



**TOWN OF KENTVILLE
PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
April 15, 2026, 4:00 p.m.**

1. Call to order
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Approval of the minutes – March 25, 2026
4. Business arising from the minutes
 - a. None
5. Presentations
 - a. None
6. New Business
 - a. Home-Based Businesses - Text Amendments to LUB
 - b. Concurrent Construction - Text Amendments to MPS and LUB
 - c. Program-Based Housing - Text Amendments to MPS and LUB
 - d. Heritage Bylaw – Review of Amendments and Process
 - e. Plan Review – Provincial Statements of Interest – Housing
7. Standing Items:
 - a. Heritage Planning (Item 6(d))
 - b. Plan Review (Item 6(e))
8. Next meeting date – May 13, 2026
9. Adjournment



TOWN OF KENTVILLE
PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes: March 25, 2026
Town Hall, 354 Main Street, Kentville Nova Scotia

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

This meeting was held in Council Chambers and was called to order by Darren Shupe at 4:06pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Cathy Maxwell, Councillor John Andrew, Councillor Cate Savage, Jakub Ziolkowski, and Carol Goodwin.

Staff Representatives: Recording Secretary Ben Croll, Director of Planning & Development Darren Shupe, and Chief Administrative Officer Chris McNeill.

REGRETS

None

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Councillor Maxwell nominated Councillor Andrew to be Chair. There were no other nominations and Councillor Andrew accepted the role as Chair.

Councillor Maxwell nominated Ziolkowski to be Vice Chair. There were no other nominations and Ziolkowski accepted the role as Vice Chair.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councillor Maxwell suggested to add an item under New Business to discuss the status of the previous Heritage Advisory Committee.

Motion was moved by Councillor Savage and seconded by Comeau.

Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, March 25, 2026

Pending Approval

Page 1

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

N/A

PRESENTATIONS

Dawn Sutherland, Provincial Director of Planning, provided a PAC orientation presentation.

NEW BUSINESS

(a) Planning Staff Overview

Director Shupe provided an overview of standings items to be added to the agenda:

- Plan Review
- Heritage

NEXT MEETING DATE

It was agreed that PAC meetings will be held on every second Wednesday of the month at 4pm. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2026, at 4pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 5:31pm

Text Amendment to the Land Use By-law – Home Based Businesses (Private Instruction)

Planning Advisory Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 8, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council give First Reading to an amendment to the Town of Kentville Land Use By-law to:

- 1. Amend Section 5.1.3(c)(i) to permit private instruction or tutoring in the arts, sciences or technologies, including classes of up to eight (8) individuals at any one time; and**
- 2. Adopt a scaled parking requirement for such uses, such that where private instruction involves more than four (4) participants at any one time, a minimum of two (2) off-street parking spaces, in addition to those required for the dwelling, shall be provided, as outlined in Option 2 of Appendix A.**

Application Summary

A complete application was received from Catherine Evans of 160 Main Street to amend the Town of Kentville Land Use By-law respecting Home Based Businesses, specifically the provisions related to private instruction.

The current Land Use By-law permits private instruction only on a one-on-one basis. The proposed amendment would allow small group instruction of up to eight (8) participants within a dwelling or accessory building.

The amendment is intended to provide increased flexibility for home-based instructors while maintaining the residential character of neighbourhoods.

Policy and Regulatory Context

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

Section 5.10 – Home Based Occupations of the Municipal Planning Strategy establishes the policy framework for permitting commercial activities within residential dwellings.

A Home Based Occupation is intended to be:

- Clearly secondary to the residential use of the dwelling; and
- Compatible with surrounding residential uses, such that it does not generate significant traffic, noise, or other environmental impacts.

Further, Policy RS-24 states:

“It shall be the intention of Council to permit Home Based Occupations in any residential dwelling subject to regulations set out in the Land Use By-law, including restrictions on the type of business and provisions to ensure the use is secondary to the main residential use.”

The Policy also directs that the Land Use By-law regulate matters such as:

- Floor area
- Number of employees
- Hours of operation
- Parking
- Accessory buildings
- Outdoor storage and signage
- Obnoxious uses

Land Use By-law (LUB)

Section 5.1.2 – General Requirements

Home Based Businesses are permitted in all residential zones, subject to provisions ensuring the use remains subordinate and compatible, including limits on floor area, parking, signage, employees, and nuisance.

Section 5.1.3I(i)

Currently permits:

“private one on one instruction or tutoring in the arts, sciences or technologies”

Section 4.2.2 and Table 4.2 – Parking Requirements

Home Based Businesses are currently required to provide:

“1 off-street parking space in addition to that required for the dwelling unit.”

Consistency with Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment to permit small group instruction (up to 8 individuals) remains consistent with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

- The use remains secondary to the dwelling
- Existing provisions regulate scale and compatibility
- The amendment refines an existing permitted use rather than introducing a new one
- Planning staff are satisfied that the amendment aligns with Policy RS-24.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment includes:

- Expanding permitted private instruction to allow small group classes; and
- Considering a range of parking regulation approaches to address potential impacts.

The full amendment text and options are provided in Appendix A.

Discussion

Intent of the Amendment

The amendment reflects evolving practices in home-based instruction, where small group formats are increasingly common.

Compatibility with Residential Areas

Existing Land Use By-law provisions continue to ensure that Home Based Businesses remain subordinate and compatible with residential uses.

Parking Considerations

Public feedback identified parking and on-street congestion as the primary concern associated with permitting group instruction.

In response, a range of options has been developed (Appendix A), from maintaining the current framework to introducing additional regulatory controls.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend Option 2 – Scaled Parking Requirement, which:

- Maintains the existing requirement of 1 additional space for lower-intensity use;
- Introduces a requirement for 2 spaces where more than four (4) participants are present;
- Provides a clear and proportional response to increased demand; and
- Remains simple, predictable, and enforceable.

Scale and Use Interpretation

The amendment represents a modest increase in intensity and remains consistent with the scale of a home-based use.

