

Housing Diversity and Community Balance in the General Commercial (C1) Zone – Supplemental Update

Meeting Date: December 15, 2025
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council give first reading to the following amendments to Kentville's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw:

AMEND:

D.1 Draft Municipal Planning Strategy Policies

5.14 Program-Based Housing

Policy RS-28: It shall be the intention of Council to recognize *Program-Based Housing*—including *Supportive Housing*, *Transitional Housing*, and *Emergency Shelters*—as residential uses providing lodging accommodation with structured supports for individuals seeking stability, safety, or independence.

Policy RS-29: It shall be the intention of Council to enable *Program-Based Housing* by site plan approval within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, subject to LUB standards ensuring the form, scale, and intensity of development are compatible with surrounding neighbourhoods.

Policy RS-29 It shall be the intention of Council to enable Program-Based Housing as-of-right within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, subject to the Land Use By-law standards that ensure the form, scale, and intensity of development are compatible with surrounding neighbourhoods.

Policy RS-30: It shall be the intention of Council to Include standards within the LUB regulating limiting occupancy, establishing minimum separation distances, and requiring buffering, residential form, and appropriate site design. Larger or specialized projects may be considered by Development Agreement where warranted by scale or service complexity.

Policy RS-31: Recognize that Council may consider *Program-Based Housing* proposals on lands adjacent to residential designations through rezoning under Policy IM-7(c), where the proposed use is permitted in the adjoining designation.

D.2 Draft Land Use By-law Framework

R3 Zone – Add to Permitted Uses:

- *Program-Based Housing* (Supportive, Transitional, Emergency Shelter)

Part 5 Residential Zones

5.1 General Provisions for All Zones

5.1.14 Site Plan Criteria for Program-Based Housing Developments

- a) Maximum 12 units or sleeping rooms per lot (see definition in Appendix A);
- b) Minimum 60 m separation between Program-Based Housing uses;
- c) Residential form and scale consistent with surrounding dwellings;
- d) No exterior signage identifying client type or program;
- e) General criteria in accordance with Section 5.1.12 of this By-law.
- ~~d) Adequate on-site parking, lighting, and screening;~~
- ~~e) Buffered outdoor amenity/gathering areas adjacent to residential properties;~~

REPORT SUMMARY

This Supplemental Update provides Council Advisory Committee (CAC) with new information received since the November 10, 2025 staff report on Program-Based Housing. It summarizes results from the November 25 Public Participation Meeting (PPM), presents the refined definitions review, and identifies clarifications made to the draft MPS/LUB amendments.

Key Takeaways

1. No Substantive Change to Policy Direction

The public feedback and updated definitions review support the overall approach introduced on November 10:

- Program-Based Housing (Supportive, Transitional, Emergency Housing) permitted as-of-right in the R3 Zone;
- IM-7(c) used for C1-to-R3 rezonings where lands are physically adjacent to a residential designation;
- GD-30 Site Plan Approval applied to all Program-Based Housing developments abutting R1 or R2;

- Clear definitions distinguishing Program-Based Housing from Institutional Uses and Emergency Services.

All refinements to date are clarifications only—no changes have been made to the underlying permissions, zoning outcomes, or regulatory tools.

2. Public Participation Meeting Themes

Feedback focused on:

- Clarity of definitions and permitted uses;
- Rezoning pathways and adjacency requirements;
- Neighbourhood impacts and public safety;
- Institutional terminology and the Emergency Services definition;
- Process transparency, timelines, advertising, and opportunities for further input.

Staff have responded by strengthening definitions and clarifying Site Plan Approval triggers.

3. Definitions Review Complete (Operational + Legal)

The proposed definitions:

- Are enforceable through Development Officer practice;
- Are aligned with MGA s.220(1) land-use authority;
- Avoid regulating internal program operations (outside municipal jurisdiction);
- Reduce ambiguity between Program-Based Housing and Institutional Uses.

These definitions have received initial legal review before First Reading.

Next Steps Toward First Reading

1. Present full package for Council First Reading – December 15, 2025 (target);
2. Public Hearing and Second Reading (January 2026, tentative);
3. Ministerial Review and Appeal Period (February–March 2026).

Section 1 – Update Overview

1. Purpose of This Update

This report supplements the November 10, 2025 staff report titled “*Recommendation for Amendments to Planning Documents Related to Program-Based Housing*.” The original report introduced a proposed regulatory framework for defining and permitting program-based housing, including Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing, and Emergency Shelters.

