Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Aquaculture Division, Licensing & Leasing Unit
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Site Report

ADA Number:	AQ#8040		
Location:	Pubnico Harbour, Yarmouth County	**Size:**	20.00 HA

Species and Methods of Cultivation Eligible for Consideration		
Species Type:	**Common Species Name(s):**	**Method(s) of Cultivation:**
Shellfish	American oyster Giant Sea scallop Bay scallop *Other species native to this water body are eligible but must be specified in a proposal*	Suspended cultivation
Aquatic Plants	Sugar kelp *Other species native to this water body are eligible but must be specified in a proposal*	Suspended Cultivation

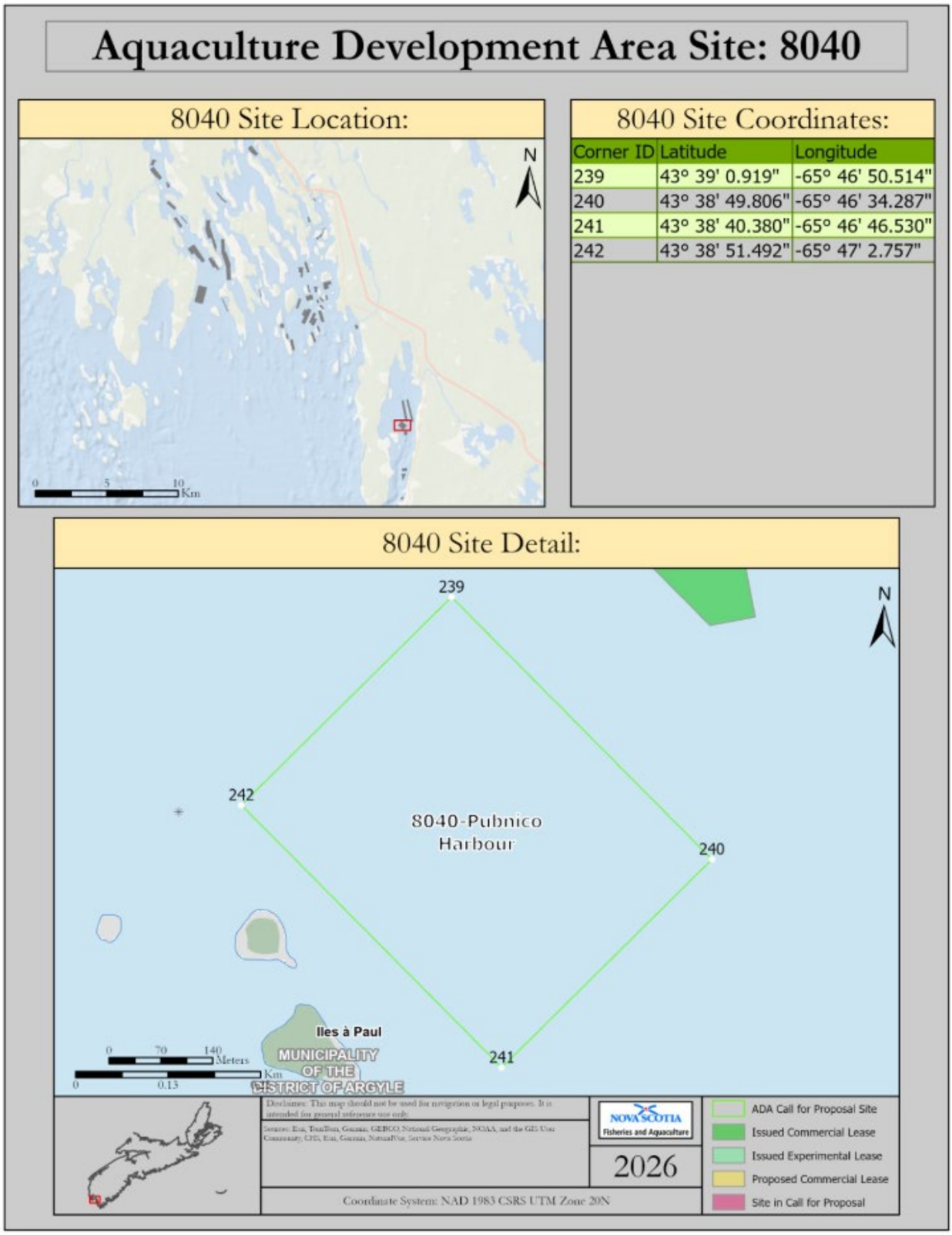

Figure 1 - Vicinity Map

Location:
Approximate center coordinates: **N 43° 38' 50.65", W 65° 46' 48.52" - NAD83 CSRS UTM Zone 20**