Enforcement Considerations

The inclusion of a defined participant threshold and corresponding parking requirement improves clarity and enforceability.

Public Participation

A Public Participation Meeting was held on March 26, 2026.

Summary of Input:

- Concerns raised regarding on-site parking and potential on-street congestion

The recommended approach (Option 2) responds directly to this concern.

Correspondence from the applicant was read by staff can be found in Appendix B.

Conclusion

The proposed amendment represents a balanced and targeted refinement to the Land Use By-law.

It supports evolving home-based business practices while:

- Maintaining residential compatibility
- Addressing parking impacts
- Providing clear and enforceable standards

Staff recommend that the amendment proceed to First Reading with Option 2 – Scaled Parking Requirement.

Attachments

Excerpt – Municipal Planning Strategy (Section 5.10 and Policy RS-24)

Excerpt – Land Use By-law Sections 5.1.2, 5.1.3, and 4.2.2

Appendix A – Proposed Amendments

Appendix B – Correspondence from Applicant

MPS

5.10 Home Based Occupations

A home based occupation is the use of a dwelling, or an accessory building on the same lot, for commercial activities; these activities must be clearly secondary to the use of the structure as a residential dwelling. Also, the property must be located in a residential zone. The purpose of regulating commercial activities in residential dwellings is to ensure compatible uses which do not add significant traffic, noise or other environmental conditions such as dust or odors.

Policy RS-24 *It shall be the intention of Council* to permit Home Based Occupations in any residential dwelling subject to regulations set out in the Land Use By-law, including;

- a) Restrictions on the type of business;
- b) Ensure the use is secondary to the main residential use on the lot; and
- c) Specifically regulate such things as floor area, number of employees, hours of operation, accessory buildings, parking, outdoor storage, signage, and obnoxious uses.

LUB

5.1.2 Home Based Businesses

In all Residential Zones, Home Based Business are permitted in any dwelling unit or a building accessory to the dwelling unit, subject to the following requirements:

- a) The dwelling is occupied as a residence by the owner of the Home Based Business;
- b) The appearance of the dwelling is consistent with a residential use and is not changed by the business or professional use;
- c) Not more than 25% of the total floor area of the dwelling up to a maximum of 500 ft² (46.45 m²) is devoted to the professional or business use;
- d) 1 off-street parking space, other than that required for the dwelling, is required;
- e) 1 non-illuminated business identification sign, being a maximum of 3ft² (0.27 m²) affixed to the building;
- f) No open storage or outdoor display associated with the business shall be permitted;
- g) It shall be conducted within the dwelling or accessory building;
- h) There shall be no exterior evidence of the conduct of the business or professional use;
- i) It shall not be an obnoxious one;
- j) No change in the roofline or bulk of the building as a result of the home occupation;
- k) No mechanical equipment is used except that reasonably consistent with a dwelling; and
- l) There shall be not more than 1 assistant who is not a resident in the dwelling employed by the use.

5.1.3 Home Based Businesses Permitted

- a) Under this By-law, Office and Professional uses permitted as a home based business shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. Health care professional, lawyer, business management consultant, accountant, public engineer, architect, business broker, marketing or sales agents, real-estate agent, skilled trades, technology or arts professionals, insurance or property appraisal practitioners, administrative and consulting services, and other business or professional services;
- b) Daycare/Nursery School, up to a maximum of 6 children;
- c) Under this By-law, Goods and Service uses permitted as a home based business shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. Dressmaking and tailoring; hairdressing and barber shops; private one on one instruction or tutoring in the arts, sciences or technologies; the crafting or repair of household goods, small engines and motors, appliances, computers, personal affects or upholstery; pet grooming; and
- d) Only the sale of goods and materials produced, assembled, refinished, repaired or used on site shall be permitted

Table 4.2 *Parking Requirements*

Land Use	Parking Requirement
<i>Residential Land Use</i>	
Dwelling Units (<4 dwelling units)	1 parking space per dwelling unit
Multi-Unit Dwellings (>4 dwelling units)	1.25 parking spaces per dwelling unit
Home Based Business	1 space in addition to the space required by the dwelling unit

Appendix A – Consolidated Proposed Land Use By-law Amendments

1. Amendment to Section 5.1.3(c)(i)

“Private instruction or tutoring in the arts, sciences or technologies, including classes of up to eight (8) individuals at any one time.”

2. Parking Regulation Options for Consideration

Option 1 – Status Quo

No amendments to parking provisions.

Option 2 – Scaled Parking Requirement (Recommended)

Amend Section 5.1.3(c) by adding:

(ii) Notwithstanding Section 5.1.2(d), where private instruction involves more than four (4) participants at any one time, a minimum of two (2) off-street parking spaces, in addition to those required for the dwelling, shall be provided.

Amend Table 4.2 – Parking Requirements:

Home Based Business

- a) 1 space in addition to the space required by the dwelling unit;
- b) Where private instruction involves more than four (4) participants at any one time, 2 spaces in addition to those required for the dwelling unit.

Option 3 – Performance-Based Requirement

Amend Section 4.2.2(a) by adding:

vi. where a Home Based Business involves instruction or client attendance, the Development Officer may require additional off-street parking where warranted.

Option 4 – Operational Control

Amend Section 5.1.3(c) by adding:

(ii) Private instruction shall be conducted in a manner that does not result in on-street parking congestion or traffic impacts within the surrounding residential area.

Option 5 – Hybrid Approach

Combination of Option 2 and Option 4:

- Scaled parking requirement; and
- Operational control respecting on-street congestion.

Appendix B – Correspondence from Applicant

The Fibre Loft is currently running from a studio in the property's carriage house. The studio is for personal use, designing, as well as virtual classes and one on one tutoring. This is in various Fibre Arts including knitting, crochet, tatting, needle felting, hand and machine sewing.

I would like to expand the business to include group classes for up to 8 people in person. I ran a similar business previously in Bedford and it grew to be a great asset to the area not only teaching great life skills for practicality and fun, but also providing a good social and therapeutic environment for both adults and children.

