

TOWN of GANDER



Municipal Plan 2009 – 2019 Background Report

Prepared by:

**ADI Limited
&
Newfoundland and Labrador
Consulting Engineers Ltd.**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Plan Review

Incorporated in 1959, and originally “planned” by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) the Town of Gander has experienced both periods of rapid growth and development and periods of downturn. The Town has also conducted several municipal plan reviews in the intervening years since its first municipal plan was prepared by CMHC in 1958. The most recent review undertaken in 1999, resulted in a background report and municipal plan covering the time period 2000 to 2010. In the fall of 2007 *ADI Limited* of Fredericton together with its Newfoundland company, *Newfoundland and Labrador Consulting Engineers Limited* of St. John’s were hired by the Town of Gander to undertake the Municipal Plan Review.

This report, conducted in 2007/2008 has been prepared to address the time period 2009 to 2019. It is based on a review of existing conditions such as population trends, economic factors, changes in demographic patterns, land use and current development, infrastructure and servicing, and quality of life indicators such as leisure and recreation services. This report, outlines “issues and options” resulting from the collection and synthesis of background data and public consultation and forms the Background Report leading to the preparation of the Town of Gander Municipal Plan 2009-2019.

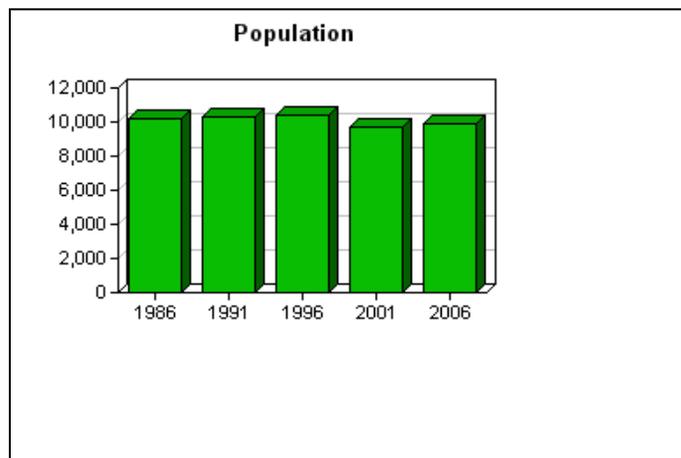
Consultation with Town Council, the Steering Committee, Town Staff, local interest groups, key stakeholders, residents and individuals and government agencies promoted the identification of planning issues affecting the Town of Gander. Options for their resolution are suggested as recommendations for future development of the Town of Gander. The issues and options background report provides the framework and rationale for updates and changes to the current Municipal Plan.

2.0 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

2.1 Current and Historical Population

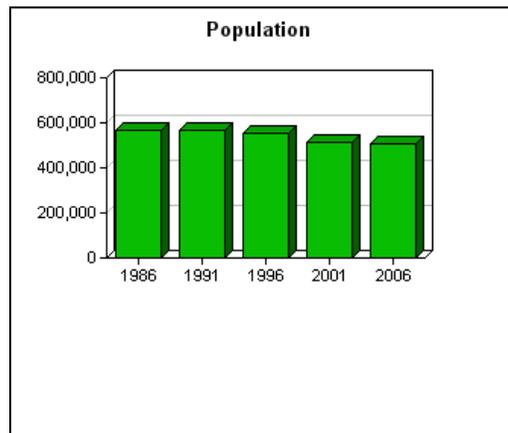
According to the 2006 Census, Gander has a population of 9,951. Table 1 illustrates the change in Gander’s population since 1986. The 1986 population was 10,205 and increased slightly over the next ten years to reach 10,365 by 1996. There was a significant population decline over the next five years resulting in a 7 percent drop in population by 2001. Since 2001, Gander has reversed the population decline resulting in a 3 percent population increase over the past five years. The current demand for new housing suggests that the population has continued to grow since the 2006 census.

Figure 1 - Gander Population: 1986-2006



Gander’s modest population declines and increases over the past 20 years are contrasted with the Provincial population trends exhibited in Figure 2. Newfoundland and Labrador’s population was stable during the late 1980’s followed by a steady decline since 1992. The Provincial population decline reflects a range of factors including declining employment opportunities leading to out migration, declining birth rates and rising death rates due to an aging population.

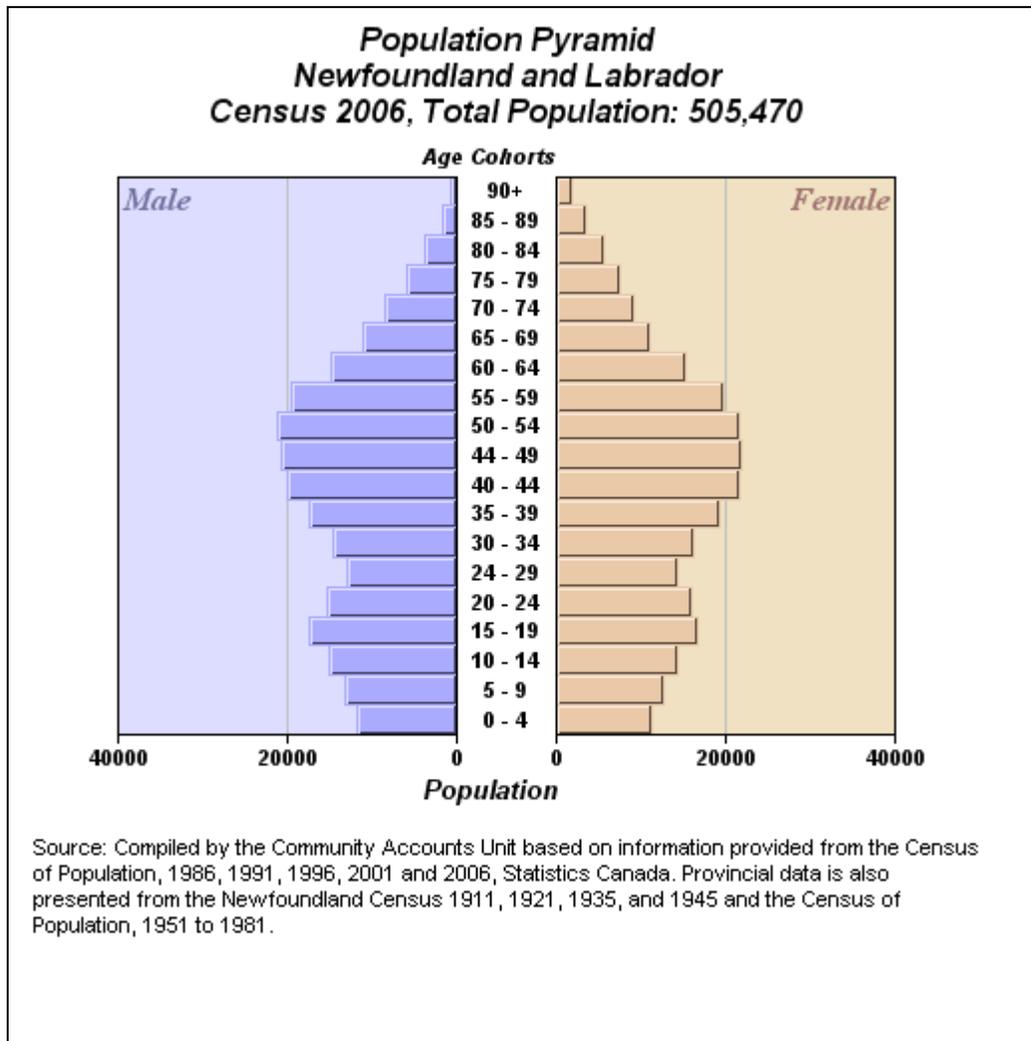
Figure 2 - Newfoundland and Labrador Population: 1986-2006



2.2 Key Demographic Characteristics: Age

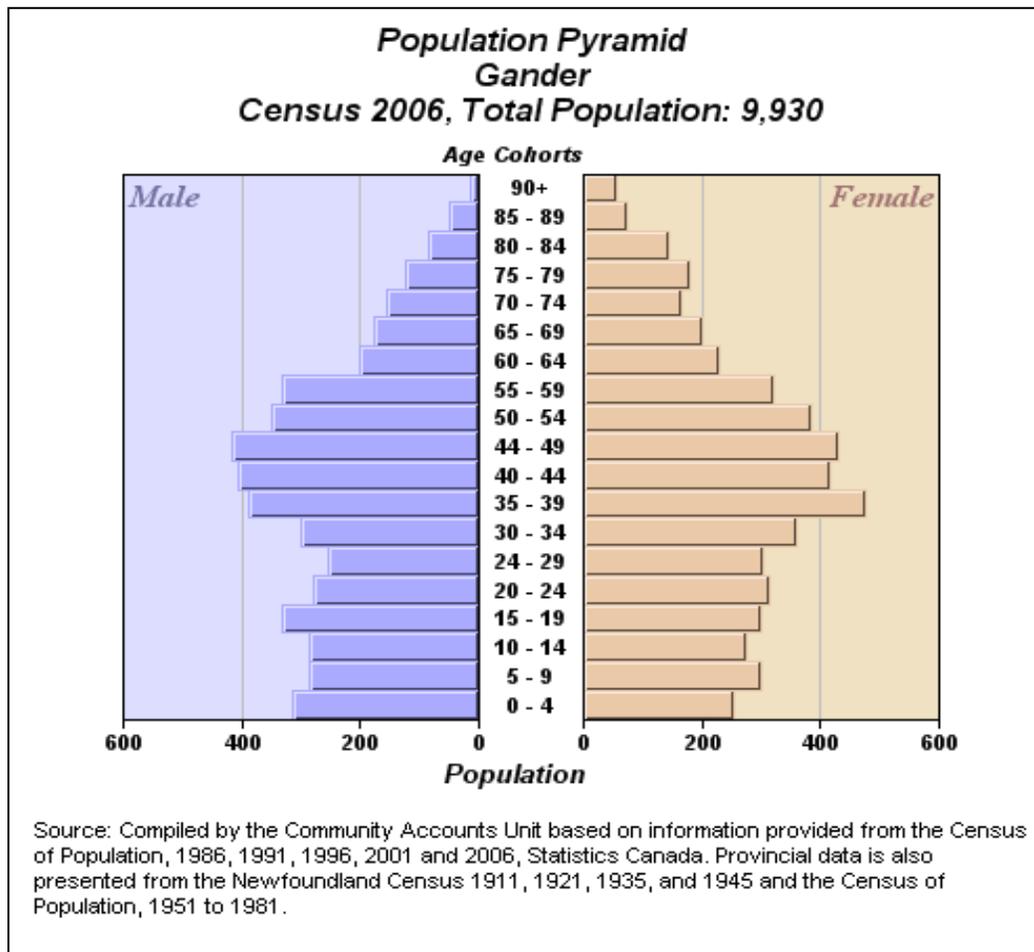
The population of Newfoundland and Labrador, like the rest of Canada, is getting older. As the baby boomer generation gets older, so does the average age of the population. This, combined with longer life expectancy, out-migration of younger members of the workforce and lower birth rates is resulting in a trend towards an aging population that will increase for some time. NL has one of the oldest populations in Canada as illustrated in the population pyramid in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Newfoundland and Labrador Population Pyramid



Gander’s population is also aging, but as Figure 4 demonstrates, it has a younger workforce (24 to 59 years) and a larger proportion of its population in the preschool and school age categories (0 to 24 years) compared to the Provincial population.

Figure 4 – Gander Population Pyramid



However, as Figures 5 and 6 illustrate, Gander will need to focus on the aging population issue. The prime labour force has been declining steadily over the past 25 years. Figure 5 shows a similar pattern for youth (those in secondary and post secondary education). Figure 6 illustrates a steady rise of the population 55 and older.

Figure 5 – Gender Age Structure – 15 to 24 years

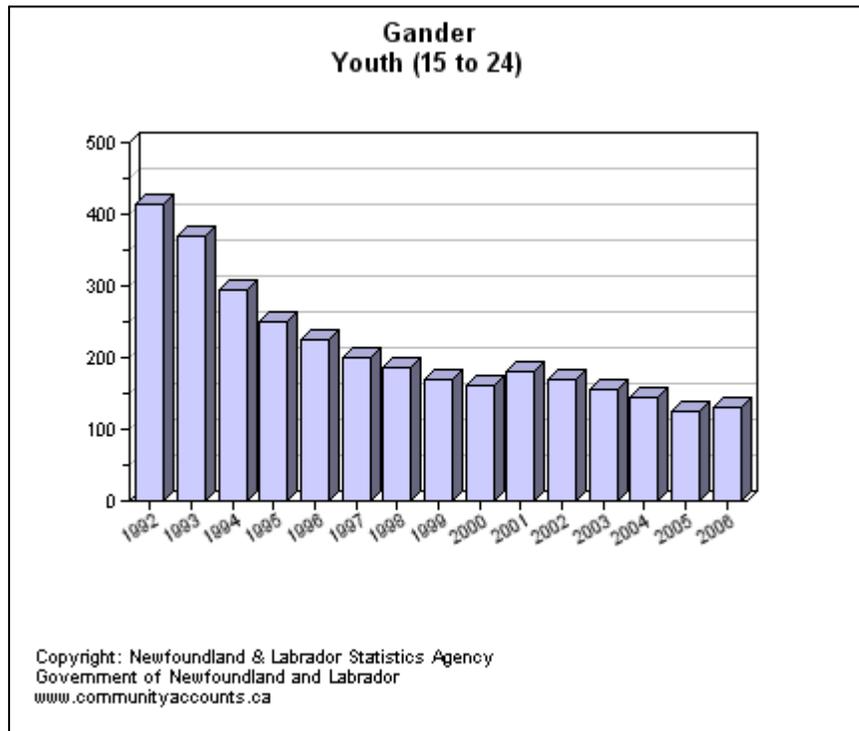
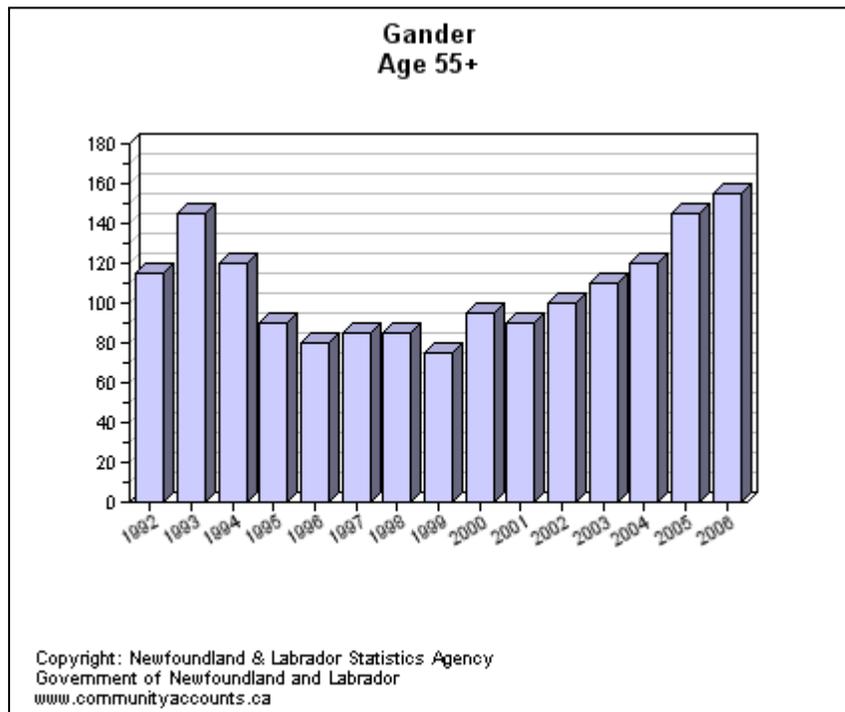


Figure 6 – Gender Age Structure Age 55 +



2.3 Future Demographic Trends

The change in population demographics from one year to the next is a result of natural aging of the population plus the effects of births, deaths and migration.

2.3.1 Population Aging

Figure 7 illustrates the age structure of the Gander population in 2001 and 2006. The natural population aging results in the population in each age group moving up one age group every five years. For example, the 0 to 4 years age group in 2001 make up most of the 5 to 9 years age group in 2006.

Examining the individual age groups, we see that the 520 children between the ages of 0 to 4 years in 2001 are now (2006) in the 5 to 9 years age group. However, this group now has a population of 590, indicating a net increase of 70 children. This increase is a result of 70 more children moving to Gander than those that left Gander or died. There was a net increase of 20 for the (2001) 5 to 9 years group and a net increase of 10 for the (2001) 10 to 14 age group. However, as we move into the older age groups, we see this trend reverse. Over the five year period 2001 – 2006, the 15 to 19 age group (in 2001) declined by 105 as it moved to the next age group in 2006 due to more out migration and deaths than in migration. This same trend occurred for the 20 to 24 age group but reverses again for the 25 to 29 age group which had a net increase of 55 as it moved to the next age group in 2006. The 30 to 34 age group also had a net increase. However for the rest of the 2001 age groups there was a net loss, reflecting higher out migration and deaths than in migration. Among the relevant trends that should be noted are:

- ***Increase in 0 to 4 years and 5 to 9 years Population***

An encouraging trend for Gander is the increase in the preschool (0 to 4 years) and 5 to 9 years population. This reflects both the birth rate and in migration and is mirrored by the increases in the 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 age groups (in 2001), presumably the parents of many of these young children. Continued population growth will depend to a large part on attracting and maintaining these younger age groups.

