

**PROPOSED ALTERATION AND EXPANSION  
OF THE  
MOUNT PEARL MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY  
TO INCLUDE THE AREA  
OF THE FORMER PEARL ESTATE LANDS & ENVIRONS**

**JANUARY 4, 2007**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with Sections 3 to 6 inclusive of the City of Mount Pearl Act, the City Council is requesting the Minister of Municipal Affairs to consider altering and expanding the southeast portion of the City's municipal boundary to the location of the proposed Team Gushue Highway to include the remaining portion of the former "Sir James Pearl Estate" and environs as part of the City of the Mount Pearl.

## **LOCATION**

The area in question is located adjacent to, and immediately southeast of, the City of Mount Pearl. The expansion area is proposed to be bounded to the south and east by the proposed Team Gushue Highway (formerly referred to as the East West Arterial Road Right of Way) and is comprised of approximately 132.34 hectares (327 acres). Map 1, illustrating the proposed boundary alteration and expansion area, is attached.

## **EXISTING SITUATION**

The area is primarily either undeveloped or in use for agricultural purposes. There is a mix of semi-urban and rural uses located in the form of strip development along Brookfield Road. There is also a major institutional use (the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre) that is involved in agricultural research.

There are 21 property owners in the area, which translates to a population of approximately 60 people. Three are considered major property owners that occupy the bulk of this semi-urban, rural, and agricultural area: the Federal Government (the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre), the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) (the former Sprung property), and Leonard Holdings.

The NLHC property (commonly known as the Sprung property) has an area of 42.27 hectares (104.45 acres) and is currently in the ownership of NLHC but has been sold or committed to a private developer for residential development purposes. This property is zoned as Rural but NLHC is in the process of requesting the area be rezoned to accommodate urban residential development.

## **MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION**

Until 1966, the area was unincorporated. In 1966, the area was placed under the jurisdiction of the St. John's Metropolitan Area Board, a regional authority that provided municipal administration, development control, and services to areas outside of the incorporated municipalities in the region.

In 1991, the municipal jurisdiction for the area east of Commonwealth Avenue and south of Mount Pearl, which included this area, was transferred from the St. John's Metropolitan Area Board to the City of St. John's. The City of St. John's is currently the municipal and planning authority for this area.

## **LAND USES**

While there is a range of land uses in the area, particularly along Brookfield Road, the predominant land use by area is agriculture, followed by undeveloped rural land. Within the area, there are ten single family dwellings, three commercial businesses of a rural nature, one communications building (Aliant) and approximately twenty buildings associated with the Atlantic Cool Climate Research Centre. A natural waterway, Flynn's Brook, traverses the area and enters and exits a major wetland centrally located in the area.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

The City of St. John's provides a basic range of services to this area that reflects the semi-urban/rural nature of the area.

With the exception of the Aliant building and the Atlantic Cool Climate Research Centre, development and buildings are serviced by individual well and septic tank disposal systems. The Aliant building is serviced with municipal water and sewer and connected to the Mount Pearl system. The Research Centre is served with municipal water services from Mount Pearl.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA**

With the recent amendment to the St. John's Urban Region Agricultural Development Area (ADA) boundaries, the NLHC property (the former Sprung property) has been excluded from the ADA and NLHC is now requesting a zoning change to permit residential development in this area. It is anticipated that the NLHC property will be developed for urban residential purposes as the area is immediately adjacent to existing residential and open space areas along the Mount Pearl boundary and can connect to Mount Pearl municipal water and sewer services and road network. The area immediately south of the NLHC property, and outside of the ADA, will also be subject to urban development pressures as water and sewer services become available to the area through the development of the NLHC property.

It is also anticipated that the remainder of the area currently within the ADA will be used for agricultural purposes. There is currently a provincial review of the ADA lands that is expected to be completed over the next two years. The future of the ADA within this area will be clarified at the end of that review.

The urban servicing of this area can be provided by the City of Mount Pearl more efficiently and effectively than the City of St. John's due to the proximity of this area to the current municipal infrastructure and facilities of the City of Mount Pearl. The City of Mount Pearl also has the capacity, expertise, and resources to direct and manage the growth and development of this area.

## **RATIONALE FOR REQUEST**

The Sprung and Pearl Estate Lands and Environs are a natural extension of the City of Mount Pearl from historical, land use, servicing, and administrative perspectives. Furthermore, consistent with previous government decisions, the proposed Team Gushue Highway provides a rational and identifiable southeast municipal boundary in this area. While it is the intent to provide more detailed rationale for this boundary alteration and municipal expansion during the public hearings, the following provides further background to the rationale for this request.

