The Annapolis Heritage Society

Submission to
the Town of Annapolis Royal
Strategic Planning Process

December, 2006

As part of its strategic planning process, the Town of Annapolis Royal has invited interested parties to provide input into the revision of the Town Strategic Plan.

The Annapolis Heritage Society (AHS), custodian of three area museums, a genealogy centre, the community archives and an extensive local artifact collection, is pleased to provide our input in the form of this submission. Our recommendations are based on our belief that the Town’s modern economy and potential growth can be enhanced by the Town becoming a “centre of excellence” for heritage preservation, its interpretation and the economic benefits derived from heritage resources.

Setting the stage
Annapolis Royal is home to three National Historic Sites and the highest concentration of heritage buildings, trees and streetscapes per population in Canada. The history of Annapolis Royal is the history of our country, and as such, it is both unique and important. The Town is recognized for its commitment to heritage and natural beauty, as evidenced by the many awards it has received, especially in recent years.

We feel that the Town can build on this recognized commitment to heritage and further enhance its leadership, both provincially and nationally, by achieving two goals:
- strengthening preservation of its heritage environment for the benefit of future generations, and
- increasing potential economic benefits from its heritage resources.

Our concerns
AHS has six areas of concern related to the accomplishment of these goals. These are:
- the preservation of the Town’s tree canopy and historic green spaces
- the management of the “hidden record”…archaeology in Annapolis Royal
- the strength of regulations governing building designation and “historic districts”
- the placement and character of new buildings and additions, both residential and commercial (in other words, zoning)
- the philosophy of appropriate signage
- the awareness of heritage and its significance within the broader community.
Rather than detail these concerns in this submission, we have listed the initiatives we feel should be adopted by the Town’s strategic planning framework to address them.

Our recommendations

1. **Develop a heritage environment enhancement and protection program**
   This would cover care, protection, by-law management and awareness of heritage trees and tree canopy sightlines, historic green spaces (such as the lawns in front of the lighthouse and the Court House), heritage gardens, the waterfront area, overhead utility wires, fencing and outbuildings.

2. **Support the development and implementation of an Archaeological Sensitivity Map for the historic district of Annapolis Royal**
   This would be a valuable tool for planned development and maintenance for the Town, and for potential education/tourism initiatives by local universities and the private sector. AHS would partner in this initiative.

3. **Seek and review “best practice reports” in heritage preservation, planning, enforcement, incentive development and economic spin-off potential from other communities recognized as leaders in their field.**
   This review of the work of others would help local businesses and organizations understand how they could maximize the economic benefits of heritage.

4. **Seek and review the signage policies and philosophies of other heritage communities**
   We have attached the signage policy of Port Townsend, Washington State, provided by Dr. Niki Clark, a member of the AHS Board and the former executive director of five heritage museums and sites in that community.

5. **Develop a specific support program for local heritage organizations and businesses interested in marketing heritage in its broad sense**
   This mechanism would offer advice and support to those seeking funding or business opportunities in archaeological investigation, heritage expertise, experiential tourism, heritage education, renovation, restoration or sympathetic new construction.

6. **Develop a heritage property owner’s information package in both print and web formats**
   This would explain the municipal and provincial laws governing heritage property, the role of PHAC and the importance of the placement and character of new buildings and additions within the heritage framework of the Town. It would serve as a reference source and planning tool. AHS would partner in this initiative.
In addition, we would like to propose one more initiative for the Town to consider, not directly related to our six areas of concern.

7. Create a charitable Annapolis Royal Foundation to support the work of heritage preservation and programming by both the Town and local organizations
New tax laws and regulations governing personal donations make this an attractive option to investigate.

In conclusion
Annapolis Royal is already well placed to be a “Centre of Excellence” for heritage preservation, its interpretation and the economic benefits derived from heritage resources. We feel that the seven initiatives proposed in our submission will help the Town achieve the twin goals we outlined on Page 1.

We would be happy to meet with the Mayor, the CAO and members of Council to expand on our concerns, our ideas and our offers of partnership.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Lawrence, President
Annapolis Heritage Society