This site is part of a designated Aquaculture Development Area and is situated in the northern region of Pubnico Harbour. At its nearest point, the site is approximately 70 meters from the shoreline of Iles a Paul at the community of Lower West Pubnico (**Figure 1**). The site is rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 500 meters long and 400 meters wide.

The nearest licensed, marine aquaculture site is AQ#0955, located approximately 4 kilometers to the south. Additionally, there are 7 other ADA sites within Pubnico Harbour which have not currently been issued an aquaculture licence or lease.

The nearest wharf facilities are the Lower West Pubnico and Lower East Pubnico Small Craft Harbours, approximately 3.3 kilometers and 4.3 kilometers south of the site, respectively. Prospective proponents should engage with local harbormasters (or equivalent) to discuss opportunities and capacity to use those facilities.

Bottom Characteristics:
A bathymetric survey of the site area was conducted in June of 2022. Depth was found to be relatively uniform throughout the surveyed area, falling between 1 and 2 meters deep across virtually the entire area (**Figure 2**). These depths and those displayed in the figure below have been adjusted to chart datum (water levels at lowest low tide). Data from the nearest CHS tidal station indicates that depths in the area may increase by approximately 3.2 meters during a typical high tide and as much as 3.9 meters during extreme high tides. In general, shallow areas and areas with lower current speeds can expect seasonal ice build-up and ice movement. Proponents should include plans on how to mitigate the impact of ice on their aquaculture operation where applicable, within their proposal.

Baseline video collection was conducted at this site in October of 2026. Video recordings of the seafloor were collected at 22 stations throughout the site area, including each of the four site corners and along three equally spaced transects running the length of the lease (**Figure 3**). Bottom conditions were found to be relatively uniform, consisting primarily of moderately packed brown silty sediment at most stations. No significant inclusions of boulder substrate were present. Flora and fauna observations were limited, consisting only of infrequent sightings of detached, mixed macrofauna accumulations, lobsters, crabs, and suspected crustacean burrows. There was some evidence of eelgrass growth in the eastern corner of the proposed lease.

Eelgrass is an ‘Ecologically Significant Species’ (ESS) and is present along the marine coast of Nova Scotia at varying degrees of abundance, with many factors contributing to its growth, survival and reproduction. The type and spacing of suspended aquaculture gear can influence the amount of light penetrating the water column and reaching the sea floor where eelgrass is present. Proponents are expected to include plans on how to eliminate or mitigate the impact of their aquacultural operation on any eelgrass present within and near to the site, where applicable. In addition, any proposed gear must have at least a 3-metre spacing between each longline.