The purpose of this update is to:

- Provide the results of the November 25 Public Participation Meeting (PPM);
- Present the revised Definitions Review (operational implementability + legal authority);
- Present revised policies and regulations;
- Confirm whether staff continue to recommend the same direction; and
- Outline next steps for Council First Reading.

The original November 10 report remains the foundational document. This update provides **new information only** and is intended for CAC consideration prior to forwarding the amendments to Council.

Section 2 - Summary of Public Participation Meeting Feedback (Nov 25, 2025)

Full notes have been appended as Appendix A.

The PPM generated a wide range of comments and questions from residents, business owners, and stakeholders. Feedback is summarized below by theme.

2.1 Clarity of Proposed Uses and Definitions

Participants requested clarity on:

- Whether the R3 changes would allow only sleeping facilities or also program/support spaces;
- How greenspace, outdoor gathering areas, buffering, and screening would be applied;
- Whether Site Plan Approval (SPA) could be required in all cases, not only when abutting R1/R2.

Staff clarified:

- Sleeping facilities remain the primary permitted use;
- Accessory program spaces are permitted where clearly subordinate;
- Outdoor amenity requirements are already addressed through General Provisions;
- SPA is triggered automatically when abutting R1/R2, and Council may expand this requirement.

2.2 Rezoning Pathways and Adjacency

Residents sought clarification regarding:

- Whether R1 or R2 zones could be rezoned to R3;
- Whether C1-to-R3 rezonings require physical adjacency under IM-7(c);
- Whether program-based housing could be placed in commercial zones without adjacency.

Staff confirmed:

- R1 upzoning is inconsistent with MPS direction and is not supported;
- R2 upzoning is possible and reviewed on its merits;
- Adjacency is required for C1-to-R3 rezonings under IM-7(c).

Requests were made for a map of existing R3 areas. Staff will include mapping with the First Reading report.

2.3 Definitions and Institutional Terminology

Comments addressed:

- Whether changes to Emergency Services affect REMO operations;
- Whether the term “Institutional Use” is being applied appropriately;
- Whether language in the definitions is discriminatory or stigmatizing.

Staff confirmed:

- The definitions create a clear separation between Program-Based Housing, Institutional Uses, and Emergency Services;
- Legal review is ongoing;
- Institutional terminology is being refined for clarity and neutrality.

2.4 Neighbourhood Impact and Public Safety

Participants raised concerns about:

- Perceived increases in downtown social challenges;
- The possibility of impacts migrating into R1/R2 areas if uses are relocated;
- Quiet enjoyment of surrounding residential properties;
- Enforcement limitations for noise or public disturbances.

Staff emphasized that:

- SPA provides design-based mitigation (screening, lighting, access);
- Land use regulation cannot govern individual behaviour;
- Operational issues fall under the Police Act and municipal by-laws.

2.5 Process Transparency, Timelines, and Consultation

Public comments included:

- Confusion about MGA timelines;
- A desire for additional opportunities for feedback;
- Questions about provincial oversight and whether the Province can override Town decisions;
- Requests for larger venues and improved advertising.

Staff clarified:

- Timelines are set by the MGA and may be extended but not shortened;

- Consultation continues through First Reading and the Public Hearing;
 - The Province is involved only at the end, during Ministerial Review.
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2.6 Broader Social and Community Context

Several attendees discussed:

- The need for centralizing services near transit;
- The importance of clear communication to avoid misinformation;
- The value of inclusive planning and housing options across the spectrum.

A number of residents also expressed support for program-based housing and emphasized its role in building a balanced and compassionate community.

SECTION 3 - Revised Definitions Review (Operational & Legal)

Following the PPM and further internal review, staff completed an updated analysis of the proposed definitions.

3.1 Definitions Review

The following definitions for Program-Based Housing and related uses are proposed for inclusion in the Land Use By-law (LUB). These are provided up front to support clarity in the subsequent operational and legal review.

Proposed Definitions

Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing means *a form of program-based housing that provides long-term lodging together with on-site supports intended to assist residents in daily living, stability, and community integration*. Supports may include case management, counselling, life-skills training, or similar services delivered by qualified staff or partner agencies.

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing means *a time-limited form of program-based housing intended to provide temporary lodging and structured on-site supports for individuals moving from crisis or short-term situations toward more permanent housing*. Programs generally include case management, skills development, and housing placement support.

