



**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS & FACEBOOK LIVE**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**  
**6:00 P.M.**

**Agenda**

1. Meeting Opening – Mayor Smith
2. Parking Requirements
  - a. Presentation of Parking Requirements – Chrystal Fuller, Town Planner
  - b. Public Input
  - c. Written Submissions Received – CAO Crocker
3. Adjournment

# Planning Report



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To: Town of Middleton Planning Advisory Committee

From: Town of Middleton Planning Staff

Date: March 19, 2025

Reference: Amendments to reduce parking requirements in the LUB for Town of Middleton—  
to reduce or eliminate parking standards to increase project viability, density and  
reduce carbon footprint

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## Recommendation:

Staff recommend the attached Land Use Bylaw amendments to change the parking requirements for multi-unit dwellings containing two or more units to 0.8 parking spaces per unit, and for dwellings in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone and in the area between Station Street, Connaught Ave, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue to 0.5 parking spaces per unit.

## Background:

Town of Middleton (“Middleton”) is exploring ways to reduce or eliminate parking standards to enable more space for housing development and encourage non-automobile modes of transportation to reduce carbon footprint. Planning staff has researched the parking regulations of other municipalities in Nova Scotia for reference to develop LUB amendment options for Council to consider. The municipalities covered in the research include towns of similar population size or similar configuration that have a traditional commercial core.

## Policy Analysis

Municipal Planning Strategy (“MPS”) Section 2.8 Transportation Policy identifies parking of cars and the encouragement of pedestrian traffic as the prime concern, especially in the downtown. MPS Policies P1 & P2 require all new developments in the Town provide suitable parking and for the LUB to include minimum on-site parking requirements for different land uses.

According to Policy IM 13, any amendments to the LUB shall be consistent with the intent and policy provisions of MPS, as well as the criteria contained in Policy IM 16. IM 16 is a set of general criteria for the Council to consider development agreements and LUB amendments. In this case of amending the LUB parking requirements, the applicable provisions of IM 16 include subclauses (f), (g), and (m).

- IM 16 (f) The provision of services and utilities
- IM 16 (g) Traffic generation, ingress to an egress from the site to abutting streets and parking
- IM 16 (m) Any other similar matter that may be addressed in a Land-Use By-law that Council feels is necessary, to ensure general compatibility of the use and structure with adjacent areas

## Research Background:

### **Parking & Housing Development**

Reducing or removing parking requirements for dwellings may contribute to more housing developments in two ways.

1. Constructing parking spaces requires additional costs and land. For individual property owners who want to convert a structure to a multi-unit dwelling, there may not be land available to create additional parking spaces to meet the requirements. For developers who are interested in apartment or condominium projects, parking spaces mean additional costs. Reducing or removing parking requirements may make new development and conversion projects more financially viable, thus encouraging the development of more housing units.
2. Parking spaces occupy lands that could be used for different purposes, such as green space, amenity areas, additional home spaces, and dwelling units. Reducing or removing parking requirements means enabling these lands for more meaningful and land-use-efficient purposes, in comparison to being stationary parking spaces.

### **Current LUB Parking Regulations**

Staff began the analysis by reviewing Middleton’s current parking regulations. This review primarily focuses on the parking requirements for residential dwellings.

Under the current LUB regulations, single and two-unit dwellings in Middleton are required to have one (1) onsite parking space per unit. All other dwellings are required to have one and a half (1.5) parking spaces per unit (See LUB Section 5.27).

Residential dwellings are permitted in the Residential (R) zone, Residential Mixed Use (RMU) zone, Residential Mixed Use (RFH) zone, Residential Holding (RH) zone, Commercial Downtown (CD) zone, and Commercial General (CG) zone.

### **Ongoing Secondary Planning Strategy Amendments**

In January 2024, the Town of Middleton engaged Fathom Studio (“Fathom”) to complete a secondary planning strategy (SPS) on a 145-acre area of land so that it could be developed as a future growth node. Fathom proposed to amend the parking requirements for all multi-unit dwellings containing three or more units to 0.8 parking spaces per unit. The parking recommendations from the SPS are being considered as part of this report and were removed from the general SPS

## Jurisdictional Scan

This research aims to identify other towns in Nova Scotia with contexts comparable to the Town of Middleton. These town's regulations would provide some ideas for Staff to develop best practices for amending Middleton's parking requirements.

