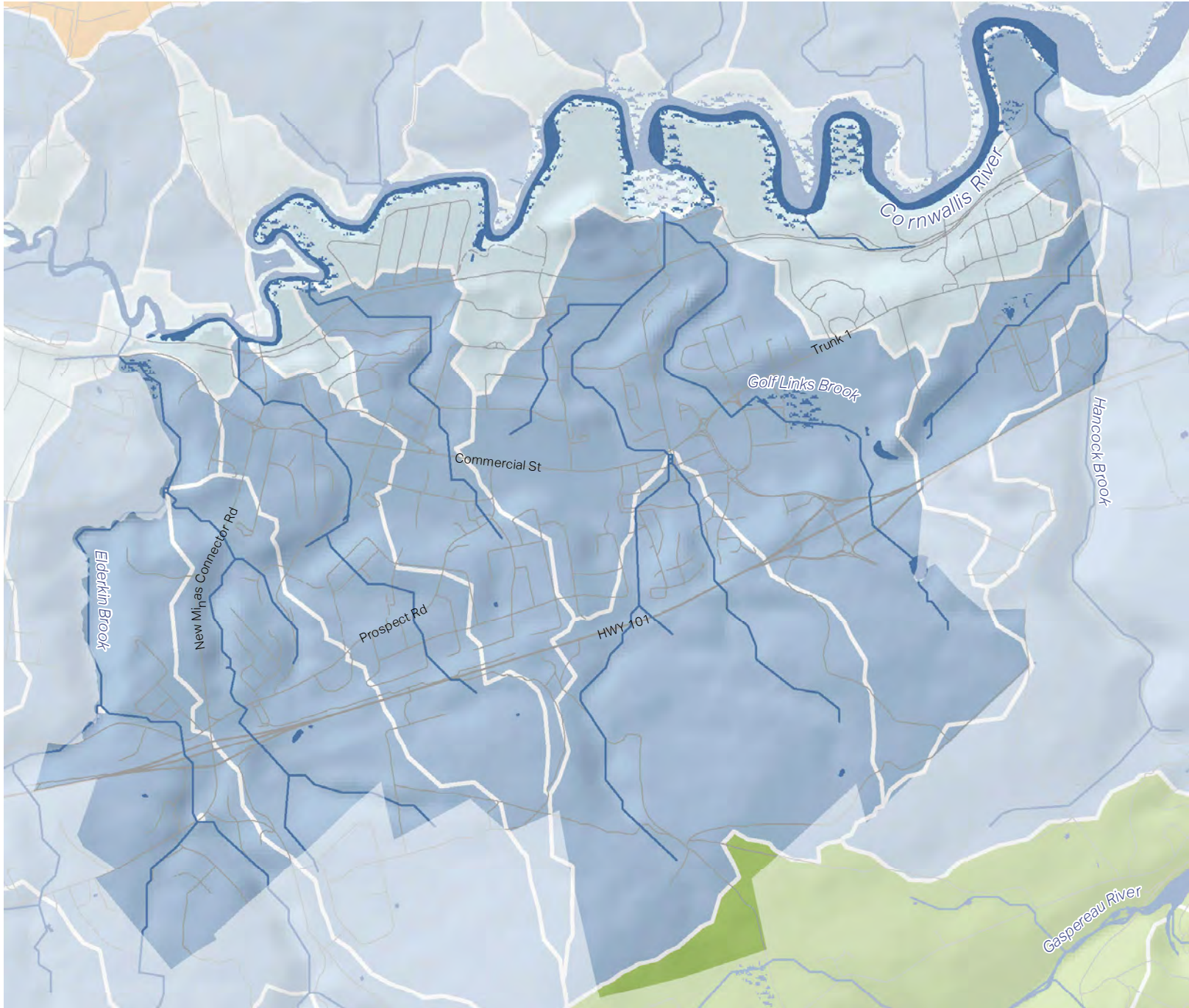
### 3.3 Watersheds

Given New Minas' varied topography, the flow of water is an important consideration. The large majority of New Minas is located within the Cornwallis River watershed. However, a very small portion at the south of New Minas flows into the Gaspereau River.

