



## WOODSIDE COMMUNITY VISION & ACTION PLAN

Woodside has a rich history. The residents of Woodside are proud of the growth of the many facilities, assets, businesses, neighbourhoods that have thrived here. This is the foundation for which the community will continue to grow and flourish into the future. It is a community that has been recognized as a distinct collection of neighbourhoods and businesses even after its amalgamation into Dartmouth in 1959. The community has always been home to people from around the world. It was that way in the past and it continues to be so today.

Its growth has been steady with stable neighbourhoods surrounding the commercial and institutional core at the intersection of Pleasant Street and Atlantic. It is a community that has direct access to both downtown Dartmouth and Halifax. The strategic location of our community next to downtown Dartmouth and along the Halifax Harbour has allowed Woodside to prosper in industry and commerce while still providing distinct residential neighbourhoods and community services. A number of significant industries have been established here. Over time some have gone but a number continue to grow and new businesses continue to find opportunity here.

The name Woodside began as the estate of Hon. John Fairbanks in 1835. He built a beautiful cottage and gardens and called the estate "Woodside" in 1886.

### The community back then...

Woodside has a natural landscape that has attracted people to the area for decades. The close proximity to the water, the open spaces and the relative short distances to both Dartmouth and Halifax has made the location of this community attractive to the Mic Mac with their seasonal camps, to the British for their cottages and in 1754, only 5 years after Halifax was founded by Edward Cornwallis, the military recognized the strategic advantage of locating guns and military power here. Until 1906 Fort Clarence was an important and the only major fortification on the Dartmouth side of the Harbour for harbour defence. (Fort Clarence pamphlet)

In past and modern history the Woodside area attracted industry. During the mid to late 1800s industries like the Mott Shipyard and the Moirs Chocolate factory employed over 200 workers. More recently the Woodside Industrial Park in the late 1950s and other smaller businesses have caught on to the economically strategic location of Woodside. "A new crown company known as Industrial Estates Ltd. had been set up by Premier Stanfield 1957". (Chapman) The company established an industrial park in 1958 totaling 64 acres on the former agricultural lands serving the hospital. The attraction of industry and workers led to expansion of infrastructure including the railway bridge across the Harbour, the Macdonald Bridge and a water

With the pressures of growth and need for services, in 1959 council took a historic vote where part of Woodside amalgamated with Dartmouth

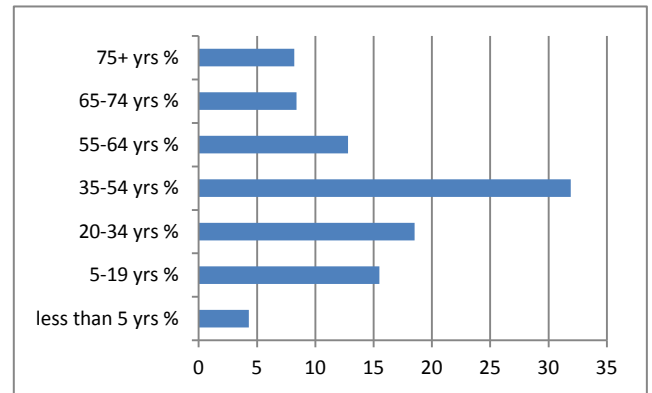


line from Maynard Lake. With the influx of workers and eventually families, the area required churches and recreational facilities. For example Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church and St. Albans Anglican were built in 1921 and the Woodside Imperoyal Presbyterian Church was built in 1922. The Community was growing with services for residents but also a place for people to visit and recreate. “The refinery and its associated housing units were separated by a large field which served as a ball field in the summer and a hockey and skating rink in the winter”. (Chapman) Additional jobs and demand for recreational facilities increased again when the Imperial Oil became a major employer in 1917. This also led to the demolition of Fort Clarence. A memorial plaque of Fort Clarence was installed to assist in preserving its importance in the history of Woodside.

The construction of these factories and industry drew people from all over the world. Along with this a variety of churches denominations and recreational facilities and open spaces were built to add to the community spirit that is still around today. This rich history has led to a diverse and welcoming community. All these factors created a place where families felt welcome and decided it was a good and safe place for their children to grow up in, to earn money and a place for their ageing parents to stay in. These cultural resources; land marks, history and landscapes are what the Community Vision is built upon.