The planning profession often gives credit to the grid street layout for offering more walkable and self-contained neighbourhoods. With commercial services and community facilities concentrated to a core, residents can access these services by walking or cycling. A community in a compact grid street layout with a commercial core helps the residents reduce their dependency on automobiles.

Middleton's town core centred around Commercial Street and Highway 1 is in a grid street layout. It is also where commercial services and community facilities are concentrated. Therefore, Middleton has potential to reduce auto-dependency.

Middleton also has a Commercial Downtown designation and CD zone that recognizes the area along Commercial Street as the traditional downtown (See MPS Policy C2). The designation and zone encourage a broad range of commercial, institutional and community uses within a convenient, compact, and pedestrian-oriented commercial district.

Considering both the population size and the urban layout, Middleton is a unique case in Nova Scotia. According to the 2021 Census, the Town of Middleton has 1,873 people. Many other towns in Nova Scotia with a commercial core in grid street layout have a larger population than Middleton. Other communities with similar or smaller populations often do not have such a commercial town core.

Staff selected the following towns in Nova Scotia for jurisdictional scan.

Town	Population (2021)
Town of Bridgewater	8,790
Town of Kentville	6,630
Town of Wolfville	5,057
(Former) Town of Windsor	3,425
Town of Berwick	2,455
Town of Lunenburg	2,396
Town of Digby	2,001
Town of Shelburne	1,644

**Figure 1. The population sizes of the Nova Scotian towns selected for research & comparison.**

Bridgewater, Kentville, Wolfville, and Windsor have significantly more population than Middleton. Their parking regulation may provide reference for Middleton if it continues to grow and sees more developments in the town core.

Berwick, Digby, Shelburne, and Lunenburg are the more comparable cases for Middleton regarding both the layout and population sizes.

## Developing Amendment Options

### Source of Housing Supply

The housing supply of Middleton is primarily individual property owners building or upgrading their homes. Staff suggests that the parking requirement amendment target and benefit converted and small multi-plex dwellings as the main source of housing supply.

Middleton tends to see more low-density residential developments than high-density ones. From 2020 to 2024, Middleton issued 16 development permits for new single-dwelling homes and renovations that convert existing structures to create more dwelling units but none for medium- or high-density residential development (see Figure 2).

Development Permits issued for low-density residential development 2020 - 2024						
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Num# of Development Permits Issued	1 for converted dwelling	2 for new single-unit dwelling 1 for converted dwelling	1 for converted dwelling	3 for single-unit dwellings	1 for single unit dwelling 3 for converted dwellings. 4 for Accessory Dwelling Units	16

**Figure 2. Middleton’s development permit records of new residential dwellings, 2020 - 2024**

### Parking Requirements & Mobility

Minimal parking requirements ensure new developments have adequate parking spaces for vehicle accessibility. It prevents spillover parking onto public streets and separates vehicle and pedestrian traffic for safety reasons. MPS Policies P1 & P2 also require the LUB to implement minimum parking regulations for various land uses.

For some communities where services and pedestrian infrastructure are absent, automobiles may main mode of transport for residents. Before reducing parking requirements in these areas, pedestrian infrastructure needs to be in place to allow for alternative modes of transportation. This would require investment and efforts much more than amending parking requirements in the land use bylaw. Therefore, amending parking requirements also needs to consider the geographic context and shall prioritize areas where auto-dependency are lower.

### Proposed Amendments

Based on the research and comparison, a review of the Northland Secondary Plan Report, best practices review and the policy of the Municipal Planning Strategy, staff have identified two recommendations to amend Middleton’s parking requirements.

**Recommendation 1** Establish a boundary that represents the town core area. Reduce the required parking-unit ratio for dwellings in the town core area to 0.5 for all dwellings in the area.

