

Proposed Amendments to the Land Use and Subdivision By-laws Regarding Phased Development, Cul-de-sac Standards, and R3/R4 Lot Frontage Standards

Staff Report TOK202549

Meeting Date: September 29, 2025
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

FOR RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

give First Reading and schedule a Public Hearing for proposed amendments to the Land Use By-law (LUB) and Subdivision By-law (SB) to:

1. Establish phased subdivision approval provisions, **including distinctions between local and collector streets**;
2. Regulate limited-access street systems (cul-de-sacs, temporary turnarounds, **looped streets**);
3. Revise lot frontage requirements in the Medium Density Residential (R3) and High Density Residential (R4) zones;
4. Establish connectivity incentives linked to density bonusing;
5. **Introduce collector street provisions requiring Town Engineer review where thresholds are exceeded**;
6. Address legacy streets that exceed current standards; and
7. **Require the reservation of corridors for future street connections, administered jointly by the Development Officer and Traffic Authority.**
8. ***Require a phasing agreement at tentative subdivision for a phased development. ***

*item introduced for process clarification, September 29, 2025

Background

Staff have initiated a review of subdivision and land use regulations to ensure development aligns with infrastructure capacity, street safety, and long-term growth management.

We expect subdivision activity to increase, particularly for larger developments with a mix of densities, and the Town's current regulations do not adequately address phasing, connectivity, emergency access, or evolving housing needs.

The CAC staff report introduced amendments focused on cul-de-sac length, unit thresholds, and phased subdivision approvals. Clarifications to the amendments have been provided to reflect the discussion at CAC, to include broader considerations such as the regulation of looped and existing overextended streets, the differentiation between local and collector streets, and the requirements for future street connections.

Discussion

Phasing, Emergency Access, and Growth Management as Central Principles

Phased subdivision approvals and emergency access standards are two tools that help to ensure that development proceeds safely and in step with infrastructure. Together, they guide how streets are laid out, how many units may be served at each stage, and how risks are mitigated when single-access streets are proposed.

Differentiating between local and collector streets is essential, as collector streets carry higher traffic volumes and serve as neighbourhood spines. To protect public safety and maintain long-term network efficiency, stricter thresholds and referral requirements to the Town Engineer and Traffic Authority are introduced. Their oversight ensures that street alignments, emergency access, and servicing capacity are reviewed against higher performance standards than those applied to local streets.

In addition to safety and servicing standards, growth management must remain a central consideration. Well-phased development helps align new housing with available infrastructure, fiscal capacity, and community amenities. By integrating growth management into subdivision approvals, the Town can balance development pressures with the ability to deliver services in a sustainable and timely manner. This approach ensures that new neighbourhoods not only meet immediate demand but also contribute to a resilient and well-connected urban structure over the long term.

The amendments have been organized into five areas to provide Council with a clear framework that links each policy change to its purpose, the street types affected, and the authority responsible for implementation. This structure helps make complex technical standards transparent and framed in a way that supports informed decision-making. Each section focuses on a core policy theme.

Area 1 – Street Connectivity & Temporary Terminations

Connectivity is central to subdivision design in Kentville. Temporary turnarounds and single-access systems should be managed to ensure long-term connections are preserved.

Amendment Focus:

- Regulation of limited-access street systems (cul-de-sacs, looped streets, temporary turnarounds).
- Requirement for future street connection corridors.
- Phasing provisions to ensure extensions occur in sequence.

Street Types Affected:

- Primarily local streets, but also collector streets where temporary terminations occur.

Relevant Authority:

- Development Officer (DO): Determines when temporary turnarounds are acceptable.
- Traffic Authority: Confirms location and alignment of reserved corridors
- Town Engineer: Reviews temporary turnaround criteria on collector streets.

Area 2 – Maximum Lengths & Dwelling Unit Thresholds

Length and unit limits help ensure that single-access streets remain safe and serviceable at all stages of subdivision phasing.