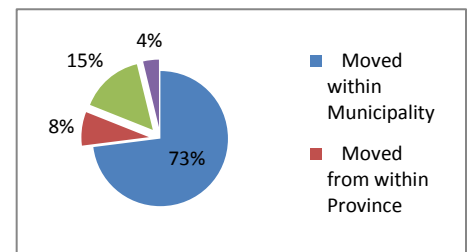
## The community today.....

The population of South Dartmouth (2006 census) which includes Woodside, Grahams Corner, Imperoyal, Southdale and part of downtown Dartmouth) is 24,741. The area has seen an 18% increase in population between 1996 and 2006. In 2006\*, about 20% population was under 20 and 16% was 65 years or older. The number of families grew by 18% between 1996 to 2006 as well with lone parent family also increasing by 18%. (Community Counts) Almost half of the population is transient, for example 45% of the population moved within the previous five years. Almost 33% moved within the municipality, 4% moved within the Province, 7% moved within Canada, and close to 2% moved outside of Canada.



Compared to the province as a whole, Dartmouth South has a relatively high immigrant population. In 2006, there were 1,834 immigrants making up 8% of the population.

In 2006, 54% of the population of Dartmouth South owned their dwellings and 45% rented as opposed to all of NS where 72% owned their own dwelling. 34% of these dwellings required either major or minor repairs. The average value of dwellings in the area increased 70% between 1996 and 2006 to \$186,365. The average major monthly payment for a home owner was \$878.00.



How do people move around within the area? In 2006, 70% of the population made use of a vehicle (car/truck/van) to get to work, while 18% used public transit, and 9% either walked or biked.

## Regional Planning

Woodside area land use regulation is managed in the Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy. In addition to this there is a Halifax Regional Municipal Planning Strategy which covers the entire municipality. It was adopted by Regional council in 2006 and is currently under review. The Woodside area is designated under the Regional Plan as an Urban Local Centre. This document identified 50 designated growth centres. Woodside is one of seven growth centres identified along the Halifax Harbour front. The area within the circumferential highway will be part of the Regional Centre Plan.



The area was designated as a growth centre and an area for Community Visioning because of the proximity to the Ferry Terminal, the construction of Mount Hope Interchange and recent developments in the area, such as the Waterfront Community College, the Dartmouth Gate complex which has attracted new businesses in the area, the mix residential development in Russell Lake area and more recently the new Metro Housing complex containing a 60 senior housing units. All of these developments have an impact on the Woodside area by increasing a diverse population, providing housing choices, and attracting a variety of businesses.

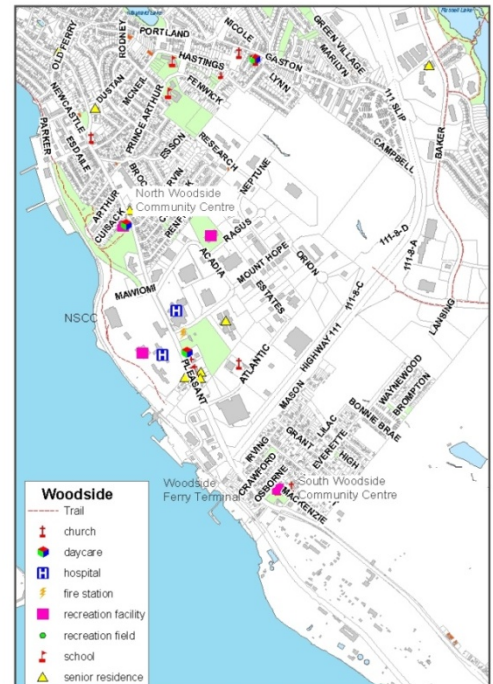
## WOODSIDE Community Vision and Action Strategy

### What is Community Visioning?

Community Visioning is a public engagement process adopted by the HRM Regional Council as a way to implement the HRM Regional Plan at the community level. The goal of community visioning is to build consensus among residents and community stakeholders on what the community should look like, feel like and be like in 5, 10 and 25 years into the future. Community Visioning engages residents in an open dialogue, builds on the community strengths and forges support for collective action. In the fall of 2010, a Woodside Community Liaison Group was formed to lead a community engagement process to develop a Vision and action plan.

### The Woodside Visioning Process

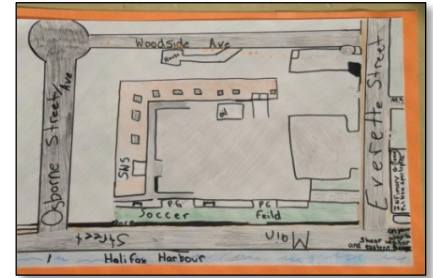
The Community Visioning consultation area generally includes the following neighbourhoods and streets: South Woodside including the neighbourhood of Carlton and Belmont and the Oil refinery. North of the Circumferential Highway the area includes the neighbourhoods west and east of Pleasant Street up to Old Ferry Road. The area includes Gaston Road and a portion of Russell Lake and also the Woodside Industrial Park.



