



# 2021 Official Plan Background Report

November 2021

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## Acknowledgments

### **Background Report**

*November 2021*

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# 1 Background

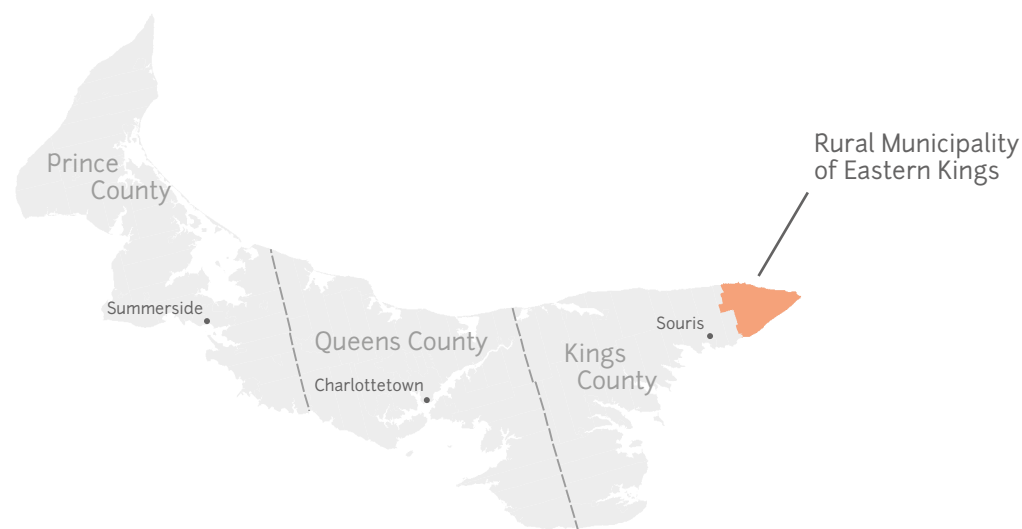


## 1.1 Context

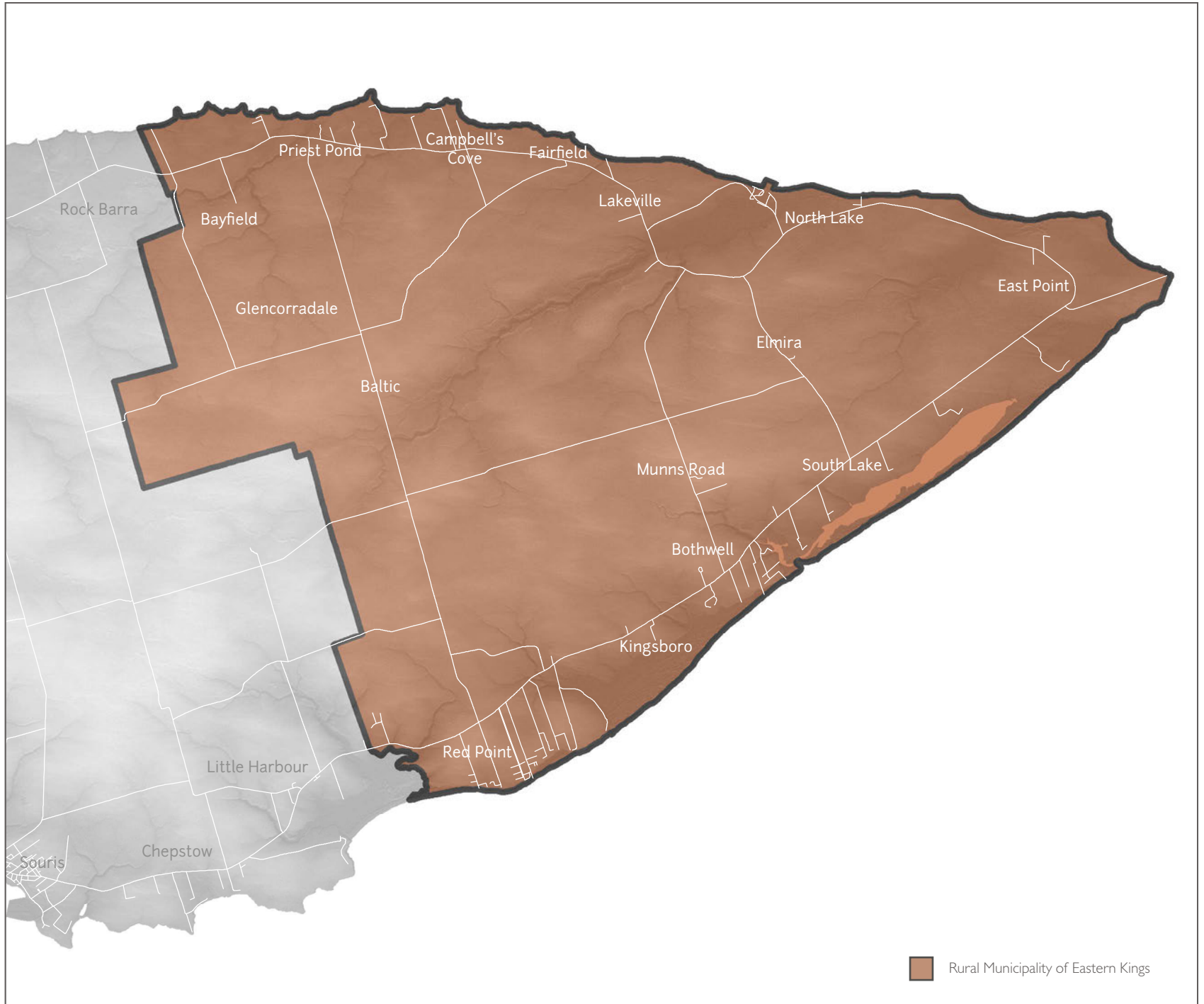
Located along the Points East Coastal Drive, the Rural Municipality of Eastern Kings is situated at the far eastern end of Prince Edward Island. The area affords attractive economic and lifestyle opportunities, exemplified by the mix of permanent and seasonal residents. The Municipality is set in a coastal pastoral landscape that includes farmland, beaches, a fishing harbour, and the Basin Head Provincial Park. Historic cultural sites include the 1867 East Point Lighthouse, the Fisheries Museum, and the Elmira Railway Museum. The community is also home to several churches, campgrounds, and other local businesses.

The Rural Municipality of Eastern Kings was incorporated in 1974, and several small communities are located within its borders. These communities include Basin Head, Bayfield, Bothwell, Campbell's Cove, East Baltic, East Point, Elmira, Fairfield, Glencorradale, Kingsboro, Lakeville, Munns Road, North Lake, Priest Pond, Red Point and South Lake.

The Municipal Council of the Rural Municipality of Eastern Kings is given its powers primarily through two pieces of provincial legislation: the *Planning Act* and the *Municipal Government Act*. Council is responsible for administering municipal plans and services, including the Official Plan and bylaws, as well as emergency measures planning. Police services are provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and fire protection is provided by the Eastern Kings Fire Department.



Map 1. Eastern Kings in the context of Prince Edward Island.



Map 2. The communities of Eastern Kings.

## 1.2 History

The Mi'kmaq have called Prince Edward Island or Epekwitk home for more than 15,000 years. Epekwitk means “cradled in the waves”, and Kespemenegek (East Point) means “end of an island”. Throughout the Municipality of Rural Eastern Kings, archaeologists have found remnants of Mi'kmaq settlements including animal bones that point to popular hunting and camping sites, and what seem to have been significant food sources of the Mi'kmaq diet, like seal, beaver, otter, fox, fish, and shellfish.

Under French rule, Pointe de l'Est was mapped in 1686 by the first European settlers on PEI. In 1763, the Island came under British Rule, and shortly thereafter Pointe de l'Est was anglicized to East Point by British Surveyor-General Samuel Holland. British colonists divided the Island into three counties and 67 lots were sold off in a London lottery. In the early 1800s, men from the Scottish Highlands began arriving at East Point and Kingsboro.