Amendment Focus:

- Local Streets:
 - Max 100 m permanent cul-de-sac to a maximum of 60 units. Connectivity incentives allow for up to 70 units up to 150 m with a walkway link; 90 units up to 200 m with an all-weather emergency connection.
 - Temporary turnaround cap: 60 units / 150 m; extendable to 120 units / 300 m with emergency access.
- Collector Streets:
 - Additional criterium — referral to Town Engineer if exceeding 150 m or 60 units.
 - Additional collector length may only be considered where:
 - A future street connection corridor is reserved and secured on the subdivision plan by way of right-of-way or registered easement in the favour of the Town of Kentville;
 - A permanent all-weather emergency connection is provided to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer; and
 - The Traffic Authority confirms that intersection spacing, alignment, and traffic operations meet safety standards.
 - Additional collector street length is hard-capped at four hundred and fifty (450) metres in length or one hundred and eighty (180) dwelling units with a temporary turnaround until a permanent street connection is provided.

Street Types Affected:

- Both local and collector streets.

Relevant Authority:

- DO: Applies thresholds during approvals.
- Town Engineer: Confirms where thresholds are exceeded and reviews emergency access.
- Traffic Authority: Confirms spacing, alignment, and traffic flow for collector extensions.

Area 3 – Emergency Access Requirements

Emergency access is a core principle of the amendments, helping to ensure that no subdivision phase leaves residents or services dependent on a single constrained route.

Amendment Focus:

- New Emergency Access – General Provisions in the SB.
- Requirement for all-weather emergency connections to extend permanent cul-de-sacs up to 200 m.
- Phased approval conditioned on maintaining emergency access in each stage beyond the first 60 units/150 m.

Street Types Affected:

- Both local and collector.

Relevant Authority:

- DO: Ensures emergency access conditions are applied.
- Town Engineer: Certifies all-weather connections.
- Traffic Authority: Verifies access alignments.

Area 4 – Legacy / Existing Overextended Streets

Several older Kentville streets exceed the current standard for length. These “legacy streets” require special treatment to prevent compounding risks through rezoning or infill development.

Amendment Focus:

- Define “Existing Overextended Street.”
- Permits up to 80 units and up to 120 units through the provision of an all-weather emergency connection.

Street Types Affected:

- Existing local and collector streets built prior to current and proposed standards.

Relevant Authority:

- DO: Applies regulations.
- Council: Retains discretion in rezoning cases.
- Town Engineer: Advises on servicing capacity.

Area 5 – Lot Frontage Standards (Land Use By-law)

Lot frontage requirements influence subdivision density, streetscape, and servicing costs. Adjustments in the R3 and R4 zones support more compact, affordable housing forms while preserving safety and efficiency.

Amendment Focus:

Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone

- Multi-unit Dwelling (three to four units): 15.24 m (50 ft)
- Multi-unit Dwelling (five to eight units): 15.24 m (50 ft)

High Density Residential (R4) Zone

- Multi-unit Dwelling (three to four units): 15.24 m (50 ft)
- Multi-unit Dwelling (five+ units): 15.24 m (50 ft)

Street Types Affected:

- Applies town-wide where R3 and R4 zones exist.

Relevant Authority:

- DO: Applies at subdivision approval and development permit review.