I believe it would bring these things to Kentville and provide a good community resource. Providing these things from a property that is already owned by us (therefore not huge overheads) means I can keep costs for the classes/courses reasonable and affordable for most people.

There will be no alterations needed to the current property as it is suitable as is.

There would be minimal impact on the neighborhood as far as noise/busyness/traffic as we are already on Main Street and we are able to offer parking on the property for up to 8 cars (not including grassed areas).

Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law Concurrent Construction and Permitting (Non-Occupied Dwellings)

Planning Advisory Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 15, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council give First Reading to amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit the issuance of development permits for Non-Occupied Dwellings prior to final subdivision approval, subject to appropriate controls respecting servicing, infrastructure, and occupancy.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present a revised approach to enabling concurrent subdivision and building construction, and to explain how the current proposed amendments differ from the earlier January 2026 proposal. The report outlines the rationale for the revisions and how the updated framework simplifies implementation while maintaining appropriate safeguards.

Background

In January 2026, Council considered a set of amendments intended to allow early construction within subdivisions prior to final approval. These amendments proposed a framework whereby development permits could be issued following tentative subdivision approval, supported by a new subdivision agreement mechanism and associated financial securities.

The intent of the original proposal was to reduce delays in housing delivery by allowing construction to proceed concurrently with subdivision servicing, while ensuring that occupancy could not occur until all municipal requirements were satisfied.

Following further review by staff, including consideration of implementation, administration, and alignment with existing municipal regulations, a revised approach has been developed.

Overview of Original (January) Approach

The January proposal introduced a subdivision-driven framework for early construction. This included the creation of a new section within the Subdivision By-law to regulate construction prior to final approval.

Under this approach, developers would be required to enter into a Tentative Agreement for Early Construction and Servicing with the Town. The agreement would establish construction sequencing, servicing milestones, and inspection requirements. In addition, financial securities would be required on a per-unit basis to ensure site stabilization and completion of servicing in the event that subdivision approval was not finalized.

Development permits for what were defined as “Non-Occupied Dwellings” could be issued during the tentative subdivision stage, with occupancy explicitly prohibited until all subdivision and servicing requirements were satisfied.

While this framework provided a high degree of control, it relied heavily on new subdivision processes, agreements, and securities.

Overview of Revised (March) Approach

The revised amendments shift the regulatory framework away from the Subdivision By-law and instead rely on policy direction within the Municipal Planning Strategy and controls within the Land Use By-law.

The revised approach introduces Municipal Planning Strategy policies that explicitly recognize concurrent subdivision and construction as an acceptable form of development sequencing. These policies establish that development permits and building permits for Non-Occupied Dwellings may be issued prior to final subdivision approval, provided that appropriate controls are in place.

Within the Land Use By-law, these controls are implemented through provisions respecting frontage on future streets, minimum building separation, and the requirement for a development permit for change of use prior to occupancy.

Under this approach, a Non-Occupied Dwelling is defined as a structure that may be constructed but not occupied. Occupancy is strictly prohibited until final subdivision approval has been granted, the plan registered, municipal services installed and accepted, and all applicable permits issued.

This revised framework eliminates the need for a new subdivision agreement structure and associated securities, while maintaining clear controls over when construction may occur and when occupancy is permitted.

Key Differences Between Approaches

The primary difference between the January and March proposals is the regulatory mechanism used to enable early construction.

The original approach relied on the Subdivision By-law to regulate both lot creation and construction sequencing, introducing new agreements and securities to manage risk. In contrast, the revised approach separates these functions by maintaining the Subdivision By-law's role in lot creation and servicing, while using the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to regulate construction and occupancy.

The revised approach also simplifies administration by removing the need for additional agreements and financial securities, and instead relying on existing municipal tools, including development permits, building permits, and occupancy controls.

Importantly, both approaches maintain the same fundamental safeguard: that occupancy cannot occur until subdivision approval and servicing requirements are fully satisfied.

Rationale for Revision

The amendments were revised to improve clarity, reduce administrative complexity, and better align with the structure and intent of municipal planning legislation.

The original approach introduced overlap between the Subdivision By-law and Land Use By-law, resulting in a more complex regulatory framework. The revised approach clarifies the distinct roles of each instrument, with subdivision regulations governing lot creation and servicing, and land use regulations governing construction and use.

In addition, staff determined that the use of financial securities specific to early construction was not necessary, as existing legislative tools provide sufficient authority to address incomplete or unsafe development conditions.

The revised approach therefore achieves the same objective—facilitating earlier construction—through a more streamlined and legally coherent framework.

Implications

The proposed amendments will enable residential construction to begin earlier in the development process, which may assist in reducing delays in housing delivery.

At the same time, the amendments maintain appropriate safeguards to ensure that infrastructure, servicing, and public safety are not compromised. Occupancy will remain prohibited until all municipal requirements have been met.

The revised framework is expected to be more straightforward to administer for staff, and more transparent for developers and the public.

Conclusion

The revised amendments represent a refinement of the original proposal, maintaining the objective of enabling concurrent construction while simplifying the regulatory approach.

By shifting the framework from a subdivision-based system to a policy- and zoning-based system, the Town is able to facilitate housing development more efficiently while preserving necessary oversight and controls.

Appendix A – Proposed Revisions

MPS

5.14 – Permitting of Non-Occupied Dwellings and Construction Sequencing

Council recognizes that the sequencing of subdivision approval, servicing installation, and vertical construction can create delays in housing delivery where physical construction could reasonably proceed in advance of final plan registration.

It is the intent of Council to permit the issuance of development permits and building permits for Non-Occupied Dwellings (NODs) in the Single Unit Dwelling (R1) and One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) zones prior to final subdivision approval and registration, provided that such permission does not compromise infrastructure standards, servicing requirements, public safety, or municipal oversight.

This process is intended solely to facilitate construction sequencing and shall not be interpreted as creating a lawful residential use or a relaxation of subdivision, servicing, or occupancy requirements.

Occupancy of any NOD constructed under this process shall remain prohibited until final subdivision approval has been granted, the plan registered, all applicable municipal approvals have been obtained, and a change of use development permit has been issued.