Steep population increases reduced Mi'kmaq access to traditional land and resources throughout PEI, and colonizers across the Island created settlements and farms on traditional unceded Indigenous territory. Today most residents on Prince Edward Island are of European descent, and many family names in Eastern Kings originate from the 19th Century, dating back generations. Both the Lennox Island First Nation and the Abegweit First Nation remain on the Island today, and many Mi'kmaq families choose to live off-reserve.

Local heritage is visible throughout Eastern Kings, and the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI continues to map and document sacred cultural and historic sites across the Island.



Figure 1. Clockwise from top: Gathering at Red Point; East Point Fog Alarm Building; Mi'kMaq Artisan Project; John Sark, Chief of the Prince Edward Island Mi'kmaq, ca. 1910-1920; Baltic Starch Company Buildings.



## 2 Demography



## 2.1 Demographic Overview

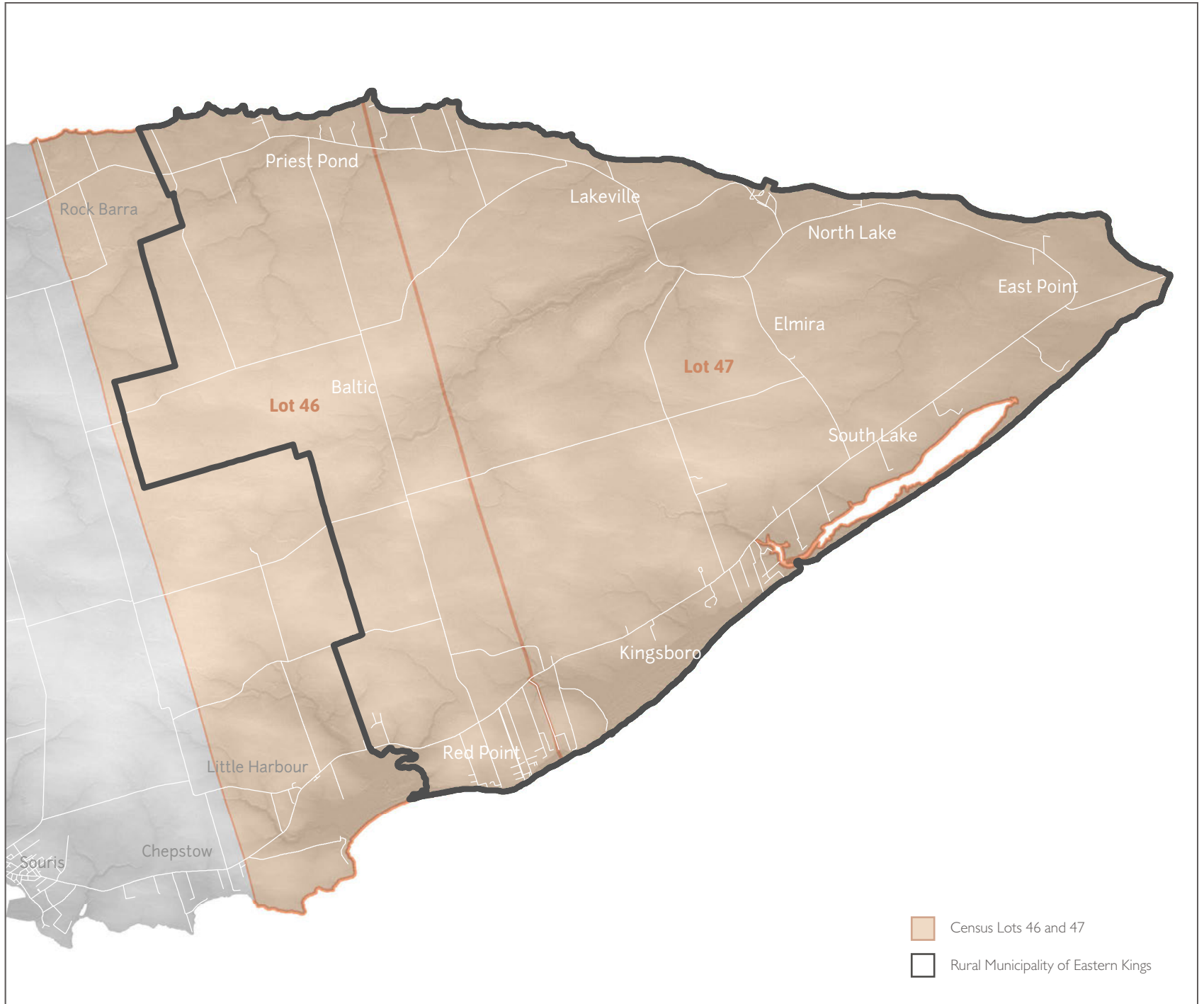
Located in Kings County, Eastern Kings is covered by two Census subdivisions: Lot 46 and Lot 47. Together, these two areas cover all of Eastern Kings, and extend beyond the Municipal boundaries to include the communities of Rock Barra and Little Harbour.

Lot 47 extends from the north shore to the south shore of Eastern Kings from the eastern tip of Prince Edward Island west to a north-south line bisecting Priest Pond. The Lot is completely within the boundaries of Eastern Kings, and includes the communities of Lakeville, Kingsboro, South Lake, Elmira, North Lake, and East Point.

Lot 46 includes an area to the west of Lot 47, including part of Priest Pond as well as the communities of East Baltic, Red Point, Rock Barra, and Little Harbour. The Lot's western boundary is a straight line less than a kilometre east of New Harmony Road. Slightly more than half of the area of Lot 46 is contained within the boundaries of Eastern Kings.

Although the Census and Municipal geographies do not match perfectly, the Census Lot information is helpful to highlight general patterns in the community of Eastern Kings.

**For simplicity, throughout this chapter Lot 46 and Lot 47 will be referred to together as Eastern Kings.**



Map 3. Municipal boundary of Eastern Kings and Census Lots 46 and 47.