Proposed Amendments

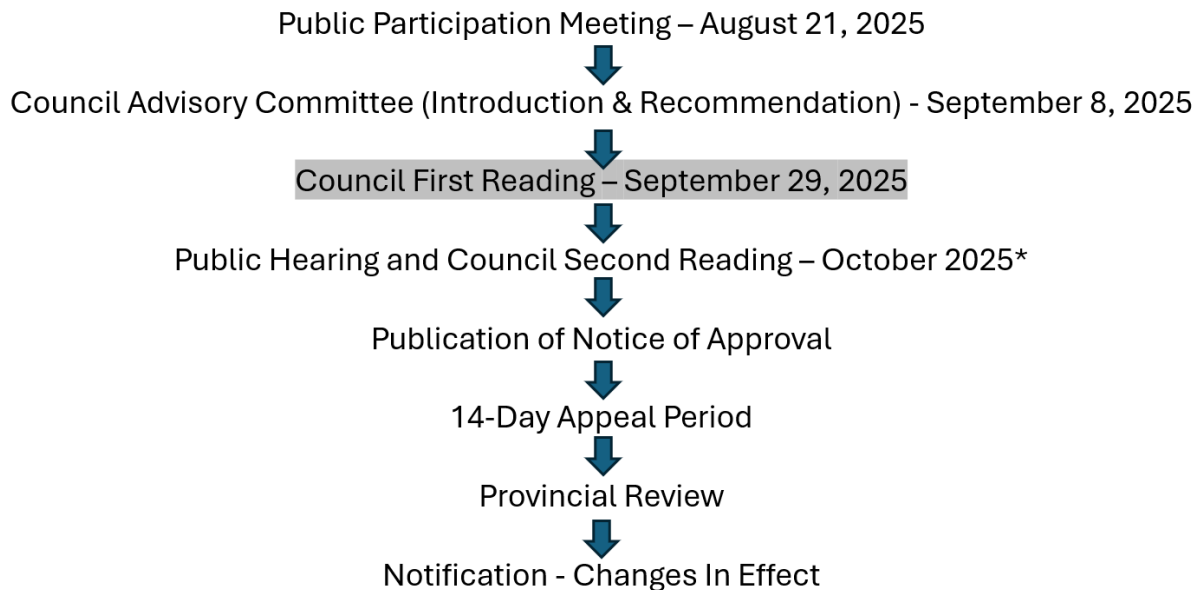
Land Use By-law (LUB):

- Add definitions: limited-access street system, looped street, flag lot (amended), permanent cul-de-sac, temporary turnaround, collector street, existing overextended street, all-weather emergency connection, future street connection corridor, and local street.
- Revise lot frontage standards in R3 and R4.
- Add density bonusing criteria tied to connectivity.
- Add cross-reference to SB requiring collector street phasing review.

Subdivision By-law (SB):

- Add Phased Development – General Provisions.
- Add Emergency Access – General Provisions.
- Add definitions: limited-access street system, looped street, flag lot (amended), permanent cul-de-sac, temporary turnaround, collector street, existing overextended street, all-weather emergency connection, future street connection corridor, and local street.
- Add future street connection corridor requirements (DO + Traffic Authority).
- Add connectivity incentives tied to cul-de-sac extensions, walkways, and emergency connections.
- Add provisions for Existing Overextended Streets.

Next Steps



Appendices

Appendix A – Revised LUB Text Amendments

Appendix B – Revised SB Text Amendments

Appendix C – Revised Limited-Access Street System Map and Table

Appendix D – CAC Presentation – September 8, 2025

APPENDIX A – New LUB Text Amendments

Add the following definitions to Section 2 – Definitions:

- **Limited-Access Street System** means a street or street network that provides only one point of vehicular access to the surrounding public street network, including cul-de-sacs, looped streets, and temporary turnarounds.
- **Looped Street** means a local street that extends from a single stem and continues in a circular alignment, rejoining the stem, thereby providing internal circulation but only one point of external access.
- **Flag Lot** means a lot with a narrow strip of land providing access to a public street and a wider portion of land located behind other lots, where the access strip is intended solely to provide legal and physical access.
- **Permanent Cul-de-Sac** means a street permanently terminated by a bulb with no further extension intended.
- **Temporary Turnaround** means a turnaround provided at the end of a street that is intended for future extension as shown on the approved tentative or final subdivision plan.
- **Collector Street** means a street identified as a collector (major or minor) as described in the Municipal Planning Strategy Policy T-3 and indicated on the MPS Transportation Map.
- **Existing Overextended Street** means a street constructed prior to the adoption of these amendments that exceeds the maximum permitted length or dwelling unit thresholds for limited-access street systems.
- **All-Weather Emergency Connection** means a secondary means of access designed to accommodate emergency and service vehicles, as well as local residents, in the case of emergency, year-round, constructed to standards acceptable to the Town Engineer.

- **Future Street Connection Corridor** means a reserved right-of-way in favour of the Town of Kentville shown on a subdivision plan to provide for the future extension of a street to an existing road network, as required by the Development Officer in consultation with the Traffic Authority.
- **Local street** means a street identified as a local street as described in the Municipal Planning Strategy Policy T-3 and indicated on the MPS Transportation Map.