Within the larger Cornwallis River watershed there are a number of smaller sub-watersheds; most of New Minas drains into smaller streams and tributaries rather than directly into the Cornwallis River. Perhaps most well-known is Elderkin Brook, to which a small area of western New Minas drains. Elderkin Brook is relatively undisturbed and its associated ravine is a popular recreational destination. Other watercourses are less well-known because they are smaller in scale and because past development has enclosed these watercourses in much of the area north of Highway 101. In fact, one segment of watercourse flows underneath the County Fair Mall.

South of Highway 101, no such enclosure has taken place. There is an opportunity for these watercourses to be protected and to form defining features of the landscape in New Minas South. Planning policy in the Secondary Plan will need to consider the effects of development on stormwater runoff and ensure proper protections are in place to control the quantity and quality of water entering these watercourses.





# WATERSHEDS

### 3.4 Wellfields

New Minas depends on groundwater, supplied by a series of nine production wells, for its potable water supply.

The quality of groundwater supply is directly linked to surface activities. As water filters from the surface into the ground it can carry pollutants, bacteria, or other toxins from both natural sources and human activities. The risk a particular activity presents to a groundwater extraction well is characterized by how long it would take for a contaminant to seep through the ground into the wellhead. This is referred to as “time of travel”. Depending on the underlying geology, the time of travel generally increases (and the risk decreases) farther away from a wellhead.

Certain human activities carry a particularly high risk to groundwater supply, such as dry cleaning activities or the bulk storage of solvents, fertilizers, and hydrocarbons. The Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw restrict land uses that pose an unacceptable risk to New Minas' groundwater through the use of “overlays” that correspond to varying degrees of risk. These overlays were developed as a result of a New Minas Water Resource Management Plan, which utilized test well yield data, local geology, hydrogeologic characteristics of the local aquifer, projected water demand, and estimated aquifer recharge rates to model the time of travel to each wellhead.

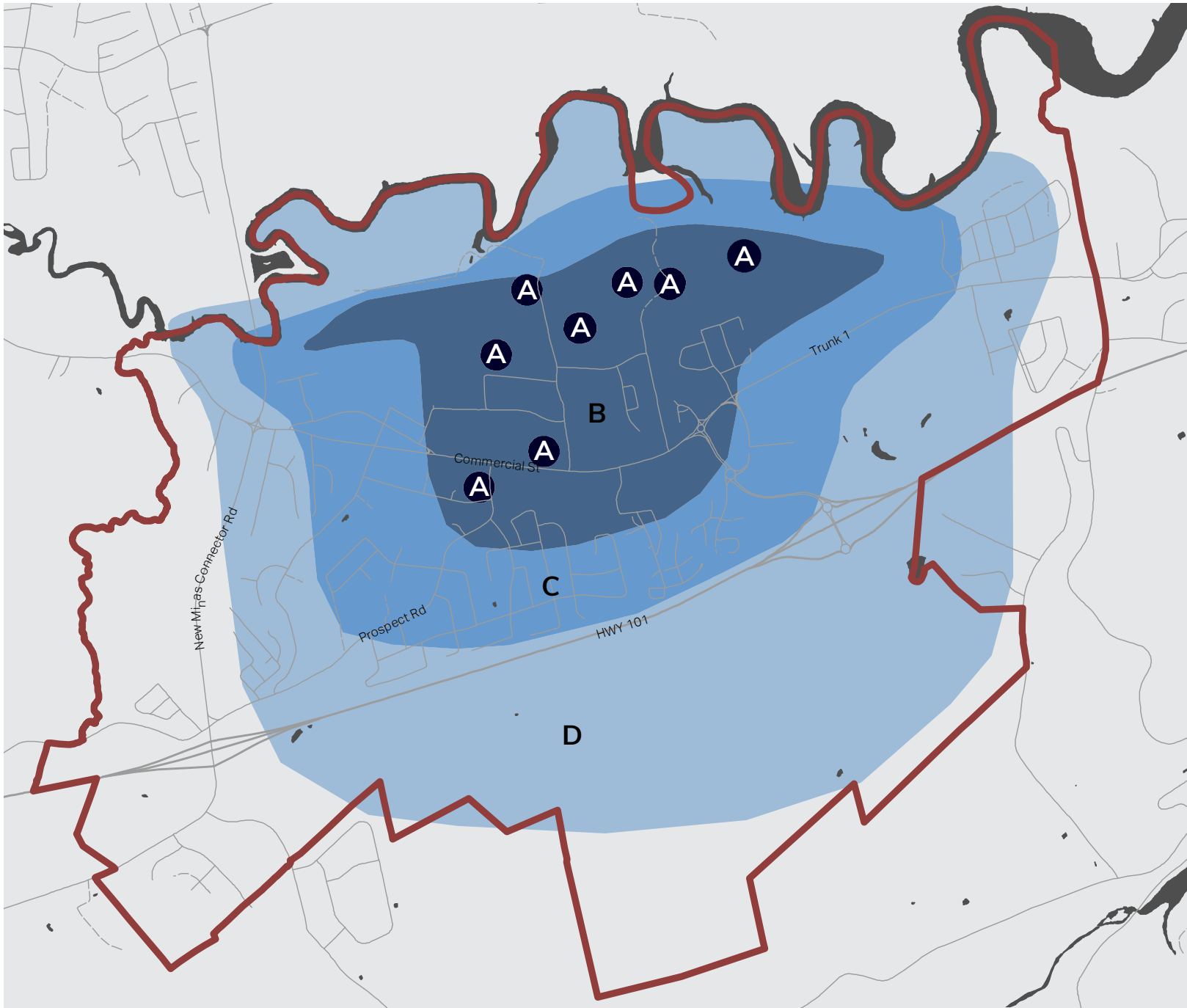
The wellfields are an important constraint when considering development potential in various areas of New Minas.