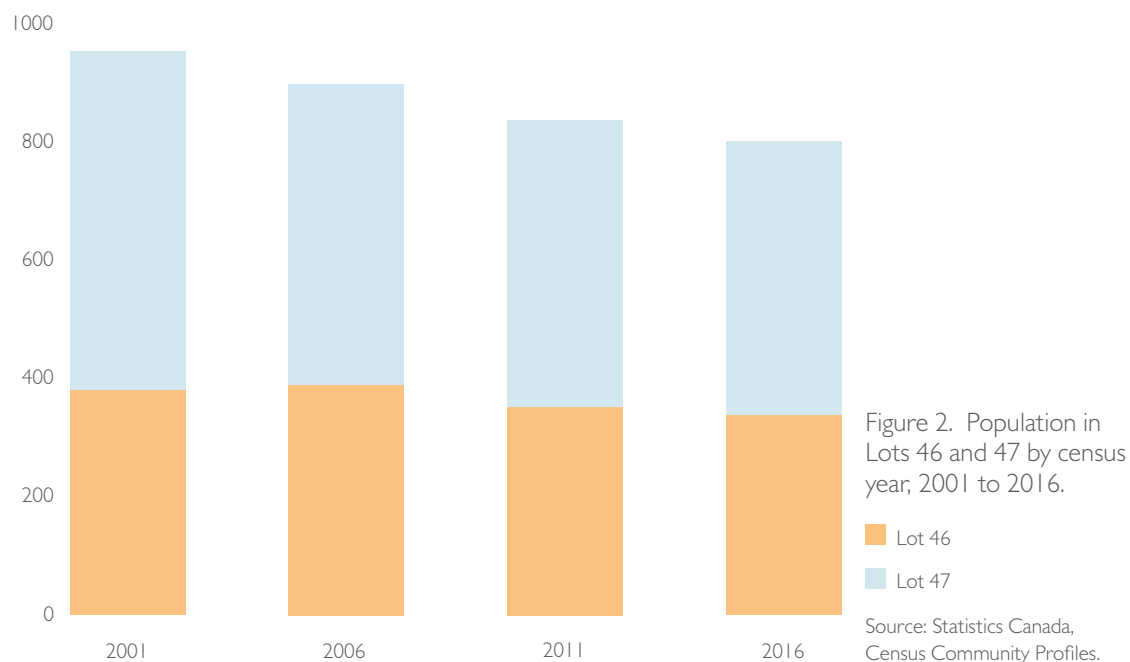
## 2.2 Population

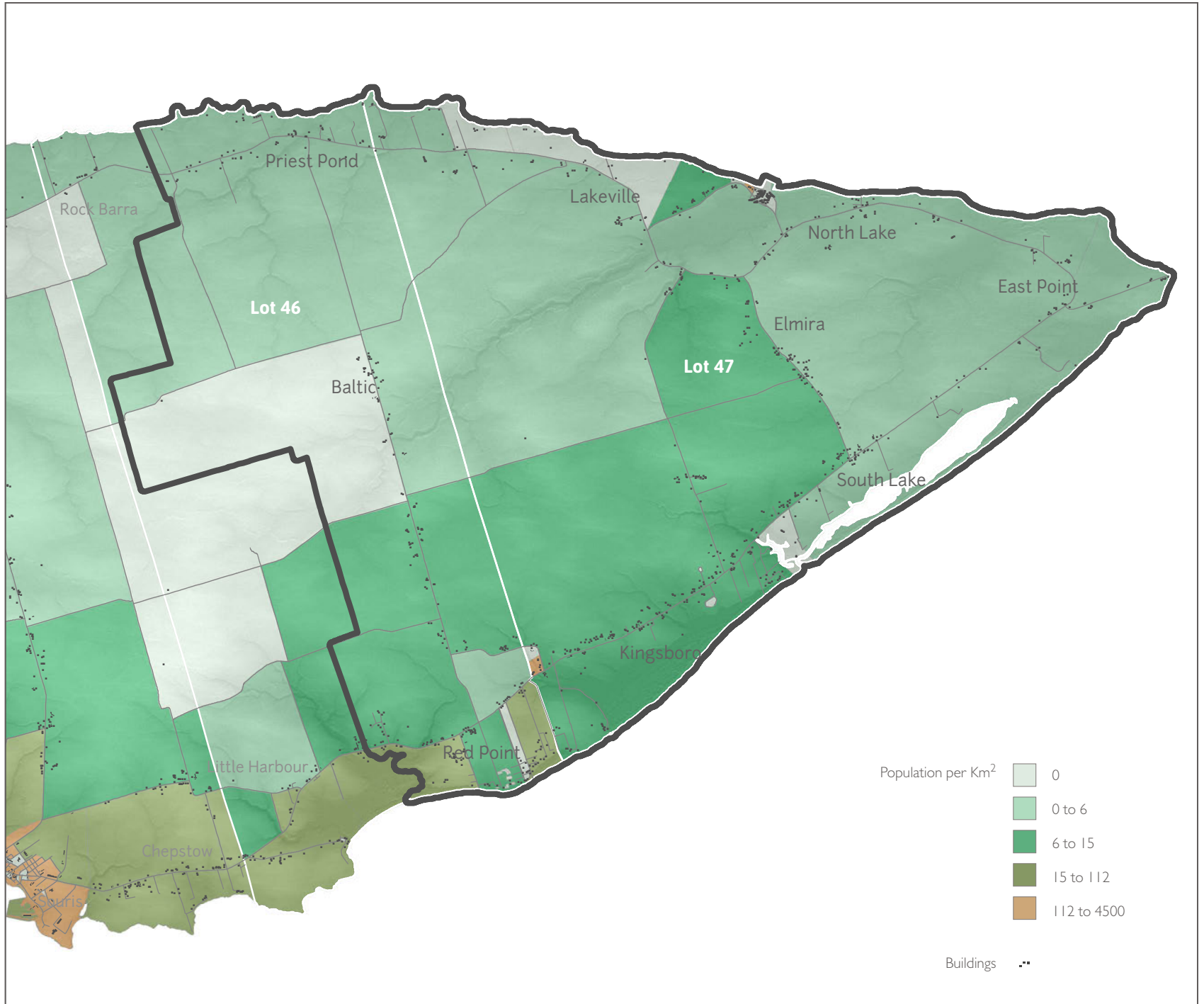
The most recent available Census data is from 2016, when a total population of 821 was reported in Eastern Kings. This was down from 856 in 2011, or a 4% decline over that five-year period.

The population in Eastern Kings has been in decline for some time now. Between 2001 and 2016 the population in Lot 46 declined by 11% while in Lot 47 the population declined by 19%. The result is that over the course of the last twenty years, the population in Eastern Kings has shifted westward.

Population density is more concentrated in the southern half of Eastern Kings, particularly in the vicinity of Red Point as well as the communities of Kingsboro and South Lake. Outside of the Municipal boundaries but within the area of Lot 46, the community of Little Harbour is one of the densest areas considered as part of this analysis.

It is important to note that these population numbers do not include seasonal or part-time residents. In 2015, fewer than half of the 681 dwellings on Lots 46 and 47 were occupied by full-time residents.





Map 4. Population density in Eastern Kings.

## 2.3 Age

When considering the population by five-year age cohorts, we see that in all three of Eastern Kings, Kings County, and Prince Edward Island, the largest age cohort is between 55 to 59 years of age. We also see the cohorts between the ages of 24 and 49 are underrepresented in all three geographies.

In Eastern Kings, women between five and 14 years old and between 40 and 44 years old represent a greater share of the overall population compared to the population of men from those cohorts.

Meanwhile, men between 50 and 54 years old and 60 and 64 years old represent a greater share of the overall population of men compared to the population of women in those cohorts. The median age in Eastern Kings is 49, four years older than the Provincial median and one year older than the median age in Kings County.

Generally, population is aging across rural PEI, a trend that is reflected in Eastern Kings. There, despite a decrease in the overall population in recent years, there has been an increase in the percentage of people over the age of 65. Residents over 65 made up 25% of the population in 2016, up from 19% of the population in 2011.