1. General Provisions (New Section)

Section 4.1.33 Streets

- a) **Temporary Turnarounds** – Where a subdivision plan identifies a street intended for future extension, development on lots abutting a temporary turnaround shall only be permitted where the turnaround has been constructed in accordance with Section 8.8 of the Subdivision By-law and is designed to provide complete connectivity.
- b) **Permanent Cul-de-Sacs** – Development shall not be permitted on lots abutting a permanent cul-de-sac that exceeds:
 - 100 m (328 ft) in length;
 - 150 m (492 ft) in length where a multi-use pathway connects the cul-de-sac head to another public street; or
 - 200 m (656 ft) in length where an all-weather emergency connection of at least 4.6 m (15 ft) in width connects to another public street.

No permanent cul-de-sac shall serve more than 60 dwelling units.

- c) **Collector Streets** – Where a collector street terminates in a limited-access street system. Development on abutting lots shall only be permitted where the street does not exceed 100 m (328 ft) or 80 dwelling units served. Additional connectivity may be considered by the Development Officer and Town Engineer if the following is provided:
 - i. A future street connection corridor is reserved on the subdivision plan;
 - ii. An all-weather emergency connection is provided to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer; and

iii. *The Traffic Authority confirms that alignment, intersection spacing, and traffic operations are adequate.*

d) **Existing Overextended Streets** – *Where an existing overextended street serves more than sixty (60) dwelling units or exceeds one hundred and fifty (150) metres in length, the maximum number of units permitted shall be eighty (80). This cap may be increased to one hundred and twenty (120) dwelling units where the developer provides a secondary all-weather emergency connection designed to accommodate fire apparatus, to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer. If full connectivity is provided through an approved tentative plan of subdivision, then no unit cap is no longer applicable.*

e) **Future Street Connection Corridors** – *Where a subdivision plan identifies a future street connection corridor, development on abutting lots shall respect the reserved alignment and no permanent structure shall obstruct the corridor.*

Intent:

- Embeds connectivity, length, and unit thresholds into land use controls, complementing the Subdivision By-law.
- Differentiates local vs. collector streets to align with their functional roles.
- Uses land use tools to reinforce subdivision design standards.
- Provides clarity for development officers when reviewing development permit and subdivision applications.
- Provides regulation for existing overextended streets.

2. Minimum Lot Frontage (Amended Sections 5.4.4 and 5.5.3)

Section 5.4.4 – Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone

- Multi-unit Dwelling (three to four units): 15.24 m (50 ft)
- Multi-unit Dwelling (five to eight units): 15.24 m (50 ft)

Section 5.5.3 – High Density Residential (R4) Zone

- Multi-unit Dwelling (three to four units): 15.24 m (50 ft)
- Multi-unit Dwelling (five+ units): 15.24 m (50 ft)

Intent:

- Reduces 100 ft frontage standard in medium/high-density zones.
- Aligns with SPIs and supports infill.
- Maintains lot area minimums to balance scale and form.

APPENDIX B - New SB Text Amendments

Add the following definitions to Section 2 – Definitions:

- ***Permanent Cul-de-Sac*** means a street permanently terminated by a bulb or turnaround with no further extension intended.
- ***Temporary Turnaround*** means a turnaround provided at the end of a street that is intended for future extension as shown on the approved tentative plan of subdivision.
- ***Existing Overextended Street*** means a street constructed prior to the adoption of these amendments that exceeds the maximum permitted length or dwelling unit thresholds established for limited-access street systems.
- ***All-Weather Emergency Connection*** means a secondary means of access designed to accommodate emergency and service vehicles, as well as local residents, year-round, constructed to standards acceptable to the Town Engineer.
- ***Future Street Connection Corridor*** means a reserved right-of-way shown on a subdivision plan to provide for the future extension of a street to adjoining lands, required jointly by the Development Officer and the Traffic Authority.
- ***Collector Street*** means a street identified as a collector street as described in the Municipal Planning Strategy Policy T-3 and indicated on the MPS Transportation Map.
- ***Local Street*** means a street identified as a local street as described in the Municipal Planning Strategy Policy T-3 and indicated on the MPS Transportation Map.
- ***Subdivision Agreement*** means an agreement entered into pursuant to the Municipal Government Act between the developer and the Town of Kentville, including provisions for phasing where applicable.