The Woodside Community Liaison Group (WCLG) was established with volunteer members drawn from residents of the various neighbourhoods.

The WCLG undertook a hard copy and electronic survey in the spring and summer of 2011. There were 134 responses from the Woodside Community Survey. Based on these results, Vision statements on selected themes were developed. In addition a number of action items were identified.

In October of 2011, there were two open houses. The Overall Vision statement and topic specific Vision statements were displayed on the walls for further public feedback. There was also the opportunity to develop additional action items for the Woodside Community Vision and Action Plan.



The following themes were identified as core to the communities near and distant future: **Public Safety, Community Services, Culture & Heritage, Trails, Greenspace and Waterfront, Commercial & Residential Development, Leisure Activities and Transportation.** In addition to consulting with the community, the WCLG maintained contact with the Councillor and a number of internal HRM staff. The Vision statement that follows was built on input and information collected through the community engagement process.



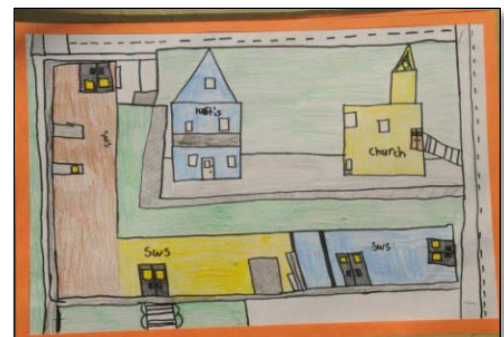
To set the table for developing the specific actions to implement these visions, there was an overall Vision Statement developed to provide the community with an overarching framework which the residents of Woodside envision for their community:

## Overall Vision Statement for Woodside

**Our community shines as a destination with a rich history tied to the diverse people who live, work and care about Woodside.**

The following key themes, in order of priority, emerged from the public consultation process:

- Public Safety
- Trails, Greenspace and Waterfront
- Transportation
- Leisure Activities
- Commercial and Residential Development
- Culture and Heritage



## PUBLIC SAFETY

### Currently in Woodside...

Woodside is an expanding community but at the same time it remains close knit. Older generations living in Woodside remain true to Woodside and at the same time inviting newcomers to the area. With such a mix it is important to become involved in community functions and meet your neighbours. This provides an awareness of your surroundings and provides safety for one another.

Woodside Community Liaison Group members have learned through our surveys that there are areas that individuals feel unsafe. With this information our vision for the future is to create a community that will have more community participation, more police presence and access to emergency 911 phones. To assist in creating a community that is safer there are also a number of actions the community can undertake with assistance of other levels of government and private businesses and community groups to achieve the safer vision for the community. In order to achieve this, the following Vision statement and actions have been developed.

### *Vision statement for PUBLIC SAFETY*

**Woodside is a close knit community where neighbours know one another, look out for each other, and are actively involved in keeping the community safe.**

Goal: To develop a community where everyone feels safe walking around and participating in community events.

### Vision Actions:

- Identify locations and then install more lighting along trail system using CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles.
- Develop more free informal programs and activities for youth in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club and other community groups. ie skate board parks, outdoor rinks, etc.
- Identify locations where further reduced traffic speed and volume issues can be addressed, i.e. along Pleasant Street.
- More police patrols at night focusing on ball fields, community centres and common walkways.
- For pedestrian safety, install a sidewalk along Atlantic Street and Acadia Street.
- Host more community events, groups, networking: e.g. Neighbourhood Watch.
- Gather/research knowledge from police and correctional workers, and other dedicated community members.



## ***Vision Statement for LEISURE ACTIVITIES***

**Woodside is a dynamic community where there is a variety of recreation and leisure opportunities for *all* residents.**

Goal: to provide a variety of both formal and informal activities for all ages and to support the existing community centres: North and South Woodside.