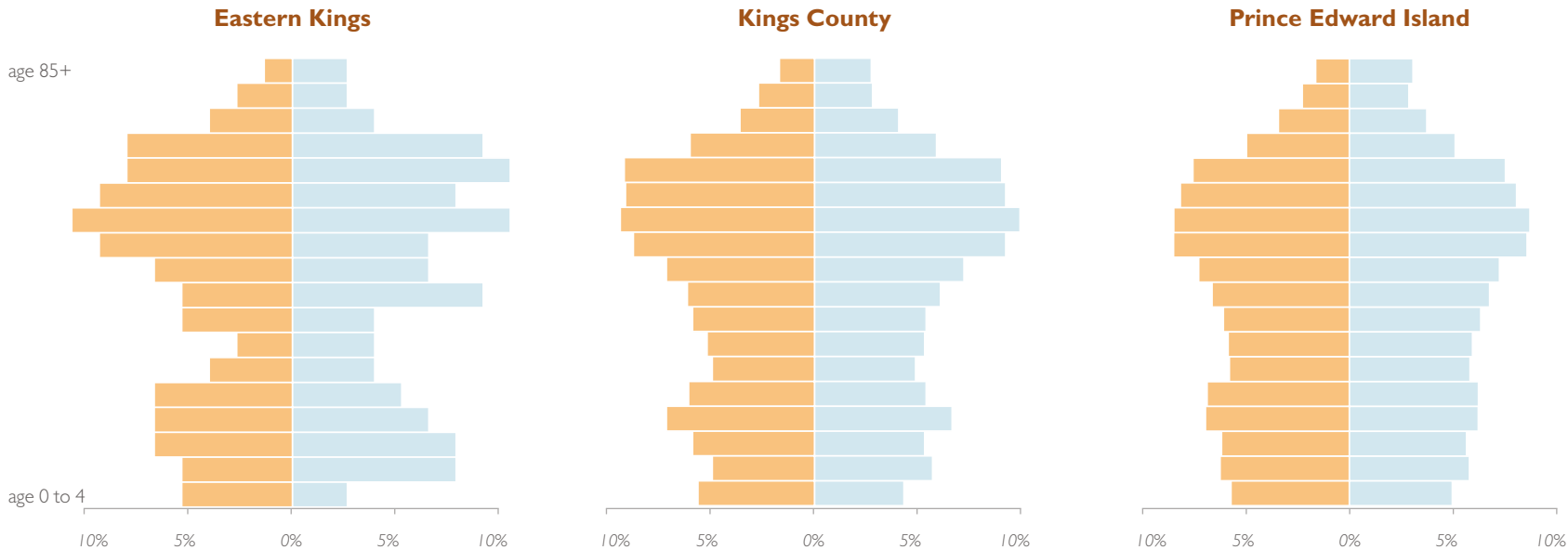
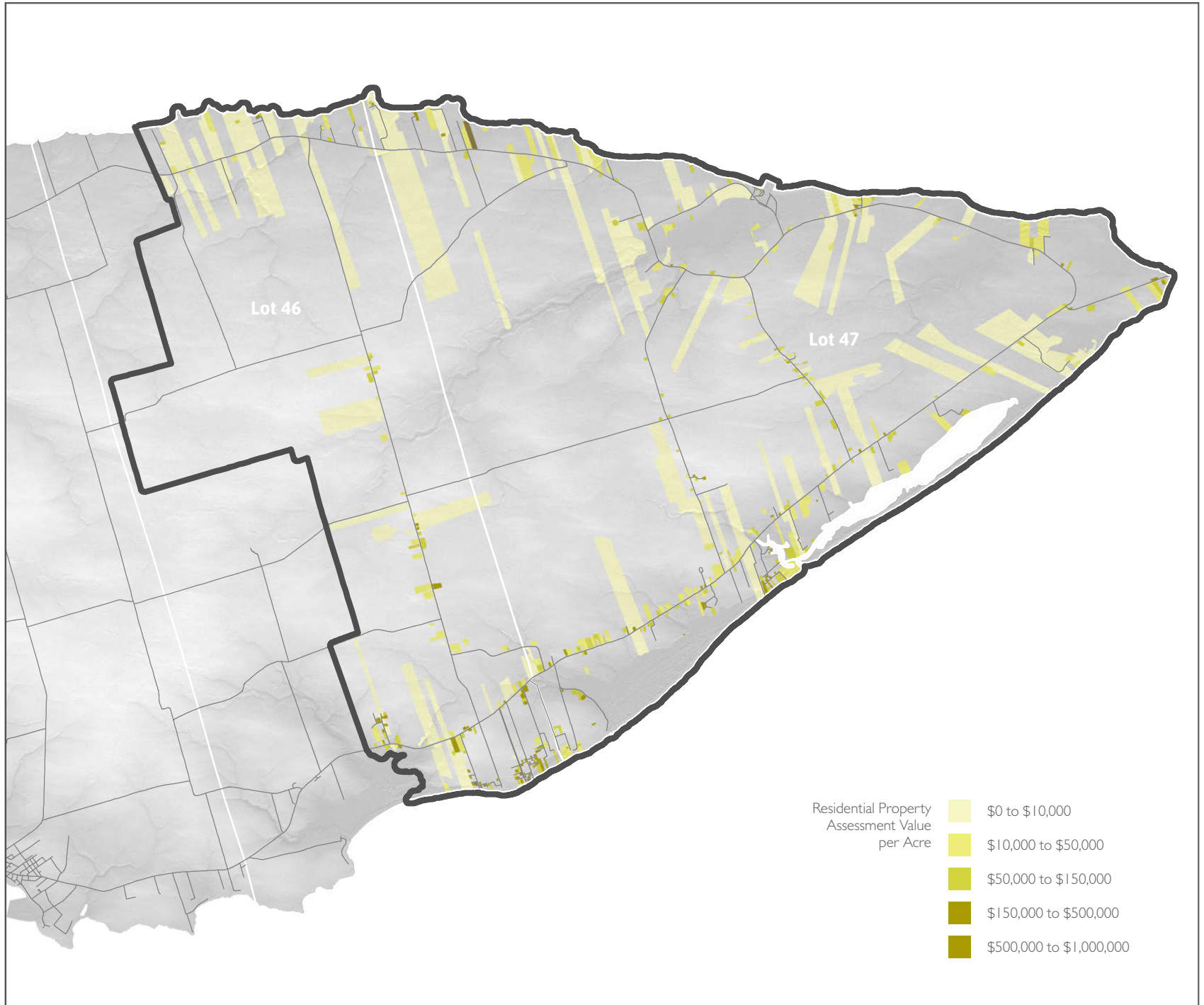


Figure 3. Population, by five-year age cohort, 2016.

Men  
Women

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Community Profiles.



Map 5. Residential Property Values in Eastern Kings

## 2.4 Housing and Economics

According to the 2016 Census, nine out of ten residents in Eastern Kings own their home. This is a higher proportion than found in Kings County (eight out of ten) and across Prince Edward Island (seven out of ten). That Census reported an average dwelling value of \$189,167 (\$214,651 in Lot 46 and \$163,683 in Lot 47). However, a scan of current real estate listings in Eastern Kings shows an average asking price of \$274,992.86, indicating that dwelling values are on the rise.

Affordable housing is defined by Statistics Canada as when a household spends less than 30% of its before-tax income on shelter. In Eastern Kings, 15% of residents fall outside of this category, spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs. By comparison, 14% of Kings County residents and 19% of PEI residents experience unaffordable housing, implying that housing is relatively affordable in Eastern Kings as compared to the province as a whole.

In 2015, the average median after-tax household income in Lots 46 and 47 was \$60,480, which is 18.8% higher than the median income of \$50,903 in Kings County.

More than half of the housing stock in Eastern Kings was built before 1980, with 27% completed before 1960. The rate of construction fell during the three subsequent decades until 2011, when 25 new houses were constructed between 2011 and 2016. As of 2016, more than 90% of the housing stock was in good condition, with only regular maintenance or minor repairs needed.

The average full-time household size in Eastern Kings is 2.5 people. Almost a quarter (22%) of households are made up of one person, and an additional 45% are two-person households. This leaves one third of the remainder split between 3, 4, and 5-person households. The chart below illustrates the household compositions taken from the 2016 census.

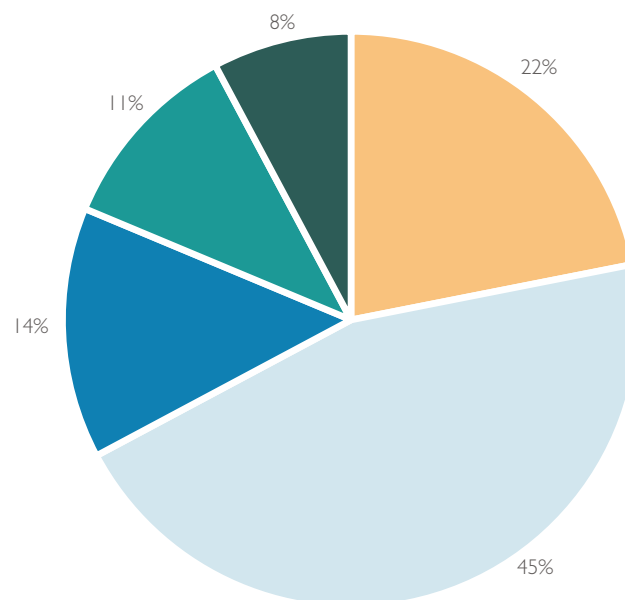


Figure 4. Full-time household composition by number of people, 2016.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census Community Profiles.



### 3 Environment



## 3.1 The Ecoregion

Prince Edward Island is part of the Nature Conservancy of Canada's Northern Appalachian/Acadian Ecoregion. Vegetation in this area includes salt marshes and tidal flats, sand dune and beach systems, and eel-grass beds.

The Ecoregion is home to approximately 250 small sub-watersheds and approximately 2,621 kilometers of marine coastline. Wetlands represent about 3.6% of the total area.

Increasing agricultural expansion and urbanization have led to high rates of habitat loss. Despite having 50% natural cover, the remaining habitat patches tend to be small, degraded and fragmented, damaged by human impacts such as road building where intersections with waterways can affect fish migration. There are 26 national species at risk here, many of which are associated with coastal habitats.