**Wellfield A** covers the area immediately surrounding each wellfield and prohibits all development not directly related to the public water utility.

**Wellfield B** is based on a 3-month time-of-travel and prohibits a relatively wide range of uses that could potentially involve hydrocarbons, solvents, bacterial contaminants, or damaging chemicals. Examples include auto-related uses, greenhouses and fertilizer storage, commercial livestock operations, and drycleaners. Multi-unit dwellings are only permitted by development agreement.

**Wellfield C** is based on a 10-year time-of-travel. It is similar to B but allows gas stations and does not require a development agreement for multi-unit dwellings.

**Wellfield D** is based on a 25-year time-of-travel and is correspondingly the most flexible. It primarily limits heavy industry; bulk storage of chemicals, fuels, and salt; commercial livestock operations; and scrap yards. In contrast, it permits automotive uses and dry cleaners and allows a wider range of uses (such as greenhouses) by development agreement.



# WELLFIELDS



### 3.5 Parking Lands

Commercial Street features extensive areas of surface parking. While this parking does provide a needed service to the many visitors to Commercial Street, it also provides an opportunity for redevelopment and intensification. The map at right highlights many of the major parking lots along Commercial Street.







## PARKING LOTS

### 3.6 Power Corridors and Collector Road

Two specific pieces of infrastructure will shape development in New Minas South: power corridors and the proposed collector road.

The first of two power corridors includes high-tension power lines running from the White Rock hydroelectric station to a crossing of Highway 101 at Exit 12. The area below these lines is cleared of major vegetation to a width of approximately 60 metres and appears to be used for informal recreational trails.

The second power corridor intercepts the first south of the New Minas boundary and then runs north-east to Busch Lane, where it turns north and crosses Highway 101 just west of Deep Hollow Road. It is cleared of major vegetation to a width of approximately 30 metres.

Over the years there have been a number of conceptual designs created for a collector road that would cross New Minas South in an east-west direction and connect Exit 12 to the road network in the vicinity of Deep Hollow Road.