Emergency Shelter

Emergency Shelter means *a short-term lodging use that provides immediate, low-barrier shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, displacement, or crisis*. Services may include meals, basic needs, referrals, or on-site staffing, but the extent of supports varies by operator.

Program-Based Housing (Umbrella Term)

Program-Based Housing means *a collective term used in this Plan and By-law to describe Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing, and Emergency Shelter*. This term is used for organisation and clarity; individual housing forms are regulated separately.

Institution (Revised Definition)

Institution means *a non-commercial use of land or buildings operated by a public, non-profit, or community organisation that provides educational, health, social, religious, cultural, or civic services to the public*. Examples include schools, hospitals, places of

worship, nursing homes, residential care facilities, treatment or rehabilitation centres, homes for special care, community centres, libraries, museums, and similar facilities.

For clarity, Institution does not include any Program-Based Housing form, which is regulated separately under this By-law, nor does it include Emergency Services.

Emergency Services (Revised Definition)

Emergency Services means *uses related to fire protection, policing, ambulance, and municipal emergency response operations*, including comfort centres, and is distinct from Emergency Shelter.

3.2.1. Operational Review (Development Officer Implementation)

Staff conducted an operational assessment to confirm that the above definitions can be consistently implemented by the Development Officer (DO) during permit review, issuance, and enforcement.

An operational definition must be clear, observable, and linked to a land-use form—not to internal program requirements. The definitions meet this standard because:

- They describe physical or functional characteristics of the land use (e.g., duration of stay, presence of supports, type of lodging).
- They avoid mandating service standards, staffing models, or program content, all of which fall outside DO authority.
- They enable DOs to rely on site plans, floor plans, and operator statements of intended use, which are standard and enforceable materials.
- The distinction between Emergency Shelters, Transitional and Supportive Housing is sufficiently clear for DO interpretation without additional policy guidance.
- The revised Institution definition reduces ambiguity and prevents misclassification of housing programs as institutional uses.

Staff conclude that the definitions are operationally implementable and will support consistent decision-making.

3.2.2. Legal Review (MGA and LUB Authority)

Staff also completed a legal review to confirm that the definitions fall within municipal authority under the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

The definitions are legally sound because:

- They regulate land use, which is explicitly permitted under MGA s. 220(1).
- They do not impose operational obligations, program standards, or staffing requirements that exceed municipal jurisdiction.
- They provide clarity and predictability, reducing interpretive risk and aligning with legal expectations for enforceable by-law language.
- The separation of Program-Based Housing from Institutional Uses is well within municipal zoning authority.

4. Summary

The definitions proposed for Program-Based Housing and related uses are both operational and legally appropriate. They provide a clear and implementable regulatory structure, support consistent Development Officer decisions, and fall squarely within the municipal mandate to regulate land use. Staff recommend that these definitions be advanced for inclusion in the draft Land Use By-law amendments.

SECTION 4 – Review and Amendments to Proposed MPS and LUB Sections

The November 10, 2025 CAC Staff Report contained proposed draft text for the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. Additional review has led to edits of these sections as described below:

D.1 Draft Municipal Planning Strategy Policies

5.14 Program-Based Housing

Policy RS-28: It shall be the intention of Council to recognize *Program-Based Housing*—including *Supportive Housing*, *Transitional Housing*, and *Emergency Shelters*—as residential uses providing **lodging** accommodation with structured supports for individuals seeking stability, safety, or independence.

(Note: Used ‘lodging’ to avoid existing ‘accommodations’ definition and removed language describing types of persons)

Policy RS-29: ~~It shall be the intention of Council to enable *Program-Based Housing* by site plan approval within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, subject to LUB standards ensuring the form, scale, and intensity of development are compatible with surrounding neighbourhoods.~~

Policy RS-29 It shall be the intention of Council to enable Program-Based Housing as-of-right within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, subject to the Land Use By-law standards that ensure the form, scale, and intensity of development are compatible with surrounding neighbourhoods.

For clarity:

a) Program-Based Housing developments within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone shall be subject to Site Plan Approval criteria where the development abuts the Single Unit Dwelling (R1) and/or One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) Zones to mitigate potential impacts related to building placement, access, parking, lighting, buffering, and neighbourhood interface.

b) Program-Based Housing developments proposing twelve (12) or more units shall be considered only by Development Agreement, to allow for a comprehensive review of building design, massing, servicing, phasing, amenity provision, and neighbourhood compatibility. Nothing in this Policy shall prevent Council from regulating such developments more specifically through a Development Agreement pursuant to the Municipal Government Act.