**Recommendation 2** Reduce the required parking-unit ratio for multi-unit dwellings from 1.5 to 0.8.

**Quantify the Impact.**

Staff assessed the number of properties each proposed recommendation would affect to quantify the impact. The analyses identified the minimal case scenario of an as-of-right development to see a reduction of parking requirements under each amendment recommendation.

The minimal case scenario only considers the lot area and frontage. The analyses did not consider situations of land subdivision or consolidation, setback distances, height, frontage distance, coverage rate, and new developments by development agreement.

The amendment shall effectively incentivize new housing units while contributing to a more active community with increased numbers of residents using active transportation modes. The amendment shall also be consistent with the MPS intent.

Amendment	Num# of Properties Impacted	Affected Zones	Dwelling Types Incentivized	Impact Effectiveness
<b>Recommendation 1</b>	222	R, CD	New and Converted Multi-unit dwellings in the Proposed Town Core Area	Significant, with a geographic focus
<b>Recommendation 2</b>	552	R, RFH, CG	New and Converted Multi-unit dwellings with six or less units	Significant

**Figure 3. Summary of the impacts of both recommendations on encouraging housing development.**

**Analysis of Amendment Impacts**

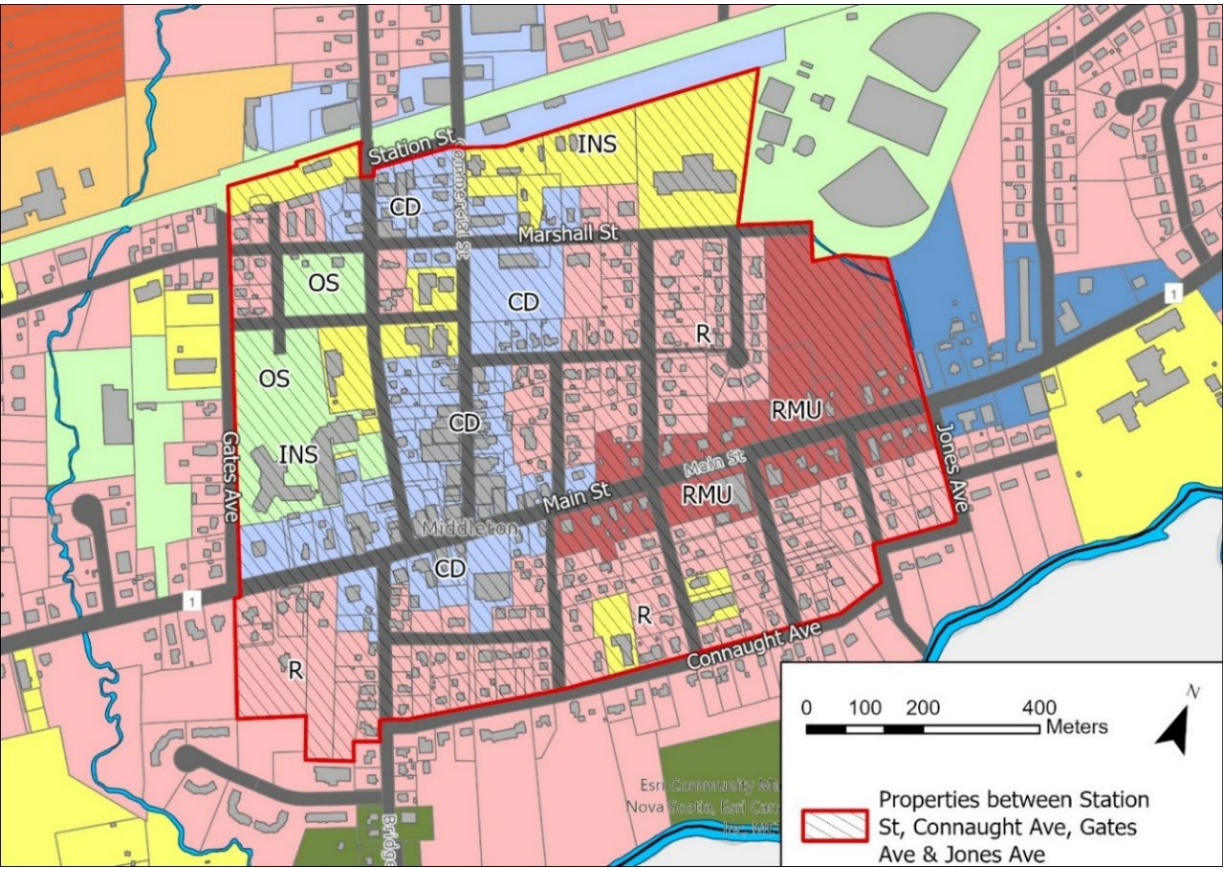
**Recommendation 1- Impact of the Amendment**