Policy RS-28

It shall be the intention of Council to recognize that subdivision approval and vertical construction may proceed concurrently and in phases, if required. Council shall permit issuance of development and building permits for NODs in the Single Unit Dwelling (R1) and One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) zones prior to final subdivision approval and plan registration, where appropriate controls are in place. These controls shall be implemented through provisions in the Land Use By-law and Building By-law by:

- a) requiring tentative subdivision approval
- b) requiring frontage on future streets,
- c) requiring minimum building separation, and
- d) controlling occupancy permit issuance.

Policy RS-29

It shall be the intention of Council to recognize that the issuance of a development permit for a NOD prior to final subdivision approval shall not:

- a) constitute lawful establishment of a dwelling use;
- b) waive subdivision requirements; or
- c) permit occupancy.

Policy RS-30

It shall be the intention of Council to ensure that occupancy is not permitted prior to the final plan of subdivision. Occupancy shall remain prohibited until final subdivision approval has been granted, the plan is registered, all required municipal approvals issued, and a change of use development permit from a NOD to a single-unit detached dwelling or a two-unit dwelling has been issued.

Policy RS-31

It shall be the intention of Council to permit the change in use of a NOD to a single-unit detached dwelling or a two-unit dwelling once:

- a) Final Plan of Subdivision approval has been granted; and
- b) Required municipal services are installed, approved, and operational

Policy GD-9

4.2.7 One Main Building on a Lot

The general intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy is to limit one main building on a lot with accessory buildings and structures. In certain instances, however, more than one main building may be necessary to accommodate certain types of development. For example, industrial uses may require several main buildings; or multiple residential buildings within a high density residential development.

Policy GD-9

It shall be the intention of Council to allow more than one main building on a lot for the following zones:

- a) General Commercial (C1);
- b) Highway Commercial (C2);
- c) Industrial (M1);
- d) Medium Density Residential Dwelling (R3);
- e) High Density Residential Dwelling (R4);

Policy GD-9a

It shall be the intention of Council to allow more than one main building on a lot in the R1 and R2 zones subject to Policies RS-28 to RS-31.

LUB

Part 1 Definitions (proposed definition)

Non-Occupied Dwelling means a single unit detached dwelling or a two-unit dwelling that is not occupied.

4.1.14 Frontage on a Street

- a) No development permit shall be issued for a use on a lot unless the lot abuts a public street or otherwise has legal access as per Section 4.1.11.
- b) Notwithstanding 4.1.14(a), development permits for Non-Occupied Dwellings on a lot abutting a future street may be issued provided a tentative plan of subdivision is approved by the Development Officer and all other applicable sections of this By-law are met.

4.1.19 One Main Building on a Lot

More than one main building may be permitted on a lot within the:

- a) General Commercial (C1) Zone;
- b) Highway Commercial (C2) Zone;
- c) Industrial (M) Zone;
- d) Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone;
- e) High Density Residential (R4) Zone;
- f) Single Unit Dwelling (R1) Zone; and
- g) One and Two Unit Dwelling Residential (R2) Zone.

All above zones are subject to the following requirements:

- i. Except as otherwise provided herein, the minimum distance between main buildings on the same lot shall be 20 ft (6.10 m), or one-half the height of the highest abutting wall, whichever is greater.
- ii. Notwithstanding subsection (i), more than one NOD may be permitted in the Single Unit Dwelling (R1), One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2), Medium Density Residential (R3), and High Density Residential (R4) Zones, subject to Section 4.1.14(b), provided that the minimum distance between buildings on the same lot shall be 8 ft (2.4 m).

5.1.14 Change of Use from Non-Occupied Dwelling to a Dwelling

A Development Permit for Change of Use from Non-Occupied Dwelling to Single Unit Detached Dwelling or Two Unit Dwelling shall be obtained before occupancy.

Issuance of a Development Permit authorizing the Change of Use shall require confirmation that:

- a) the requirements of Policy RS-31 of the Municipal Planning Strategy have been satisfied; and
- b) all other Land Use By-law regulations have been met.

5.2.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

- c) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to 4.1.14.

5.3.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

- h) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to 4.1.14.

5.4.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

- e) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to 4.1.14.

5.5.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

- a) (v) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to 4.1.14.

Building By-law

4.6 The building official shall, in the case of the construction of new structures, withhold an occupancy permit until satisfied that approvals relating to sewer and water connections required by the Town of Kentville's Department of Engineering and Public Works have been granted.

Appendix B- January Staff Report

Concurrent Construction and Permitting – Proposed Amendments to Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Subdivision Bylaw

Meeting Date: January 26, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

FOR RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

give First Reading to the proposed Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Subdivision Bylaw amendments permitting issuance of development permits within subdivisions under a Servicing Agreement, and that Council direct staff to schedule a Public Hearing prior to Second Reading.

BACKGROUND

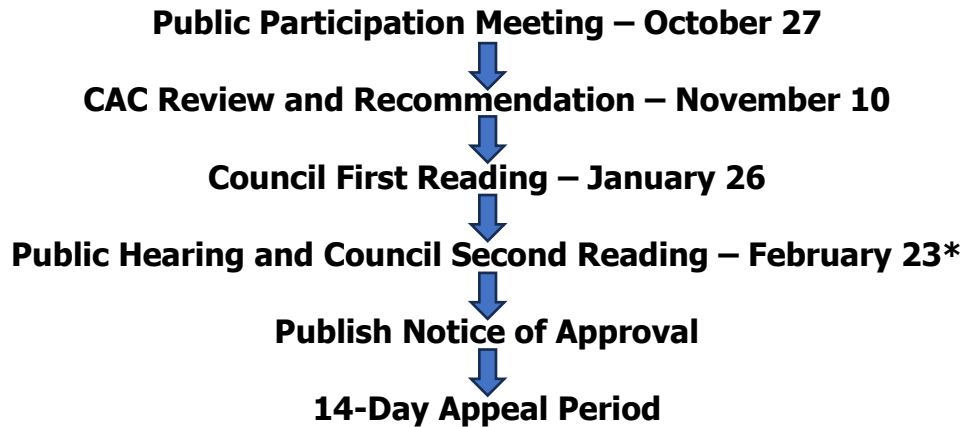
Following the recommendation of the Council Advisory Committee on November 10, 2025, Staff reviewed and confirmed the process, policy, and regulations with the Town Solicitor, Town Public Works, and Building Officials. Through these discussions, staff have suggested additional amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Subdivision Bylaw to facilitate the proposal (Appendices A-C).