### **Currently in Woodside...**

There are a number of places of leisure currently in Woodside. These places include the bowling alley, lawn bowling grounds, tennis court, a few small baseball diamonds and playgrounds, the Bowles Area and the swimming pool at the Nova Scotia Hospital. In addition to that there are two well used Community Centres – North Woodside on Pleasant Street and South Woodside Community Centre on Everett St. Unfortunately the leisure places, aside from the community centres are not actively used. In order to take advantage of these facilities, we need to find additional recreational and leisure opportunities for residents. One way is by incorporating these existing facilities and building on the success of the community centres in order to provide Woodside Residents an active, multi opportunity recreational and active community that we envision for all ages. In order to implement this we have developed a number of specific steps and actions that can help fulfill this Vision. In order to get from where we are today to what our vision is for the community the following actions are needed:



### **Vision Actions:**

- **At Bowles Arena** - schedule times for public skates on a regular schedule and day.
- **Pool at NS Hospital** – Review policy of use and maintenance.
- **Harbourfront Trail and Greenspaces:**
  - Encourage trail use and parks – walking, relaxing, picnics, community events, community garden.
  - Encourage developers to include turn-key parks in their development plans.
  - Encourage use of natural amphitheatre/picnic park on Arthur St.
- Develop a marina in Sandy Cove and develop public access to the harbour.
- Locate and **inventory community meeting rooms/spaces**.
- Create **clubs for senior citizens, youth, and newcomers** in the area.
- Begin a **Neighbourhood Watch** program in interested neighbourhoods.
- Encourage **volunteerism** in Woodside.
- Form a **joint service committee** to implement services/activities.
- Create a **community newspaper and website**.
- Develop a **Farmers market**.
- Develop an **off leash dog park**.
- Find spaces, both indoor and out, for **public art**.



- **Sporting and Recreational Services:**
    - Publicize the recreation events/places that are currently available.
    - Create a community team who want to begin the process to have a "sportsplex" facility in South Dartmouth.
    - Investigate ways to build an indoor and outdoor exercise facility, a tennis court, an outdoor basketball court, a public tennis court, and/or a skateboard park in the community.
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## ***Vision Statement for CULTURE AND HERITAGE***

**Woodside’s intriguing past is artistically interpreted throughout the community, providing knowledge and enjoyment for all.**

**Woodside today is a festive, culturally diverse area with a shared pride in strong community centers and support for the arts.**

GOAL: To have the Culture and Heritage of Woodside made available to residents, citizens of HRM and tourists.

### **Currently in Woodside...**

Woodside has a rich and unique Mi’kmaq, military and industrial history. Woodside is a community that is fortunate to have two well run and well used Community Centres; North Woodside and South Woodside. These community centres not only provide spaces for recreational and leisure activities but also host community events. The Dartmouth Heritage Museum is close by and also provides an opportunity to celebrate Woodside’s rich history. The pubs, coffee shops, local groups and community events all provide opportunity for residents of Woodside to gather and share their varied culture and experiences. In addition to the community centres there are other community gathering spaces such as the rink, the lawn bowling, the bowling facilities, and the churches.

The residents of Woodside learn about their history and culture from family, friends, books, Community Centers, Internet, museum, newsletter, library, churches, Schools, Imperoyal anniversary event and seniors in our community. In order to get from where we are today to what our vision is as a community, the following actions are needed:

### **Vision Actions:**

- Document the **story of Woodside**. Develop a booklet about the area.
- **Place interpretive signs** to help tell the story of Woodside at various locations in the area.
- Produce and install "Welcome to Woodside" **signs**.
- Submit a proposal to have the story of Woodside included in the proposed HRM museum.
- Identify ways to welcome and entice people from **different cultures** to the area.
- Publicize the story of **Fort Clarence** history and make it available to all.
- Hire **students** to collect stories about the area and develop an on-line Woodside museum/exhibit.

- Develop and build on the annual **antique car show** and assist in turning it into a major event for the area; have it take place on the Natal Day weekend to draw attention to the Woodside area and include a neighbourhood event.
- Identify historic buildings of value and cultural landscapes of value in the community.

### **Vision Statement for TRAILS, GREENSPACE AND WATERFRONT**

**Woodside is a highly sought after, family- oriented community because of its safe and enjoyable network of trails and green spaces, and its celebrated and accessible waterfront. It is a community that supports a healthy environment and allows families to be physically active.**

Goal: To enhance these community assets so residents can enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

#### **Currently in Woodside...**

Woodside has an excellent waterfront trail system and Metro Transit Ferry Service. The location of these assets takes advantage of the incredible views that the residents of Woodside get to appreciate daily. There are also parks and a few places to relax and enjoy the environment although more would be welcome! There is potential to improve the connectivity with the trail and transit systems to the rest of the community by making it a more walkable and bicycle friendly environment where folks can travel by foot or bike from where they live to where they work, study and play. Turning the junction of trail and Ferry terminal to a welcoming destination that residents can easily walk or bike to would greatly enhance their usage. Currently these places are vandalized and in many cases not connected to the rest of the community.