Recommendation 1 proposes to reduce the required parking-unit ratio for all dwellings in the CD zone and those located between Station Street, Connaught Avenue, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue to 0.5 parking spaces per unit. Figure 4 shows the properties in this area. Recommendation 1 would encourage converted dwellings and small multi-plexes.

Below is the proposed section to the LUB (See Appendix A).

**5.27 Parking Requirements for Properties near Town Core**

**(b) Notwithstanding Section 5.27, 0.5 off-street on-site parking spaces shall be required for every dwelling unit to be developed or converted on properties in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone and in the area between Station Street, Connaught Avenue, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue, as shown in the Schedule B.**



**Figure 4. Zoning of properties between Station St, Connaught Ave, Gates Ave, and Jones Ave.**

The area between the four streets has a grid-street layout and is the most walkable part of the town where commercial services and community facilities are concentrated. Residents living in the town core area would rely less on automobiles for travel to access services. Zones within this area that permit dwellings with two or more units are R and CD.

R zone permits dwellings to contain no more than six units. CD zone permits converted dwellings up to two units. Staff estimate Recommendation 1 would affect 222 properties zoned CD and R in Middleton and encourage converted dwellings.

**Recommendation 1 – Analysis & Discussion**

Recommendation 1 significantly reduces or waives the additional required parking spaces for conversion and expansion that add units to the existing structure. It also applies to an area where the auto-dependency is the lowest. Here, many commercial services and community facilities are located within a walkable distance of 400 metres from residences.

Number of Dwelling Unit(s)	Required Parking Spaces ( <b>Recommendation 1, 0.5 space per unit</b> )			
	Property in R Zone (0.5 space per unit)	Property in R Zone (current LUB)	Property in CD Zone (0.5 space per unit)	Property in CD Zone (current LUB)
1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2
3	2	5	Not permitted	Not permitted
4	2	6	Not permitted	Not permitted
5	3	8	Not permitted	Not permitted
6	3	9	Not permitted	Not permitted

Figure 5. Number of parking spaces required under Recommendation 1 amendment.

**Recommendation 2 – Impact of the Amendment**

Recommendation 2 would require 0.8 parking spaces per unit for all multi-unit dwellings with three or more units. It would benefit all properties in zones that permit multi-unit dwellings, which include R, RFH, and CG zones.

In total, staff estimates Recommendation 2 could incentivize small multiplexes up to six units on approximately 552 properties in Middleton.

**Recommendation 2 – Analysis & Discussion**

Recommendation 2 benefits new developments and conversions of small multiplexes. It incentivizes the same types of housing as Recommendation 1 does but affects more properties in Middleton. By having a lower parking requirement than single- and two-unit dwellings, staff anticipate Recommendation 2 would incentivize more multi-plex developments.

Number of Dwelling Unit(s)	Required Parking Spaces ( <b>Recommendation 2, 0.8 spaces per unit for multi-unit dwellings</b> )			
	Property in R & RFH Zones (Recommendation 2)	Property in R & RFH Zones (current LUB)	Property in CG Zone (Recommendation 2)	Property in CG Zone (current LUB)
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	5	3	5
4	4	6	Not permitted	Not permitted
5	4	8	Not permitted	Not permitted
6	5	9	Not permitted	Not permitted

Figure 6. Number of parking spaces required under Recommendation 2 amendment.

## Recommendations & Draft Motions

### Conclusion

Both recommendations align with the intents of MPS & LUB and affect a significant number of properties in Middleton. They would also encourage the as-of-right development of low-density multi-plexes commonly seen in Middleton. Such type of housing is deemed as the “Missing Middle.” This notion refers to a range of housing types that fall between single-family detached homes and mid-rise apartment buildings.