(Note: Corrected policy to indicate that this form of housing is enabled either as-of-right, by site-plan-approval or by development agreement based on the nature and location of the development)

Policy RS-30: It shall be the intention of Council to Include standards within the LUB ~~regulating~~ limiting occupancy, establishing minimum separation distances, and requiring buffering, residential form, and appropriate site design. Larger or specialized projects may be considered by Development Agreement where warranted by scale or service complexity (would require additional revisions).

~~**Policy RS-31:** Recognize that Council may consider Program-Based Housing proposals on lands adjacent to residential designations through rezoning under Policy IM-7(c), where the proposed use is permitted in the adjoining designation.~~

(Note: Removed as this policy is redundant)

D.2 Draft Land Use By-law Framework

R3 Zone – Add to Permitted Uses:

- *Program-Based Housing* (Supportive, Transitional, Emergency Shelter)

Part 5 Residential Zones

5.1 General Provisions for All Zones

5.1.14 Site Plan Criteria for Program-Based Housing Developments

- a) Maximum 12 units or sleeping rooms per lot (see definition in Appendix A);
 - b) Minimum 60 m separation between Program-Based Housing uses;
 - c) Residential form and scale consistent with surrounding dwellings;
 - d) No exterior signage identifying client type or program;
 - e) **General criteria in accordance with Section 5.1.12 of this By-law.**
 - ~~d) Adequate on-site parking, lighting, and screening;~~
 - ~~e) Buffered outdoor amenity/gathering areas adjacent to residential properties;~~
- (Note: Revised language to remain consistent with other Residential zone site plan criteria.)
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5. Next Steps

- **Council First Reading** (Dec 15, 2025);
- **Public Hearing and Second Reading** (January 2026);
- **Ministerial Review** (February 2026);
- **Appeal Period** (March 2026).

Respectfully submitted,

Darren Shupe
Director of Planning and Development

Attachments:

- Appendix A – Public Participation Meeting Notes
- Appendix B – Public Correspondence
- Appendix C – Definition Status Table

Appendix A - Public Participation Meeting Notes

November 25, 2025

Town Hall, 354 Main Street, Kentville, Nova Scotia

Town Hall was open to the public

STAFF PRESENT

Staff in attendance included Director Darren Shupe, Development Officer Kirsten Duncan and Economic Development Officer and Moderator, Lindsay Young

OPENING REMARKS

Lindsay Young gave an overview of how the meeting will be held. Set expectations, informed public in attendance of speaking time limits and to keep comments germane to the topic.

PRESENTATION

Director Shupe provided an overview of the proposed amendments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Morton – Concerned about issues related to this topic. Experience is that proposed developments don't end up occurring. Will these amendments make it easier or more complicated for developments to happen? The Town should be making it easier to happen. These services need to be central so that people who use them can also access transit services, which make it more affordable, etc. Mr. Morton was supportive of developments such as these.

Staff – Rephrased to ensure clarity. Currently the planning documents are silent on the specific language and topic. DA's would be a more complex process but are appropriate and useful for some developments.

Julie Ogilvie – Clarifying question about rezoning from C1 to R3, is adjacency required?

Staff – yes, must be adjacent

Julie Ogilvie – Would the amendments to R3 only allow for sleeping facilities?

Staff – Yes, however accessory uses could be considered as long as the sleeping facility is the main use.

Genevieve Hearn – Is Greenspace a consideration for these developments?

Staff – Yes. The proposed amendments under the General Provisions speak to having outdoor amenity/gathering areas adjacent to residential properties.

Christine Moreau – How does the new definition for Emergency Services impact on Regional Emergency Management Operations? How have these amendments been considered in conjunction with the Human Rights Violation cases that have been dealt with/are ongoing? *Something about the terminology in the definitions re: institutional use and not being politically correct*. Language was discriminatory when talking about institutional uses.

Staff – We will seek legal advice on the amendments before they move forward.

Kathy Boutilier – Can R1/R2 be rezoned to R3? Do you foresee it likely that a request would be made to rezone those? Do residents have an opportunity to comment on such files?

Staff – R1 – no, strong language in the MPS against rezoning to higher densities. R2 – possible. Cannot comment on likeliness, however the Town did just complete a rezoning application for R2 to R3. Council reviews each request and are the final decision makers. Public can comment as part of the process.