Figure 7 Gander Demographic Population Change 2001-2006

	2001 CENSUS			2006 CENSUS			% CHANGE		
	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL
Total Age Groups	4,715	4,945	9,660	4,745	5,190	9,951	0.60%	5.00%	2.80%
0-4	250	265	520	315	255	570	26.00%	-3.80%	9.60%
5-9	280	270	545	285	300	590	1.80%	11.10%	8.30%
10-14	330	290	620	285	275	565	-13.60%	-5.20%	-8.90%
15-19	360	340	700	330	300	630	-8.30%	-11.80%	10.00%
20-24	340	325	665	280	315	595	-17.60%	-3.10%	10.50%
25-29	290	320	605	255	305	560	-12.10%	-4.70%	-7.40%
30-34	390	435	825	300	360	660	-23.10%	-17.20%	20.00%
35-39	410	410	825	390	475	865	-4.90%	15.90%	4.80%
40-44	420	430	850	405	415	820	-3.60%	-3.50%	-3.50%
45-49	370	395	760	415	430	840	12.20%	8.90%	10.50%
50-54	350	340	690	350	385	730	0.00%	13.20%	5.80%
55-59	215	230	450	330	320	645	53.50%	39.10%	43.30%
60-64	190	205	390	200	230	430	5.30%	12.20%	10.30%
65-69	180	170	345	175	200	375	-2.80%	17.60%	8.70%
70-74	125	200	325	155	165	325	24.00%	-17.50%	0.00%
75-79	115	160	280	125	180	305	8.70%	12.50%	8.90%
80-84	65	75	135	85	145	235	74.10%
85-89	30	50	85	50	75	120
90+	15	25	40						

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, 2008

- ***Decline in Preschool and School Age Population***

A comparison of the 0 to 19 years population in 2001 versus 2006 illustrates that there has been a slight net decrease. This reflects the lower birth rates and out migration that has taken place in the 1990's. The challenge will be to retain the larger 0 to 9 years population that is or will be entering the school system.

2.3.2 Net Impact of Trends

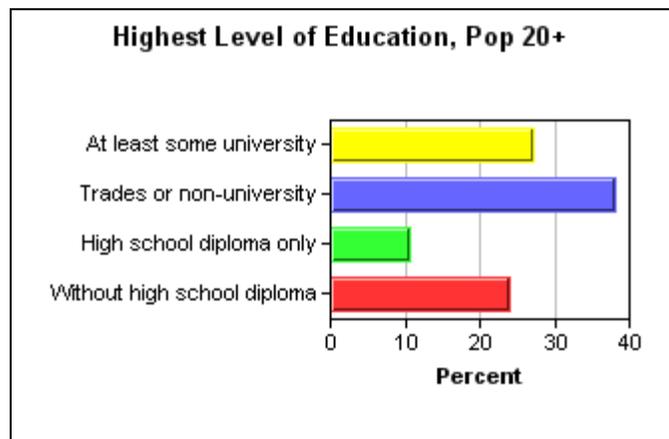
Gander, like most communities in Canada, is experiencing modest growth in population. There is a strong aging trend, resulting from both a declining birth rate and longer life expectancy. There is significant out migration, particularly by the 20 to 24 year age group. This out migration is being offset by the new additions to the population (0 to 4 years age group) and in migration by those in the 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 age groups.

Age structure is an important consideration for many aspects of community planning including housing needs, recreation, other community services and economic development.

2.4 Key Demographic Characteristics: Education

Figure 8 provides a summary of education levels for Gander from 2001. The 2001 Census indicates that 76 percent of the Gander population (20 years of age and older) has at least a high school diploma. This is considerably higher than the Provincial population where only 60 percent of the population has at least a high school diploma. In Gander 15% of people aged 25 to 54 reported having a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2001, compared to 13% of those aged 25 to 54 in the Province as a whole.

Figure 8 – Gander Population Education Profile



2.4.1 School Enrolment

As outlined above under Future Demographic Trends, Gander has experienced an increase in the preschool population (0-4 years) and the 5 to 9 years population. The 2006 Census data show that the population 0 to 4 years has increased by 50, while the population 5 to 9 years has increased by 45 persons. The children in these two groups would have started to enter the school system between 2001 and 2007 and all of the children in the 0- 4 years group, will be in the school system by 2011. This corresponds to an increase in enrolment experienced by Gander Academy. However, enrolment in the higher grades; middle school and over; has decreased, as exhibited in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Gander School Enrolment

Gander School Enrolment 2000 - 2007

	Year	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
School									
Gander Academy K -6		812	812	803	786	829	827	837	879
St. Paul's Intermediate 7 - 9		374	368	412	406	394	355	348	324
Gander Collegiate 10 -12(+)		308	431	386	367	371	400	397	383
Total Enrolment		1494	1611	1601	1559	1594	1582	1582	1586

Source: Central Nova School District, Gander, 2008.

2.5 Population Projections

The Provincial Government has developed population projections for both the Province and each economic zone. The Provincial and Kittiwake Economic Zone population projections forecast a slow decline in population over the next decade. The medium growth scenario suggests that the Provincial population will decline by 3 percent over the next ten years. The Kittiwake Economic zone population is forecasted to decline by 7 percent over the same period. However, Gander is one of the urban areas of Newfoundland that is experiencing population growth, due to in-migration from other parts of the Province and elsewhere. Based on recent population growth and the current outlook, population forecasts have been prepared for Gander. These are summarized in Figure 10.

2.5.1 Low Population Growth Scenario

The low growth scenario is based on a stable population or zero net growth. Gander would continue to attract sufficient in-migration to make up for the population losses through out-migration and natural losses (deaths less births).

Figure 10 - Historical and Forecasted Population - Newfoundland and Labrador, Kittiwake Zone, and Gander

Year	Newfoundland & Labrador		Kittiwake Zone		Gander Population Forecasts					
	Popula- tion	5 yr growth	Popula- tion	5 yr growth	Medium Pop.	5 yr growth	Low Pop.	5 yr growth	High Pop.	5 yr growth
1986	576,495		59,444		10,205		10,205		10,205	
1991	579,518	0.5%	58,166	-2.1%	10,335	1.3%	10,335	1.3%	10,335	1.3%
2001	521,986	-6.8%	49,406	-10.1%	9,660	-6.8%	9,660	-6.8%	9,660	-6.8%
2006	509,940	-2.3%	47,144	-4.6%	9,951	2.8%	9,951	2.8%	9,951	2.8%
2011	502,612	-1.4%	45,348	-3.8%	10,150	2.0%	9,951	0.0%	10,349	4.0%
2016	492,683	-2.0%	43,708	-3.6%	10,353	2.0%	9,951	0.0%	11,262	4.0%
2018	489,059	-2.1%	43,106	-3.7%	10,560	2.0%	9,951	0.0%	11,712	4.0%
2021	484,506	-1.7%	42,278	-3.3%	10,771	2.0%	9,951	0.0%	12,180	4.0%

Source: Economics and Statistics Branch, (Economic Research and Analysis Division), Department of Finance, September 2006, Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

2.5.2 Medium Population Growth Scenario

The medium growth scenario is based on 2 percent net population growth every five years. This compares with 2.8 percent growth over the last five years and -2.4 percent over the past 20 years. This assumes a continuation of the current population trends, except at a slightly lower growth rate. Over the next ten years the population is projected to increase by approximately 500 for a total of 10,560 residents.

2.5.3 High Population Growth Scenario

The high growth rate assumes that the rate of economic growth and in-migration will increase resulting in a 4 percent net population increase over a five year period. While this appears to be a modest growth rate, it would need to be achieved during a period when the overall Provincial population is declining approximately 2 percent every five

years. This scenario would require an increase in the current population and economic growth rates.

2.6 Conclusion

Like the rest of Canada, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador is aging; however the province has one of the oldest populations in Canada. Gander's population is also aging, but it has a younger work force (24 -59 years) and a larger proportion of children in the preschool and school age category (0 – 24 years) compared to the rest of the province.

Newfoundland and Labrador has also experienced an 8.9% decline in population over the last 25 years. The document “A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2007” notes that population is “aging rapidly and shrinking in most regions of the Province. Modest population declines are expected to continue over the longer term. Rural areas are aging most rapidly and feeling the effects of population reduction as youth migration from these areas continues.”

Gander has experienced a modest population growth of 3% in the census period 2001 to 2006 with a total population of 9,951. However, its population declined 2.4% in the last twenty years. Population projections for Gander based on low, medium and high growth scenarios anticipate a stable population with no growth or decline in the low growth scenario; 2% net population growth every 5 years for a medium growth scenario; and a 4% net population increase over a five year period for the high growth scenario. Although the latter seems like a modest growth rate, it would need to be achieved at a time when the overall provincial population is declining 2% every 5 years.

The most probable scenario is a medium growth rate of 2% net population every 5 years, assuming a continuation of the current population trends, at a slightly lower rate of growth. Thus in 10 year's time, Gander can anticipate of population of 10,560 – up from the current population of 9,951. This is an achievable rate of growth for Gander, as forecasts predict negative growth for the entire province. The Kittiwake Economic Zone population projections forecast a slow decline in population in the next decade, with Gander being an anomaly. Gander is one of the few urban areas that will continue to experience population growth due to in-migration from other parts of the province and the country. In-migration from the outlying areas will continue as the population ages and baby boomers and seniors continue to seek housing closer to amenities such as hospitals and medical services, retail services, and recreation opportunities.

A key growth strategy for the Town of Gander will be to attract healthy, active seniors while retaining its younger population. The in-migration of people from 55 years and older will continue as the population of the province continues to age. This trend will have future ramifications for appropriate housing models for seniors, as well as recreation and services.

Thus, monitoring growth over the next 5 and 10 years will be critical for the Town of Gander, in order to determine and implement appropriate development practices. Should the Town find that growth has exceeded the predicted medium growth scenario, development strategies may need to be implemented sooner than expected.

3.0 ECONOMY

3.1 Economic Profile - Overview

Gander was established in 1938 as a strategic North American base allowing transatlantic flights during the Second World War. Gander continued to grow in the post-war years as commercial air traffic replaced the military traffic. While Gander's role in supporting trans-Atlantic air traffic has changed due to the longer range of modern aircraft, the Airport continues to be a major focus of economic activity. This includes its role as a regional airport, military base and technical support for long haul cargo and passenger aircraft. The Airport is now a major aerospace centre supporting manufacturing, maintenance, and repair operations.

The Town of Gander has developed into a full service community. The community is situated on the Trans Canada Highway with access to the deep-water port of Lewisporte. The main economic industries for the Town of Gander are in the areas of transportation, communications, public administration and defence.

In addition, a large portion of Gander's economy is driven by the service industry including shopping centres and recreational facilities. Some 128 surrounding communities, with a combined population of 90,000, rely on the businesses and public services provided in Gander. Gander also provides regional health services and office space for regional offices of the Provincial Government. Gander is a regional, post-secondary training centre, with two community colleges offering a variety of trades and technology career choices. In addition, being centrally located with a hotel capacity of 500 rooms, Gander is also a favourite spot for regional, provincial, and national conferences and meetings.

Pressure for residential development and commercial activities is affecting the Town. The number of housing starts has grown steadily since 2002. This growth impacts the need for infrastructure and amenities such as recreation facilities.

Commercial development has also shown growth during this time period with \$11.5 million dollars of commercial development occurring in 2006. The development of big box store shopping areas poses other issues. The Town has identified 5 development areas for potential growth and development. In addition, the Province has reserved a corridor for the future realignment of the TransCanada Highway [TCH] in the area of Gander Lake and is it important that the area is appropriately delineated and to enable Council to deal with the long term and economic impacts of such realignment.

3.2 Economic Sectors

Figure 11 summarizes Gander’s employment by industry and compares it to Provincial employment. Gander, in comparison to the Province, has a relatively low reliance on the resource sectors such as fishing, forestry and mining as well as less manufacturing employment. Gander’s employment base is more focused on the service sectors such as retail, wholesale, business and other services. This is consistent with its role as a service centre for the surrounding communities.

Figure 11 - Employment by Industry Division: Gander vs. Newfoundland and Labrador

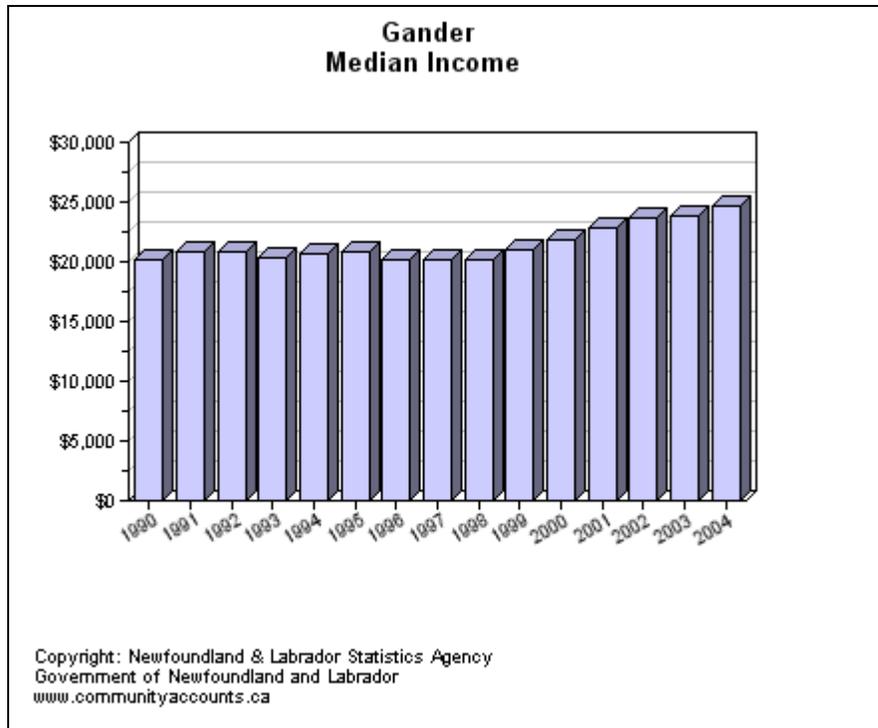
Sector	Gander	% Share of Labour Force	Newfoundland & Labrador	% Share of Labour Force
Resource based industries	60	1.2%	22,640	9.7%
Manufacturing & construction	310	6.3%	39,020	16.8%
Wholesale & retail trade	925	18.7%	36,555	15.7%
Financial and Real Estate	225	4.6%	7,085	3.1%
Health and Education	980	19.8%	45,320	19.5%
Business Services	900	18.2%	30,590	13.2%
Other Services	1,545	31.2%	51,055	22.0%
Total Labour Force	4,945	100.0%	232,260	100.0%

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, 2001.

3.3 Income

Figures 12 and 13 summarize the median income of the Gander and Provincial populations since 1990. While both figures show a steady increase in incomes over time, Gander has consistently had higher median income and has actually widened the gap over time.

Figure 12 – Gander Median Income



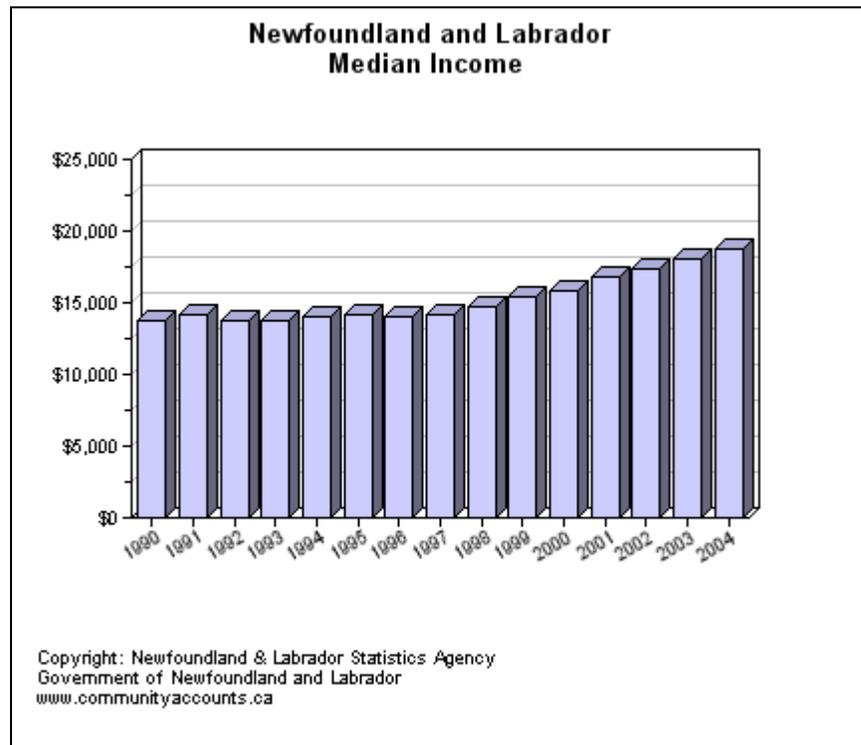
Median incomes reported by Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency for 2004, indicates that median income for residents of Gander is \$24, 600; compared to \$18,700 provincially. These figures show an increase from the 2001 Canada Census figures which are \$22, 900 for Gander, and \$16,800 provincially.

Median family income (for all family types including couple families, lone-parent families; and non-family persons) is reported as \$47,000 for Gander and \$35,700 for the province. These figures show an increase from the 2001 Canada Census figures which are \$45,900 and \$32,700 respectively.