### **Historical Ties**

It has been known since the incorporation of Mount Pearl that a major portion of the estate of Sir James Pearl, the founder and namesake of Mount Pearl, is outside but immediately adjacent to the modern-day boundaries of the City of Mount Pearl. In fact, the actual "mount" and homestead portion of the Estate is outside the municipal boundary of the City of Mount Pearl. The "mount" is clearly visible from many vantage points within Mount Pearl.

Up to and including the present time, the area has had historical and family ties with the community and the City of Mount Pearl. Portions of the former Pearl Estate have been developed into urban subdivisions within the current boundaries of the City of Mount Pearl.

In 1973, as part of the Mount Pearl Newtown Property Acquisition Program, NLHC expropriated property in the northwest portion of the area, today more commonly known as the Sprung property, for residential purposes. It was the intent of NLHC to develop this property for residential purposes as part of the Mount Pearl Newtown Development. A residential subdivision plan was subsequently prepared by NLHC that integrated the area into the overall Mount Pearl Newtown - Federal/Provincial Land Assembly.

During the 1980's, the Sprung Property was developed as a hydroponic greenhouse operation. The municipal servicing of the land and access to the property was from Commonwealth Avenue within Mount Pearl. The common perception of the residents of the province was that this area and the Sprung development was a part of Mount Pearl. Media reports routinely referenced the 'Sprung Greenhouse operation in Mount Pearl'. When the Sprung lands become developed for residential

purposes in the near future, municipal servicing and access will once again be required from Mount Pearl via Commonwealth Avenue.

In 1991, the municipal jurisdiction for the area east of Commonwealth Avenue and south of Mount Pearl (which included the NLHC lands, the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre Federal lands, the former Pearl Estate and the proposed Team Gushue Highway) was transferred from the St. John's Metropolitan Area Board to the City of St. John's. This was the first instance that the City of St. John's had municipal jurisdiction over these lands.

The year 2008 marks the twentieth anniversary of the incorporation of the Mount Pearl as a City. The inclusion of the homestead of the founder and City's namesake, Sir James Pearl, would be a highlight to the citizens of Mount Pearl and would enhance the celebration of both the growth of municipal government in Newfoundland and Labrador and the incorporation of the City of Mount Pearl.

### **Logical and Identifiable Boundaries**

In 1981, the municipal boundary of Mount Pearl was expanded to take in the surrounding lands of the St. John's Metropolitan Area including Southlands. Two major roads, Kenmount Road to the north and the Trans Canada Highway to the west, became identifiable municipal boundaries. The eastern portion of the Mount Pearl municipal boundary followed a portion of the proposed Team Gushue Highway Right of Way so that when constructed, the road would act as a further identifiable boundary for Mount Pearl.

Changes to the City's municipal boundary in 1991 followed identifiable boundaries with the exception of the area southeast of the City. Previously in 1981, it was understood that that the future southeastern boundary of the City of Mount Pearl would follow the Team Gushue Highway Road Right of Way. The 1991 decision failed to follow sound planning principles in the establishment of logically identifiable boundaries and servicing patterns.

In 1999, the Provincial Government used the relocated Kenmount Road right of way as a main boundary extension when the Kenmount Road migrated to the north as a result of the construction of the Outer Ring Road. This has continued the provincial practice of using the regional road system as identifiable municipal boundaries for Mount Pearl. This is considered a precedent for boundary adjustments in this region and could be considered as a precedent for the expansion of Mount Pearl into the Estate lands.

In this southeast area, the Department of Transportation and Works has identified the alignment of the Team Gushue Highway Right of Way as the next regional road constructed to connect the Gould's By-Pass to the south with the existing portion of the Team Gushue Highway that has been