Forest cover continues to decrease due to agricultural and rural development. Although PEI has conservation status, the status only covers 3.1% of the ecoregion.

### Coastal Zones

The Municipality of Rural Eastern Kings includes the ecologically significant Basin Head, a shallow coastal lagoon that is home to a unique species of Irish moss found nowhere else in the world.

Unlike other smaller species of Irish moss, this plant is free-floating, and thrives in tangles amongst the clumps of mussels that also grow there. This species of Irish moss also contains a higher percentage of carrageenan,

a natural product that is commonly used as a thickening agent in products like sunscreen and ice cream.

Basin Head is home to the Basin Head Provincial Park, a striking white sand coastal landscape surrounded by dunes and agricultural land, and the Basin Head Marine Protected Area (MPA).

The Basin Head MPA includes the lagoon and an adjacent offshore buffer zone that extends more than a kilometre into the Northumberland Strait. The objectives of the Basin Head MPA are to maintain the quality and ecological integrity of the marine environment that supports the Irish moss. Adjacent to the lagoon is Basin Head Fisheries Museum.

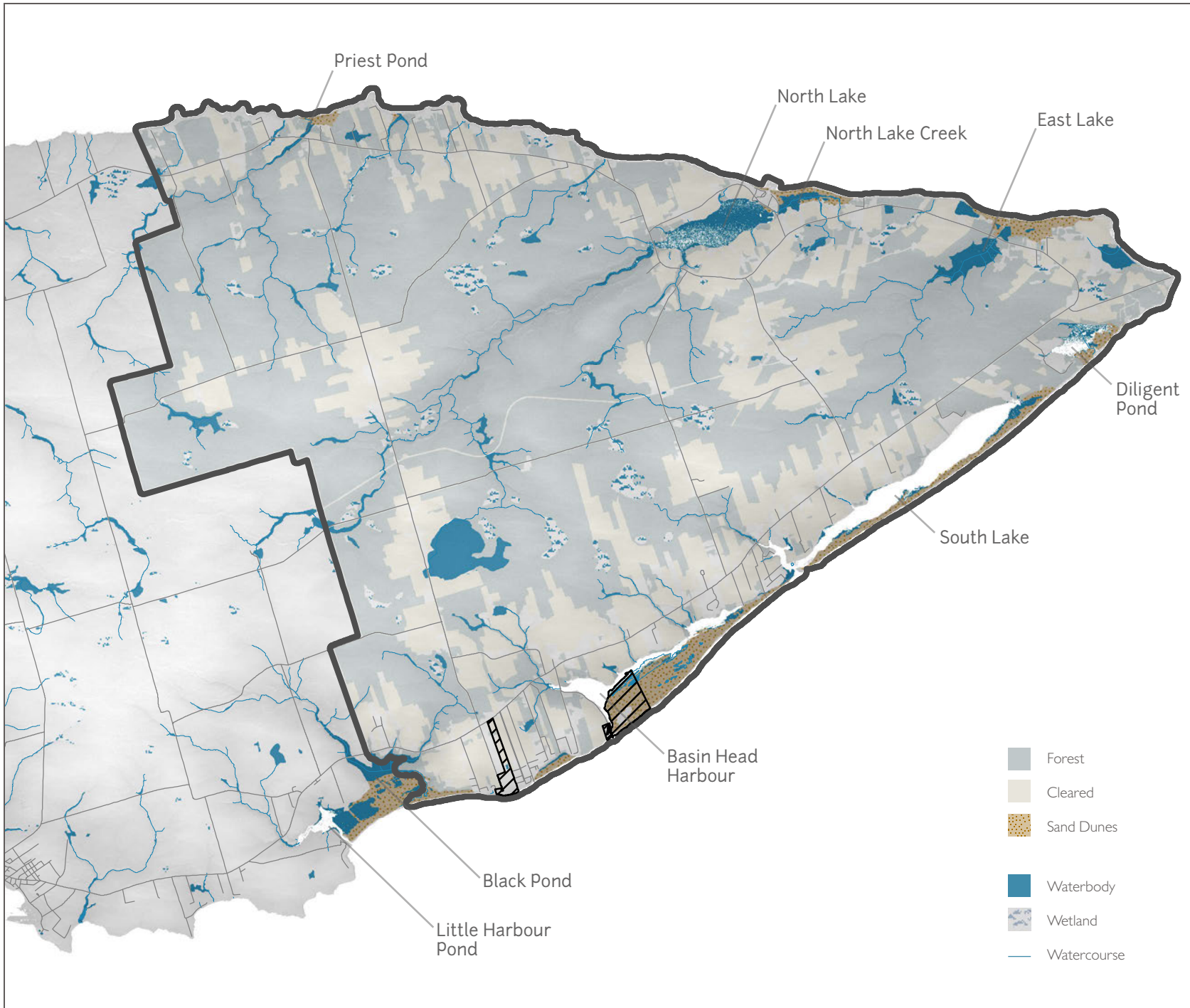
### Water Quality

Residents of the municipality depend on groundwater for their water supply. Protection of ground and surface water also is important to the local fishery and tourism industries, as well as the wildlife that depends on it. The quality and volume of groundwater depend on controlling pollution and preserving vegetation and aquifer recharge areas.

The 2013 Official Plan and Development ByLaw contains policy intended to protect water quality, and mitigate the effects of climate change, erosion and flooding. This policy conforms with Provincial policies and regulations contained in the *Environmental Protection Act*, requiring minimum buffers around watercourses, wetlands, and streams.



Map 6. Protected areas in Eastern Kings



Map 7. Land cover and Hydrology in Eastern Kings

# 4 Economy



## 4.1 Employment

Statistics Canada uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to break down the total labour force into industry categories. In Eastern Kings, the classification employing the greatest share of the population is “agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting”. According to the 2016 Census, these industries make up about 32% of the local industry and 26.7% of the local workforce. Within the Municipality, agriculture and forestry are a large part of the community’s lifestyle and identity, and agricultural uses are protected within the Official Plan. With a long history in the community, approximately 85% of the municipality’s landmass is currently occupied by agricultural or forestry uses.

According to the 2016 Census, “health care and social assistance” is the second largest industry in the Municipality. However, currently there are no health sector employers in Eastern Kings. The health care and social assistance sector has the third largest workforce of any NAICS industry in the Municipality, but employees generally commute to workplaces outside of the municipal boundary.

Manufacturing is the third-largest industry in the area. One major employer in this industry is North Lake Fisheries, which produces and supplies fresh and frozen seafood to local and international restaurants, distributors, and retailers.

Other major employers located within the Municipality are in the sales and service industries. Although tourism is not included as a category within the NAICS system, the tourism industry is generally regarded as one of the top three primary industries on Prince Edward Island.

There are a number of larger employers located within the town of Souris, just to the west of Eastern Kings. These employers provide jobs in food science, food processing, health, finance, transportation, education, public administration, and the service sector.

## 5 Infrastructure



### Transportation

Roadways and infrastructure help connect people to economic opportunities, educational opportunities, social and health services, communities, and nature. In 2016, 100% of employed residents in Eastern Kings over the age of 15 traveled to work in a car, truck or van according to the Census, and nearly three quarters (72%) travelled to a different census subdivision for work. Another 8% travelled outside the province for work.

All public highways within the Municipality are the responsibility of the Provincial Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, including arterial, collector, and local roads. The Province also regulates the construction and use of private roads where they meet a public right of way.

The Confederation Trail is a provincially-regulated rail-trail that crosses Prince Edward Island. The trail extends into the middle of Eastern Kings, where it ends in Elmira.

The Island Walk is a 700 kilometre walking route that loops around the Island. A portion of the Island Walk forms a loop between Souris and East Point, following the Confederation Trail between the western boundary of the Municipality east to Elmira. From there, it continues north and east to a spur that connects the Island Walk to East Point before it returns southwest along East Point Road to Kingsboro. There, the Island Walk routes northeast out of the Municipality, eventually reconnecting with the Confederation Trail in Souris.