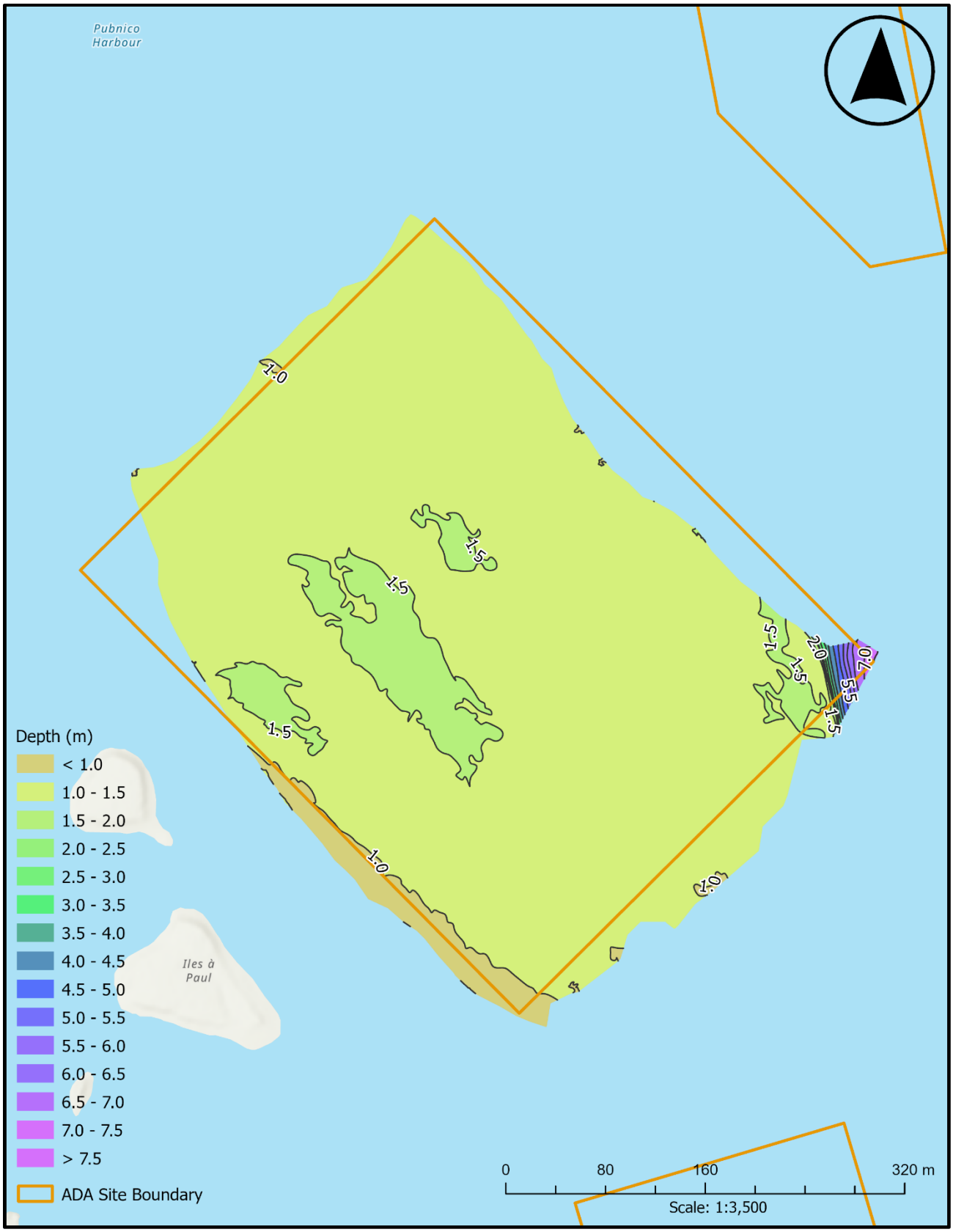

Figure 2 - depth contour mapping resulting from a bathymetric survey conducted by NSDFA