The most recent conceptual design was developed by the engineering firm Amec Foster Wheeler in 2015. It reflected updates to the proposed location of the Granite Drive Interchange (since completed). This route is designed to follow existing terrain as much as possible to minimize the amount of earthworks that would need to occur. The exact routing would only be determined following detailed on-site analysis and environmental study. The collector road is designed to initially function as two lanes with the ability to expand to four lanes as development occurs. The Transportation Technical Study commissioned as part of this Secondary Plan project concurs with the general routing of the collector road.



BASE MAP

NEW MINAS SECONDARY PLAN

LEGEND

Power Corridors

Proposed Collector Road

MAP DESIGN

Drawn by

Checked by

Date

Project No.

21-6-17

900101

PARAMETERS & MAP DESIGN

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UPLAND

The map displays a topographic view of a region including New Minas. A prominent red boundary encloses a large area, likely a project site. A black line with arrows indicates a proposed collector road, showing its path through the landscape. Blue dashed lines represent power corridors, which are shown crossing the proposed road. The map includes various geographical features such as roads, buildings, and water bodies, providing a detailed context for the proposed infrastructure.

# POWER CORRIDORS + COLLECTOR ROAD

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# 4 Public Consultation



## PUBLIC WORKSHOP



## 4.1 Preliminary Engagement

**A full summary of the preliminary engagement results can be found in the What We Heard Report available on the project website.**

The project team hosted a number of opportunities for the public to provide preliminary input into the New Minas planning process. As the project progresses additional opportunities will be made available.

### Advertising and Webpage

The project team established a webpage to act as the central hub for project information and materials. The overall project was advertised with a postcard delivered to every residential address in New Minas. Individual project events were advertised on Facebook and on the websites for both the Municipality and Village. The project team also keeps an email list and notifies interested people of project events via this list.

### Online Public Launch

The project team hosted a public project launch on November 17, 2020. This event occurred online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project team gave a presentation on the project and then hosted a question-and-answer session.

### Surveys

The project team created three online surveys and made them available to the public from November, 2020 to January, 2021: one focused on housing, one for business owners, and a third that looked at the overarching vision for New Minas moving forward. A fourth survey, focused on urban design and active transportation, was conducted by the sub-consultant conducting the associated technical study.

### Social Pinpoint

Social Pinpoint is an online engagement platform that allows users to place “pins” on a map of their community to identify opportunities and challenges in a given area. The project team hosted a Social Pinpoint map for New Minas over the same period as the surveys.

### Stakeholders

Within New Minas there are a number of stakeholders who have topic-specific input or would be specifically affected by various aspects of the Secondary Plan. These include local community groups, social service providers, environmental groups, Village staff, neighbouring municipalities, municipal and provincial departments, business owners, and landowners in the expansion lands south of Highway 101. The project team reached out to these stakeholders and hosted one-on-one or small group conversations over the phone or online video conferencing.

### Written Submissions

In addition to the structured engagement avenues the project team has accepted written and emailed submissions throughout the duration of the project.

### Technical Study Engagements

The Vision New Minas project is being supported by four technical studies. As part of these studies the consultants interviewed stakeholders relevant to their study subject areas. Additionally, the team for the Urban Design and Active Transportation study conducted an online survey and a series of online workshops.



## 4.2 Major Themes

The results of these engagement methods have been grouped into themes. Major themes were mentioned frequently by a range of people, in a variety of contexts, and across methods.

### **Affordability**

Across all engagement methods, affordability was the most widely discussed issue for New Minas. Affordable housing options, both from an ownership and rental perspective, were consistently mentioned. Over half of all respondents to the Housing Survey observed that housing was either somewhat difficult or very difficult to find, with many citing a lack of housing options suitable to their needs.

Business owners also flagged affordability as a major issue, many citing high property taxes, expensive utilities, and high purchase cost/rent as barriers for maintaining or growing their businesses.

### **Active Transportation & Open Space**

Many respondents focused on active transportation and “greening” the streets as a major theme. Across all engagement methods, respondents were eager to see New Minas become a more walkable, bikeable community. Many pointed to the current design of Commercial Street as a major issue, from both a traffic and safety perspective. They also feel the current design makes for an unpleasant walking experience, which deters people

from walking, contributing to ongoing traffic challenges.