In addition to the trail system, Woodside has a number of neighbourhood parks, a significant natural urban greenspace and three wetlands. These too, are assets the community values and want to build on by making the parks more multifunctional and conserve the natural urban wild space and wetlands. In order to get from where we are today to what our vision is as a community the following actions are needed:

#### **Vision Actions:**

- Design a **green space and trail concept plan** for Woodside to include (but not be limited to):
  - An attractive, seamless and safe connection on the Dartmouth Waterfront trail between Tupper Street and Old Ferry Road with resting places.
  - Additional trails and improved connectivity for bikes and pedestrians.
  - Extensions of the Dartmouth Waterfront Trail from the Woodside Ferry up to the intersection of Atlantic Street and Pleasant Street, John’s Lunch, Dartmouth Gate and eventually to Eastern Passage and Russell Lake community/trails.
  - Attention to linkages between trails and bus stops and other modes of transportation.
  - An emphasis on all greenspace and trails being multi-age oriented and safe.
  - Consistent and attractive signage.
  - View planes or viewpoints warranting protection from development.



- Creation of park-like waterfront access by the Woodside Ferry Terminal.
- Engagement of youth in the planning and design of open space between the waterfront and the ferry.
- Build a multiuse trail between the NSCC parking area on Atlantic St. and the Waterfront campus (using CPTED principles).
- Develop criteria to evaluate the adequacy of a park's contribution to the well-being of a neighbourhood and natural systems and evaluate and prioritize existing parks to make them more multifunctional.
- Develop a formal look off (with signage) at top of Mason St. and identify other possible locations.
- Formally protect green space behind the industrial park. Develop the park as a natural urban wild space.
- Consider the recommendation from the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board to formally conserve and protect the three large wetlands in the Vision area. The 3 identified large wetlands should be considered one connected ecosystem requiring a comprehensive plan.
- Ensure that the tree canopy cover within the neighbourhoods and public spaces are at least maintained and over time increased (refer to targets in draft HRM Urban Forestry Master Plan).
- Establish a volunteer trails and greenspace committee to implement these actions and seek funding and support from Sobeys, Imperoyal, Southwest Properties and NSCC.
- Map trails and green spaces, and indicate site uses and services. Make the map available digitally and in print within Woodside merchant locations as well as on HRM's Regional Trails website.
- Identify where wetlands are in Woodside and review existing protective measures for existing wetlands.
- Develop landscape guidelines for all Woodside parks and green spaces. Include an emphasis on the planting of native trees and shrubs.
- Add, at key points along Dartmouth Waterfront Trail, pet waste bags, directional signage and information panels.

## **Vision Statement for COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

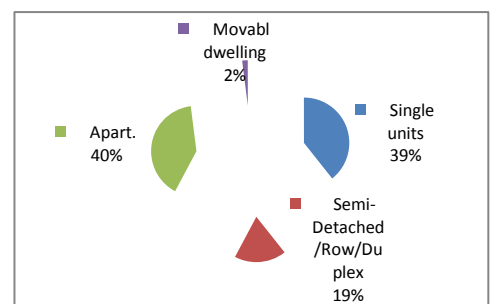
**Woodside is a vibrant, welcoming community with a variety of housing options. Amenities and businesses are within walking distance and meet the needs of all residents.**

Goal: Attract unique businesses that will draw people to the community & provide housing choices within walking distance from Ferry.

### **Currently in Woodside...**

Both residential and commercial development in the area is increasing at a steady pace. At Russell Lake there is an increase in housing options ranging from single units to multiple units. On Mount Hope Avenue there is a new seniors facility next to the existing Oakwood Manor. The community college with its student and instructor populations has also brought a greater demand for alternative housing choices. Currently there are a number of commercial businesses from hairdressing, medical facilities, pharmacies, a pub, a coffee shop, fast food chains and the ever popular John's Lunch and Value Village that continue to attract people from all over Dartmouth and Halifax.

The views and proximity to a ferry service and a waterfront trail all make this place an increasingly attractive place for both Commercial and Residential Development. The Industrial park also provides employment to both residents of the area and to those who live



elsewhere. The new Mount Hope overpass not only has assisted in traffic flow but it will attract more businesses to the area.