These amendments will require changes to the Chapter 95 - Building Bylaw.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council give First Reading to the proposed Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Subdivision Bylaw amendments permitting issuance of development permits within subdivisions under a Servicing Agreement, and that Council direct staff to schedule a Public Hearing prior to Second Reading.

NEXT STEPS



*anticipated dates; final dates set by Council

Respectfully submitted,

**Darren Shupe, Director of Planning and Development
Town of Kentville**

Attachments:

- Appendix A – Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments
- Appendix B - Land Use By-law Amendments
- Appendix C – Subdivision Bylaw Amendments

APPENDIX A – DRAFT MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY AMENDMENTS

4.2.7 One Main Building on a Lot

The general intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy is to limit one main building on a lot with accessory buildings and structures. In certain instances, however, more than one main building may be necessary to accommodate certain types of development. For example, industrial uses may require several main buildings; or multiple residential buildings within a high-density residential development.

Policy GD-9 It shall be the intention of Council to allow more than one main building on a lot for the following zones:

- a) General Commercial (C1);
- b) Highway Commercial (C2);
- c) Industrial (M1);
- d) Medium Density Residential Dwelling (R3); ~~and~~
- e) High Density Residential Dwelling (R4);
- f) Single Unit Dwelling (R1); and
- g) One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2).

APPENDIX B – DRAFT LAND USE BY-LAW (LUB) AMENDMENTS

Part 1 Definitions (proposed definition)

Non-Occupied Dwelling means a single unit dwelling or a two unit dwelling that is not connected to sewer and water services.

Section 3.7 – Concurrent Construction (New Clause)

3.7.1 Conditional Permitting within Tentatively Approved Subdivisions

Notwithstanding any other provision of this By-law, the Development Officer may issue a development permit for construction of a structure on a proposed lot within a subdivision that has received Tentative Approval, provided that:

- a) a Tentative Agreement for Early Construction and Servicing, as required under Section 5C of the Subdivision By-law, has been executed between the Developer and the Town;
 - b) financial securities acceptable to the Town have been provided to the Town in accordance with the Subdivision By-law; and
 - c) all other applicable requirements of this By-law, the Subdivision By-law, and the Building Code Act are met.
- a) Issuance of a development permit during tentative subdivision approval does not guarantee final approval of the aforementioned plan of subdivision.

3.7.2 Limitations of Issuance of Non-Occupied Dwelling Development Permits

The number of development permits eligible for approval, and the conditions under which the development permits may be issued, shall be governed by:

- a) the Tentative Agreement executed for the development; and
- b) the requirements set out in Subdivision By-law Section 5C – Early Construction Following Tentative Subdivision Approval.

3.7.3 Occupancy Restrictions

Nothing in this section permits occupancy of the Non-Occupied Dwelling constructed prior to satisfaction of all conditions in:

- a) the Tentative Agreement;
- b) Subdivision By-law; and
- c) issuance of a Development Permit for a Non-Occupied Dwelling.

3.7.4 Authority Not Limited

Nothing in this section limits the Town's ability to impose additional conditions on any construction of a structure that is conditionally permitted through:

- a) the subdivision approval process,
- b) phasing approvals,
- c) engineering approvals, or
- d) any other applicable municipal instrument or approval.

3.7.5 Withholding or Suspension of Development Permits

Where servicing is not progressing in accordance with approved engineering plans or the Tentative Agreement, or where required security has not been maintained, the Development Officer shall:

- (a) refuse to issue additional development permits for Non-Occupied Dwellings;
- (b) suspend any development permits already issued; or
- (c) require additional security as a condition of continuing construction.

3.7.6 Occupancy of a Non-Occupied Dwelling

Only once a final plan of subdivision is approved, the Development Officer may issue a Development Permit for Change of Use from the Non-Occupied Dwelling to the appropriate permitted use.

4.1.19 **One Main Building on a Lot**

More than one main building may be permitted on a lot within the:

- a) General Commercial (C1) Zone;
- b) Highway Commercial (C2) Zone;
- c) Industrial (M) Zone;
- d) Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone;
- e) High Density Residential (R4) Zone subject to the following requirement:

The minimum distance between the buildings shall be 20 ft (6.10 m), or one-half the height of the highest abutting wall, whichever is greater.

Notwithstanding anything in this bylaw, more than one Non-Occupied Dwelling may be permitted in the Single Unit Dwelling (R1) zone and One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) zone subject to Section 3.7, and any other zoning regulation.

5.2 Single Unit Dwelling (R1) Zone

5.2.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

The following uses shall be permitted in the Single Unit Dwelling (R1) Zone subject to the requirements of this By-law:

- a) Ancillary Dwelling Units subject to Section 5.1.1 of this By-law
- b) Home Based Businesses, in accordance with Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of this By-law
- c) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to Section 3.7 of this By-law

5.3 One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) Zone

5.3.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

The following uses shall be permitted in the One and Two Unit Dwelling (R2) Zone subject to the requirements of this By-law:

- a) Ancillary Dwelling Units subject to Section 5.1.1 of this By-law.
- b) Home Based Businesses, in accordance with Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of this By-law.
- c) Bed and Breakfast, in accordance with Section 5.1.4 of this By-law
- d) Inns, in accordance with Section 5.1.5 of this By-law.
- e) Converted dwellings subject to 5.1.11 of this By-law
- f) Public and Private Schools subject to 5.1.13 of this By-law
- g) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to Section 3.7 of this By-law