Lack of sidewalks in subdivisions, as well as a lack of connectivity between neighbourhoods, were also brought up as challenges that residents would like to see addressed.

Residents overwhelmingly cited active transportation infrastructure and street beautification as an opportunity for the community and made many suggestions for specific improvements.

### **Accessibility & Inclusion**

Relating strongly to the theme of active transportation, many respondents described a lack of accessibility in the built environment and acknowledged a desire to make improvements to meet the needs of community members with disabilities and older adults. With 6% of respondents to the Visioning Survey self-identifying as a person with a disability, and residents over the age of 65 making up over a fifth of the local population, this is a considerable proportion of the population.

This was also a major theme that emerged in the Housing Survey with respondents expressing a need for more accessible housing options for people with disabilities and elderly residents, including single-level dwellings or ground level accessible housing units.

### **Redevelopment/Using Existing Commercial Space**

Another major theme that emerged was a desire among residents to see redevelopment of existing vacant commercial spaces. Many residents mentioned the vacancy rates in the mall as an issue, and expressed a desire to see these spaces occupied with local small businesses. There was also an emphasis on small business development as opposed to an influx of big box stores.

Respondents of the Visioning Survey identified the presence of local businesses in New Minas as the greatest strength on which to build the future of the community. The abundant availability of parking and the presence of larger regional businesses also ranked highly as strengths that could be built upon.

In addition to commercial redevelopment, residential infill development was also noted as an opportunity to be explored.

### 4.3 Secondary Themes

Secondary themes garnered fewer mentions and had narrower range of contexts than major themes, but were still recurring.

#### Traffic & Roads

Traffic and roads emerged as a secondary theme with many respondents noting that traffic on Commercial Street is often quite heavy and flow is sometimes slow. It was also noted that side roads, namely Crescent Drive, are receiving higher traffic volumes as people try to avoid Commercial Street, resulting in potential safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists.

Poor road conditions in subdivisions was also mentioned by multiple residents as an issue that they feel needs to be addressed.

#### Building + Planning Regulation

Another secondary theme that emerged was building/planning regulations, and the effects that they may have on community development. Some thoughts and suggestions included:

- Increased residential planning in some areas to control development and design
- Fewer duplexes, more condo and townhouse options
- More high-density residential development

- Better diversity of housing options to accommodate working class families
- Limits on expansion – fill in existing space first
- Allow secondary suites in all single-unit neighbourhoods, provided infrastructure capacity is there
- More accessible housing units near/within commercial areas
- Incentives to renovate existing properties in more established areas
- Current rules and regulations are becoming too onerous for builders

#### Communication & Clarity

Communication emerged as another secondary theme throughout engagement. Respondents consistently described experiencing unclear communication from local government.

A lack of clear understanding of planning regulations, particularly as they relate to commercial developments, was noted throughout the Business Survey, as well as the Vision Survey. Suggestions included:

- More educational resources on the Village and Municipality's websites to help business owners to understand rules and regulations

- Regular updates released to the public to ensure regular communication with the business community from both the Village and the Municipality
- Better by-law enforcement

#### Recreation

The final secondary theme that emerged throughout the public engagement process was recreation. Strongly tied to active transportation, respondents made the following suggestions to improve recreation opportunities in New Minas:

- Turf soccer field
- Community or regional recreation facilities, especially a swimming pool
- Easy access to outdoor recreation (trails, etc.)
- More localized play areas for children
- Connectivity among recreation facilities
- Community garden plots
- An off-leash dog park
- Options for cheap recreational activities (i.e. \$2 drop-in swimming, gym, etc.)
- A "Makerspace" for local crafters/artists

# 5 Preliminary Development Concepts

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood with various development concepts overlaid in orange. The concepts include new street layouts, lot divisions, and building footprints. A large, irregularly shaped area in the upper-middle section is highlighted in a solid tan color, possibly indicating a specific development zone or a large-scale project area. The surrounding areas show existing street grids and building footprints in a more muted, greenish-grey tone.