- **Limited-Access Street System** means a street or street network that provides only one point of vehicular access to the surrounding public street network, including cul-de-sacs, looped streets, and temporary turnarounds.
- **Looped Street** means a local street that extends from a single stem and continues in a circular alignment, rejoining the stem, thereby providing internal circulation but only one point of external access.

1. Phased Subdivision Approvals - Proposed Text – (New Section)

Section 8.21 Phased Subdivision Approvals

- a) Subdivision final approvals may be granted in phases where full build-out, including lots, streets, and infrastructure, is intended, based on the approved Tentative Plan of Subdivision.
- b) Where full street connectivity cannot be achieved within a single phase, any temporary street termination on a **local street** shall not:
 - i. serve more than sixty (60) dwelling units; or
 - ii. exceed one hundred and fifty (150) metres in length.
- c) Where full street connectivity cannot be achieved within a single phase, any temporary street termination on a **collector street** shall not:
 - i. serve more than sixty (60) dwelling units; or
 - ii. exceed one hundred and fifty (150) metres in length, except where additional criteria are satisfied to the approval of the Development Officer, Town Engineer, and Traffic Authority, including:
 - 1. reservation of a future street connection corridor on the subdivision plan by way of right-of-way or registered easement in the favour of the Town of Kentville;
 - 2. provision of an all-weather emergency connection; and
 - 3. written confirmation from the Traffic Authority that intersection spacing, alignment, and traffic operations are adequate.

d) Notwithstanding Section 8.21(b–c), a temporary street termination may serve more than the thresholds above, provided that the developer supplies a secondary means of emergency access. Such access shall be in the form of either:

- a public street; or*
- an all-weather emergency connection designed to accommodate fire apparatus, to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer.*
 - i. Where such access is provided on a **local** street, no temporary street termination shall:*
 - 1. serve more than one hundred and twenty (120) dwelling units; or*
 - 2. exceed three hundred (300) metres in length.*
 - ii. Where a temporary turnaround on a **collector street** exceeds three hundred (300) metres in length or one hundred and twenty (120) units, additional review and approval by the Town Engineer and Traffic Authority shall be required, with provisions for future connection or emergency access.*

In considering such extensions, the following criteria shall apply:

- 1. The Development Officer shall be satisfied that:*
 - a. A future road connection corridor is reserved and secured on the subdivision plan reserved and secured on the subdivision plan by way of right-of-way or registered easement in the favour of the Town of Kentville;*
- 2. The Town Engineer shall be satisfied that:*
 - a. an all-weather emergency connection capable of accommodating fire apparatus is constructed to municipal standards;*
 - b. municipal services are designed to accommodate the extended phase and are capable of connection to future roads; and*
 - c. the design of the temporary turnaround conforms to a standard acceptable by the Town Engineer.*

3. *The Traffic Authority shall be satisfied that:*

- a. interim traffic volumes can be safely accommodated without unacceptable impacts to traffic operations or neighbourhood safety; and*
- b. sight distances, turning movements, and traffic control measures are appropriate for the extended configuration.*
- e) In no case shall a temporary turnaround on a collector street exceed four hundred and fifty (450) metres in length or serve more than one hundred and eighty (180) dwelling units. Any proposal beyond these limits shall require full permanent road connectivity to the satisfaction of the Town.*
- f) The amount of securities shall be sufficient to cover the estimated cost of removing the temporary turnaround and completing the permanent street extension and maintenance, as determined by the Town Engineer.*
- g) Upon completion and acceptance of each phase, securities shall be released in proportion to the estimated cost of that phase relative to the total subdivision, less a 10% holdback retained for the duration of the maintenance period.*
- h) Where a temporary turnaround is proposed, the future street corridor must be shown on the final subdivision plan and noted in the approval conditions.*
- i) Where phased subdivision approval is sought, a Phasing Agreement shall be entered into with the Town at the Tentative stage. This agreement shall establish sequencing, conditions, and securities. Subdivision Agreements entered into at each Final stage shall implement the provisions of the Phasing Agreement for that phase. *item introduced September 29, 2025***

Intent:

- Sets numeric thresholds for local and collector streets when full connectivity cannot be provided.
- Requires securities to protect the Town and guarantee future connections.
- Introduces oversight by the Town Engineer and Traffic Authority for collector streets.
- Mandates clear identification of future connections on plans.