The Background Report prepared by Canning and Pitt Associated in 1999, indicated an average family income of \$51,955 reported by Statistics Canada in the 1996 Census. Approximately a decade later, the average (couple) family income reported by Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency in 2004 is \$75,600, as compared to an average (couple) family income for the province of \$63,200.

Thus, in the intervening years, since the last Municipal Plan review, Gander residents have prospered and are relatively better off compared to others in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

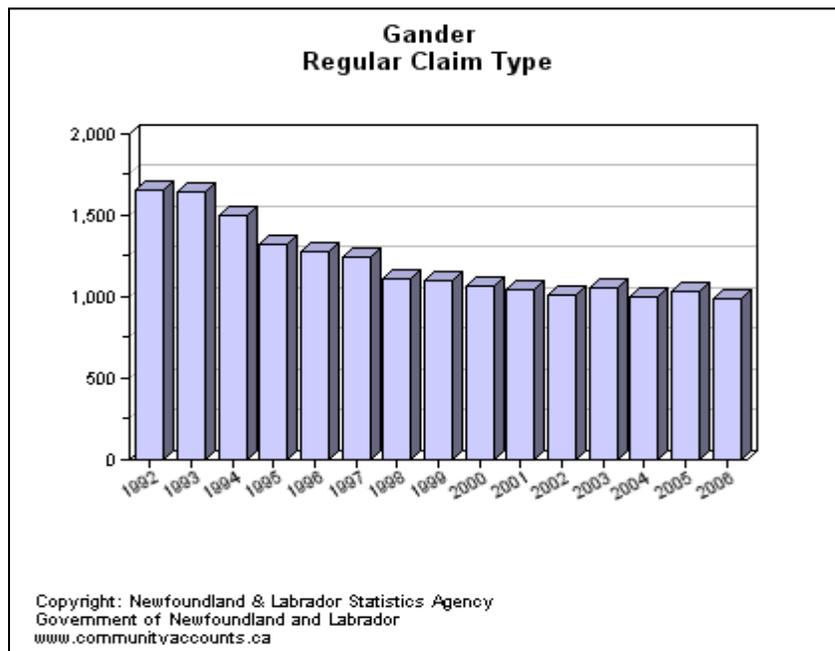
Figure 13 – Newfoundland and Labrador Median Income



3.4 Employment Insurance Claims

A further indicator of the relative economic strength of Gander is the number of employment insurance claims. As Gander has continued to diversify its economic base and develop stable employment, the number of employment insurance claims has steadily declined, as illustrated in Figure 14. The number of individuals in Gander who collected Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2006 was 1,000 – significantly lower than the 1992 figure of 1,655. This indicates an increase in employment opportunities associated with the retail and service sectors and the construction industry. Thus Gander enjoys a stable economy.

Figure 14 – Employment Insurance Claims



3.5 Gander International Airport Authority

In the time period since the last Municipal Plan and Municipal Plan Background Report were completed, several significant changes have affected the Gander International Airport. The Gander International Airport Authority Inc. (GIAA) assumed responsibility for the operational and managerial control of the airport March 2001. As a not-for-profit organization the GIAA, is responsible for the sustainability and development of the Gander Airport under the terms of a 60-year lease agreement with Transport Canada. The Gander International Airport Authority continues to implement its Business Plan in order to identify and develop new business opportunities and maintain its profitability.

The GIAA continues to be a significant contributor the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador in addition to its role as a service provider to local air passengers and international aviation.

A study endorsed by the GIAA and undertaken by InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. measured employment and spending related to the airport as it relates to jobs, wages and economic productivity.

The study, based on employer survey data, established that the airport and airport specific operations generate “1,200 jobs in the province, with \$107 million in GDP, \$312 million economic output and \$70 million in wages.” By reviewing “indirect and induced

impacts” which also include “downstream industries that result from the presence of the airport” (for example suppliers and contractors), and employment resulting from “spending by individuals employed directly or indirectly by the airport,” the study found that total economic impacts resulted in 2,382 jobs, \$136 million in wages, \$201 million in GDP and \$536 million in economic productivity.

Furthermore, ongoing economic activity at the airport contribute \$32 million annually in tax revenue with \$20.6 million going to the federal government, \$10.7 million to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and \$0.8 million to the Town of Gander.

Thus the GIAA continues to play a considerable role in the economic health of the provincial economy and local employment. The study further states that: “the airport is a source of stable, year-round employment for the regional economy, a major tax contributor and a significant engine that creates great benefit in the economy.”

In terms of employment wages and stability, employees of the Airport and related businesses earn an average wage of \$61,000 per year of full time employment. Furthermore, 96% of jobs related to airport operations are full time; and 98% are permanent.

Performance data collected by the GIAA indicates that in 2006, the airport’s performance experienced a 27% reduction in cargo flights and a 20% reduction in military activities. However, corporate jet traffic increased by 9% over 2005, for an all time high. It is anticipated that this will continue to be a stable source of revenue for the GIAA. Domestic passenger travels also decreased by 9% between 2005 and 2006. However, an enhanced summer schedule proposed by Air Canada as well as charters offered by Sunwing Vacations is anticipated to bolster air travel in 2007.

The GIAA continues to overtly promote development and growth of its 158 –acres of land available for lease. Land use planning and development is an important component of the growth and structuring of the Gander International Airport. Strategic marketing by the GIAA has attracted private and public sector tenants who may choose airside locations. The location of these lots provides maximum visibility, accessibility and proximity to Downtown Gander. The GIAA 2006 Annual Report predicts long-term development projects will enact positive change and growth that will provide “the core foundation of financial stability that the airport, community and region require.”

3.6 Tourism

Tourism development is an important aspect of economic development in the Town of Gander and the surrounding region. Province-wide, the number of non-resident visitors to Newfoundland and Labrador continues to increase annually. Data provided by the Gander

Chamber of Commerce indicates that since 2005 the number of visitors to the Information Centre has increased from 6,700 to 11,200 annually. The winter tourism season has increased and the period from September to November has also seen an increase in visitors. These are more non-resident mature visitors who are look for adventure vacations.

The Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation website reveals various tourism statistics regionally and for the province. Generally visitations have increased from 2006 to 2008, with slight decreases in some modes of transportation. Passenger movements reported for Gander Airport showed a 14.3% increase from 2006 to 2007. Passenger vehicle traffic reported by Marine Atlantic at Port Aux Basques increase by 4.6% for the same time period, but tour bus visits decreased by 8.7% for the same period. The overall occupancy rate for roofed accommodation for Zone 14 – Kittiwake, which includes the Gander area, was 39.65% for 2006-2007; and generally occupancy rates increased by 2.4% for this region in the time period.

The Town of Gander has developed a number of tourism attractions and facilities (Figure 15) many of them located in the area overlooking Gander Lake on the south side of the Trans Canada Highway, which has been identified as an area for future recreational and tourism development. The Golf Course, was expanded to 18 holes, the Tourism Information Centre, Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest, cross country ski trails, and the Little Harbour marina are all located on or overlooking Gander Lake.

Within the regional tourism industry, Gander has an important role to play as an entry point and staging area for tourists to the region (and the province for those entering through the airport), as well as having a good supply of quality hotel accommodations (1000 person capacity) and other services. With a good supply of recreational facilities, Gander is also a choice location for regional, provincial and national meetings, conferences and sporting events.

The importance of the travel and tourist trade to the area's economy is evident by the number of organizations who have a role encouraging development of this sector. These include the Town's newly established agency; Destination Gander, the Gander and Area Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee, and the Kittiwake Economic Development Corporation. Each group promotes the Town and/or the region to the travelling public.

Figure 15 – Gander Tourism Attractions, Infrastructure and Other Facilities

Attractions and Events	Tourism Infrastructure	Cultural and Recreational Facilities
Silent Witness Memorial Thomas Home Demonstration Forest Cobb's Pond Rotary Park North Atlantic Aviation Museum Newfoundland Trailway (Cobb's Corridor Section) Commonwealth War Graves Pipe Plane Replica Display Little Harbour Marina, Gander Lake Gander River Festival of Flight Gander Airport Display Sabena Crash Memorial Site	Gander and Area Tourist Chalet Jonathon's Pond Park Country Inn and RV Park Commercial and Charter Air Services International airport DRL Coachlines depot at the airport 5 Hotels Motel and Trailer park 5 Car Rental Agencies Tour Companies 6 Major Bank Branches 11 Churches Variety of Restaurants Numerous Lounges and Nightclubs Convention and meeting Facilities	Arts and Culture Centre and Swimming Pool 18 Hole Golf Course Driving Range Nordic Ski Trails Gander Curling Club Gander Community Centre Peyton's Pins and Bowling Lane Gander Rod and Gun Club Gander Field Complex Softball pitches Baseball Diamond 4 Tennis Courts 400M Track Soccer Pitch Skateboard Park Basketball Courts Youth and Adult Recreational Groups Hockey and other sport tournaments Gym Facilities located at CFB Gander 9 Wing Ski-Doo and walking trails Fitness Centres Spa's/Massage Therapy

3.7 Economic Outlook

Newfoundland and Labrador is experiencing strong economic growth. This growth is primarily due to its resource sector, principally, oil, gas and mining. Newfoundland is expected to be a Canadian leader in 2007 and beyond, in terms of economic growth. A positive outlook is expected in terms of GDP, personal income, retail sales, and employment. The population, however, is expected to decline by 1 percent or approximately 6,000 over the period 2006 – 2010. This is tempering economic growth such as GDP, retail sales and housing starts.

Gander is participating in Newfoundland and Labrador's economic growth as evidenced by its population growth, new businesses and strong growth in housing demand. The

economic growth is a result of attracting new businesses in the manufacturing, retail and service sectors. It is also growing in terms of public services such as health, education and other government programs.

Combining the relatively positive economic outlook for the Province with Gander's development as a regional service and retail centre suggests that Gander is in a position to continue to grow both in terms of its economy and population.

4.0 LAND USE

The original development pattern established for Gander in the 1957 CMHC Municipal Plan has established the foundation for a well laid-out and efficient town. Subsequent development has been well-planned. Land uses tend to be distinct with minimal conflicts between uses. Open space abounds in the form of organized playgrounds and parks, trails, treed buffers and forested areas.

The Town has a distinct downtown core that includes a host of recreation and cultural facilities and institutional uses; two established industrial areas, and a fully serviced business park; well laid-out residential subdivisions with room for growth and some highway commercial development including the James Paton Memorial Hospital, Gander Golf Club, Aviation Museum and Tourist Chalet along the Trans Canada Highway.

In the last few years, the introduction of “big box stores” has created some development pressures in the downtown core. A Downtown Redevelopment Study completed in 2006 by Tract Consultants; provides recommendations for downtown revitalization.

The extension of Cooper Boulevard to Gander Bay Road has been completed in the planning period, relieving westbound traffic volumes on the Trans Canada Highway to the Magee Road intersection.

Gander has a compact and efficient form and layout that is pleasing and easy to navigate.

4.1 Development Activity

A review of building permits issued for the period 2000 – 2007 reveals significant fluctuations in overall building starts and the total value of permits issued. Building statistics tracked by Town staff for the period include 6 categories of building types; residential, commercial, industrial, government/institutional, hotel, and apartment building. Total number of permits issued includes both new construction and other which may include additions and renovations. Figure 16 outlines the total number of building permits issued per year and their total value, while Figure 17 depicts this in graph form.

Total number of permits issued has increased by 134 in 2007 over 2000, with some fluctuations from year to year. However, more significant is the comparison of the total value of permits per year. The highest total value of permits; \$28million⁺, corresponds to the lowest number of permits (286) issued in the year 2000. This may be attributed to

a major building addition and renovations to the James Paton Memorial Hospital. The lowest total value of permits; \$9 million ⁺, was recorded in 2004; with only 57 permits issued for new construction and 279 permits issued for renovations. The year 2005 shows another significant occurrence as the value of building permits; \$20 million ⁺, more than double the year before, while actual number of permits issued was 409; or 73 more permits issued. The total value of building permits has remained fairly consistent; between \$20 and \$22 million for each year between 2005 and 2007; and actual permits issued at between 409 and 420 permits.

Only the residential category has shown consistent growth in the 8 year period ranging from 286 permits issued in 2000 to 420 issued in 2007. No building permits for new construction have been issued in the categories industrial; hotels; or apartment buildings for the time period. Thus, most development in the future could be expected in the residential and commercial categories, with minimal development for the government/institutional category.

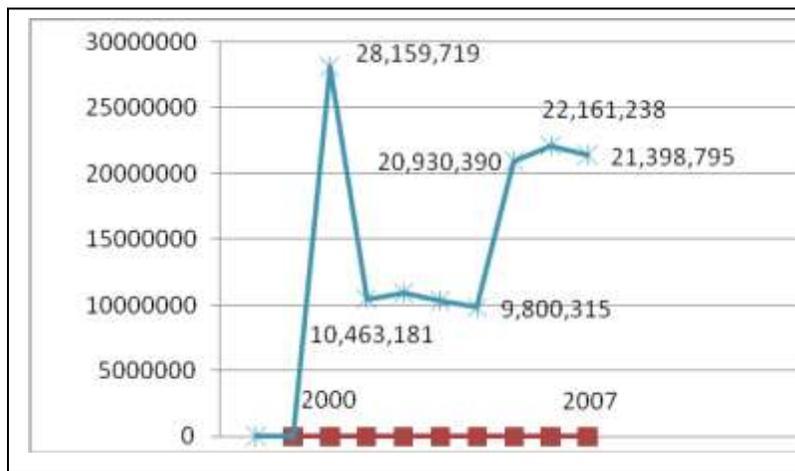
Figure 16: Total Building Permits Issued/Value in Gander 2000 - 2007

**TOWN OF GANDER
All Building Permits and Value: 2000 - 2007**

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER BLDG PERMITS	TOTAL VALUE \$
2000	286	28,159,719
2001	329	10,463,181
2002	316	10,895,190
2003	365	10,335,178
2004	336	9,800,315
2005	409	20,930,390
2006	417	22,161,238
2007	420	21,398,795

Source: Town of Gander, 2007

Figure 17: Graph - Value of Building Permits Issued 2000 -2007



4.2 Residential

Gander offers a good stock of new and older homes in traditional neighbourhoods. Housing statistics gathered by Town Staff indicates the following number of dwelling unit types in the Town [2007]: 2820 single family dwellings; 306 semi detached dwellings; 204 row houses; 16 condominiums; and 689 sub-apartments units. In addition, CFB Gander provides an additional 76 residential units contained in 3 buildings.

Within the single family dwelling category there are 102 mini homes [including mobile homes] located in a mini home park on Viscount Crescent, Gray Avenue and Curtiss Avenue.

In the last 8 years, the distribution of housing types created reveals that the majority are single family dwellings, followed by dwellings with apartment units. Figure 18 shows the dwelling types and total dwelling units created from 2000 to 2007.

In 2007, 63 single family dwellings were created, compared to 14 (or 4.5 times more) created in 2000. The number of single family homes created each year since 2000 increased significantly, but remaining fairly constant 2006 to 2007.

The number of dwellings with apartments, created for the time period has increased slightly for the time period, but remains fewer than 10. A total of 5 duplexes were constructed from 2004 to 2005. Three row houses were built between 2000 and 2001 but

not since. No condominiums or apartment buildings were constructed in the time period. In 2007 a total of 77 dwelling units were created compared to 22 in 2000.

Figure 18: Dwelling Units Created in Gander 2000 – 2007

GANDER - NEW DWELLING UNITS CREATED:2000 - 2007						
Dwelling type	Single	Dwellings	Duplex	Row	Condos/	total
units/year	Family	w/ Apts.		Houses	Apts.	units
07 # bldgs	63	7	0	0	0	70
# units	63	14	0	0	0	77
06 # bldgs	61	5	0	0	0	66
# units	61	10	0	0	0	71
05 # bldgs	52	6	3	0	0	61
# units	52	12	6	0	0	70
04 # bldgs	49	3	2	0	0	54
# units	49	6	4	0	0	59
03 # bldgs	26	4	0	0	0	30
# units	26	8	0	0	0	34
02 # bldgs	21	8	0	0	0	29
# units	21	16	0	0	0	37
01 # bldgs	23	2	0	2	0	27
# units	23	4	0	10	0	37
00 # bldgs	14	1	0	1	0	16
# units	14	2	0	6	0	22

Source: Town of Gander, 2008.

Whether a bungalow built in the 1950’s or a split-entry built in 2007, the housing stock in Gander is well maintained and shows pride of ownership. Of particular note is the mini (mobile) home park bounded and Curtiss Streets. The majority of these homes are situated width-wise on the lot, have been renovated with the addition of porches and decks, and have beautifully landscaped gardens.

4.2.1 Housing Starts

Gander has experienced a “housing boom” in the last ten year planning period that shows a positive change from the previous planning timeframe. While an average of 38 housing starts were reported for 1990 – 1994; and they continued to decrease until 2003; 2004 marks the beginning of an upward trend in house construction in Gander, as shown in

Figure 19. Beginning in 2004, with 56, housing starts have continued to increase with 70 starts recorded in 2007. It should also be noted that building permits for house additions and renovations has also increased from 2000 to 2007 with more 280 issued in 2007.

**Figure 19 – Housing Starts and Value
Value of Building Permits/Residential: 2000- 2007**

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER	TOTAL	NEW	OTHER
	BLDG PERMITS	VALUE \$	BUILDINGS	
2000	238	3,585,560	21	217
2001	285	4,603,691	37	250
2002	268	4,760,050	29	239
2003	293	5,257,768	30	263
2004	301	8,674,315	56	245
2005	349	9,550,660	64	285
2006	308	10,624,385	66	242
2007	354	12,770,755	70	284

Source: Town of Gander, 2007

The value of building permits for residential construction and renovations has increased 3.5 times to a dollar value of more than 12 million in 2007.