## 5.1 Guiding Principles + Key Directions

The results of the formative public engagement, technical studies and background analysis, and the many hours of discussion among the Working Group provide a strong foundation of both technical information and community aspirations on which to build the preliminary development concepts and ultimately the final Secondary Plan for the Growth Centre of New Minas.

This foundation can be summarized by a series of “Guiding Principles” – broad values about how New Minas (including New Minas South) should develop in the future, and how the community should serve its residents and visitors. The Guiding Principles represent the fundamental expectations for New Minas and, as a result, should be clearly reflected or possible (given appropriately detailed policy and regulation) in all development concepts.

### A Place for People

- Enable diverse housing options that cater to a variety of household sizes and compositions, life stages, physical needs, and economic needs
- Build new infrastructure to be barrier-free, and retrofit existing infrastructure where barriers to accessibility exist
- Create public spaces that are beautiful and inviting
- Provide a variety of trails, parks, and other recreational opportunities to meet a diverse range of interests
- Create an interconnected and walkable transportation network that conveniently links people to the services they want and need
- Establish standards that require buildings and sites to be attractive and comfortable at a human scale
- Recognize areas of historical and cultural significance
- Form distinct neighbourhoods that contribute to a sense of place

### Green Living

- Facilitate and encourage transportation alternatives to the private automobile
- Leave steep slopes in a natural, vegetated state to minimize erosion, protect habitat, and reduce stress on natural water systems
- Reduce stormwater runoff volumes
- Preserve and utilize ecological services
- Conserve wetlands and water bodies to preserve water quality, natural hydrology, habitat, and biodiversity
- Provide ample opportunities for residents to connect with nature
- Provide tree-lined and shaded streetscapes
- Facilitate optimum conditions for the use of passive and active solar strategies

### A Regional Destination with a Strong Business Community

- Continue to support New Minas’ role as a regional destination for shopping at a variety of scales
- Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment along Commercial Street to improve safety, provide comfort to users, beautify the street, and highlight Commercial Street as the heart of New Minas
- Provide recreational facilities and supporting amenities that draw users from throughout the region
- Encourage users of Highway 101 and the Harvest Moon Trail to stop and spend time in New Minas

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### **Thoughtful Development and Sustainable Services**

- Plan development to take advantage of natural assets, such as views
- Devise a development framework that enables growth over time and can respond to market demand
- Develop a phasing plan that will make development practical and infrastructure investments logical
- Efficiently utilize existing infrastructure to make the most of existing investments
- Develop new areas in a manner that minimizes the need for new infrastructure
- Ensure the cost burden of new infrastructure is not placed on existing communities
- Establish a road network that minimizes the burden on local streets

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## 5.2 Preliminary Development Concepts

Three high-level, preliminary development concepts explore various ways in which New Minas could be developed in terms of land use, density, and preservation of open space.

These three concepts are intended to be very conceptual in nature. They provide a preliminary picture as a means to spark discussion and to supply inputs for preliminary traffic modeling. The scenarios are a test for the impact of different decisions that might be made.

The results of public discussion and the modeling will inform the “preferred development concept” that will be the basis of the policy and zoning in the Secondary Plan. The preferred development concept could borrow elements from multiple concepts, and from public ideas that arise from reviewing the concepts.

***These concepts are preliminary and should only be seen as material for sparking discussion. Nothing is set in stone.***



## **Shared Features**

All three preliminary development concepts share some features. These include the power corridors and the proposed connector road (see Section 3.6). They also include the following development features:

### **1. Commercial Street Intensification**

All of the development concepts assume mixed-use (residential and commercial) intensification along Commercial Street. The ample undeveloped lands and parking areas, as well as many commercial buildings reaching end-of-life, provide an opportunity for redevelopment and reconfiguration. One major policy incentive to encourage redevelopment could include permitting development up to six stories in height. The development scenario calculations assume redevelopment of 25% of the area along Commercial Street along with a wholesale redevelopment of the Country Fair Mall. With mixed-use development, these areas could accommodate approximately 1,700 new residential dwelling units and 3,700 new residents.