2. Permanent Cul-de-sacs and Temporary Turnarounds - Proposed Text – (Amended Section)

Permanent Cul-de-sacs (Section 8.8)

- a) Permanent cul-de-sacs shall not exceed 100 m, or 150 m where a walkway at the cul-de-sac head connects to another public street, or 200 m where an all-weather emergency connection connects to another public street.*
- b) Dwelling unit limits for permanent cul-de-sacs shall be as follows:*
 - i. A maximum of sixty (60) dwelling units where the length of the cul-de-sac is one hundred (100) metres or less;*
 - ii. A maximum of seventy (70) dwelling units where the length of the cul-de-sac is greater than one hundred (100) metres but does not exceed one hundred and fifty (150) metres, provided that a public walkway connection is established to the satisfaction of the Town;*
 - iii. A maximum of ninety (90) dwelling units where the length of the cul-de-sac is greater than one hundred and fifty (150) metres but does not exceed two hundred (200) metres, provided that an all-weather emergency connection capable of accommodating fire apparatus is constructed to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer.*
- c) A permanent cul-de-sac serving more than the unit caps above shall not be permitted unless a second public street connection is provided.*

Section 8.23 Temporary Turnarounds (New Section)

- a) Temporary turnarounds shall be required where a street is planned for future extension in order to provide complete connectivity, as shown on the approved Tentative Plan of Subdivision.*
- b) Temporary turnarounds shall be constructed to a standard acceptable to the Town Engineer and shall permit safe turnaround of emergency and service vehicles.*

- c) *Where an emergency access gate is required, a protocol for use shall be established by the Town in consultation with emergency service providers.*

Intent:

- Ensures temporary turnarounds and cul-de-sacs are built to engineering standards.
- Applies tiered thresholds with incentives (walkway, emergency access).
- Differentiates temporary turnaround criteria between local and collector streets.
- Caps permanent cul-de-sacs at 60 units unless connectivity is improved.
- Introduces emergency access gate protocol requirement.