5.4 Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone

5.4.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

The following uses shall be permitted in the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone subject to the requirements of this By-law:

- a) Ancillary Dwelling Units subject to Section 5.1.1 of this By-law
- b) Home Based Businesses in accordance with Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of this By-law
- c) Bed and Breakfast, in accordance with Section 5.1.4 of this By-law
- d) Inns, in accordance with Section 5.1.5 of this By-law
- e) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to Section 3.7 of this By-law

5.5 High Density Residential (R4) Zone

5.5.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

The following uses shall be permitted in the High Density Residential (R4) Zone subject to the

a) requirements of this By-law:

- i. Home Based Businesses, in accordance with Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of this By-law
- ii. Bed and Breakfast, in accordance Section 5.1.4 of this By-law
- iii. Inns, in accordance with Section 5.1.5 of this By-law
- iv. Local commercial uses shall include the following and be approved as part of the site plan approval process, in accordance with 5.1.12.
 - Animal Hospital
 - Automobile Service Station
 - Bakery
 - Catering Establishment
 - Club (Commercial or Private)
 - Convenience Store
 - Commercial schools & recreation
 - Craft Products
 - Day-Care & Nursery Schools
 - Dog Grooming
 - Dry Cleaning
 - Garden Centres
 - Golf Courses and Driving Ranges
 - Small Scale Grocery Stores (Under 3,000 square feet)
 - Medical Clinics
 - Restaurant
 - Small Scale Retail Space (Under 3,000 square feet)
- v. Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to Section 3.7 of this By-law

5.6 Large Lot Residential (R5) Zone

5.6.2 Permitted Uses with Conditions

The following uses shall be permitted in the Large Lot Residential (R5) Zone subject to the requirements of this By-law:

- a) Ancillary Dwelling Units subject to Section 5.1.1 of this By-law
- b) Home Based Businesses, in accordance with Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of this By-law
- c) Bed and Breakfast, in accordance Section 5.1.4 of this By-law

- d) Special Events, in accordance with Section 5.1.7 of this By-law
- e) Non-Occupied Dwellings subject to Section 3.7 of this By-law

APPENDIX C – DRAFT SUBDIVISION BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1. Addition of New Section 5C – Early Construction Following Tentative Subdivision Approval

The Subdivision By-law is amended by inserting the following new section immediately after existing Section 5B:

C. Early Construction Following Tentative Subdivision Approval

5.14 Purpose

The purpose of this Section is to establish the conditions under which construction of any structure may occur on proposed lots after Tentative Approval but before the completion and acceptance of all Primary and Secondary Services, and to ensure that no structure is occupied until all required servicing and life-safety infrastructure is complete.

5.15 Tentative Agreement Required

Where an applicant proposes to commence construction of a structure prior to final approval of the proposed subdivision, the applicant shall enter into a Tentative Agreement for Early Construction and Servicing with the Town.

The Tentative Agreement shall include terms respecting:

- a) construction sequencing and permitted early works;
- b) required servicing milestones;

- c) security to be provided pursuant to subsection 5.16;
- d) restoration obligations;
- e) inspection and certification requirements; and
- f) occupancy restrictions pursuant to Chapter 95 - Building Bylaw.

5.16 Site Stabilization Security for Early Construction

- a) In addition to any security required elsewhere in this By-law, the Town shall require the
- b) applicant to provide security in order to:
 - i. restore the site if final approval of the subdivision application is not granted;
 - ii. undertake emergency servicing works; or
 - iii. remedy any default under the Tentative Agreement.
- c) The value of Security shall be \$5,000 per non-occupied dwelling, in a form deemed satisfactory to the Town.
- d) Site Stabilization Security shall be released once the proposed subdivision obtains final approval.

5.17 Application to Phased Subdivisions

For multi-phase subdivisions, the requirements of this Section apply to each phase individually. Security and servicing milestones may be imposed on a per-phase basis.

Reconsideration of Amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law — Program-Based Housing and Emergency Shelters

Planning Advisory Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 15, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Planning Advisory Committee:

Recommend that Council endorse the revised policy direction outlined herein and direct staff to prepare revised amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, undertake a Public Participation Meeting, and return the amendments to the Planning Advisory Committee prior to consideration by Council for First Reading.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to revisit and refine Town-initiated amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) respecting Program-Based Housing and Emergency Shelters. These amendments previously received First Reading from Council and were anticipated to proceed directly to Public Hearing.

Following First Reading, staff undertook additional analysis informed by feedback received through the Public Participation Meeting, internal review, and legal input. Through this process, it became evident that refinements to both the definitions and the regulatory structure would improve clarity, consistency, and defensibility. As a result, staff are recommending that the Town step back in the process to allow for a revised approach to be considered by both PAC and Council prior to undertaking further public engagement.

This approach reflects a refinement of the Town’s original initiative and is intended to ensure that the final amendment package is clear, implementable, and aligned with the Town’s authority under the Municipal Government Act.

Background

Kentville’s current planning framework does not clearly define or regulate housing forms that include structured supports or program-based living arrangements. As a result, such

uses have historically been interpreted through existing residential or institutional categories, which has at times led to uncertainty and inconsistent application.

To address this gap, the Town initiated amendments to define Program-Based Housing and related uses, clarify institutional definitions, and enable these housing forms within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone. The initial framework introduced distinctions between Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing, and Emergency Shelters, and proposed a combination of Site Plan Approval and Development Agreement controls.

Council provided First Reading to these amendments based on that framework, with the intention of proceeding to Public Hearing.

Rationale for Reconsideration

Following First Reading, further review identified several areas where the proposed framework would benefit from refinement.

The distinction between Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing, and Emergency Shelters relied in part on factors such as duration of stay and the circumstances of occupants. These distinctions proved difficult to define in a clear and enforceable manner and created overlap between use categories. This raised concerns regarding the ability of staff to consistently interpret and apply the definitions and introduced the potential for the framework to be perceived as regulating occupants or program characteristics rather than the use of land and buildings.