Towards the second half of the last 10 year planning period Gander has experienced resurgence in in-migration. This can be attributed to “baby boomers” retiring to Gander from either the region, or other areas of the province and country; and families moving into Gander to be closer to amenities. It is not unusual for one parent of a two parent family to be away working on the mainland [often in Alberta] while the one parent works maintains the family in Newfoundland.

4.2.2 Seniors Housing

In terms of housing for seniors, few changes have occurred since the preparation of the Pitt Canning Background Report. There are two major complexes; **Golden Legion Manor** which offers 102 apartments for independent living; and the long term care facility **Lakeside Seniors Home**, a 118 bed facility which provides 24 hour nursing and supportive care to 102 residents. Both facilities serve a regional clientele in addition to local residents.

Nightingale Manor Personal Care Home on Hadfield Street offers 66 independent living units for senior adults who no longer wish to maintain a home, but are not ready for long term care facilities. It offers a dining room and recreation activities.

4.2.3 Retirement Housing Market

In the previous planning period, several development schemes geared towards the retirement market were successfully initiated.

Highland Park/Freedom Village located on Ogilvie Street, and accessed from the Trans Canada Highway, [TCH] was planned as a retirement housing development. Approved for 46 single units, small cottage type homes have been built as retirement housing for active healthy seniors. There are 38 residential units that range in size from 700 sq ft. to approximately 1500 sq ft. This subdivision is attractive with its proximity to Little Cobb's Pond and the walking trail that links to the Cobb's Pond trail system. The lack of an alternate access into Gander, as a left lane turn against west bound TCH traffic is required at the intersection of Ogilvie and the TCH; is problematic. [See drawing A #1]

Mifflin Place housing on Mifflin Place was also developed as an Active Adult Lifestyle community. With 50 row house rental units, this development offers semi-independent accommodations for seniors with support and recreation services.

4.2.4 Public Housing

The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation [NLHC] provides rental housing to low-income households that cannot obtain suitable and affordable rental housing in the private market. The Corporation rents housing to low-income families, seniors, non-elderly singles, people with disabilities and others in need of housing. In total there are 112 NL Housing units in Gander; 1 - 2 bedroom unit; 97 – 3 bedroom units; and 14 – 4 bedroom units.

Currently there is a zero vacancy rate with a waiting list of 23 individuals or families. Demand is highest for the 1 and 2 bedroom units especially for lone parent families with one child and seniors, either couples or singles.

To be eligible for housing with Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corporation, applicants must complete a stringent application form including a Revenue Canada assessment. Income forms part of the need evaluation and cannot exceed a gross household income of \$31,000.00. However, some families subsist on as little as \$20,000 per year.

Some private units are available through the rent supplement programs, including seniors units at Golden Legion Manor and Pine Tree Manor. The Housing Corporation is negotiating with the provincial government to provide additional monies for the rent supplement program in Gander. In the private market, landlords support the rent supplement program when vacancy rates are high and private renters are scarce. With a very low vacancy rate in Gander, there is little interest from landlords to participate in the rent supplement program.

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has identified a need for housing for low income seniors. Additional units are needed as the Golden Legion Manor has a waiting list for rent supplement units. Some low income seniors may also have health issues which exacerbates their housing needs.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has in the past bought surplus PMQ units from the Department of National Defence and plans to continue this practice in the future as these units come available.

Co-operative Housing, operated by an independent board, offers 18 units in Gander with no current vacancies. Several units were sold a few years ago. Coop Housing, developed through provincial and federal sponsorship, is no longer being developed.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has in the last year solicited proposals from developers and contractors to build affordable units. The Corporation offers developers and contractors funding of up to \$35,000 per unit to build affordable housing units, which can be rented at fair market value after 10 years. No interest has been expressed by local developers or contractors to build affordable or low income housing.

4.3 The Current Housing Market

4.3.1 New Construction

An examination of previous predictions for housing demand, demographic statistics, housing starts over the past 8 years and discussions with local developers, staff, residents; reveals a number of issues surrounding the appropriate mix of housing types and availability of housing in Gander in the future.

Housing starts have increased dramatically in the last 5 years, surpassing the estimated demand of 40 units per year in the Pitt Canning Background Report. In 2007, 70 building permits were issued for new house construction in Gander; almost double previous

projections. The demand for housing has seen a rise in the price of building lots as well as construction costs. Residential building lots were selling for between \$41,000 and \$66,000 in 2007. Demand for larger lots with more opulent homes also is on the rise. In 2006 typical lot frontages ranged between 18 – 20 m [60 – 65 ft.], while in 2007 larger frontages of 21 – 23 m [70-75ft.] were in demand.

House prices have also risen dramatically which may be in part to an increase in material and labour costs, as well demand for higher end homes with high quality finishes. Contractors report that a few years ago typical house prices [new construction] ranged from \$225,000 to \$250,000. In 2007, the average price of a new home was \$270,000 for a 1400 ft² bungalow. While a starter homes, [approximately 1000 ft²] ranged in price from \$160,000 to \$190,000. This is generally higher than in other markets in Atlantic Canada.

Where is this demand coming from? Discussion with contractors indicates that some of the demand comes from local residents who are able to “buy-up” and due to favourable personal circumstances supported by low mortgage interest rates. Today, most couple families have two working adults, resulting in higher household incomes, while in the 1970’s and ‘80’s, this was less prevalent. Professionals moving to Gander to enhance careers, and in-migration of retiring baby-boomers moving to Gander from outlying regions or from other parts of the province and country, make up the other purchasers of new homes.

Contractors indicated that as long as market forces dictate a demand for high-end housing they will continue to build it.

4.3.2 Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing was identified by many people contacted during the course of the municipal plan review. While approximately a decade ago, there was a high vacancy rate for rental accommodation, that trend seems to have reversed in 2007. Rental accommodation is difficult to find. Good quality, updated, smaller homes, in older neighbourhoods sell quickly and for relatively high prices. Evidence from Real estate companies suggests these homes may sell for between \$160,000 to \$170,000 dollars. Older homes that require work may sell for between \$120,000 and \$130,000.

The trend to add sub-apartments in single family homes has diminished. Most of the excess stock of PMQ housing owned by DND has been sold; a good deal of it bought in blocks by rental agents. Recently, a former PMQ with 4, 800 sq. ft. units, sold for \$279,000 in Gander. An updated, 30 year mobile home with 1350 sq. ft. can fetch as much as \$92,500. Land rent would be an additional charge.

Homes to rent are scarce, and may be charged out for \$750/month plus utilities; while basement apartments may go for between \$500 and \$600 a month plus utilities. Vacancies in apartment buildings are rare, especially if the building is in good repair and thus desirable. Some of the rental demand is coming from students attending the College of the North Atlantic and the Gander Flight Training School.

More affordable housing is available in outlying areas such as Appleton, Glenwood, Gambo and Gander Bay etc. Those without the means to afford higher priced houses in Gander, may purchase affordable homes in the region, and commute to Town for work, school and services. Although, in the past few years, housing prices in Appleton and Glenwood have started to increase, they are nonetheless lower than in Gander.

The demand for housing is market driven. Developers will continue to build high end homes as long as there is a demand.

4.3.3 Supply and Demand for Residential Lots – Future Residential Growth

According to the Pitt Canning Background Report, a 1995 Housing Market Study predicted Gander had [at least] an 18 year supply of lands for residential development based on a projected demand of 50 lots per year; or in today's terms, enough residential lots to last until 2013. As the 50 lot per year demand was not reached until 2004, the Housing Market Study forecast has some validity in 2007 and for the next planning period.

In the previous planning period, the Pitt Canning Background Report identified the largest supply of residential land in Northeast Land Assembly with an approved 500 lots. Currently, the supply of available residential lots includes:

- The **Spruce Court Subdivision**: approved for 854 lots, 245 lots have been developed; 28 are to be developed in the spring of 2008; thus 581 lots are available for future residential use. [See drawing A #3]
- **Freedom Village**: Phase 1 - approved for 46 lots, 38 have been developed; 8 lots are left with 3 sold for development in the spring of 2008. Future phases of development may result in an additional 120 lots for residential uses. [See drawing A #1]
- **Bishop Street** infill [former site of St. Paul's and St. Joseph's School]: 22 lots will be available for residential uses.
- **Wareham and Sons** is proposing a housing development for younger seniors behind Mifflin Place. This proposed development for young retirees ages 55+, will include 64 cottage-type rental units "from the ground up." Proposed as high end

units, approximately 840 to 990 square feet per unit; the rental fee will include all aspects of maintenance.

- **NELA** – Yeager Street extension.

Therefore, approximately 723 residential building lots are currently approved and available for residential uses in Gander.

4.4 Residential Growth Strategies for the Planning Period – Issues and Options

The review of the current situation in terms of housing development in Gander and availability of land for this purpose reveals the following issues and options for residential growth in the next ten year period.

4.4.1 Future Residential Growth – Issues

In terms of future residential growth, a projected population increase of 500 people forecasted for the next 10 years. What implications does this increase in population have on the infrastructure and growth? An increase in Gander’s population of 500 people is equivalent to one residential subdivision. If interest rates remain low, the economy of Gander remains healthy, a demand of 50 residential building lots per year may be reasonable for the next planning period or 500 residential lots. Gander currently has 723 available residential lots, thus a conservative estimate of demand for the next planning period can be easily accommodated.

In addition, land for future development for residential uses is identified in the current Municipal Plan as Comprehensive Development Areas. These CDAs offer additional opportunities for residential lots in the planning period and include:

- CDA 1: west of Magee Road between Cobb’s Pond and the Trans Canada Highway. This area is adjacent to the Freedom Village development. [see drawing A #1]
- CDA 2: north of Memorial Drive East, and east of Cooper Blvd. [also known as the Old Navy Site; see drawing A #2]
- CDA 3: Spruce Court; west of Magee Road, continues to be developed [See drawing A #3]
- CDA 4: Gander Lake Shore Area - land south of the Trans Canada Highway; between the TCH and Gander Lake [Initial discussions with the Steering Committee and Council entertained plans for potential limited residential uses in

this CDA area, however, the proposed Trans Canada Highway realignment, at time of writing, is not yet resolved, and therefore the decision was made to continue the Comprehensive Development Area designation on this land until such time that the highway issue is resolved. See also section 4.7.2 Trans Canada Highway for detailed discussion about the highway. [See drawing A #4].

4.4.2 Public Housing and Affordable Housing:

The Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation works with non-profit agencies and developers to provide public housing for Gander residents. Although NLHC has issued requests for the development of housing for families and individuals with low incomes, during the last planning period, they have gone unanswered by local developers.

As long the housing market for high end homes is robust, developers are not likely to build affordable housing or housing for families and individuals with low incomes. Yet affordable housing and public housing is needed as the vacancy rate for rental housing is low and house prices have increased substantially.

4.4.3 Housing for Active, Healthy, Seniors (retiring baby-boomers age 55+)

Demographic trends reveal that the first wave of baby boomers is starting to retire. These are persons 55 years of age and older. They are healthier and more active than their predecessors, live longer and have more disposable income with which to retire.

In the last census period, the age group 55 – 59 years increased by 43.3% or 195 persons [net]. In Gander, some of these “seniors” may be part of an in-migration to Town. Some are moving in from the outlying rural areas of the region; or other areas of the province; others are returning to Gander after pursuing careers away. Some move to Town to be closer to hospitals, medical practitioners, services and shopping, recreation, culture and other amenities and social networks. Some are long term Gander residents who are changing homes and thus lifestyle. As the population ages, more people in this age groups may choose alternate housing models.

Many of these retirees desire housing models that are different and innovative. Local developers are seeing more demand for high end, detached or semi detached single family dwellings. One storey units, approximately 900 to 1100 sq ft., located on small plots of land that may allow for minimal gardening, are preferred. Rental units with long term leases that include all maintenance are popular, although the condominium developments have not caught on here.

4.4.4 Seniors Housing (Older Adult Category 60+)

Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the oldest populations in Canada. The population is “aging rapidly and shrinking in most regions of the Province. Modest population declines are expected to continue over the longer term. Rural areas are aging most rapidly and feeling the effects of population reduction as youth migration from these areas continues.” [Source: “A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador.”]

Gander’s population is also aging and the Town will need to monitor and focus on this aging in the next planning period. The most significant implication will be the need for seniors housing in the future. Demand for housing for the aged and infirmed will rise resulting in a need for more assisted living units and long term care beds.

4.4.5 Future Residential Growth – Options

4.4.5.1 CDA 1 – Freedom Village area

Comprehensive Development Area 1 is located to the west of Magee Road bound by the Trans Canada Highway to the south, the Freedom Village development to the west, and Cobb’s Pond Park to the north. [See drawing A #1]

a) Access

The intent is to extend Ogilvie Road through Carr Crescent to Magee Road, thus linking the Freedom Village development, and public land designated future residential, to the Town by an alternate and safer street network than the existing access off the Trans Canada Highway. The area around Carr Crescent is currently designated Industrial General and several lots are vacant and offer opportunities for in-fill.

b) Public Institutional [PI] Reserve

It is proposed that land west of [behind] the College of the North Atlantic, Gander Collegiate and St. Paul’s Intermediate School, should be designated Public Institutional [PI] and reserved for future land use requirements of the schools.

c) Designated Residential: RHD-1 and RMD

The area is currently serviced with Municipal water and sewer services. It is proposed that the lands be designated residential to accommodate future residential development for the planning period. To accommodate potential future post secondary students, it is proposed that a portion of land be designated Residential High Density-1 to facilitate the development of housing for potential students. Other residential lands shall be designated Residential Medium Density [RMD].

It has an area of 25.94 hectares which can accommodate approximately 231 lots in total. Approximately 73 lots are proposed for Residential High Density -1 [RHD-1] use; 156 lots are proposed for Residential Medium Density use [RMD]; and 2 lots for Local Commercial [LC] use.

d) Commercial Local [CL]

Two lots are proposed as commercial local to accommodate local commercial conveniences.

e) Open Space & Linkages

Buffers designated as Open Space Recreational [OSR] will provide a transition between uses. Recreational open space will provide linkages to Gander Collegiate, St. Paul's Intermediate schools, the College of the North Atlantic and new residential development to the existing trail system at Little Cobb's Pond.

f) Environmental Assessment

Prior to any development of this site, water bodies and wetlands within this development area must be identified and environmental buffers established and located around these assets to allow for their preservation and protection as required in the Municipal Stewardship Agreement. Any proposed development must comply with provincial environmental regulations to determine whether an environmental impact assessment is required.

4.4.5.2 CDA 2 – Old Navy Site

CDA 2 is located on land east of the Cooper Blvd. and north of the Memorial Drive East. Transfers in land ownership have been arranged by the Departments of Transport and National Defence and the land has been purchased a private developer. A 15 metre buffer is shown around the wetland areas. The proposed lot layout shows a 30 metre setback from the edge of the asphalt of Gander Bay Road. [See drawing A #2]

a) Access

This area will be accessed from Cooper Blvd. at the point where a new road creates a four- way intersection with the extension of Raynham Street on the east side of Cooper Blvd. An internal road network is designed for residential uses and no individual lot access to Cooper Blvd. is allowed.

b) Designated Residential: RMD

The site has an area of (approximately) 60.58 hectares. It shall be designated RMD – Residential Medium Density to accommodate future residential uses for the planning

period. In addition some commercial uses will be allowed and designated as CG – Commercial General. It is anticipated that approximately 350 residential lots and 25 commercial lots can be created on this site.

c) Municipal Stewardship Agreement

Known water bodies and wetlands within this development area must be identified and environmental buffers with a depth of 15 metres located around these assets to allow for their preservation and protection as required in the Municipal Stewardship Agreement.

4.4.5.3 CDA 3: Spruce Court

The Spruce Court Subdivision continues to be developed for residential uses. The developer has been required to make changes due to unforeseen issues with topography and wetlands. The continuation of a trail system and linkages to Cobb’s Pond are required and follow up by Town staff is needed to ensure these are provided. Spruce Court currently has one playground near McGrath Place. Another playground should be considered in the southern area of the subdivision to accommodate children once housing development is completed in that portion of the subdivision. [See drawing A #3]

4.4.5.4 CDA 4: Gander Lake Shore Area

The Gander Lake Shore is a large area of land that lies between Gander Lake and the Trans Canada Highway and is designated in the current Municipal Plan for tourism, recreation and open space and conservation uses. Current development includes the James Paton Memorial Hospital, the golf course, skiing and hiking trails and a section of the Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest. The North Atlantic Aviation Museum is located in this area. [See drawing A #4].

The current Municipal Plan indicates that a 1988 Gander Lake Shore Development Scheme was incorporated into the Municipal Plan. The intention was to develop the area for year-round tourism and recreation and to provide optimal locations for commercial, public and recreational open space uses; while taking advantage of the area’s natural beauty, rural characteristics and scenic views.

Discussions in connection with this Municipal Plan review, with Council, the Steering Committee; staff; developers; representatives of the Chamber of Commerce; and residents reveal that goals for the development of this area have changed and in the future might incorporate limited residential housing uses. However, a realignment scheme proposed by the Department of Transportation and Works in 1997 has not yet been constructed, but remains a Departmental issue nonetheless.

a) Future Development Goal

This area shall be reserved as a Comprehensive Development Area for the planning period and no development shall commence without the resolution of the Trans Canada Highway realignment.