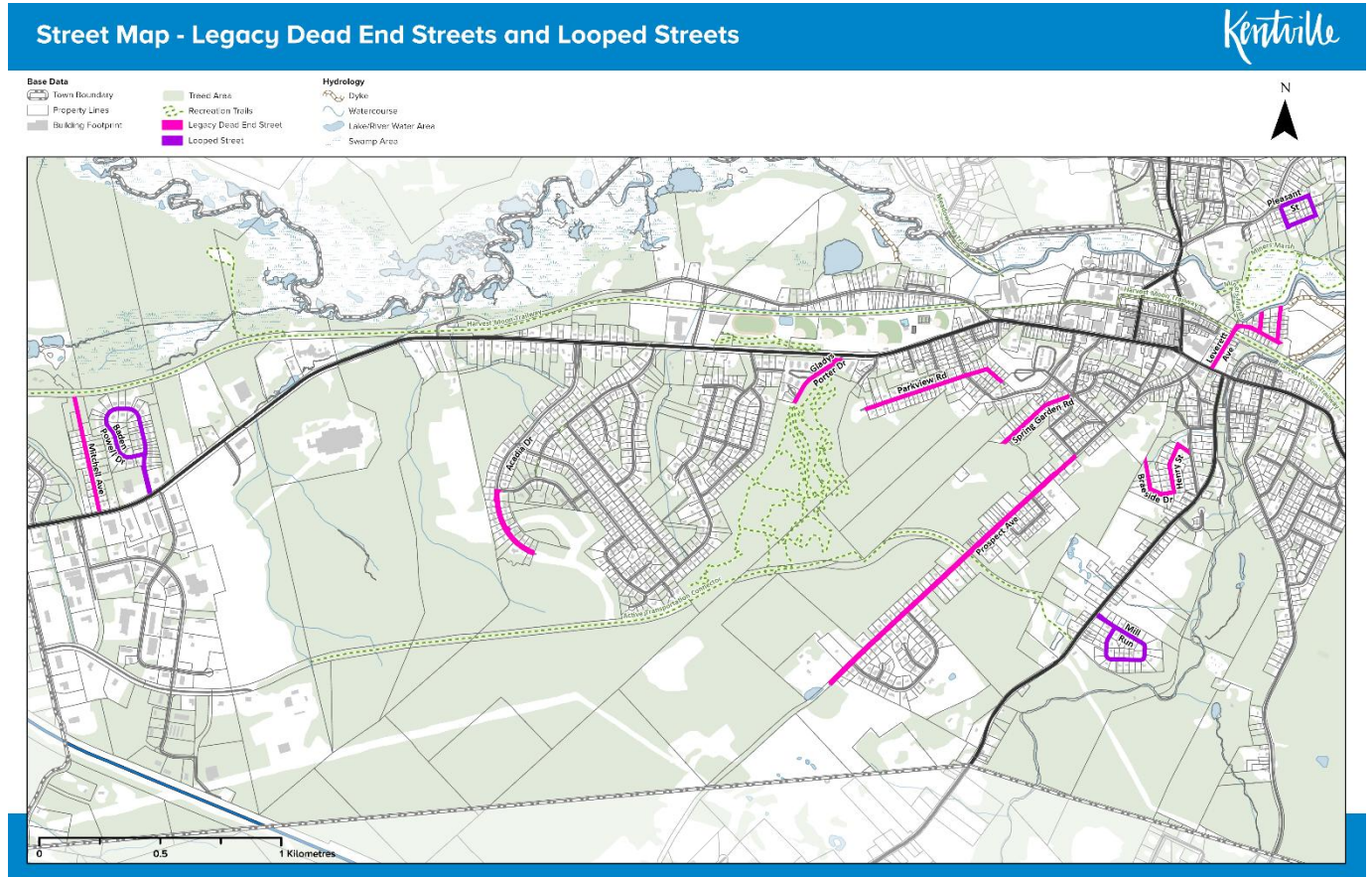
3. Addition to Municipal Road Specifications (New Section)

Section 2.15

An All-Weather Emergency Connection provides a secondary access route intended for use by fire, police, ambulance, and other emergency vehicles, as well as local residents, in the event the primary street access is obstructed. Such connections shall:

- 1. Be constructed of an all-weather surface (e.g., compacted gravel, asphalt millings, concrete, or pavement) capable of supporting the imposed loads of fire and service apparatus;*
- 2. Have a minimum clear width of 6.0 metres (20 ft), exclusive of shoulders, and a vertical clearance of not less than 4.6 metres (15 ft);*
- 3. Provide a continuous, unobstructed path from the subdivision to a public street;*
- 4. Be designed to accommodate turning radii of emergency vehicles;*
- 5. Remain free of barriers such as fences, gates, or landscaping unless such barriers are approved breakaway, lockbox, or electronically controlled gates acceptable to the Town Engineer; and*
- 6. Be maintained in a condition that provides year-round accessibility, including during snow, ice, or other adverse weather conditions.*

APPENDIX C:



Legacy Dead End Streets

Road Name	Length (ft)	Length (m)	Number of Units
Spring Garden Road	1,173	357	18
Parkview Road	1,441	439	44
Henry/Braeside Drive	1,594	486	24
Gladys Porter Dr (<i>Kadray Court/Blanchard Fraser Place</i>)	939	286	60
Parkview Road/Comeau Avenue	567	173	15
Prospect Avenue (Overlook to End)	4,471	1,363	134
Leverett Avenue/Klondyke Street/Chestnut Place	1,741	531	62
Mitchell Avenue	2,003	611	22
Acadia Drive	1,075	328	22

Looped Streets

Road Name	Length (ft)	Length (m)	Number of Units
Mill Run	2,090	637	37
Baden Powell Drive	2,504	763	78
Burke Subdivision (<i>Colonial Ave/Fairview St/Hillside Ave/Pleasant St</i>)	1,625	495	23