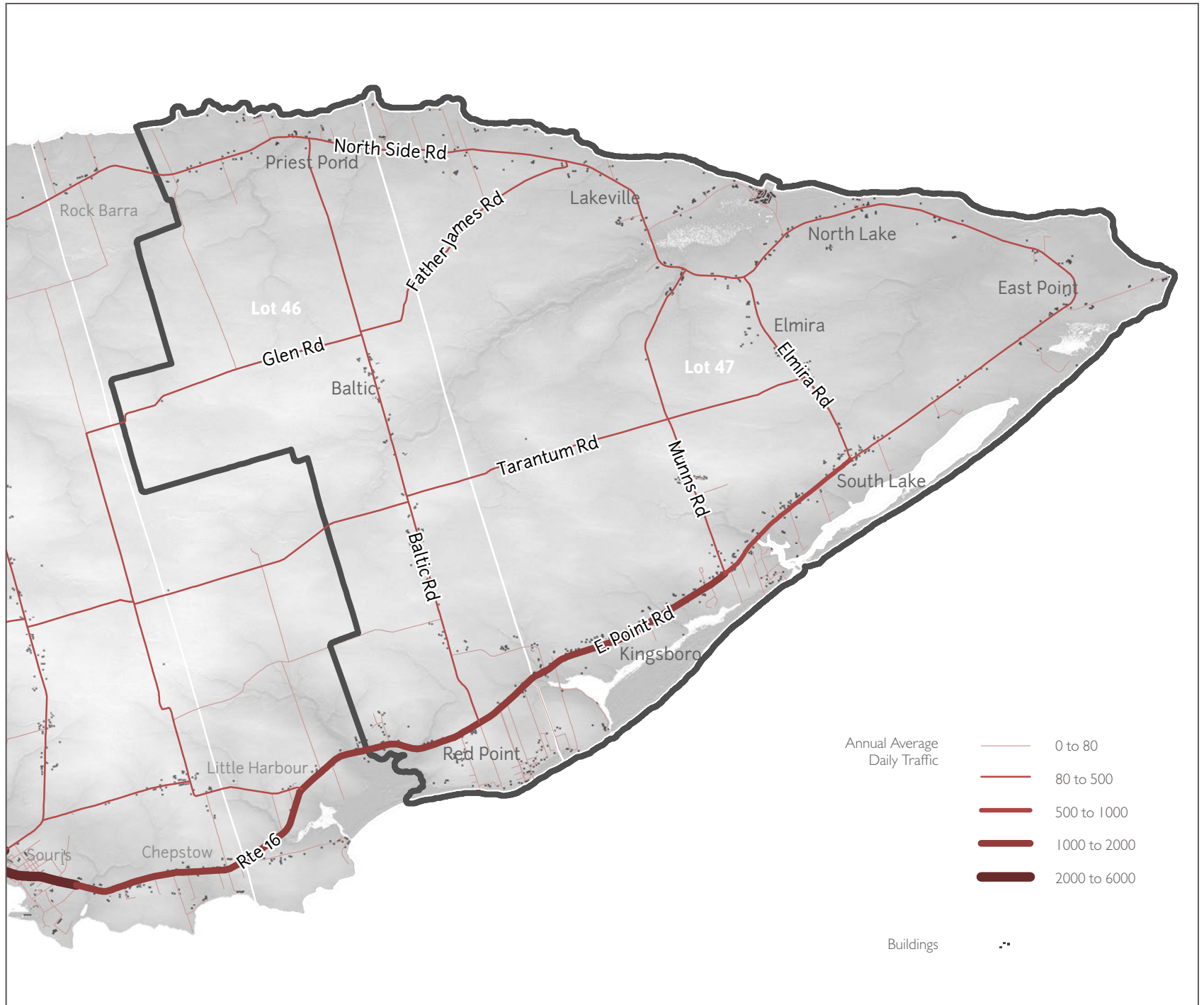
### Solid Waste Management

Garbage, compost and recycling services are not managed by the Municipality but provided by Island Waste Management.

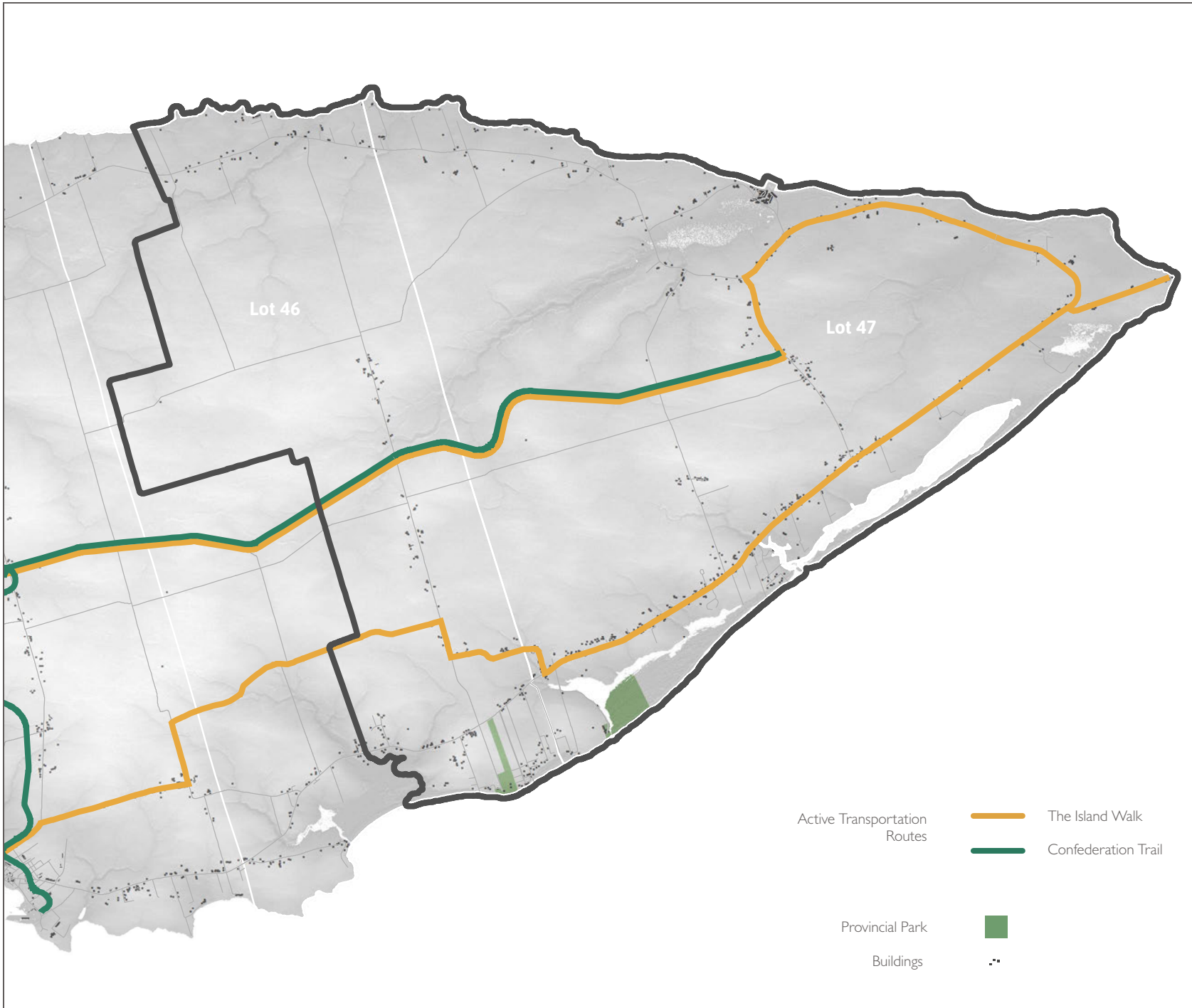
### Water and Wastewater

At the time of the 2013 Official Plan, the Municipality did not provide any central water or wastewater servicing. All public facilities and homes are serviced by individual wells and serviced by on-site sewage disposal systems.





Map 8. Road network with 2019 traffic counts for Eastern Kings



Map 9. Active transportation network in Eastern Kings.