Once the Trans Canada Highway realignment is resolved, Council may decide to explore development options for this site. Among the proposed options are residential housing, tourism and recreation uses and conservation uses. Any proposed development will be subject to provincial environmental and water resources legislation.

b) Water Resources Act and Environmental Protection

As Gander Lake is the source of the Town's drinking water, this area is within the *Gander Lake Protected Public Water Supply Area*. Any type of development on this land must adhere to the *Water Resources Act*, under the Department of Environment and Conservation – Water Resources Management Division. All proposed development activities within a protected public water supply area must require prior approval under *Section 39* and *Section 48* of the *Water Resources Act* and contain required environmental setback and buffers as stipulated by legislation.

c) Access

A realignment of the Trans Canada Highway proposed by the Department of Transportation and Works in 1997 has not yet been built and discussions with Department staff reveal there are no immediate plans to begin the work. A study commissioned by Sheppard Green Engineering Limited in 1997 predicted that traffic volumes would increase by 2% each year requiring the completion of the TCH realignment.

Providing safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian access to the area (especially in regards to the Trans Canada High) is of paramount concern; and will be a costly endeavour. Therefore, the realignment of the TCH and its timing must be resolved with the Department of Transportation and Works prior to developing this area for any purposes.

d) Future Development and Design Policies

To ensure environmental concerns are addressed especially as they relate to the *Gander Lake Protected Public Water Supply Area* and the *Water Resources Act*, and the Watershed Management Plan (1996) it is recommended that the area be developed with the criteria of LEED for Neighbourhood Design (LEED-ND), and Sustainable Community Design.

4.4.5.5 Housing for Active, Healthy, Seniors (retiring baby-boomers age 55+)

Market forces will dictate the type of housing that is developed in Gander. Currently, at least one developer is proposing a development for this age group encompassing 64 semi-detached single family units, one storey high with an area of approximately 1000 sq feet per unit. To be located behind Mifflin Place with a proposed 64 units, at time of writing construction has not begun.

Council may encourage innovation in housing models for active, healthy seniors immigrating in to the Town and ensure that designation of lands for residential uses allows for a mix of densities and housing types.

4.4.5.6 Seniors Housing (Older Adult Category 60+)

Currently two seniors' facilities address the needs of the older senior's population: Golden Legion Manor provides mostly independent living accommodations, while Lakeside Seniors Home is a long term care facility. An aging population will require more housing units providing varying degrees of care.

Council may encourage the development of additional housing units for older seniors by ensuring that land is designated public institutional to accommodate independent and long term care developments for seniors.

4.4.6 Conclusion

Gander has an adequate supply of serviced residential lots to accommodate demand at least in the short and mid-terms. Lands identified for residential purposes, will ensure accommodate long term housing demand including unforeseen increases in population.

A preliminary investigation of the developable areas proposed in Comprehensive Development Areas 1 and 2 will net approximately 579 additional lots for residential uses in the future. This is in addition to the (approximate) 721 residential building lots currently approved and available for residential uses in Gander. A potential 1,300 lots will be more than adequate to supply the residential housing market in Gander for the next decade.

4.5 Commercial

The Gander 2007 Business Directory lists 542 commercial businesses; 79 of these are home based businesses. Currently, commercial enterprises are classified as Commercial General (CG), Commercial Downtown (CD), Commercial Highway (CH), and Commercial Local (CL).

The commercial areas of Gander grew around the central retail area of the Town. The retail area considered Gander's downtown centre, is located primarily along Airport Boulevard between Cooper Boulevard and Elizabeth Drive and includes the Elizabeth Drive Shopping Centre and Town Square, and Armstrong Boulevard. The shopping area services local customers as well as those living within the region.

Gander's downtown core has grown around a number of retail malls and large scale commercial operations such as car dealerships, national grocery store and hardware store chains that are not traditional downtown activities. The resulting development, with large swaths of parking adjacent to the road, and buildings set well-back from the public domain, is more appropriate as highway commercial development in scale and massing than the traditional scale and aesthetic associated with "downtown." Commercial outlets and services are housed in many one storey buildings "spread out across a flat, mainly concrete and asphalt landscape that is efficient for snow clearing, but is not appealing for pedestrians." [Source: *Town of Gander Downtown Redevelopment Study*, Tract Consulting Inc, 2006.]

The current Background Report and Municipal Plan recommended that Council undertake a study to that would offer solutions to revitalize the Gander's downtown. In 2006, Tract Consulting Inc. completed its report, *Town of Gander Downtown Redevelopment Study*, which makes recommendations for the enhancement and revitalization of the downtown. Gander Town Council adopted the report and a Steering Committee made up of the Chamber of Commerce, Town staff, and local business people was instructed to begin implementing the recommendations. The purpose of the Tract Consulting Inc. study was to suggest design improvements to Elizabeth Drive and Airport Boulevard that would result in a "more welcoming and pedestrian-friendly shopping district."

Furthermore, in the last 7 years the completion of the Cooper Boulevard extension has allowed the introduction of "big box stores" in the area of Roe Avenue. The addition of large chain stores like Wal-Mart signals both positive and negative indicators. On the positive side, Wal-Mart develops new facilities where the economy is strong and growth is projected. The appearance of a Wal-Mart also inspires other large chains to move into the area. Big box stores attract shoppers from the region, who will inevitably spend money on other local services such meals, gas and sometimes lodging and entertainment. Big box stores, often considered a threat by local merchants, afford them the opportunity to distinguish their products and services as "specialty items." On the negative side, the location of the big box stores and their proximity to Gander's downtown creates pressure for more large scale development that detracts from the focus of downtown and in terms of design, aesthetic, and pedestrian scale.

4.5.1 Commercial Designations - Issues

Various different commercial uses exist within the boundary of Comprehensive Development Area 5. [See drawing A #5] Although this area is referred to as Gander's downtown, in reality much of it has the scale and function of highway commercial developments and shopping centres. This is may be due in large part to inconsistencies in zoning and allowed uses, such as highway commercial versus local retail. The recent introduction of big box stores has further eroded the nature and purpose of "downtown." Therefore it is proposed to realign the current land use designations to address the land uses that have been permitted in the planning period and to encourage like uses to be located in the most appropriate locations in the future. The significance of the study completed by Tract Consulting Inc.: *Town of Gander Downtown Redevelopment Study, November 28, 2006*; cannot be diminished. The *Town of Gander, Downtown Redevelopment Study, 2006*, has been endorsed by Council. It is recommended that the *Downtown Redevelopment Study* be integrated into the Municipal Plan so that its recommendations are followed in order to revitalize the "downtown" area of Gander. An additional land use designation is proposed that would recognize an all ready existing area of big box stores within the commercial precinct of Gander and to encourage the development of new big box stores to build upon this critical mass.

The designations are as follows:

- Commercial General (which encompasses an area of Downtown Redevelopment)
- Commercial Downtown (which encompasses the Downtown Redevelopment Area)
- Commercial Highway
- Commercial Local
- Commercial Shopping Centre (which includes the development of big box stores)

4.5.2 Commercial Designations – Options

The following commercial designations are applied in Gander.

4.5.2.1 Commercial General

Areas designated commercial general are meant to accommodate a wide range of commercial uses that are normally found outside of a typical downtown precinct. This may include uses such as large retail outlets, showrooms, building supply and automotive parts and repair outlets.

However, the 2006 Tract Consulting Inc. report; *Town of Gander, Downtown Redevelopment Study*, identified an area of commercial redevelopment that includes the businesses fronting on Airport Boulevard from Elizabeth Drive to Cooper Boulevard. As Council has adopted this report and plans are underway with a joint venture between the Town and the Chamber of Commerce to begin initiating the recommendations of this study, it is vital that the redevelopment of this area continue and that in the future, the redevelopment of the “downtown area” be extended to include Armstrong Boulevard and Bennett Drive in addition to any back lots within the Commercial General designation within this boundary. [See drawing A #5]

4.5.2.2 Commercial Downtown

The boundary that designates Commercial Downtown includes “Town Square” [both sides of Elizabeth Drive including the shopping plazas]; following the west side of Elizabeth Drive north of Airport Boulevard and includes the area of the Community Centre and Arts and Culture Centre; and west to Markham Place; then south of Airport Boulevard to include the area bounded by Lindbergh Road. This area was previously designated as Commercial Downtown. The recommendations of the *Town of Gander, Downtown Redevelopment Study, 2006*; apply to Town Square and should also be applied to the remainder of the realigned Commercial Downtown designation and any new development, redevelop or infill that might occur in this area in the future.

Including the recreational and cultural establishments of the Arts and Culture Centre, Community Centre and Gander Curling Club, creates an important critical mass “downtown.” These uses draw people into the core of community and help to make it vibrant and sustainable. [See drawing A #5]

4.5.2.3 Commercial Highway

Highway Commercial uses are located along the north side of the Trans Canada Highway and provide services to the travelling public including accommodations, service stations and restaurants. Most lands along this route designated highway commercial have been developed. In addition, The James Paton Hospital, Tourist Chalet and Chamber of Commerce, Aviation Museum and Gander Golf Club are all located in this area south of the TCH although these uses are located on lands with public institutional, open space and tourism recreation designations.

4.5.2.4 Commercial Local

Local commercial areas in Gander typically contain businesses that cater to neighbourhood needs. Uses include convenience stores, video outlets, some specialty stores and coffee shops and fast-food outlets. In Gander, local commercial areas have been planned and are located mainly at intersections on the edges of residential

neighbourhoods. The main locations for these developments include Memorial Drive, Byrd Avenue, Elizabeth Drive and Edinburgh Avenue. There are also a few small convenience stores at locations within residential areas throughout the town.

The addition of local commercial uses should be considered adjacent to lands designated for future residential growth.

4.5.2.5 Commercial Shopping Centre

The area of east of Cooper and north of Roe Avenue where big box stores such as Wal-Mart have located; as well as the area west of Cooper and south of Airport Boulevard, [location of the Dominion Store, etc.] are proposed to be designated as Commercial Shopping Centre; and all others areas within the boundary of CDA 5 will remain as Commercial General. [See drawing A #5]

4.5.3 Home Based Businesses

In previous municipal plan reviews it is noted that Home Based Businesses were more prevalent. According to the Gander 2007 Business Directory, 79 of 542 commercial businesses are home based businesses, as compared to 156 recorded in 1998. These businesses include professional services such as book keepers and accountants, daycare providers, artist's studios, crafts and ceramics providers, cleaners, caterers and the like. Some may have grown to the point of relocating in larger premises in commercial districts.

Although this sector has decreased since the last municipal plan review it is nonetheless an important contributor to the Town's economy. The Town has encouraged and regulated home based businesses in a manner that preserves the residential nature of neighbourhoods reducing potential for conflicts. To this end a new *Town of Gander Home Based Business Regulation, February 2008*, has been developed and adopted by Council.

4.5.4 Future Commercial Growth

Opportunities for future commercial growth are available on lands within the Commercial General designation, especially on Roe Avenue, through infill opportunities on Armstrong, Airport Boulevard and Bennett Drive and in the Gander Business Park. Maximizing opportunities for commercial growth and development will ensure that the Gander economy remains strong in the region. It is suggested that the preparation of a downtown signage by-law be examined as recommended by the Town of Gander Downtown Redevelopment Plan, Tract Consulting, 2006.

4.6 Industrial lands

There are two well established industrial areas in Gander; one on McCurdy Drive and the other on Carr Crescent. They contain a mixture of industrial operations and buildings. Several vacant lots provide opportunities for infill.

The Gander Business Park, located north of the airport, includes Baird Place industrial park. This area consists of 113 acres with 97 acres currently available for industrial development. Due to a lack of industrial development activity, a portion of Baird Place was re-zoned in recent years to Commercial light industrial. A courier company has since located there. The remaining lots in Baird Place zoned Industrial General are vacant, although it is a fully serviced area.

Additional lands beyond the Gander Business Park are also designated for industrial uses and provide more than adequate industrial lands for future development. In addition to this lands for industrial uses are also available on property managed by the Gander International Airport Authority. These lots available for lease are serviced and provide access to airport services and the Trans Canada Highway.

4.6.1 Industrial Lands - Issues

No permits for the construction or renovation of industrial projects were issued in the period from 2000 to 2007. The last permit issued for an industrial project was in the early 1980s. This trend is likely to continue in the near future.

Although it is important that Gander is able to accommodate industrial uses should they materialize, consideration should be given to re-zoning Baird Place [to Garrett Drive] to Commercial light industrial; or Commercial General; in order to promote development on these serviced lots before sponsoring infrastructure improvements to develop other lands for commercial light industrial and/or commercial uses.

4.6.2 Industrial Lands – Options

Several options for future industrial land uses are recommended as follows:

- Encourage future industrial uses to locate on vacant lands in the well established industrial parks on McCurdy Drive and Carr Crescent to take advantage of existing infill opportunities.

- Re-designate the Industrial General lands in the Gander Business Park with the intent to re-zone all or a portion of this land for Commercial light industrial and/or commercial general uses.

4.7 Airport Lands

The Gander International Airport is operated and managed by the Gander International Airport Authority. A Land Use Plan was prepared in 1999, when the Airport was under the authority of Transport Canada. This Land Use Plan is still in effect and has not been updated since 1999. One of the most notable inclusions in the plan was the Noise Exposure Forecast which recommended that residential development should not occur in areas within a 35 Noise Exposure Contour. The information contained in this report is therefore still in use and still valid today.

4.8 Road Network

Gander's road network consists of major and minor arterial roads, residential and commercial/industrial collectors and local streets. Within the last planning period, the Department of Transportation and Works extended Cooper Boulevard to intersect the Gander Bay Road. The extension of Cooper Boulevard bisected Peyton's (Long) Pond, an important area for waterfowl and local wildlife. The bisected pond remains of significance to local wildlife through the installation of oversized culverts, a recommendation of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture, in an effort to minimize interference to local waterfowl usage of the area.

The extension of Cooper Boulevard relieves the Town of some through traffic pressures as well as reducing westbound traffic flow on the TCH to the Gander Bay Road /Magee Road intersection. Cooper Boulevard and Gander Bay Road (Route 330) and Magee Road are designated provincial routes but are maintained by the Town.

Currently, none of the intersections controlled by stop signs, reviewed in the traffic engineering study, warrant the installation of traffic signals. It was also determined that during the planning period [the next ten years] the intersections of Airport Boulevard and McCurdy Drive; and Airport Boulevard and Armstrong Boulevard will not yet approach volumes that warrant traffic signals. However, in another ten year period beyond the planning period, traffic signals at these locations will be required.

4.8.1 Urban Street Classification

The urban street classification for Gander is as follows:

Arterials		Collectors	
Major	Minor	Residential	Industrial/commercial
Trans Canada Highway	Magee Road	Edinburgh	Elizabeth
Cooper Blvd		Byrd	Airport/James
Gander Bay Road		Raynham	Memorial
		Morgan	McCurdy
		Bennett	Roe
		Ogilvie (future)	
		Rowsell (future)	

All other roads in Gander are considered local roads and provide access to residential, light industrial and commercial uses.

4.8.2 Trans Canada Highway

A 1997 study by Sheppard Green Engineering Limited, to review options for the upgrading of the Trans Canada Highway through Gander proposed three options. The option preferred by the Department of Transportation and Works proposes the construction of a new section to bypass the Town to the south between the existing route and Gander Lake. However, this proposal has met with opposition from the Town and business community who prefer the existing route to be maintained or upgraded.

Discussions with staff of the Department of Transportation and Works reveals that the Department proposes to proceed with the construction of a new route alignment for the TCH to bypass Gander within an estimated 8 to 10 years or approximately in 2016 to 2018. The Department has requested that the proposed route be incorporated into the Gander Municipal Plan and that policies be put in place to ensure that no development which would interfere with the future route is permitted.

4.8.3 Road Network – Issues

A review of the road network and on site observations and examination carried by traffic engineering suggests the following:

4.8.3.1 Cooper Boulevard – as a major arterial, access to Cooper Boulevard should continue to be limited.

4.8.3.2 Gander Bay Road – as a major arterial, access to Gander Bay Road should continue to be limited.

4.8.3.3 Raynham Avenue – previously designated as a residential collector in the Subdivision Master Plan, Raynham Avenue currently ends in a cul-de-sac. The extension of Raynham to Cooper Boulevard was determined previously, and should be completed. Residents have voiced opposition to this extension and a proposed new Fire Hall to be constructed on a lot to be designated on the north -west corner of Cooper Blvd and the Raynham extension.

4.8.3.4 Ogilvie Street – can provide a means of access from the Freedom Village development to McCurdy Drive via Carr Crescent. This is a viable alternative route to the only existing means of access – the Trans Canada Highway.

4.8.3.5 Trans Canada Highway Realignment – the Department of Transportation and Works has indicated that it plans to proceed with the Trans Canada Highway realignment within the planning period. Staff speculates that this might be in 8 or 10 years time. The current CDA 4, south of the Trans Canada Highway is approximately 52 ha of land that cannot be developed until appropriate access is provided from the Trans Canada Highway. The proposed realignment of the TCH requires that an access ramp be built from Cooper Boulevard, that would provide access to the land south of the TCH, CDA 4. Another ramp is proposed at the west end of the TCH, within the Town limit, in the vicinity of Magee Road.

4.8.4 Road Network - Options

The following options have been identified to enhance the road network in Gander in the future:

4.8.4.1 Cooper Boulevard – provides an access to CDA 2 from Cooper Boulevard. Ensure that the internal road network is designed for residential use of the land within this Comprehensive Development Area. [See drawing A#2]

4.8.4.2 Raynham Avenue – ensure that the access to CDA 2 is aligned with the Raynham Avenue extension to Cooper Boulevard. As development proceeds in the future [beyond the 10 year planning period 2009- 2019] and traffic volumes increase, an evaluation should be completed to determine whether signals should be installed at this intersection.