In order to ensure the increasing development into the area occurs at a manageable rate it should include acceptable building standards, designs and landscaping. Changes are needed in the Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. Revised regulations on permitted land uses, landscaping and design guidelines will go a long way in improving the Community's desire for a balanced, attractive and walkable place to live. Through proper regulations and control, Woodside can continue to be a place for new families to begin and as well as provide spaces for seniors to remain in their community and new businesses to prosper. In order to get from where we are today to what our vision is as a community the following actions are needed:



### **Vision Actions:**

- Identify additional locations for more residential development and add to the list.
- Create a contact list of local trades-people and survey to determine if they are interested in starting a BID.
- Encourage/attract local businesses and unique businesses to the area including a farmers market.
- Re-develop some of the existing residential, i.e. multiple units and include higher building standards, design standards.
- Rationalize the uses in the industrial park, in particular those lands closer to Pleasant Street.
- Develop/create design guidelines for streetscape and landscaping.
- Retain views of Harbour. An initial review of public spaces and where views from these places should be retained. Ensure that existing views are not lost through development.
- Attract businesses such as art galleries, gift shops, local businesses, grocery store, general purpose stores, healthy food stores, restaurants.
- Encourage and develop a balance and mix of residential and commercial development.
- Create a walking and bicycle friendly community. Identify areas that need upgrades such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle routes to facilitate access to ferry and other services.
- Ensure CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles are considered when locating new buildings and development.
- Request a pedestrian pathway across Highway 111 to Dartmouth Gate and Industrial Park from Province.
- The centre of Woodside at the intersection of Atlantic Street and Pleasant will be more concentrated with residential units, businesses and services. This centre would be within walking distance from the ferry, North and South



Woodside existing residential neighbourhoods & businesses, the college, and the Industrial Park.

## ***Vision Statement for TRANSPORTATION***

**To be the community that continually promotes the improvement and safety of transportation within HRM-Woodside area, with emphasis on, trails, walking and bicycle routes, bus and ferry transit and streets.**

Goal: To provide a range of transportation options with a focus on good connectivity, walkability and biking.

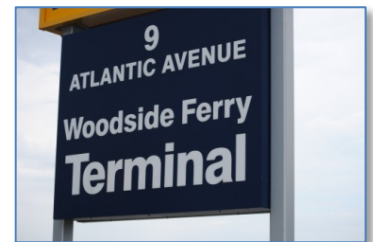
### **Currently in Woodside...**

The Bus/Ferry service in the community is appreciated! These services provide Woodside residents safe and economical choices in transportation. Better connections between buses and ferry times would be something that would greatly improve these services. In conjunction with the ferry service the free parking at the ferry terminal provide opportunities for those who either live outside the area or not within walking distance from the ferry. The increase of students in the area also warrants the need for increased bus routes and ferry service.

As for car and pedestrian traffic there are a number of cross walks and lights that facilitate this option of travel. The increased traffic brought on by the circumferential highway and the recent opening of the Mount Hope exit has eased some of the traffic along Pleasant Street but it also brings more traffic to the area. For a more bicycle, pedestrian friendly community there is a need to make the choice and connection between all these travel options more attractive for all. In order to get from where we are today to what our vision is as a community the following actions are needed:

### **Vision Actions:**

- Establish more frequent and timing connections between bus/ferry services i.e. ferry service at 5:30 am.
- Build berm between Hwy. 111 and streets of South Woodside (Irving/Mason) to decrease noise and air pollution for all residents.
- Build bike lanes on Pleasant St. & to Ferry Terminal (Atlantic St.) and give priority to cyclists & pedestrians at traffic lights.
- Encourage bike racks in front of businesses and institutions.
- Connect Waterfront Trail with Shearwater Flyer and Eastern Passage.
- Reduce volume and speed of car traffic on selected streets.
- Align roadways i.e. lane stripes do not match up at Highway 111 and Pleasant Street intersection.
- Request a greater police presence for drivers not stopping at crosswalks, speeding, vandalism, etc.
- Enforce legislation for jake brake usage on Highway 111.
- Encourage the development of a water taxis business to Halifax.
- Build third lane on Highway 111 (exiting right onto Pleasant Street).
- Plant more trees along Pleasant i.e. from NSCC to Highway 111.



- Install a bus shelter for people waiting for buses at Woodside Ferry terminal.
- Signs needed on trail/ferry connection indicating which way to college, ferry, hospital, businesses.
- Create bus stop pull-off further south on Pleasant Street in front of A&W.
- Revise and request new bus routing up Everette Street, across Grant Street and down Irving Street, and a bus route to Burnside Industrial Park.