## 6 Land Use



# 6.1 Land Use Documents

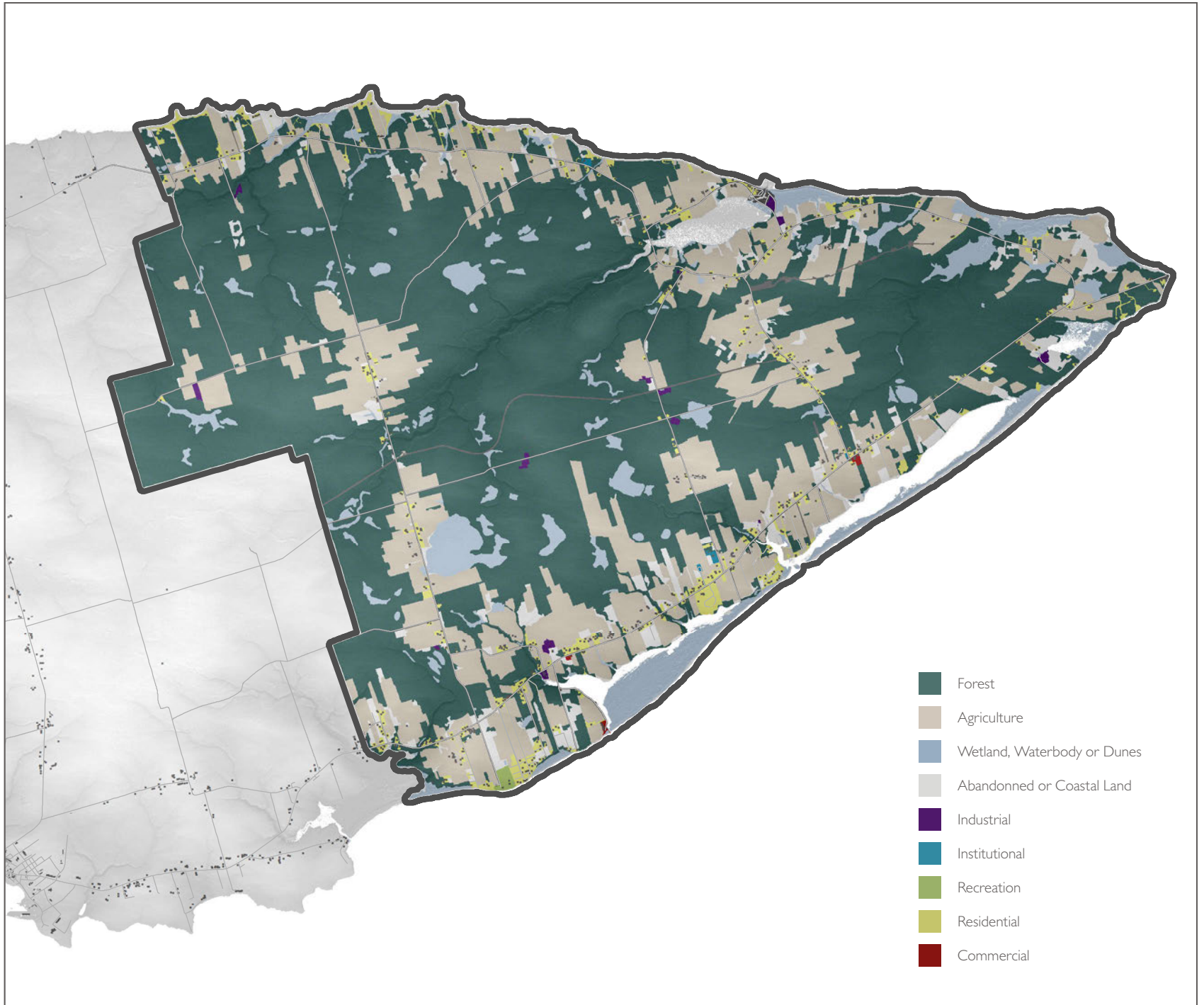
In PEI, development must conform to the Official Plan and Development Bylaw. The Official Plan is a legal document which defines policy on a broad range of planning issues, while the Development Bylaw includes regulations that implement these policies as they relate to land use and development. Within the Development Bylaw, the Municipality is divided into zones which determine permitted land uses. Zoning defines the development standards required in each case, such as lot area and frontage requirements, the location, size, and height of structures, permitted signage, outdoor storage, parking, and erosion control standards such as the required setbacks from watercourses.

The current documents were developed in 2013 and are now up for review. Updates will examine existing gaps in land use policy and regulations, and respond to new challenges and key issues for the community.

The Official Plan cites data from 2009 that outlines the following land uses:

	Area (in acres)
Agricultural	8,311
Commercial	15
Forestry	20,953
Industrial	74
Institutional	18
Abandoned or Coastal	1,367
Recreation	30
Residential	945
Transportation	649
Wetlands	2,547

Figure 5. Land use in Eastern Kings according to the 2010 PEI Corporate Land Use Inventory.



Map 10. Land use in Eastern Kings according to the 2010 PEI Corporate Land Use Inventory.

## 6.2 Development

Residential housing in Eastern Kings includes single-detached houses, cottages, and modular or mini-homes. The vast majority (97%) of dwellings are single-detached, with a small number of semi-detached dwellings making up the remainder. The uniform composition of the residential building stock in Eastern Kings has implications for the types of housing tenure available.

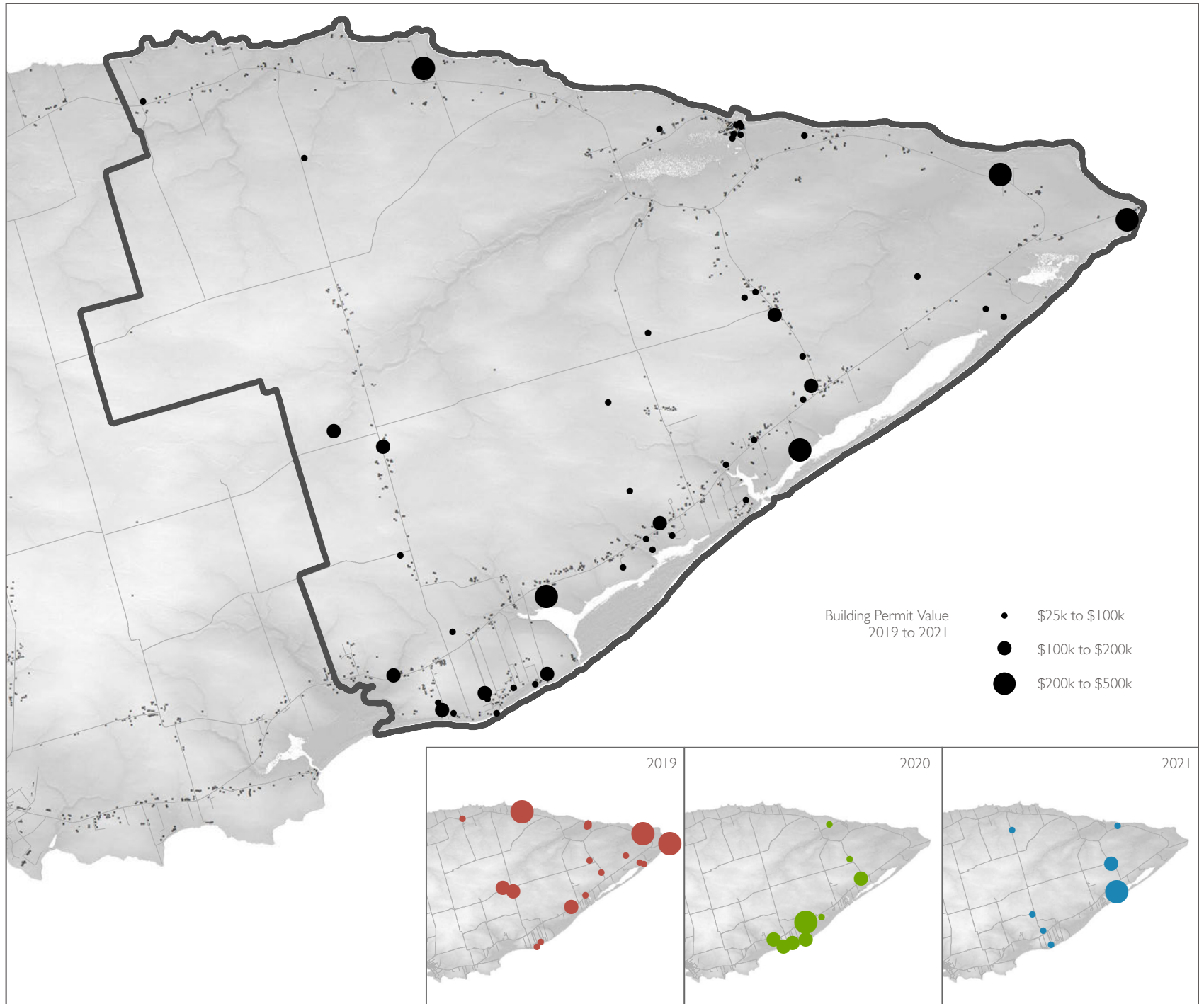
Residences located on a private road may be classified as seasonal, regardless of whether or not the occupants live there year-round. There are a significant number of undersized lots in the area, with 371 properties under the provincial minimum lot size of 25,000 square feet.