4.8.4.3 Secondary residential collector – consideration should be given to an alternate residential collector, north of Raynham Avenue, which can intersect with

Rowsell Boulevard at Magee Road, and provide access through lands designated Open Space Recreation, to Gander Bay Road. [See drawing A #3]

4.8.4.4 Ogilvie Street - extending Ogilvie Street to Carr Crescent to provide direct access to the town, and a safer alternative to the TCH should become a priority. This also enables the development of current CDA 1 for residential purposes. [See drawing A #1]

4.8.4.5 Existing TransCanada Highway – the 1997 Sheppard Green Engineering report regarding the Trans Canada Highway realignment, predicted an increase in traffic volumes that has not yet been reached. Although the Department of Transportation and Works continues to support the realignment scheme, no definitive timeframe for construction has been established. Town Council and residents have voiced their concerns about the realignment. As 11⁺ years have elapsed since the realignment scheme was suggested and since a report investigating traffic volumes and engineering issues commissioned, it may be prudent for Council and the representatives from the Department to revisit the issue. An updated traffic engineering study should be conducted. A resolution should be sought in order to enable the Town to develop the land south of the TCH, which is CDA 4. [See drawing A #4]

5.0 RECREATION

Parks and recreation have long had major impacts on the lives of all residents in a community. The traditional view of recreation as a sport dominated and competitive pursuit is no longer valid in today's society. Where traditionally society embraced a strong work ethic, the trend over the last decades has seen the rise of a leisure ethic determined to bring a healthy balance to our hectic lives. Leisure opportunities provided through recreation give individuals the opportunity to lead a balanced life. Therefore it is important to appreciate the concepts of leisure and recreation in order to satisfy today's realities.

Leisure

Leisure represents discretionary or free time in which one may make voluntary choices of experience. Leisure is neither good nor bad. The choices one makes of leisure have the potential for positive or negative influences on quality of life. Leisure encompasses a myriad of choices. Differences in age, stage in life-cycle and income determine residents' availability to pursue leisure time activities; putting ever greater pressure on municipalities to provide adequate facilities and leisure choices that meet a multitude of user needs and contribute to the quality of life in the community.

Thus, leisure can be defined as that portion of times not obligated by daily demands of subsistence or existence. It is free time in which one may make voluntary choices of experience.

Recreation

Recreation may include an extremely wide array of activities such as: sports, games, crafts, arts, music, drama, travel, hobbies, intellectual pursuits, outdoor experiences, and social activities. These activities may be engaged in briefly, or in a sustained way, for single episodes or throughout one's lifetime. Recreational choices may be challenging, stimulating, or relaxing and rewarding. They may offer social interaction or be solitary pursuits. Above all, they should be fun! The challenge for municipal providers of recreation services is to provide a broad enough range of choices that meet a diversity of recreation needs; make those choices exciting, rewarding and available to all participants.

Thus, recreation can be defined as any socially acceptable activity pursued during leisure time, either individually or collectively, that provides immediate personal enjoyment.

Community pride is based on leisure opportunities and facilities and the quality of the local environment. Studies dealing with quality of life issues focus on the quality of recreation opportunities and the quality of the urban environment. Communities are often evaluated on their level of open spaces, availability of recreation facilities and leisure programs. Thus important components of the recreation system are parks, playgrounds and open spaces and facilities.

Open Space

Open space is public and private space that is open to the sky and is used or has the potential to be used for public recreation. It is not necessary for open space to be “natural” in the sense of being untouched by human intervention. Open space can include areas occupied by man-made structures as well as spaces formed by those structures.

Open Space means all space, public or private, that is open to the sky and is used or has the potential to be used for public recreation. Open space may be categorized as active or unstructured and serves the community in a physical, educational, aesthetic or protective manner.

Active Open Space means space used primarily for recreation that is of a physical nature such as sports. Areas may be organized for a particular sport, or not organized.

Unstructured Open Space means space used primarily for recreation that is of an individual nature, for example, walking, reading, and picnicking. Physical activity is at a minimum and is usually not organized.

Open space forms a system in which different land uses are combined to create a network. This system can include green spaces and corridors, trails and linkages [such as streets and plazas] parks, playgrounds, fields and environmental features such as reservoirs, flood basins, watersheds, waterways and wetlands, and the like.

The open space system is an important planning tool as it provides a structural framework for urban growth and development. As a framework, it also provides continuity in the urban context by binding together otherwise disconnected and unrelated development areas, creating a sense of identity for the Town.

5.1 The Gander Experience

The parks and recreation system has a major impact on the lives of all residents. The goal of the Department of Parks, Recreation is to provide and improve the quality of life for all Gander residents through meaningful leisure experiences. This can be achieved through the provision of parks and open spaces, facilities and programs, and active healthy living and wellness education, which respond to the needs of residents. Leisure opportunities provided through recreation give individuals the opportunity to lead a balanced life. The entire community will be enhanced if a broader definition of recreation is recognized and all residents are encouraged to participate in the recreation system.

To understand the importance and the impact of leisure and the parks and recreation system in Gander, it is important to examine the community's profile.

5.1.1 Recreation in Gander

To understand the current situation regarding the parks and recreation system in Gander it is necessary to examine the lands, facilities and programs under the jurisdiction of agencies and groups other than the municipality. Although some of these are not the direct responsibility of the Town of Gander, their importance for the residents of Gander and as a component of the recreation system and open space network cannot be overlooked.

The Town of Gander, through the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has a mandate that is twofold; to “encourage more tourist activity and to attract conventions, tournaments, trade shows and special events to the Town of Gander; and to facilitate and co-ordinate recreation and leisure services that stimulate personal growth, healthy lifestyles, increase civic pride and improve the quality of life for the residents of Gander.”

Over the past number of decades various facilities have been developed in Gander and programs initiated for the purposes of providing residents with a good mix of recreational opportunities. Gander is in the enviable position of having a significant recreational infrastructure that would normally be found in a larger municipality. Some of these facilities have been developed by other agencies, such as the Provincial Government and Canadian Forces Base 9-Wing Gander.

Numerous groups provide a multitude of leisure and recreation programs for all age groups in Gander. Various associations exist to manage facilities and/or activities.

In addition, several private commercial enterprises provide fitness and leisure opportunities. Figure 20 lists the parks, open spaces, facilities and program providers in Gander.

Figure 20: Parks & Open Space & Facilities in Gander

Parks & Open Space	Facilities	Program Providers
Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest	Arts & Culture Centre	Adult Basketball League Aerobics
Gander Golf Course & Driving Range	Gander Community Centre	Airials Gymnastics Airport Nordic Ski Club
Nordic Ski Trail (15 km)	Library	Avion Players Theatre Group
Cobb’s Pond Rotary Park	3 school gymnasia	Chikaka Judo Club
Little Cobb’s Pond Trail	CFB 9Wing Recreation Complex	Gander Curling Club
Newfoundland Trailway	Gander Curling Club*	Gander Seniors Curling Club
Gander Field Complex (Elizabeth Drive)	Curves Fitness Centre*	Gander Dance School
6 softball pitches	Total Body Fitness*	Gander Golf Club Inc.
2 basketball courts	Yoga Fitness*	Gander Lakers Swim Team
1 baseball diamond 4 tennis courts	Peyton’s Pins (bowling)*	Gander Minor Baseball
10 playgrounds & play lots 1 Skateboard park	Gander Rod & Gun Club*	Gander Minor Hockey
2 soccer fields	Gander Golf Course	Gander Shotokan Karate Club
Pipe Plane Replica Display	Gander Driving Range	Gander Soccer Club
Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery	North Atlantic Aviation Museum	Heather Harris School of Dance
Silent Witness Memorial		Gander Rod & Gun Club
Little Harbour Marina & Park (wharf, beach, picnic area)		Recreation Hockey Mens & Ladies
		Silver Jets Figure Skating
		Tennis Club
		Skaters Edge
* commercial privately owned A movie theatre closed in 2006		

5.2 Issues in Recreation

The 21st century poses challenges for adapting and designing sports and recreation facilities that will respond to constantly evolving and changing community needs. This is important because facility availability, quality and location determine programming options and participation. To this end, several emerging recreation trends must be considered when proposing new facilities and programs.

5.2.1 Aging Population

An overall aging population is a significant trend across the country. There will be a greater number of people of older ages participating in recreation who will require a change in type and use of facilities. This aging population trend is evident in Gander as 40% of the population of Gander is 45 years of age and up.

5.2.2 Diversity in Aging Populations

It is important to recognize that the “seniors” group is not a homogeneous one, and abilities will range from “active younger seniors” to “frail older senior.” Thus, two groups of “seniors” are emerging as the “baby boom” generation begins to retire from the job market. The first group is the “Younger, Healthy, Active Adults” category (55⁺ years) who are able to retire at a younger age, and who remain active and thus healthy. Studies show this group is more active, and more active longer, than their predecessors. The second group is the “Older Adult” category (60⁺ years). Although older adult seniors may also be very active, for older seniors, recreation becomes more about social interaction than physical activity.

In 2001 Gander’s population of adults from age 55⁺ was 2050 people, in 2006 that number increased by 385 adults for a total of 2435. There are currently 1570 people between the ages of 45 and 54, who will be moving into the Younger Active Healthy Adult category in the 10 years [which corresponds to the planning period]. The adult age categories from 45⁺ years have all shown and increase in population in the 2006 census. Today in Gander there are 4005 people over the age of 45 or 40% of the population. In 2001, this group had a total of 3500 persons, or 36% of the population. Thus this group has grown 4% over the census period while the total population of Gander increase 3.3 % during the period. The age group 60⁺ years makes up 18.0% of Gander’s population as compared to 19.9 % for Newfoundland and Labrador and 17.9% for the country. The document “A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2007” notes that population is “aging rapidly and shrinking in most regions of the Province. Modest population declines are expected to continue over the longer term.

Rural areas are aging most rapidly and feeling the effects of population reduction as youth migration from these areas continues.” This growth in adult populations will have significant impacts on the recreation system in Gander.

5.2.3 Facility Infrastructure – Capital Investment Risk Management

Trends across the country also include a “changing capital investment risk.” This means that facilities like arenas, curling rinks, sports fields are increasingly considered higher risk investments due to an aging population. Municipalities are choosing to invest in multi-use facilities that meet the needs of many age groups and programs rather than single use high end facilities. Single use facilities are being replaced by “inter-generational” recreation complexes that offer flexibility of use that can cater to a diverse market thereby generating some economic benefits in terms of operational costs. The trend for investment is in trails, leisure pools, natural areas and gardens and theatres. [Seniors’ Recreation Strategy Report, 2005]

5.2.4 Demand for Programming Changes

Across the country, the gradual aging of the population is increasing the demand for individual based programming such as walking, yoga, aerobics, golf and other fitness programs, resulting in a decrease in demand for the traditional higher intensity team sports such as hockey, baseball, basketball and the like. In Gander, the adult population age 45 + makes up 40% of the population. The needs of this group have started to change and will continue to change and reflect the trend towards more individually based programming. This will be a significant factor for Gander in the provision and use of recreation facilities.

5.2.5 Active Living

Active living incorporates the concepts of physical experience, total life experience, and the relevance of physical activity to daily life and its facilitation with communities. (Quinney, et al, Towards Active Living – 1994) Active living can be defined as a way of life in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily life.

This concept has become even more important since the start of this century and the realization that Canada’s children are physically inactive leading to all manner of health and social problems. Studies conducted in recent years by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institutes [CFLRI] examined rates of participation in organized and unorganized physical activities both in school and outside of school, and found that children and youth are far below recommended levels of activity. The data found that

91% of Canadian children and youth not meeting the guidelines set by Canada’s Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth that state children should accumulate 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day in addition to the incidental activities required for daily living. Based on these studies, Active Healthy Kids Canada recommended that families need to re-establish and increase unstructured physical activity and play as part of their daily lifestyle, for schools to establish quality daily health and physical education classes, and that children need to pursue physical activities as opposed to sedentary time in front of a computer or television screen.

To this end the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has embraced an Active Healthy Living mandate, through its strategy “*Active, Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador – A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador.*” Furthermore, a Provincial Wellness Plan sets out a vision for individuals, families and communities to achieve optimal health and well-being. The Provincial Wellness Grants Program, established under the Provincial Wellness Plan – approved an application by the Gander Active Living Committee for \$40,000, to enable the Committee to expand the active schools initiative in the Central Region allowing 4,000 K-6 children to have access to daily physical activity and access to nutritious food at school. The Active Living Committee is a not-for-profit organization formed in 2003 made up of local physicians, nutritionists, fitness leaders and health promotion professionals whose mandate is to advocate active and healthy lifestyle choices.

The Gander Active Living Committee established an Active Schools Initiative that covers 55 schools in a large geographic area in central Newfoundland. This initiative is focused on grades K- 6 but also includes schools with an enrolment of K-8 and K- 12. A partnership among school boards, Departments of Education and Health, municipalities and their parks and recreation departments, and the private sector enabled the Committee to secure funding in addition to undertaking fund raising. The program, titled Daily Physical Activity is based on the classroom setting wherein trained teachers lead physical activities each day sometimes in combination with their studies. The focus is to teach children healthy active living coupled with good nutrition, with the hope that these lessons taught early in life, will become habit forming.

Studies have shown that the rates of obesity and diabetes among school aged children are higher in Central Newfoundland than elsewhere in Canada. Physical activity is lower here, especially on weekends and in particular among girls. Giving teachers the training and resources to sustain the program has been a key component towards its success. Encouraging outdoor activities has been problematic in some instances where inadequate outdoor playing fields exist. Some school administrators are hesitant to allow their

children to play outside due to a lack of safe open spaces. [This was also noted by staff and the principal of St. Paul’s Intermediate School].

Another consequence of the program witnessed by the Committee is that many children “don’t know how to play.” The personal computer, video games, electronic toys, DVDs and big screen TV’s have created a cohort of children who are more prone to sedentary activities involving a screen than physical school yard games. The result has physical, health and social ramifications as children are overweight, suffer from diseases [such as diabetes, high blood pressure] and have less social interaction with their peers.

Children learn best by example. Active parents who promote physical family activities and healthy lifestyle choices will set an example for their children. Teachers who are good role models and an example of healthy living will also be emulated.

Thus 20 minutes of physical activity daily provided through the schools should be considered a preventative program and supported by the municipality and the province as it will help reduce and stem the tide of childhood diabetes and obesity in Gander. Evaluations conducted by program organizers indicate that positive fitness and health improvements are all ready evident.

5.3 Recreation Issues and Options in Gander

The results of the research and consultations were analysed to reveal a community demographic profile, recreation trends, the current situation in Gander with respect to parks, open space, facilities and programs in order to assess the recreational infrastructure to determine needs for the next planning period.

Discussions with staff of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and facility managers, a mail-out survey questionnaire sent to program providers and subsequent telephone follow-up; a focus group meeting with program providers, telephone and personal interviews with key stakeholders, high school students, and public meetings, were used to obtain public input and opinion regarding recreation system in Gander. There is general consistency regarding the status of recreation in Gander and the issues. The main themes resulting from the consultation are described as follows.

5.3.1 Role of Department of Parks and Recreation

The role of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism is broad based in terms of its mandate to deal with issues related to recreation, parks and open spaces, tourism and culture. Recent changes to the Department’s tourism function with the emergence of

Destination Gander as the primary tourism driver, provides an opportunity for the Department to streamline its mandate and concentrate on the provision of recreation and leisure services. To this end, the image and name of the department should reflect its primary purpose in serving the community's recreation and leisure needs, thus it is recommended that the name be changed to the Department of Recreation and Leisure Services. The parks function will be better served under Municipal Works.

5.3.2 Facilities

Respondents are generally satisfied with existing recreation facilities in Gander and most acknowledged the number and quality of facilities is atypical for a town the size of Gander. Many thought that most facilities are used to near capacity – which is based on speculation and empirical evidence shows otherwise. Emerging issues include the need for:

- a second ice surface
- a multi-purpose space/gymnasium
- a wellness centre
- teen centre
- Airials Gymnastics Club facility
- outdoor multipurpose field and track
- lights for the Nordic ski trails; and tennis courts
- renovations and/or addition projects

5.3.2.1 Second Ice Surface

The issue is one of scheduling of ice surface time when tourism or convention activities require the arena facility. Two options exist; a second ice surface built as a “shell” attached to the existing facility and sharing the same plant; or another arena.

Order of magnitude cost estimate: for a shell with refrigeration plant is approximately \$3 million; for a shell with refrigeration plant and changing rooms is approximately \$3.8 million. [Cost estimates are *today's prices only*, and do not reflect or predict market fluctuations. The market has seen dramatic increases in prices of building materials in 2008, thus costs in the future may be significantly different than those quoted in this report].

The standard for provision of arenas is 1 per 10,000 population and in larger cities; 1 per 20,000 population. Although Gander's population is just short of 10,000 and it is a regional centre and thus provides services and facilities for residents living outside the town limit, it nonetheless fits the standard. The arena is not used capacity, with ice available outside of prime times. Weekend use of the arena for trade shows and the like,

has an impact on facility users such as the hockey and skating clubs. However, the redirection of these “events” to another facility would alleviate the problem. Furthermore, the population is projected to grow by 500 people to 10,500 residents in the planning period [the next ten years]. However like the provincial and national trends, Gander will continue to experience an aging population. Seniors are not arena users. With an aging population, the municipality must consider the capital costs as well the operational costs of a second ice surface as well as future use of two ice surfaces to determine its capital investment risk.