### **2. Environmental Protection of Ravines**

The three major ravines that run through New Minas South contain steep slopes and sensitive environments. All three development concepts assume these areas would be off limits for development. They could potentially be used for trails and other nature-based recreation opportunities.

### **3. Destination Parks**

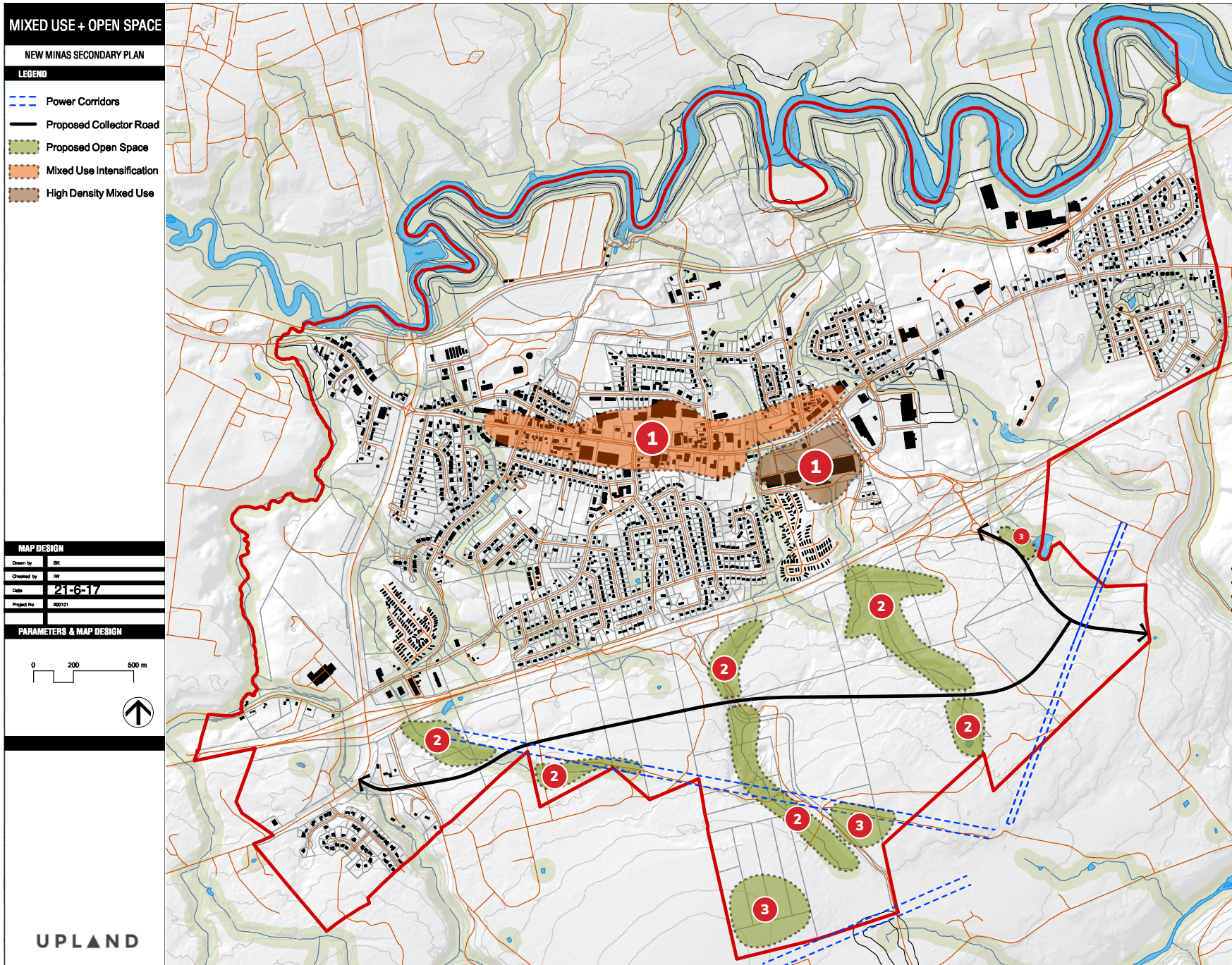
New Minas is a regional destination, not just for retail but also for recreation. All three concepts include “destination” parks. Two are located in the south extent of New Minas South, on the two highest points of land. These parks could be tied into a trail network running through the central ravine. The third park concept is located at the Granite Drive Interchange and would act as a view park, rest stop, and as a buffer between development and the adjacent watercourse.