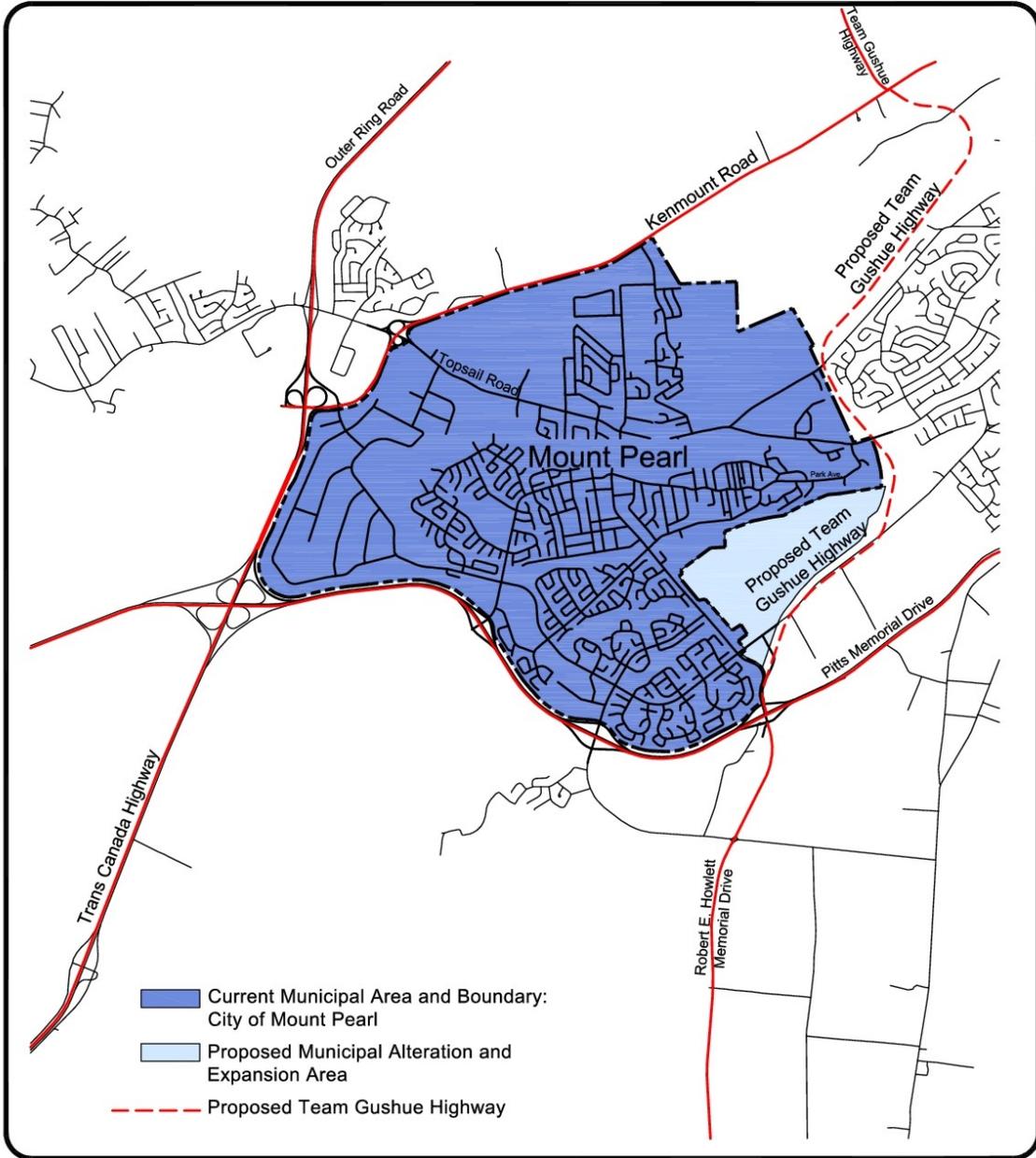
constructed in north central part of St. John's. Now is the time to create this rational municipal boundary along the southeast boundary of Mount Pearl.

### **Efficient Municipal Administration and Servicing**

The area immediately abuts the City of Mount Pearl boundary; more closely associates with the City of Mount Pearl, and would be more efficiently administered and serviced by Mount Pearl.

When the area urbanizes (and indications are that this will occur in the very near future in the area of the NLHC property), there will be a requirement for municipal water and sewer services to be extended into the area from the City of Mount Pearl as the only adjacent municipal water and sewer system available. It is timely to undertake such an expansion at this time, prior to the urban development of these lands, to reduce, from two to one, the number of municipal authorities that will be required to undertake a detailed review of the proposal and issue the appropriate approvals and permits.

The City of Mount Pearl has the capacity, expertise, and financial resources to direct and manage urban growth and development of this area, which is confined within the identifiable limits of the proposed Team Gushue Highway as the municipal boundary for this area.



**Proposed Boundary Alteration and Expansion Area**  
**The City of Mount Pearl**

Scale:	Date:
1:50000	02/01/07

Map 1