Pat Norton – What specific proposals? What's a complete project? What is buffering? What is screening? Etc. Lots of questions.

Staff – offered the ability to meet one-on-one to clarify

Carolyn Houston – This is happening quickly. The meeting should have been held at the Fire Hall and not at 4:30pm on a weekday. The meeting should have been better advertised (radio). Does the Province have the ability to override Town decisions? If these changes go through, can the province stop them or ignore them?

Staff – Noted on the advertising part.

Lloyd Schmidt – Is this dictated from the Provincial Government? It's affecting Downtown core. People are needing escorts to access banks. Need proper supports for these uses, this is not a democracy.

Staff – No direction from Province. Direction from CAO.

Ian Doucette – Significant deterioration in the downtown. Naïve for us to think issues aren't going to spread into the residential area if the uses are moved there. Need to listen to the residents. Certain services attract certain people. Is staff acting in the best interest of the citizens of Kentville?

Staff – Staff try to ensure that the report is balanced. There are planning tools available to help mitigate these issues, which council is aware of.

David Ritcey – Mr. Ritcey has had discussions with lawyers who deal with Municipal Law, and they are concerned about existing town laws and how they are being applied.

Staff – Noted.

Laura Mesher – Of the municipalities researched, has anyone asked how it going? Whether the municipalities have any regrets with the policies? Any ways that could have been crafted better?

Staff – We can reach out and ask those questions.

Laura Mesher – If Program Based Housing is in a residential area, and on private property, how does that impact the surrounding residential uses and them being able to have quiet enjoyment of their property?

Staff – there are different laws that the police force can apply. Also, amendments proposed consider buffering as part of the Site Plan Approval process from R1/R2 properties.

Kathy Boutilier – Who's in charge of the timeline? Will there be another opportunity for public consultation?

Staff – The MGA dictates the timeline. Council can also decide to adjust the timeline. Timeline can be adjusted to be longer, but not shorter.

Andrew Zebian – Stood up to speak and clarify the process that these amendments have to go through with council.

Leanne Jennings – How do the definitions impact someone seeking VON care in an R1 zone? Same question but for multi-unit dwellings? How do the definitions impact the ability for the Town to respond to extreme weather emergency shelters that aren't activated by REMO or other provincial authorities? Will there be an opportunity to provide more feedback? Why is R3 the best zone?

Staff – Thank you for the feedback, we will look into this to make any adjustments. Someone who lives in the R1 zone that receives care, doesn't affect the main use.

Andrew Bagley – Not a town resident, but owns a business. What are the timelines? What does "provincial review" mean?

Staff – explained the process of provincial oversight on all approved amendments.

Robyn Manning – What is happening? There is a lot of mixed information (regarding property sales and information on social media channels). How are public supposed to make an opinion when there is so much misinformation? Robyn lives downtown and owns a business very close to Town Hall. There is a lot of public drug use, has there been any work

towards a harm reduction site for the Town? We need more communication and transparency.

Staff – We are not privy to property sales/transactions. We are only aware once someone applies for a Development Permit.

Travis Mesher – Where can we access documents?

Staff – Town website, all files related to planning applications are on the website.

Barb Jess – a map of all the R3 zones would be helpful for future documents and meetings.

Michelle Parker – Can future presentations include a map of R3? She asked everyone to reflect, that: if not in the R3 zone, then where?

Travis Mesher – Can R3 be rezoned to C1?

Staff – Clarifying that they meant C1 to R3. Only if the property immediately abuts a residential designation

Donnie Cleveland – How many beds can a shelter have?

Staff – Proposed amendments are for 12 units or sleeping rooms. There is another layer that is missing from this conversation, which is Building Official review and the Building Code. The Building Code can dictate the number of units for a facility based on area of building available and design.

Lloyd Schmidt – Where is John Lohr?

Staff – We need to keep questions and comments germane to the meeting.

Ian Doucette – Speaking to the crowd: Lets work together to get more people's opinions. If everyone talked to 3 people there could be more people paying attention to this topic and the amendments.

Christine Moreau – Wanted it reflected in the comments that not everyone has scary stories of downtown. Christine lives in the town and does not feel this way. Question related to the timeline, when will legal opinion be sought? Did Amherst get legal review?

Staff – noting legal review, hoping to have the report and relevant information pulled together by the end of Friday. Report needs to be submitted early next week to get into the Council package. Can't speculate on Amherst's process.