5.3.2.2 Multi-Purpose Facility [Leisure Centre]

In Gander there are three gymnasias associated with the public schools and a gymnasium available at CFB 9-Wing Gander. There is no municipal multi-purpose/ gymnasium facility. Several program providers and facility managers identified the need for more gym space and multi-purpose space. Existing available space is used heavily and indeed one club, the Airials Gymnastics Club is looking for new accommodations as Gander Academy, the club’s home for 35 years, will no longer be available as of September 2008.

Trends in recreation recognize that single use facilities are becoming obsolete and need to be replaced by more flexible multi-generational recreation facilities that can accommodate users of all ages, a myriad of program choices and generate greater operational economies of scale. The design of a multi-purpose gymnasium with a flexible configuration, and integration of additional spaces must have the physical capacity to support leisure programming.

The provision of a leisure/recreation centre is typically 1 facility per 15,000 service population. The development of a multi-purpose building [leisure centre] should be incorporated into the existing arena and pool facilities to build upon the critical mass and to share the physical plant if possible.

Consideration of this type of facility for Gander may have merit on several levels. Gander’s population is aging – a flexible multi –purpose facility can accommodate the needs of a broad spectrum of the population. Its flexibility allows the programming of a myriad of leisure and recreation programs. There is currently an identified need for more multi-purpose/gymnasium space for activities for children, teens and seniors. Programming options in a multi-purpose facility will facilitate community based programs that can focus on physical activity for all ages. This reflects the province’s initiative and mandate for Active Healthy Living.

The capital investment risk for a municipality considering the development of a multi-purpose space/gymnasium [leisure centre] would be lower than for a single use facility. An order of magnitude cost estimate for a multi- purpose leisure centre is approximately \$1.6 million. [Cost estimates are *today's prices only*, and do not reflect or predict market fluctuations. The market has seen dramatic increases in prices of building materials in 2008, thus costs in the future may be significantly different than those quoted in this report].

Components of a Multi-purpose Facility in Gander:

This type of multi-purpose facility could accommodate the following needs/uses identified during the course of this study:

- A place for teens
- A space for the YMCA's satellite program; 3F: Fifty, Fit and Fun
- A wellness centre
- A space for basketball, indoor soccer, floor hockey, volleyball, badminton etc.
- A planned, dedicated space for the Airials Gymnastics Club

a) A Place for Teens

Interviews with teachers, principals [and vice principals] and students indicated a need for leisure activities that are socially based. A place where teens could come to “hang out” like a teen drop-in centre was suggested. Teens that are not on sports teams and who are not interested in competitive sports need a place to meet friends, to socialise and to pursue leisure interests. Teens interviewed lamented the closure of the movie theatre as it provided a safe and desirable leisure activity. Teens indicated that without the cinema, there is nowhere to go and they end up driving around town. A space for teens must nonetheless provide program opportunities whether scheduled or spontaneous. A multi-purpose facility can accommodate spontaneous games of basketball or badminton, as well as providing a specific leisure programs geared to teens. A video games room/computer room is also of interest to this age group.

b) Seniors: Fun and Fitness over Fifty

The 3-F program [Fun and Fitness over Fifty] is a satellite program of the YMCA in Grand Falls-Winsor. Its focus is to provide fitness opportunities for middle aged and older adults in a fun social setting. Again, this program fits under the mandate of the provincial government of Active Healthy Living. At the present time, this program will be run in the upstairs viewing room at the provincial pool facility, on a trial basis. This type of leisure program readily fits the parameters of a multi-purpose facility and would also fall under government's Active Living mandate.

c) Wellness Centre

Recreation staff has discussed the need for a “wellness centre.” Typically a wellness centre is developed in cooperation with many partners to address wellness issues in a holistic manner both through education and prevention. A model for a wellness centre includes various community partners such as a health authority, a municipality, a school district or post secondary education facility, a service provider such as the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club and other service providers and agencies appropriate to a specific location and focus.

The purpose of a Wellness Centre is to provide a multi-purpose/gym space and myriad opportunities for recreation and leisure activities; and health and lifestyles education for all age groups in Gander.

Wellness centres are gaining popularity in urban centres due to their effectiveness. The model of a wellness centre complies with government’s Provincial Wellness Plan which focuses on improving the health of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador to help all residents “achieve their optimal state of wellness.” [*A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador*” -2007]

d) Indoor Sports [Non-competitive]

Several program providers and individuals suggested the need for another gymnasium that could accommodate all manner of indoor sports such as basketball, indoor soccer, floor hockey, volleyball, badminton and the like. It was emphasized that more non competitive opportunities are needed for teens in the area of recreational sports and recreational leagues.

e) Airials Gymnastics Club Facility

The Airials Gymnastics Club has been in existence for 35 years and has approximately 200 members ranging in age from 4 to 17 years of age. Started by a teacher, the club operates out of Gander Academy using the school gym and a storage area. The Airials is the only club in Newfoundland that does not have a dedicated facility. In the last year, the school administration has indicated to the Club executive that it is no longer able to offer the storage space and gym to the Club. The Club has prepared a proposal to develop a stand- alone facility with an estimated budget of \$750,000 in 2005. [In today’s prices the proposed budget may be higher due to increased costs of some building materials.] Town Council has been asked to support the proposal and the Club’s bid to obtain provincial government funding. Discussions are underway between the Club and the provincial government – regarding funding. The Town through the Department of Recreation is considering an investment of \$100,000 to build a new storage facility

attached to Gander School gymnasium, and help the Club replace its equipment over the next few years.

Gander's population is in line with the provincial and national trends towards an aging population. In the last census period Gander experienced an increase in the age group 0 to 4 years and the age group 5 to 9 years. This reflects both the birth rate and immigration and a similar increase in population is seen in the age groups 25 to 29 years and 30 to 34 years, presumably the parents of some of these young children. However, a comparison of the 0 to 19 years population in the census period 2001 to 2006 reveals that there has been a slight net decrease in school aged children. The challenge will be to retain the larger 0 to 9 years population that is or will be entering the school system. This will depend on Gander's ability to attract and retain their parents [young adult groups 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 years].

A space dedicated to the gymnastics club use, as a component of a multi-purpose/gymnasium facility may be feasible, especially if the gymnastics space could be used for other programs such as aerobics, yoga, and fitness classes for various users groups especially seniors.

This increase in population of the age group 1 to 9 years may warrant the provision of some recreation services in the future, however, with a demonstrably aging population, Town Council must again examine its capital investment risk. Facilities that are multi-generational and multi-dimensional will serve a larger user clientele and thus be more financially viable. In the future, municipalities need to focus the provision of recreation and leisure services and including facilities to meet the needs of the "masses." In Gander's situation, as with the province and other urban centres, the majority of residents are 45 years and older.

5.3.2.3 Movie Theatre

Although it is not a facility that should be financed by a municipality, the closure of the movie theatre has left a gap for all residents, particularly teens. The Town may wish to explore avenues to attract and support a new cinema operator.

5.4 Parks and Open Space

Respondents generally voiced their satisfaction for the parks and trails available to Gander residents. Cobb's Pond Rotary Park and the Trailway, cross country ski trails were mentioned as real assets for the Town. It was suggested that better maintenance is needed for various playfields such as the soccer pitches and softball fields, and especially the dug-outs and the condition of the turf.

5.4.1 Neighbourhood Parks

As residential subdivisions are developed it will be important for the Town to work with developers to identify areas where neighbourhood parks should be installed to meet the needs of the local community within a 0.8km radius. Neighbourhood parks can include parkettes, tot lots, playgrounds, sitting areas and small sports fields. A comparison based on number of residents and age groups to be served, and proximity of other parks and open spaces will determine the type of neighbourhood park that will meet the needs of local residents.

5.4.2 Community Parks

Gander residents are well supplied with neighbourhood and regional parks. The addition of facilities to the Gander Academy Soccer Complex and the Elizabeth Drive Playlot enhance these locations. Building on an existing critical mass would make these areas community parks. The Department of Parks and Recreation has examined these areas and proposed to include bleachers and a washroom/changing room facility at Soccer Complex; and a new major playlot and splash pad to the Elizabeth Drive Playlot.

5.4.3 Outdoor Multi-Purpose Field and Track

St. Paul's Intermediate School has proposed the need for a multi-purpose field and perimeter track to be built behind the school and between the Intermediate School and Gander Collegiate. This proposal has met with some positive reaction from teachers, students and residents. Currently there is no green area between the schools and nowhere for students to play outdoors. Students sometimes played wall ball against the school but this practice was stopped when it was deemed dangerous – as students chased stray balls across Gander Bay Road. There is also nowhere for teachers to conduct phys Ed classes outside. Currently, there is no track in Gander and no multi-purpose field. There is a track in Botwood, and although schools in Gander can use this track, the logistics of bussing students makes it an undesirable option. As there is nowhere to train for track and field, enrolment in this activity has decreased.

The schools proposal is to design and develop a multi-purpose field that can be used for any number of outdoor sports and activities that need a large grassed field, and to install a track around the perimeter of the field. This project could be phased over a number of years and each phase installed as budgets permit.

The addition of a multi-purpose field and track would accommodate the needs of middle school and high school students and is very much in keeping with government’s mandate of Healthy Active Living programs for students.

This is a facility that potentially would get used by many other groups in Gander. It would service the Special Olympics track and field team. The track could be used by children, teens, adults and seniors alike. The multi-purpose field lends itself to recreational or pick-up games of football, field hockey, soccer, etc. Thus, this proposal supports government’s mandate to provide healthy active opportunities for all residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador - 2007 states: “making healthier lifestyle choices must be a priority of both individual citizens in their daily lives and government in its policies, programs and services. ...efforts to promote healthy behaviours demonstrate that citizens more readily support a healthy lifestyle when they are educated about its value and have access to safe and attractive physical activities through recreation and sport. Support social and physical environments are vital to helping citizens choose to become more active.”

The development of a track and multi-purpose field has merit. This is a project that should be explored with a number of partners, including the municipality, the school district and the provincial government.

5.5 Programs

Generally residents are satisfied with the type, quantity, and quality of leisure and recreation programs. Some organizations reported an increase in participants, for example tennis, minor/ladies hockey, and cross country skiing; participation in basketball has decreased, others reported a stable number of participants. Some program gaps were identified as described below.

5.5.1 Program Gaps for Teens

Programs gaps were identified specifically for teens although there was no consensus. An observation voiced by teens, teacher and principals and other respondents is that there are not enough non-competitive sports opportunities for teens. Gifted athletes have opportunities to participate on sports teams, but those who don’t make the team or can’t afford the registration fee, have few options. Recreational leagues or additional opportunities for teens to play basketball, volley ball and hockey were mentioned.

High school aged teens indicated that since the closing of the movie theatre, there are few opportunities for them. Many like to just “hang-out” but have few places in which to do

so. A teen centre facility was identified as a potential benefit, especially if it could accommodate more “drop-in” type opportunities. Suggestions included table tennis, badminton, and the ability to play “pick-up” sports such as basketball or floor hockey. Flexibility in a teen facility that would allow spontaneity in terms of participating in an activity seems to be of paramount importance. The social aspect of a teen facility is equally important.

Some residents felt that there is enough to do for teens and that some will not get involved no matter what is offered to them. This may be a perennial perception across the country. Some teens may not have a role model at home from whom to learn about good lifestyle choices; others may not choose structured recreation and leisure activities because all ready have too rigorous a schedule. All children need to be allowed to be “just be kids.” Providing teens with a safe environment to pursue leisure activities, sports, and fitness or to just socialize may be of overall benefit to the community.

5.5.2 Program Gaps for Seniors

Program gaps were identified as lacking especially for female adult seniors. To maintain health, confidence and self esteem, senior adults need to increase and maintain their involvement and participation in a range of physical, social, mental health and other activities. Routine physical activity in recreation and sport can help seniors, who tend to be less active, achieve overall health and overcome the social isolation that comes with aging. Healthy, active, older adults, who require less medical intervention, live in their own homes longer, and lead productive lives put less demand on our health care and social systems. A municipality that is proactive provides good quality recreation and leisure activities for its senior citizens ensuring their good health and participation in the community. This can be linked to another government initiative on healthy aging. Government’s discussion paper “Healthy Aging for All in the 21st Century” explains that its focus is on communities and populations for the prevention of disease, promotion of health and protection of residents particularly seniors. The “Healthy Aging Policy Framework and Plan is government’s commitment to healthy populations. This is also linked to the provincial Recreation and Sport Strategy that will encourage and promote proposals that increase the level of physical activity among seniors.

5.6 Promotion

It was noted by some residents that the recreation system could benefit from enhanced as well as increased promotion of programs, facilities, fees and schedules. Enhancing the Recreation Department’s website to provide more information, making it user–friendly and enabling residents to register and pay on-line for programs was suggested. Several

students and teachers indicated the schools could also do more in terms of promoting programs that are offered in the schools.

5.7 Volunteerism

Several program providers reported that volunteerism has decreased; that it's more difficult to attract volunteers to their organization; and that the same few people are responsible for the organization year after year. As the baby boomers retire and they become empty nesters, they are less interested in volunteering their time and more interested in pursuing leisure and recreation activities.

Attracting volunteers is a problem experienced by all manner of groups and is a common problem across the country. The municipality may wish to examine various methods to attract volunteers, and share these with program providers to assist them in expanding their volunteer base. These methods may range from offering incentives [such as prizes], training clinics for instructors or coaches; and finding ways to make the volunteer experience a “sociable” one. Creating a data bank might also provide groups the opportunity to call on volunteers for specific events or tasks. Inviting groups to one day seminar to explore options; discuss strategies and share examples may help all groups as well as the Department of Parks and Recreation to meet their volunteer quotas in a positive and creative manner.

5.8 Renovations Projects and Additions to Facilities

Department of Parks and Recreation staff identified several projects that would involve the renovation or addition of facilities or amenities to improve existing buildings, parks and open spaces. These are listed as follows.

5.8.1 Gander Arts and Culture Centre [Pool]

It is proposed to add onto the building that houses the pool and into the space between the Community Centre and the main pool structure. Extending the building would allow for bleachers for spectators, and a much needed family change room accessible to the pool deck and an additional storage area.

This would then allow the current observation area to be used as a meeting room, or a multi-purpose room. The 3-F program [Fun and Fitness over Fifty] with a focus to provide fitness opportunities for middle aged and older adults; could use this facility to conduct its program.

5.8.2 Regional Parks - Cobb's Pond Rotary Park

A consultant has been hired to develop a Master Plan for Cobb's Pond Rotary Park that will outline recommendations for future development and maintenance of the Park.

5.8.3 Trails

It is also important that as land is developed for any use, but especially residential uses, that trails are developed to link subdivisions to existing trails and parks. There is currently a proposal to develop a 4th trail from the Spruce Court Subdivision to Cobb's Pond Rotary Park. Upgrades to Cobb's Pond Rotary Park also includes ongoing to maintenance to the boardwalk.

5.8.4 Existing Playlots

Upgrade and redevelop 6 existing playlots with new play equipment.

For more details see the complete report Town of Gander Recreational Infrastructure Needs Assessment, 2008.

6.0 RURAL RESOURCES USES

A number of rural resource uses are located outside the built up area of Gander. The following describes these uses and implications for future planning.

6.1 Forestry

The Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife Division, Eastern Habitat Joint Venture is involved with the Town of Gander in the Municipal Stewardship Program. The Eastern Habitat Joint Venture has been asked to offer comments regarding the Gander area as a component of the Municipal Plan Review. The Eastern Habitat Joint Venture has asked that the following recommendations be incorporated into the municipal planning documents.

Areas within the municipal planning boundary have been slated for commercial harvesting within the timeframe of the next Municipal Plan. A proposed cutting area adjacent to Cobb's Pond was visited by the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture and Wildlife Division staff in the winter of 2007 and is not considered an issue from a wetland or waterfowl perspective. Cutting would, however, be obvious when viewed from one portion of Cobb's Pond (a management unit) and it has been recommended by Wildlife Division staff that a viewscape analysis be considered, should the community deem the cutting of relevance to recreational enjoyment of the area. It has been recommended by Eastern Habitat Joint Venture staff that a 100 metre buffer remain intact around all portions of Whitman's Pond in an effort to maintain ecological integrity in such a prolific wildlife area. The community fully supports the issuance of a 100 m buffer around Whitman's Pond.

Forest harvesting operations within the Gander Planning Area support a number of commercial and domestic sawmill operation. On Crown limits there 6 commercial operators cut a total of 6,006 cubic metres of wood within the Municipal Planning Area. [Some of these operations may be within the municipal boundary of the Town of Benton.]

While there is no current commercial harvesting by forestry companies within or immediately adjacent to the municipal planning area, both Corner Brook Pulp and Paper and Abitibi-Consolidated have timber rights to land areas in the northern and western portions of the municipal planning area and in areas immediately adjacent to the planning area. Both Corner Brook Pulp and Paper and Abitibi-Consolidated issue domestic cutting permits to local residents to cut hardwoods between October and March.

Domestic cutting is controlled by the Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods who issued 23 permits in two domestic cutting areas with the Gander Municipal Planning Area in 1998. These cutting areas are located around Soulis Pond and north of the municipal waste disposal site on the Gander Bay Road, (areas 31 and 32). Total cutting amounted to 828 cubic metres. The Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods is now developing new strategic and operating plans for forests in the area and has established a stakeholder management committee which involves the Town and the Gander River Watershed Monitoring Committee.

The Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest covers an area of 5,400 ha coinciding with the boundaries of Transport Canada lands surrounding Gander International Airport. It is a working forest illustrating integrated forest management techniques and common forestry practices. There are no long term cutting operations. However, permits have been given for pre-commercial, commercial and domestic cutting activities as part of the management plan. Silviculture and other activities are also undertaken with all activities conducted according to a forest management plan. The town is involved in forest management initiatives underway within the municipal planning area as partner in the Thomas Howe Demonstration Forest Foundation.

6.2 Aggregate Resources

There are a number of active quarries within the Gander Municipal Planning Area. These are located outside the built up area of the Town, close to the Trans Canada Highway near the western and eastern limits of the planning area.

Current Plan policy restricts aggregate extraction south of the Trans Canada Highway and the Department of Mines and Energy have requested that such activities be permitted with the approval of the Town and the departments of Environment and Labour and Mines and Energy.

6.3 Agriculture

Land in the Gander area is rated as having fair to good capability for agriculture. However, commercial agriculture in the municipal planning area is limited to one greenhouse operations on Gander Bay Road.

6.4 Cabin Development

Existing cabin developments in the Gander planning area are located along the shores of Jonathan’s Pond, Boot Pond and Soulis Pond. The developments are regulated by the Lands Branch, Department of Environment and Lands, who design and allocate cottage lots on Crown lands. This agency has requested that Plan policy recognize these developments and provide for them accordingly.

6.5 Special Policy Area: Gander Bay Road

Over the last decade, the Gander Bay Road area has changed from a rural area where various types of rural agricultural and recreational businesses operated, to one which is today, primarily a rural residential area, with a number of businesses still operating.

Existing commercial uses include two nurseries, a veterinary clinic, dog kennels, a trailer camping park and a golf driving range. With the exception of a Trucking operation, these uses are compatible with surrounding residential uses. Future development of the area will be limited, due to the presence of sensitive wetland areas which are part of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture program to preserve waterfowl habitat, and other wet and boggy areas.

The area is not presently serviced with municipal water and sewer services. The Town’s Engineering Department estimates that provision of water services to all homes in this area would cost in the order of \$200,000. Residents have reported no problems with their current on site systems, and ground water is generally of good quality and quantity.

7.0 MUNICIPAL SERVICES

As there have been no significant changes to municipal services provided by the Town of Gander, the following section summarizes information regarding water supply, sewage and waste disposal.

7.1 Water Supply

Gander Lake, one of the largest lakes in the province, is the source of Gander's water drinking water supply. In 1976, the Town constructed a new pump house located on the lake shore below Skipper's Drive. The water supply system consists of a 1.2 meter diameter intake and four pumps capable of delivering 100 litres per second. Water quality problems in the past resulted in an extension of the water intake pipe into deeper water. Water is pumped to the Water Treatment Plant where it is disinfected with Ozone, filtered and treated with chlorine. The water is then stored in a 6,800 cubic meter reservoir near the center of Town before entering the distribution system.

With the exception of Gander Bay Road, all built up areas of the Town are serviced with piped water. The Town's engineering department estimates that provision of water servicing to the un-serviced area of Gander Bay Road would cost in the order of \$200,000. The water supply is more than adequate to meet future growth of the Town

The Department of Environment and Conservation, Water Resources Management Division has offered comments regarding the Municipal Plan and offers the following recommendations. There is a Protected Public Water Supply Area for the Town of Gander known as Gander Lake Protected Public Water Supply Area. All development activities in a protected public water supply area require prior approval, under the Section 39 of the *Water Resources Act*, from the Water Resources Management Division of the Department of Environment and Conservation as well as the Gander Lake Watershed Committee. A minimum 15 metre environmental buffer should be established and maintained along the high water mark of all bodies of water, including streams, ponds, wetlands, and the ocean. Any development within this buffer must be approved under Section 48 of the *Water Resources Act*.

A 1996, Watershed Management Plan prepared by EDM Limited, et al; for the Water Resources Division – Department of Environment, recommended that development be limited near the steep slopes on the north side of Gander Lake. This area corresponds to land for future development in Comprehensive Development Area 4. Should the land within the CDA 4 boundary be developed for residential uses in the future, a 300 metre

buffer from the ordinary high water mark of Gander Lake is proposed, and a 60 metre buffer between the Trans Canada Highway realignment and the developable area. A portion of the proposed realignment of the TCH will fall within the 300 metre buffer.

7.2 Sewage

There are two sewage treatment plants within the Town. The Beaverwood sewage treatment facility, located north of the business park, was built in 1987. This services an older area of town with a combined sewage system. The plant was designed to accommodate high volumes of flow and does have an overflow. Overflow generally occurs in extreme rainfall events. It currently operates at an estimated 50% capacity under normal operating conditions. However, the Beaverwood treatment system is not efficient and effective. As no residential growth is forecasted in the service area of the Beaverwood facility it is anticipated that it will not reach its capacity in the planning period.

Sewage in the northern areas of Gander flows to a second treatment plant off Magee Road in the Northeast Land Assembly. This plant has a capacity of 3000 cubic meters per day and consists of a primary and secondary treatment system with an aeration package. The effluent quality of the Magee Road plant is deteriorating which is an indication that it is near capacity. This treatment facility is currently operating at approximately 95% capacity and is not expected to accommodate future growth over the planning period.

The Town's Beaverwood sewage treatment system empties into the headwaters of Soulis Pond which empties into Soulis Brook and then to Gander Lake. Magee Road Plant empties into Peyton's Pond and Whitman's Pond headwaters. Tests completed in 2008 indicate that the wastewater treatment system on Magee and the Beaverwood Plant will not meet the new Federal Regulations for Municipal Wastewater Effluent Quality. The growth of the Town is also causing some concern with respect to the location of the Treatment Plants as land becomes more valuable for development.

As one sewage treatment plant is nearing its capacity load, and the other is inefficient, the Town is investigating the installation of a new, larger sewage treatment facility in the future.

7.3 Waste Disposal

The Gander Municipal Waste Disposal Site is located on Gander Bay Road. This site has sufficient capacity to serve the town over the next planning period. VON Broadening

Horizons currently provides curbside recycling to the community which has reduced the volume of garbage to the landfill by approximately 10%.

The Central Newfoundland Waste Management Authority is currently undertaking the task of developing a Solid Waste Management Plan for the Central Newfoundland Region with the ultimate goal of 50% reduction of materials going to landfills by 2010. This facility will be located in Norris Arm North and will encompass a lined landfill with leachate treatment, full recycling facility and a composting facility. This site is scheduled to be accepting solid waste from Gander and all communities in Central Newfoundland by the end of 2010. At this time the current waste disposal site in Gander will be closed to municipal solid waste.

8.0 ENVIRONMENT

The environment is comprised of different elements including air, land, water and our built surroundings. This chapter deals with important environmental issues that may influence the growth and development of Gander in the future.

8.1 Waterways

There are three ecologically sensitive water systems within the municipal planning area:

1. Soulis Pond which flows into Gander Lake and is part of the scheduled system for Gander River (located in Salmon Angling Zone 4).
2. Cobbs Pond contains brook trout and is a management unit within the Gander Stewardship Zone. Peyton's (Long) Pond and Whitman's Pond are significant for waterfowl and for other wetland-associated wildlife and for recreational angling and are management units within the Gander Stewardship Zone.
3. Home Pond forms the headwaters of the Traverse River, a scheduled salmon river (located in Salmon Angling Zone 5).

Gander Lake, which is the deepest lake on the island of Newfoundland, forms the southern boundary for Gander's municipal planning area. The lake, with a maximum length of 50 km and an average width of 2 km, is part of the Gander River Basin which covers an area of 5,310 km² (Sheppard Green Engineering and Associates *et al.*, 1997). The lake is fed primarily by the North West and South West Gander Rivers which flow into the western portion of the lake. The only outflow for the lake is Gander River which is located to the west of the municipal planning area. Gander Lake is used as a potable water supply for the Towns of Gander, Appleton and Glenwood. The Gander River is a scheduled salmon river and has a long history of angling activity.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada has offered comments regarding the Municipal Plan review and suggests the following. The planning boundary encompasses a large number of streams and ponds which provide habitat for trout and possibly juvenile salmon. The Federal *Fisheries Act* provides protection for this habitat, therefore plans for all projects which have the potential to harmfully alter, disrupt or destroy this habitat should be referred to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for review prior to commencement.

8.2 Historic Resources

The Department of Tourism Culture and Recreation, Provincial Archaeology Office has forwarded comments regarding the Municipal Plan review and suggests that there is potential to encounter historic resources within the boundaries of the planning area, thus the Provincial Archaeology Office requests that any plans for projects involving ground disturbance around Gander Lake, Soulis Pond, Home Pond, Boot Pond or Jonathan's Pond be forwarded to the PAO for review prior to commencement of the project.

8.3 Eastern Habitat Joint Venture

The Town of Gander is partner to a Municipal Stewardship Agreement with the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV). The EHJV is one of 21 joint venture initiatives established across North America to help meet the objectives of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, which was signed in 1986 by Canada and the United States. The aim of this plan is to assure the survival and increase of waterfowl populations and protect waterfowl habitat. The Province of Newfoundland and Labrador participates in the EHJV through the Wildlife Division of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

In 1993, the Town signed an agreement with the Wildlife Division to manage wetlands within a specified stewardship zone with technical advice being provided by the Wildlife Division. In 1999 the agreement was renewed to include an area in and around Benton Lagoon, which now serves as a tertiary wastewater treatment site. In 2007 the agreement was further revised, in keeping with recommendations of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture, to include all portions of Peyton's (Long) Pond (with boundaries following the "Open Space Conservation" Zone as per the Town of Gander's Municipal Plan/Development Regulations 2000-2010) and Whitman's Pond (with the inclusion of a 100m buffer around Whitman's Pond).

The Gander Stewardship Zone is a 2,008 ha area that includes most of the wetlands and surrounding uplands in the western and northern portions of the municipal planning area in addition to Benton Lagoon. Based on the results of a wetland evaluation, five important wetland areas exist within Gander's Stewardship Zone. There are currently five designated management units within the Gander Stewardship Zone: Cobb's Pond and Northwest Bog; the entirety of Peyton's (Long) Pond; Whitman's Pond, and Benton Lagoon. A Habitat Conservation Plan (currently being updated to include latest additions to the Stewardship Zone), prepared by the Wildlife Division, provides direction for the Town in planning and managing conservation activities within the zone, including management units.

The plan calls for all Stewardship Zone management units and any future units to be zoned as protected areas in the Municipal Plan in keeping with section four of the most recent stewardship agreement signed by the community which reads as follows:

“The Town agrees that in the preparation of a Municipal Plan for the Town or any amendments to any existing Municipal Plan, the areas designated as Management Units shall be recommended by the Town to be appropriately declared protected areas under section 13(3)(f) of the Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000 (or such legislation in amendment or substitution therefore as may be brought into effect from time to time). The Town in passing regulations or by-laws related to the protected areas so designated under the Municipal Plan or amendments thereto and which may affect the Stewardship Zone shall do so in consultation with the Minister and in keeping with the principles of this Agreement.”

9.0 GREEN COMMUNITIES

Canadian municipalities both large and small are beginning to initiate environmental programs and services that focus on corporate and household activities to achieve environmental sustainability as well sustainable resource use, healthy communities and healthy ecosystems including clean water, air and soil. A national “green community” initiative is promoted by various groups among them Green Communities Canada, which has a chapter in St. John’s. Many municipal governments understand that they have direct and indirect control of up to half of Canada’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These municipalities recognize they must take action against climate change and reducing the community’s greenhouse gas emissions by investing in environmentally sustainable infrastructure and taking a leadership role in the community to lower both corporate and community GHG emissions.

Examples of specific programs to achieve green communities include the following corporate and community initiatives:

- Corporate Inventory & Action Plan to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions – which comprises 5 sectors: water and sewage, solid waste, buildings, streetlight and vehicle fleet. Specific projects include:
 - ✓ Municipal Building Retrofit
 - ✓ LEED design for new municipal buildings and subdivisions
 - ✓ LED traffic lights
 - ✓ LCD computer monitors
 - ✓ Green seal purchasing program
 - ✓ Backyard composting
 - ✓ Topsoil production
 - ✓ Anti-idling initiative
 - ✓ Hybrid vehicles
 - ✓ Water-based traffic paint
 - ✓ Streetlight power reduction
 - ✓ Trails\bicycle route master plan
 - ✓ Active transportation plan

- Community based projects include specific things that homeowners can do such as:
 - ✓ Replacing incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent light bulbs

- ✓ Decreasing the thermostat in the winter and increasing the air conditioner in the summer by 2 degrees
- ✓ Replacing furnace filters and air conditioners on a regular basis
- ✓ Shutting down and unplugging electronic devices when not in use
- ✓ Washing clothes in cold water
- ✓ Hanging laundry outside to dry instead of using the tumble dryer
- ✓ Eating more locally produced, unprocessed food
- ✓ Planting a tree
- ✓ Driving less

Thus a municipal government can promote a number of environmental initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote and encourage everyone in the community to reduce their impact on the planet. Gander's Town Council may wish to pursue the Green Communities model to ensure that Gander continues to be a healthy, vibrant, place in which to live, work and play both today and in the future.

9.1 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - LEED

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building rating system that was originally developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to provide a recognized standard for the construction industry to assess the environmental sustainability of building designs. Canadian Green Building Council (CaGBC) has since adapted the USGBC LEED rating system to respond to specific requirements of buildings in Canada.

LEED is a point-based rating system. Points are earned for building design and characteristics that are environmentally beneficial. The LEED rating systems quantifies "green credits;" for example, 5% of the building materials must be from salvaged materials to earn a point for the salvaged materials credit.

LEED for building design includes six topic areas. Each topic area has associated goals described below:

- **Site Development:** minimize storm water run-off, encourage car pooling and bicycling, increase urban density and green space;
- **Water Efficiency:** eliminate site irrigation, reduce water consumption, minimize or treat wastewater;

- **Energy Efficiency:** reduce building energy consumption, use renewable energy, eliminate ozone-depleting chemicals, commission building systems;
- **Material Selection:** minimize construction waste, re-use existing building façade, use recycled and salvaged materials, use renewable construction materials and design and build more durable buildings;
- **Indoor Environmental Quality:** incorporate day lighting, use low off-emitting materials, provide operable windows and occupant control of work space, improve delivery of ventilation air;
- **Innovation in Design:** use a LEED Accredited Professional, who can exceed the requirements of a credit by incorporating innovative environmental features not covered in other areas.

The larger benefit of LEED buildings is an improved indoor environment (lower absenteeism, greater productivity, better thermal comfort), lower maintenance costs (commissioned building, more durable materials, smaller or eliminated building systems), higher corporate profile (increased product sales, marketing advantage, improved employee morale), and reduced risk of remedial measures (to deal with sick building syndrome or environmental contaminants).

The LEED system is a systematic way of ensuring that the most important environmental issues are considered during the design of a building. LEED performance criteria have been developed to be use specific and include:

- LEED for New Construction and Major Renovations is designed to guide and distinguish high-performance commercial and institutional projects.
- LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance provides a benchmark for building owners and operators to measure operations, improvements and maintenance.
- LEED for Homes promotes the design and construction of high-performance green homes.
- LEED for Retail recognizes the unique nature of retail design and construction projects and addresses the specific needs of retail spaces.

- LEED for Neighborhood Development integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national program for neighborhood design.

LEED Neighbourhood Development criteria are currently being developed for the Canadian market. A pilot project is underway in the City of Langford BC with the goal of producing planning by-laws and policies that support long-term sustainability for the community. It is anticipated that the new guidelines, bylaws and policies will be transferable tools for use in communities throughout British Columbia and help local governments in their efforts to support and encourage more sustainable neighbourhood development.

When a building receives LEED certification it indicates that the builder has demonstrated a commitment to sustainability by meeting higher performance standards in environmental responsibility and energy efficiency than currently required. It is expected that LEED certification for a neighbourhood would meet similar standards.

The LEED - Neighbourhood Development draft standards being developed by the City of Langford are intended to be used by the CaGBC for LEED Neighbourhood Development certification. This certification will recognize development projects that successfully protect and enhance the overall health, natural environment and quality of life of communities. These certified development projects will focus on smart growth best practices including designing pedestrian orientated neighbourhoods with access to public transit and community amenities within walking distance.

The Town of Gander can be a leader in the province by endorsing and promoting the principles of Green Communities and LEED design and thus proactively becoming an environmentally responsible, healthy and sustainable community.

10.0 MUNICIPAL FINANCE

The Town's financial position over the last ten years has improved markedly. Its annual budget has grown from \$7.5 million in 1999 to \$10.8 million in 2008. In years past Council made a conscious decision to reduce its debt ratio to no more than 20%, in order to give itself more flexibility in its budget. The ratio for 2008 is well below the targeted amount and stands at 15.9%, a significant decrease from the 1999 level of 24.6%. Gander is fortunate in that it has a large commercial tax base for a community of 10,000 people and 50% of all taxes come from the business sector. This allows Council to keep its residential tax rate at a reasonable level.

As a result of the strong growth in recent years in both residential and commercial construction the assessed value of property in the community continues to climb. There was negligible growth from 1999 to 2003, but from 2003 to 2008 the total value on the assessment roll has increased by 34%.*

Source: G. Brown, Town Clerk, Town of Gander, 2008.