In addition, the original amendments proposed regulatory standards for Program-Based Housing that differed from those applied to other multi-unit residential development in the R3 Zone. Upon review, this approach was found to introduce inconsistency where the built form, scale, and function of development are otherwise comparable. A more consistent approach to residential uses is considered more appropriate and defensible. The classification of Emergency Shelter was also reconsidered. It was determined that Emergency Shelter is more appropriately categorized as an Institutional Use, reflecting its service-oriented nature and operational characteristics. This distinction allows for more appropriate siting and review through the Development Agreement process.

Legal review reinforced the importance of ensuring that land use regulations focus on the physical use of land and buildings and avoid reliance on subjective or operational characteristics. The revised approach responds directly to this guidance.

Revised Policy Direction

The revised approach simplifies and clarifies the framework while maintaining the Town's original objective of enabling a broader range of housing options.

Program-Based Housing is defined as a residential use and is no longer divided into sub-categories for regulatory purposes. It is proposed to be permitted within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone and subject to the same Site Plan Approval requirements that apply to other multi-unit residential development. Development Agreements are required only where development exceeds eight units or sleeping rooms, ensuring that additional review is focused on larger-scale proposals.

Emergency Shelter is defined separately and categorized as an Institutional Use. It is proposed to be permitted within the Institutional (I) Zone and subject to Development Agreement. This ensures that site-specific considerations such as scale, access, and compatibility with surrounding uses can be addressed.

Additional refinements to the Institutional policies clarify that not all Institutional Uses are of the same scale or intensity and that certain uses may be directed to specific zones or approval processes.

Proposed Process Moving Forward

Given the extent of the revisions, staff recommend that the Town adjust the amendment process to ensure that the revised framework is fully considered prior to adoption.

The proposed process is as follows:

- Consideration of the revised approach by the Planning Advisory Committee;
- A Public Participation Meeting to present the refined framework;
- Return to the Planning Advisory Committee with final proposed amendments;
- Consideration by Council and First Reading of the revised amendments;
- Public Hearing; and
- Second Reading.

This process ensures that both PAC and Council have the opportunity to consider the revised approach prior to public engagement, and that the public is engaged on a clear and refined framework.

Discussion

The revised approach represents a refinement of the Town’s original initiative rather than a change in direction. The objective remains to enable Program-Based Housing as a form of residential development while ensuring compatibility with surrounding uses.

By simplifying the definitions, aligning Program-Based Housing with other residential uses, and clearly distinguishing Emergency Shelter as an Institutional Use, the Town improves clarity, consistency, and defensibility. This approach supports more predictable outcomes for applicants, staff, and the public.

The proposed process also enhances transparency by ensuring that the revised framework is clearly communicated and understood prior to formal adoption.

Conclusion

The Town-initiated amendments represent an important step in addressing housing needs within Kentville. Further review has demonstrated the value of refining the framework to improve clarity, consistency, and defensibility.

Staff recommend that the Planning Advisory Committee consider the revised approach and support advancing the amendments through the updated process prior to returning to Council for First Reading.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darren Shupe
Director of Planning and Development

Attachments

- Appendix A – Proposed Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments
- Appendix B – Proposed Land Use Bylaw Amendments
- Appendix C – Staff Report - First Reading 2025-12-15

Appendix A — Proposed Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments

Section 5.14 is amended to introduce policies respecting Program-Based Housing.

5.14 Program-Based Housing

Program-Based Housing represents a form of residential development that may incorporate shared or grouped living arrangements and may be associated with the provision of supports or services. While these features may distinguish such developments operationally, they do not alter the fundamental land use characteristics of the development as residential in nature.

It is the intent of Council that Program-Based Housing be regulated as a residential use and not be distinguished or differentiated based on the characteristics of occupants, the nature of services provided, or the organizational structure of the operator. Regulation shall instead be grounded in the physical use of land and buildings, including built form, scale, site design, and compatibility with surrounding development.

This approach is intended to ensure that the Land Use By-law is applied consistently and fairly across comparable forms of residential development, while providing clear and enforceable standards that support predictable outcomes for applicants, staff, and the community.

Policy RS-28 It shall be the intention of Council to recognize Program-Based Housing as a residential use providing accommodation within a shared or grouped living arrangement, which may include the provision of supports or services.

Policy RS-29 It shall be the intention of Council to enable Program-Based Housing within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, subject to the requirements of the Land Use By-law. Program-Based Housing shall be subject to Site Plan Approval in accordance with the same thresholds and provisions applicable to other multi-unit residential development, in order to ensure compatibility of form, scale, and site design with surrounding development.

Policy RS-30 It shall be the intention of Council to require the Land Use By-law to establish provisions regulating the form, scale, and site design of Program-Based Housing to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential uses.

Policy RS-31 It shall be the intention of Council to require a Development Agreement for Program-Based Housing developments exceeding eight (8) dwelling units or sleeping units.

Chapter 9 shall be amended to include additional Institutional policies.

9.2.4 Institutional Use Differentiation

While Institutional Uses are generally encouraged within the Town, it is recognized that such uses may vary significantly in scale, intensity, and operational characteristics. As a result, not all Institutional Uses are appropriate in all locations or subject to the same approval processes.

It is the intent of Council to provide for a range of Institutional Uses while ensuring that those with greater potential for land use impact are appropriately located and subject to additional review where warranted.

Policy I-9 It shall be the intention of Council to recognize that Institutional Uses vary in scale and intensity, and that certain uses may be limited to specific zones or subject to additional approval requirements in accordance with the Land Use By-law.

Policy I-10 It shall be the intention of Council to permit Emergency Shelter uses within the Institutional (I) Zone by Development Agreement.

Section 4.2.4 Development Agreements shall be amended to include Emergency Shelters within the Institutional (I) Zone and Program-Based Housing exceeding eight (8) units within the R3 Zone as uses requiring Development Agreement.