Smaller neighbourhood parks, serving the immediate neighbourhood, would be included within other areas of New Minas South as development occurs.

### **4. Infill Development**

The three preliminary development concepts focus on Commercial Street and New Minas South since they are by far the largest spaces for new development in the coming years.

However, this does not exclude ongoing “infill development” within established areas of New Minas. This could include development of vacant lots, conversion of existing dwellings to contain more units, and development of “accessory dwellings” such as backyard suites or “granny flats”. The final Secondary Plan will consider these types of development.



## Shared Features

### Development Concept 1

In this concept, a large proportion of New Minas South would be dedicated for low-density residential development. For the purposes of calculations this is assumed to be primarily single-unit housing. Residential areas would also include neighbourhood-scale parks and potentially neighbourhood-oriented commercial (convenience stores, etc.) uses.

Approximately 38 acres of land at the Granite Drive Interchange, and 28 acres of land at Exit 12, are dedicated for commercial and highway commercial (gas stations, accommodations, etc.) development. This accommodates an estimated 350,000 square feet of retail floor area once area lost to circulation and parking are considered.

Based on an average residential lot size of 8,000 square feet, this concept accommodates almost 1,700 new dwellings in New Minas South. This lot size is double the smallest size (4,000 square feet) permitted within the Residential One Unit (R1) Zone, and smaller than the average lot size of approximately 12,000 square feet in New Minas.



1,666



3,566



SCENARIO 1

NEW MINAS SECONDARY PLAN

LEGEND

Low Density Residential

Mid Density Residential

High Density Residential

Mixed Use Intensification

High Density Mixed Use

General Commercial

Highway Commercial

Open Space

MAP DESIGN

Drawn by

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Date

Project No.

21-6-14

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PARAMETERS & MAP DESIGN

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UPLAND

Concept 1

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## Development Concept 2

This concept builds on Concept 1 to explore the effect of increasing residential density. The eastern residential portions, adjacent to the Granite Drive Interchange, are identified as a mix of two-unit development and multi-unit buildings.

Commercial development remains the same, with 38 acres at the Granite Drive Interchange and 28 acres at Exit 12.

Based on a lot size of 8,000 square feet for detached housing and 2,000 square feet per unit for attached housing, this concept would enable over 2,700 new dwellings within New Minas South. This is roughly in line with the residential density assumed in the development of the collector road concept in 2015.



2,740



5,865



SCENARIO 2

NEW MINAS SECONDARY PLAN

LEGEND

Low Density Residential

Mid Density Residential

High Density Residential

Mixed Use Intensification

High Density Mixed Use

General Commercial

Highway Commercial

Open Space

MAP DESIGN

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Date

Project No.

21-6-14

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PARAMETERS & MAP DESIGN

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Concept 2

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### Development Concept 3

This concept explores the impact of increasing commercial development area by converting 25 acres of land at the Granite Drive Interchange from purely residential to mixed-use development with ground floor commercial and higher-density residential on the upper floors. Additional housing density is also added to the “interior” neighbourhoods along portions of the east-west collector road.

This concept accommodates an additional 50,000 square feet or more of retail area. The extra residential density increases the number of dwellings to beyond 3,500.



3,510



7,511

SCENARIO 3

NEW MINAS SECONDARY PLAN

LEGEND

Low Density Residential

Mid Density Residential

High Density Residential

Mixed Use Intensification

High Density Mixed Use

General Commercial

Highway Commercial

Open Space

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Concept 3

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