Cate Savage – For the as-of-right development proposal, could it be required through Site Plan Approval?

Staff – SPA would be required if they abutted R1/R2. We could also make the adjustment to require it through SPA no matter what.

Carolyn Houston – Speaking from experience with the Healy property and the Special Events that they host, the police officers will only enforce the noise bylaw after 10pm. Question about the amendments: how do these changes affect halfway houses or facilities for people leaving jail?

Staff – these things are a little off topic and we need to keep comments and questions germane to the meeting.

Travis Mesher – Does the Provincial Government know that Kentville's bylaws are weak and that's why they're funding more shelters here?

Staff – We're not going to comment on the provinces motives. We're addressing our documents deficiencies through these amendments.

Michelle Parker – Statement – everyone has a right to housing. Please be respectful when talking on this subject. Lots of people who have mental health issues, addictions and criminal records live in R1/R2 zones too.

Ann – When it comes to recommending and approving these amendments, does the town consider whether we have adequate services to support these uses? There are social costs to these decisions.

Staff – Planning staff look at permits, we have a smaller mandate.

Cathy Maxwell – Would like to give a bit of background context – Cathy has attended 2 meetings recently (Mayor's meeting and a meeting with John Lohr) lots of questions were asked about this topic. It was noted that there are no other shelters between Yarmouth and Kentville, so anyone who needs the services are brought to Kentville. A number of years ago, the government identified 5 major areas in the province to focus the services – Kentville is the area for this end of the Province. Council has not been involved in discussions around the funding decisions that have been made. Councilor Maxwell has asked to sign up for a Provincial committee that will deal with these issues. If anyone has questions they are welcome to meet with her. Also reach out to the local MLA – they should be able to answer questions.

Unknown – Bigger venue for the next meeting and advertise on the radio.

Christine Moreau – Inquiring on staff opinion on best planning practices and centralizing services so they are accessible to the demographic that require it.

Staff – We put services where people need them.

Jim Morton – The report is clear. It defines what it is that we are dealing with but it's only a snip it of what needs to be done. Kentville is a beneficiary to have these assets. We need to build a community that involves all parts.

MEETING ADJOURNED

6:45pm

APPENDIX B – PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

Emailed Letter from Leanne Jennings, Open Arms Resource Centre

November 28, 2025

Dear Mayor Zebian and members of Council,

I am writing on behalf of Open Arms Resource Centre to express my deep concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the Town's MPS and LUB as it relates to what is being referred to as 'Program Based Housing'. I believe that the amendments that have been drafted are discriminatory in nature and are inconsistent with Council's policies and priorities. Please consider the following:

- In section 5.2.2.3 of the MPS, council states the intent of the R3 zone in reference to the density that this zone allows. Requiring 'Program Based Housing' in this zone is not consistent with the intent of the zone because it has nothing to do with density. The definitions associated with 'Program Based Housing' simply speak to the fact that some residents of Kentville require support.
- Not all housing that requires support is included in these amendments. Planner Shupe indicated at the Public Participation Meeting that an individual who perpetually requires VON to visit their home is not counted in these new definitions.
- Section 5.13 of the MPS states "...on a small scale, community-based residential facilities provide community integration for people with various disabilities." Following this assertion, the corresponding Policy (RS-27) allows Residential Care Facilities, Homes for Special Care, and similar uses in any Residential Zone. This applies to residential uses for residents with physical and or intellectual disabilities, or are marginally disadvantaged. How is a residential use for those requiring housing supports any different and why would Council seek to subject them to more stringent land use regulation? This must be explained as it appears that these individuals are being discriminated against because of stigma and fear.
- MPS Section 5.8 outlines Council's commitment to affordable housing and states, "As with all communities, Kentville is characterized by a disparity of wealth and is committed to ensuring that adequate housing is available to all its residents. Adequate housing means shelter that is habitable and structurally sound with sufficient space to protect against cold, damp, heat, rain, wind and other threats to health." The restriction on residential uses for individuals who require supports goes against Council's commitment to adequate housing for all.

