

Construction of the Ravines of Bedford South, a multimillion-dollar Clayton Developments mega-project named after seven ravines that run through the site, bounded by the Bicentennial and Bedford highways.

(ERIC WYNNE / Staff)

MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE WORKS

A list of some of the major development projects that will either be completed or be underway in Nova Scotia in 2005.

- **Heritage Gas** will continue construction of its \$120-million natural gas distribution system in Halifax, Amherst, New Glasgow, East Hants and Truro. Heritage plans to build a \$10-million distribution system within the town of Amherst during the year and make gas available to the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre by September. A consortium of **SaskEnergy, AltaGas Services and Scotia Investments**, Heritage Gas plans to make natural gas available to 20,000 Nova Scotia residents and 6,500 businesses within six years. To date, it has signed 129 customers, 50 of whom are now burning gas.
- Construction of the Ravines of Bedford South, a multimillion-dollar **Clayton Developments** mega-project named after seven ravines that run through the site, bounded by the Bicentennial and Bedford highways, will continue in 2005. Expected to take up to 15 years to complete, the 6,000-unit development includes single-family dwellings, luxury townhouses and urban estate homes. Construction of a 79-unit condominium, the Tides, is expected to be complete in the fall of 2005.
- **Renewable Energy Services Ltd.** of Windsor plans to have three 65-metre tall wind turbines - two in the Halifax area and one in Guysborough - costing a total of \$4 million to \$4.5 million, producing one megawatt of power each for **Nova Scotia Power** in 2005. The company hopes to have six or seven wind farms in the province in the next five years. A single farm would produce 30 to 35 megawatts of power.
- **Highland Energy Inc.** of Kirkland, Que., will spend \$3 million to extract biogas from the closed Sackville landfill to add two megawatts of electricity to Nova Scotia Power's grid in 2005. The project is one of 17 alternative energy source proposals from eight companies that Nova Scotia Power has chosen to add 28 megawatts of electricity to its capacity. The projects will displace the equivalent of 80,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide or 31,000 tonnes of coal.
- Other alternative energy suppliers to NSP that expect to be up and running in 2005 include **Atlantic Wind Power**, which is building three new turbines near its 17-turbine project in Pubnico; **Comeau Lumber Ltd.** of Meteghan, which will burn wood waste to generate electrical power; **Vector Wind Energy Inc.** of Ottawa, which will build one wind turbine in Springhill and two others in the Cumberland-Col-

- chester area; **Black River Hydro Ltd.** of Mabou, which is building wind turbines in Creignish, Mabou and Pictou County; **Cape Breton Power Ltd.** of Glace Bay, which is building one turbine in New Waterford and one in Glace Bay; and **Eskasoni Power & Energy Eastern Nova Scotia**, which is building one wind turbine on the Eskasoni First Nation.
- **Home Depot**, whose Canadian operations are headed by Cape Breton native Annette Verschuren, is building a \$6-million store in Sydney that will open in 2005. The 7,400-square-metre outlet, which will create more than 130 full- and part-time jobs, will be located on Grand Lake Road, across from the Mayflower Mall.
- Construction of the Wentworth, a \$6.8-million, 44-unit condominium complex - Cape Breton's first - overlooking Sydney's Wentworth Park will be completed in 2005. Developers **Jonelijn Concrete Construction Ltd.** and **BCA Investment Co-operative** expect the building will be ready to open in late April 2005.
- Another condo project scheduled to be completed in 2005 is the \$3.4-million, 20-unit Village on the Green, which will overlook the Truro Golf Course. The 20-unit stucco building, a project of **Archibald Leech Developments**, will be in the style of architect Andrew Cobb, who designed a stucco home on Prince Street that now houses the law firm **Birchell MacDoigall**.
- **Provident Developments** of Bedford plans to break ground on its \$26-million, 160-home Eastern Passage development, the Village at Fishermen's Cove, in January. The first phase of the development, which will include detached, duplex and townhouse units, is expected to be ready by the summer of 2005.
- Bedford West is a billion-dollar, 20-year development bordering Highway 102 at Hammonds Plains Road and designed to accommodate 20,000 people in about 6,000 residential units, a mix of houses, condominiums and townhouses. Approvals are still pending, but **Annapolis Group** vice-president Archie Hattie said the company hopes construction of roads and related infrastructure could begin in 2005.
- **United Gulf Developments** also hopes to have a road under construction in late 2005 to its \$100-million residential-commercial Paper Mill Lake development in Bedford. The five-year project, announced in 2004, includes a 100,000-square-foot hotel.
- **Imperial Oil** will spend 2005 working on the \$100-million upgrade of its Dartmouth refinery to