According to the 2013 Official Plan, more than 17% of the tax assessments for all developed buildings are commercial, and Provincial records show that between 1999 and 2009 an average of 12 development records were issued in Eastern Kings each year.

More recent records show that 26 development permit applications were received by the Municipality in 2019 and again in 2020. This included two commercial projects in 2019: a telecommunications tower and a 30MW wind farm. Combined, these two commercial projects garnered \$19,200 in municipal development permit fees. Permits were issued for 51 of the 52 applications, including 16 new accessory buildings, 6 cottages, 3 modular homes, 11 single-unit dwellings, and 14 additions, alterations, or renovations. The permit for the wind farm was applied for but not issued.

	2019	2020
Accessory Building <i>(e.g. shed, garage, barn, pergola, boat house)</i>	9	7
Cottage	1	5
Modular/Mini	1	2
Single-Unit Dwelling	6	5
Additions or Alterations	6	8
Other	3	0

Figure 6. Residential development permits issued, by type.



Map 11. Development permits in Eastern Kings, issued from 2019 to 2021

## 6.3 Zoning

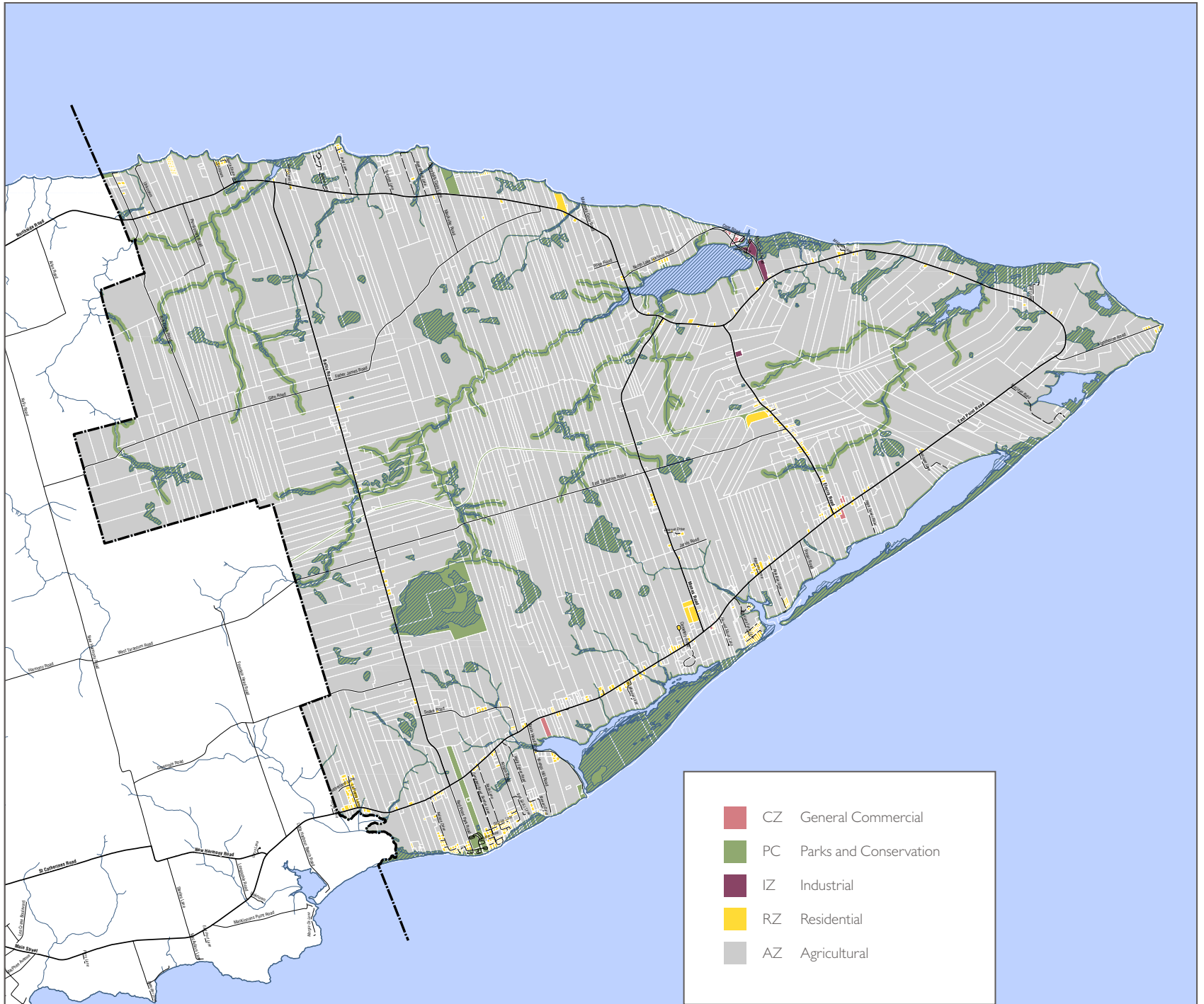
There are five land use zones in Eastern Kings: Agricultural, Parks and Conservation, Residential, Industrial, and General Commercial.

A large majority of the land in the Municipality is zoned Agricultural. This is followed by the Parks and Conservation zone, which covers wetlands, watercourses, and coastlines throughout the Municipality.

Some of the largest concentrations of Residential zoning are in the vicinity of Red Point and along East Point Road, in the southwest of Eastern Kings. Another concentration of Residential zoning exists along Elmira Road and the southern portion of East Baltic Road, and a number of Residential parcels are located off of North Side Road.

The community of North Lake is home to the majority of Industrial and General Commercial zoning. In addition to this, one parcel of land along Elmira Road is zoned Industrial, and there are five parcels along East Point Road that are zoned General Commercial.





Map 12. Zoning in Eastern Kings. (2013)

## 7 Addressing Emerging Issues



The Official Plan and Development Bylaw are intended to be living documents, regularly updated and reviewed as the local environmental, economic, and social conditions shift.

### Key Issues

- » Climate change effects, including erosion
- » Basin Head habitat protection
- » Water quality
- » Upcoming changes to provincial land use legislation
- » Lack of seniors housing
- » Increases in remote work & home-based businesses
- » Opportunities for active transportation infrastructure
- » Development process for undersized lots

### Responding to Changing Land Uses

- » Declining agricultural industry
- » Future vision for the fishing & forestry industries
- » Changes in the tourism industry
- » Increasing subdivision development
- » New land uses such as food trucks, tiny homes, accessory suites

### Administration

- » Clarify development procedures & processes
- » Consider what is feasible for enforcement

### Content Updates

- » Revisiting the community vision
- » Expanded historic and cultural context
- » Incorporating new data & statistics
- » Existing land uses
- » Updated dates & references

### Usability

- » Simple language (avoiding “legalese”)
- » Clear structure & organization
- » Using visuals and maps to illustrate concepts
- » Consistency between the two documents



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