Missing middle housing offers several benefits, including increased housing affordability, more diverse housing options, improved walkability, higher density utilization of land, and a potential for more vibrant neighborhoods by providing a range of housing types for different household sizes and income levels, all while generally maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.

### Staff Recommendation to PAC:

The proposed LUB amendment recommendations would affect Residential (R), Residential Mixed Use (RMU), Residential Future High Density (RFH), Commercial Downtown (CD), and Commercial General (CG). The amendment will only adjust the parking requirements for residential uses in these zones and is consistent with their intent as specified in the MPS Policies.

Adopting Recommendation 1 & 2. Amend the Land Use Bylaw to require 0.8 parking spaces for all multi-unit dwellings and add a section that requires all dwellings on properties in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone and in the area between Station Street, Connaught Ave, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue to have 0.5 parking space per unit.

Options:

1. Recommend to Council to proceed with the recommendations and give First Reading.
2. Recommend that Council not proceed with the recommendation and not give First Reading.
3. Provide other direction to Council

### Proposed Motion for PAC:

*Be it resolved* **THAT** the Planning Advisory Committee recommends that the Town of Middleton Council approve the LUB amendments regarding changing the required parking-unit ratio to require all multi-unit dwellings to provide 0.8 parking spaces per unit, and all dwellings on properties in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone and in the area between Station Street, Connaught Ave, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue to provide 0.5 parking spaces per unit, and add Schedule B to the LUB.

### Proposed Motion for Council, First Reading:

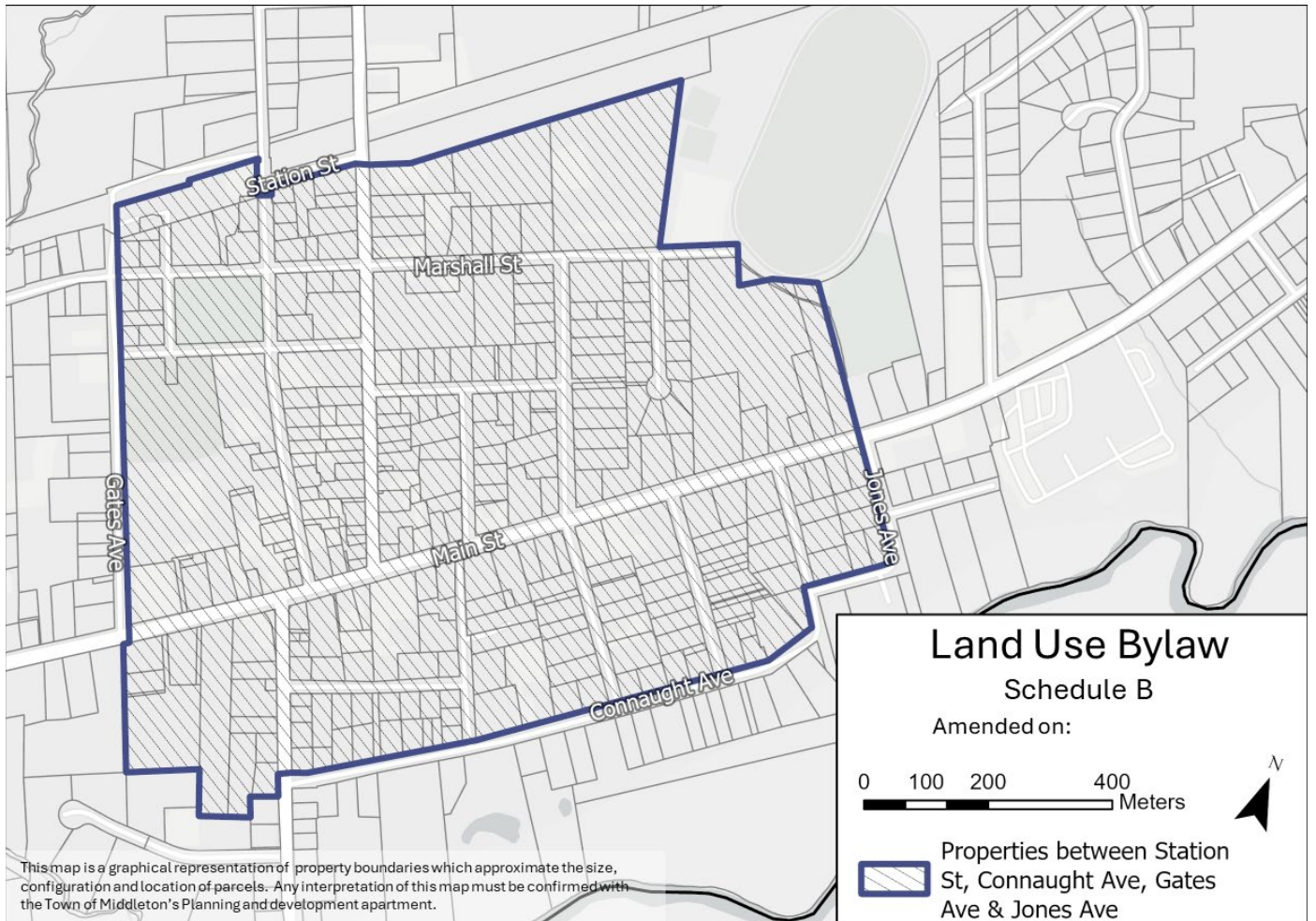
*Be it resolved* **THAT** the Municipal Council give First Reading to and schedule a Public Hearing for the LUB amendments regarding changing the required parking-unit ratio to require all multi-unit dwellings to provide 0.8 parking spaces per unit, and all dwellings on properties in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone and in the area between Station Street, Connaught Ave, Gates Avenue, and Jones Avenue to provide 0.5 parking spaces per unit, and add Schedule B to the LUB.