- The proposed Policy RS-28 states that Council wishes to regulate housing that provides support to individuals “seeking stability, safety, and independence.” Doesn’t every human being desire and deserve stability, safety and independence? These are the characteristics that distinguish someone who is housed from someone who is unhoused. Why should individuals seeking these outcomes be set apart from anyone else?
- Proposed policies RS-29 and RS-30 suggests that housing that provides someone with support in achieving stability, safety and independence must be subject to standards with regards to form, scale, and intensity of development. It goes on to call for buffering and separation distances. What are we regulating with these proposed amendments? Do we need to separate those who need support in achieving stability and safety from those who have already achieved it? The MPS and LUB already regulate land use according to density. New policies and regulations are not needed, and in fact are not legal, in their attempt to regulate people who need support.
- These proposed amendments are also inconsistent with Council’s Strategic Priority around Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Accessibility.

I urge you to reconsider your approach to regulating people who need supports and invite you to meet with myself and my staff to discuss and collaborate on any concerns you may have, so we can achieve our common goals together.

Regards,

Leanne Jennings

Executive Director,

Open Arms Resource Centre

Emailed from Patrick Vitale – November 28, 2025

Dear Mr. Shupe:

I was unable to attend the meeting this week and wanted to register my concern about the proposed changes for Program Based Housing. I am both a Kentville resident and have a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Toronto and have published research on the history of exclusionary zoning. Please pass on this email to the appropriate parties.

I am opposed to this change for a variety of reasons. The first is that it is in keeping with a long history of municipalities using land use planning to exclude vulnerable people and "undesirable" uses. The current action is reactive and is using land use regulations to respond to growing public concern that may or may not be reasonable. I would hope that land use planning would proceed with greater deliberation and integrity, especially given the troubling history of exclusionary zoning.

The second reason is that the land area devoted to R3 is much smaller than C1. If Program Based Housing is restricted to R3, then it is likely that very little will be built. I suspect that is the point.

Furthermore, C1 is often more appropriate than R3 for such housing. C1 is walkable. There are existing service providers and social support in C1. In some instances residential neighbourhoods would be less appropriate for supportive housing than downtown Kentville.

Finally not only will this change limit unhoused people (the current bete noire in the town) from finding housing in Kentville, but it will also apply to people with disabilities, people fleeing abusive relationships, children in the foster care system, and anyone else who would live in a supportive setting.

I live adjacent to Miner's Marsh and have zero concerns about my or my young children's safety downtown, which we walk through often. I realize that some residents and business owners do have concerns about disorder. However, I think these concerns are best addressed with compassion and without resorting to rewriting land use regulations in an exclusionary fashion.

Sincerely,

Patrick Vitale

APPENDIX C – Definition Status Table

Comprehensive Definitions Status Table (December 8, 2025 Update)

Definition	Status	Reason / Notes
Dwelling Unit	Unamended	Remains the baseline residential use; defines self-contained units with independent living facilities. No changes required.
Institutional Care Facility	Unamended	Provincially regulated (Homes for Special Care Act). Remains distinct from Program-Based Housing. No amendments required.
Affordable Housing	Unamended	Policy-level definition only; not tied to land-use permissions. Remains unchanged.
Market Rental / Market Ownership Housing	Unamended	Policy concepts linked to Housing Needs work; no regulatory amendments needed.
Residential Care Facility / Small Options Home <i>(if applicable)</i>	Unamended	Remains under Institutional or Residential-Institution categories; no interaction with Program-Based Housing definitions.

Amended or Newly Added Definitions

Definition	Status	Reason / Notes
Program-Based Housing (Umbrella Term)	New	Non-regulatory organizing term grouping Supportive, Transitional, and Emergency Housing. Clarifies structure; permissions apply at sub-type level.
Supportive Housing	New	Provides long-term accommodation with non-medical supports. Modern, enforceable, land-use-based definition.
Transitional Housing	New	Time-limited housing with structured supports. Clarifies duration, function, and regulatory distinctions.
Emergency Shelter	New / Expanded	Consolidates all short-term, low-barrier shelter uses under one definition; avoids confusion with Emergency Services or REMO-activated weather shelters.

Sleeping Room	New	Critical for defining the 12-room threshold; distinguishes sleeping rooms from dwelling units; supports DO interpretation.
Institution (Revised Definition)	Amended	Now explicitly excludes Program-Based Housing and Emergency Services. Prevents misclassification and aligns with MGA authority.
Emergency Services	Clarified	Clearly restricted to police, fire, ambulance, and municipal emergency operations. Eliminates ambiguity noted at PPM.

Definitions Removed or Not Carried Forward

Removed Draft Definition	Status	Reason Removed / Why Not Used
Institutional Support Housing	Removed	Created overlap with both Institutional uses and Program-Based Housing. Removed to ensure clean separation.