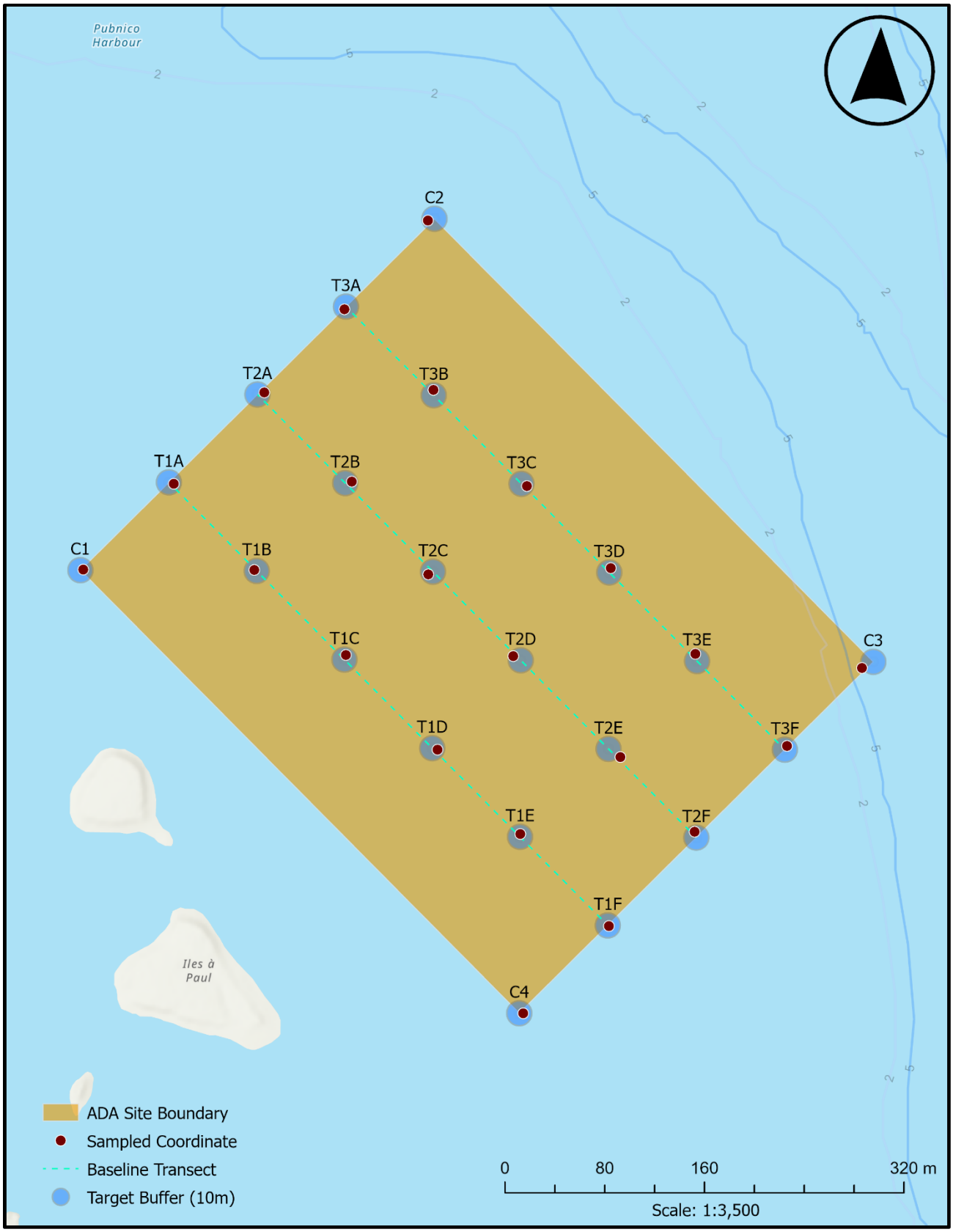

Figure 3 – Benthic baseline video collection stations.

Water Quality:
This site is located within an area classified as "approved" for harvesting of all species of bivalve mollusks by the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program as of November 13, 2026. Proponents are expected to check, on a regular basis, with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the most current classification status. (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/shellfish-mollusques/cssp-map-eng.htm).

Wildlife:
Much of the northwestern shoreline of Pubnico Harbour is identified within the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources Significant Species and Habitat Database as migratory bird habitat (https://nsgi.novascotia.ca/plv).

Accuracy and Currency of Data:
The Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture strives to provide accurate and up-to-date information in this report. However, this report is not a peer-reviewed scientific publication and is instead intended to be a summary representing the general conditions regarding the site's suitability for the type of aquaculture under consideration by a Proponent interested in responding to a call for proposals (and subsequent application for an aquaculture licence and lease) for this site.

The Department does not make any guarantees as to whether or not an aquacultural operation would be successful at this site, nor does it absolve a person from ensuring that they obtain any additional necessary permits, approvals or licenses from the relevant Municipality, Provincial or Federal agency prior to conducting aquaculture.

Prepared By:	Matthew King, Manager, Licensing, Leasing and Planning	Matthew King Digitally signed by Matthew King Date: 2026.11.16 12:42:43 -04'00'
	Name / Title	Signature / Date