## Appendices:

Appendix A: Schedule B adding to the LUB as described in Recommendation 1

Appendix B: Other Nova Scotian towns' parking requirements of for dwellings and long-term accommodations

# Appendix A:



## Appendix B:

<b>Parking Requirements for Dwellings and Long-term Accommodations</b>				
<b>Town</b>	<b>Single &amp; Two-unit Dwellings</b>	<b>All other Dwellings</b>	<b>Senior Apartments</b>	<b>Nursing Home</b>
Middleton	1 Parking space per dwelling	1.5 Parking spaces per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit	0.5 Parking space per bed
Shelburne	1 Parking space per unit	1 Parking space per unit	1 Parking space per unit	1 Parking space per unit
		1.5 Parking space per unit (>6 units)	1.5 Parking space per unit (>6 units)	1.5 Parking space per unit (>6 units)
Digby	1 Parking space per dwelling	1.5 Parking spaces per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit	0.5 Parking space per bed
Lunenburg	Town of Lunenburg has no requirement for automobile parking, but require developments to include bicycle parking			
Berwick	1 Parking space per dwelling	1.5 Parking spaces per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit or 1 parking space per 400 sqft of floor area
Windsor	1 Parking space per dwelling	1.5 Parking spaces per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit	0.5 Parking space per unit
Wolfville	1.25 Parking spaces per unit + 0.5 parking space per bedroom in excess of 3 bedrooms	1 Parking space per unit + 0.5 parking space per bedroom in core area  1.25 parking spaces per unit + 0.5 parking space per bedroom in core area	1 Parking space per bed + 0.5 parking space for each guest bedroom	0.5 Parking space per bed + 1 parking space per 40 sqm of total floor area
Kentville	1 Parking space per dwelling	1 Parking space per dwelling (< 4 units)  1.25 Parking Spaces per dwelling (4 or more units)  0.5 Parking Space per dwelling for	0.5 Parking space per unit	2 Parking spaces + 0.5 parking space per resident

		multi-unit dwelling in C1 zone		
Bridgewater	0.5 Parking Space per dwelling in C1 zone  1 Parking Space per dwelling	0.5 Parking Space per dwelling in C1 zone  1.25 Parking Space per dwelling	0.5 Parking Space per unit/bed	0.5 Parking Space per unit/bed