- produce low-sulphur diesel fuel. The refit, announced in 2004, will be complete in 2006, ahead of federal government deadlines for reduced diesel fuel emissions. The project will employ 350 workers at peak.
- **Nova Scotia Power**, the province's chief source of electricity, plans to complete the installation of a \$25-million, 47-megawatt natural gas turbine at its Tufts Cove generating station in Dartmouth in 2005.
- **Innovative Properties** of Dartmouth will complete a \$165-million first-phase of a multimillion-dollar residential-commercial development in downtown Dartmouth in 2005. The 24-unit Canal Bridge Condo is under construction and is expected to be complete in the spring of 2005. Phase 2 includes eight, two-storey townhouses, while Phase 3 is a planned 20- to 26-unit apartment building at Pine and Queen streets.
- The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board will hear an appeal in January from opponents of the proposed \$10-million to \$20-million 17-storey Midtown Tower Hotel on Grafton Street, which would be built around the venerable **Midtown Tavern**. The hotel development was approved in July 2004 by HRM's Peninsula community council. But the plan has its critics, including groups like Heritage Trust Nova Scotia and the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage, which say it is inconsistent with the municipal planning strategy because the building is too high and incompatible with neighbouring heritage structures.
- The extension of Gateway Park north to Electropolis - Phase 1 of the **Halifax Port Authority's** \$100-million cruise ship facility upgrade, which will be done over several years - will start in 2005. The upgrade will also include the redevelopment of the seawall, cruise pavilion and the Pier 21 museum. The port authority will also continue \$13 million of harbour-dredging work in 2005.
- Work on the \$330 million Halifax sewage treatment project will continue in 2005. The Halifax waste treatment plant is to be in operation by the fall of 2006, the Dartmouth plant by the summer of 2007 and the Herring Cove facility by the summer of 2008. In December, Halifax Regional Municipality signed a contract for the last phase of the project - a \$12-million biosolids processing facility to be built at **AeroTech Park**, near **Halifax International Airport**.
- The \$8-million condominium project adjacent to All Saints Cathedral in Halifax is scheduled to finish in the spring of 2005. A project of Halifax development company **Greenwood Lane Inc.**,

- the complex will include 42 units and 12,000 square feet of commercial space.
- **Halkirk Properties**, owners of the old Keith Brewery complex on Lower Water Street in Halifax, which houses the Halifax Farmers Market, plans to resubmit a new development plan for the property in January. Halkirk withdrew its original \$52-million expansion plan for the site last year after complaints about a planned 27-storey condominium tower component. Halkirk principal Bill Greenwood said that work on the north end of the property, now a parking lot, could begin in late 2005 if all approvals are received.
- **The Paramount**, a \$19-million, two-building apartment complex housing 169 units on South Park Street in Halifax, is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2005. The apartment development, located between the **Lord Nelson Hotel** and the YMCA, overlooks the Public Gardens.
- Phase 2 of the Hemlock Park Place condominiums on the Bedford Highway is scheduled to open in 2005. The second phase of the development includes 76 condominium units. Designed in five phases, the project will include a total of 400 condos when completed.
- Construction of Letson Court, an eight-storey condominium project on Morris Street between Barrington and Queen streets, is scheduled to begin in January. Developed by **Halkirk Properties**, the 52-unit complex is expected to be finished by the spring of 2006.
- Construction of the multimillion-dollar Martello condominium development on Dresden Row above the **Park Lane** shopping complex in Halifax is scheduled to finish by December 2005. Only five of the 108 units in the 10-storey building remain unsold.
- Expansion at **Halifax International Airport** will continue in 2005. The airport authority is spending \$50 million on a 18,000-square-metre expansion of its terminal, including a planned U.S. preclearance area, that began in 2004 and is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
- **Michelin** is investing \$25 million to expand its Bridgewater plant and \$16 million at its Waterville facility. The work is scheduled to be complete by the fall of 2005. The 2004 announcement was not without controversy, as it came with a \$4-million contribution from the provincial government to offset capital costs.
- **Nova Scotia Power** is building a \$35-million, 35,000-square-foot coal-handling marine facility in Point Tupper. The development, which NSP has put up for sale, is scheduled to be complete in mid-2005.

"You can try to tell people where to live, but whether you succeed is another thing," he said, noting that communities just outside Halifax Regional Municipality, like Lantz, Enfield, and even Truro, benefited from the moratorium. The freeze was put in place while the municipality works out a strategic development plan, expected to be complete some time in 2005.

"Starts for single family (dwellings) were down a bit in HRM" in 2004, he said, while other areas, such as Sydney, the South Shore and Truro, were strong.

"Part of it is a shortage of lots in HRM due to the moratorium," he said, noting that the development freeze is also costing the municipality tax revenues. "If people want trees, they won't go to the city centre, they'll go to Truro, Windsor, Lantz and Enfield."

Mr. Pettipas said 2004 was a good year for residential housing starts in Nova Scotia, par-

effect on the housing market. "We're cautiously optimistic," he said. "I think OK."

David McCulloch, market analyst with Mortgage and Housing Corp. in Halifax, characterized 2004 as a "soft landing" year for housing, with a peak of 2003, when the 5,096 housing starts province.

"I don't think it's going to be that bad a year at all," projecting that housing starts in 2005 will be down about 10 per cent from the 4,550 in 2004.

Mr. McCulloch said somewhat surprised at the timing of the strength in single home starts, which he attributed to low mortgage rates and a "soft landing" year for single family, "adding that demand for minimum and rental accommodation will remain strong as baby boomers become nesters and look to downsize."

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