Policy GD-5

It shall be the intention of Council that the following uses be permitted only by Development Agreement in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, the applicable provisions of this Strategy, and the evaluation criteria set out in Policies IM-10 and IM-11:

- f) Emergency Shelter uses within the Institutional (I) Zone.
- g) Program-Based Housing developments exceeding eight (8) dwelling units or sleeping units within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone.

Appendix B — Proposed Land Use By-law Amendments

PART 1 — DEFINITIONS

Add New Definition — Program-Based Housing

Program-Based Housing means a residential use providing accommodation within a shared or grouped living arrangement, which may include the provision of supports or services to residents, and may include individual or shared sleeping units, shared common areas, and accessory administrative or support functions. For the purposes of this By-law, Program-Based Housing shall be considered a residential use.

Add New Definition — Emergency Shelter

Emergency Shelter means a building or part thereof used to provide short-term accommodation and associated services for individuals requiring immediate shelter or protection, and may include accessory services, administrative offices, and support spaces.

Amend Definition — Institution

The definition of Institution shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

Institution means the use of land or buildings for the provision of public, community, health, educational, or social services, including but not limited to hospitals, schools, nursing homes, residential care facilities, treatment and rehabilitation centres, community living arrangements, and similar uses.

PART 4 — GENERAL PROVISIONS

Amend Section 4.1.27 — Site Plan Approval

Section 4.1.27 is amended by adding the following clause:

d) Program-Based Housing developments within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone, in accordance with the requirements of the applicable zone provisions.

Amend Section 4.1.9 — Development Agreements

Section 4.1.9 is amended by adding the following clause:

f) Program-Based Housing developments exceeding eight (8) sleeping units or dwelling units within the Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone.

PART 5 — RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Amend Section 5.4.1 — Permitted Uses (R3 Zone)

Section 5.4.1 is amended by adding the following use:

- Program-Based Housing

Amend Section 5.4.3 — Permitted Uses by Site Plan Approval (R3 Zone)

Section 5.4.3 is amended by adding the following use:

- Program-Based Housing, up to eight units

Add New Section — Additional Provisions for Program-Based Housing

The following section shall be added to Section 5.4:

5.4.3a Program-Based Housing

- a) Program-Based Housing shall be subject to the same zone requirements applicable to multi-unit residential development.
- b) Program-Based Housing shall not be regulated based on the characteristics of occupants or the nature of services provided.
- c) Program-Based Housing developments exceeding eight (8) sleeping units or dwelling units shall only be permitted by Development Agreement in accordance with Section 4.1.9 of this By-law.

PART 8 — INSTITUTIONAL ZONE

Add New Subsection — Permitted Uses by Development Agreement

Section 8.1 is amended by adding the following subsection:

8.1.1a Permitted Uses by Development Agreement

- Emergency Shelter

Add New Provision — Emergency Shelter

The following provision shall be added to Section 8.1a:

Emergency Shelters shall be considered only by Development Agreement and shall be evaluated having regard to site-specific considerations including scale, access, compatibility with adjacent uses, and operational characteristics.

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.
-

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.)

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 (if applicable)	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.

Amendments to the Heritage Property By-law and Processing of Six Heritage Property Registrations

Planning Advisory Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 15, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council request staff to process the six previously considered heritage properties, following adoption of the amended By-law, to ensure full compliance with statutory notice and appeal requirements.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present amendments to the Heritage Property By-law to reflect the transition of advisory responsibilities from the former Heritage Advisory Committee to the Planning Advisory Committee, and to seek a recommendation to Council to re-initiate the registration process for six heritage properties due to a procedural error in the original notification process.

Background

Town of Kentville administers heritage property registration in accordance with its Heritage Property By-law and the enabling provisions of the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act.

Historically, advisory functions related to heritage matters were carried out by the Heritage Advisory Committee. With the establishment of the Planning Advisory Committee, these responsibilities are now intended to be consolidated under a single advisory body to improve administrative efficiency, streamline processes, and align with the Town's broader planning framework.

As part of this transition, amendments to the Heritage Property By-law are required to formally reassign these responsibilities.

Separately, six properties were previously brought forward for heritage registration. During that process, it was identified that notice of appeal was not mailed to affected property owners within the required timeframe. As proper notice is a fundamental requirement of the registration process, this procedural error affects the validity of the original process.

Discussion

The primary purpose of the proposed amendments is to update the governance structure of the Heritage Property By-law by replacing references to the Heritage Advisory Committee with the Planning Advisory Committee. This change reflects current practice and ensures that the By-law accurately assigns advisory responsibilities moving forward. In addition to this governance update, the amendments introduce minor procedural clarifications to improve the administration of the By-law. These include clearer direction regarding notice requirements, timing, and internal consistency of the registration process. These refinements are administrative in nature and are intended to support consistent and compliant implementation.

During review of the heritage registration process, staff identified that the timing requirements for mailed notice following Council's decision were not met in the case of six properties previously considered for designation. While the intent of the process was achieved, strict adherence to statutory requirements is necessary to ensure that Council's decisions are legally sound and defensible.

To address this, staff recommend that the six properties be processed following adoption of the amended By-law. These properties remain strong candidates for heritage designation based on their cultural, historical, and architectural value. The proposed action is not a reassessment of their merit, but a re-initiation of the process to ensure full compliance with legislative requirements.

Processing will include issuing properly timed written notice to affected property owners, providing an opportunity for appeal in accordance with the legislation, and bringing the properties forward for final consideration by Council. This approach ensures that any resulting designation is procedurally sound and legally defensible.

Policy and Legislative Context

Heritage Property By-law is enacted under the authority of the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act, which establishes requirements for notice, registration, and appeal.

The proposed amendments align the By-law with the Town's current governance structure while ensuring that all procedural requirements continue to meet legislative standards.

Conclusion

The proposed amendments to the Heritage Property By-law primarily serve to update the Town's advisory structure by assigning heritage-related responsibilities to the Planning Advisory Committee.

At the same time, the amendments provide an opportunity to strengthen procedural clarity and address a previously identified notification error. Processing the six properties following adoption of the amended By-law ensures that the Town's heritage program proceeds in a manner that is consistent, transparent, and fully compliant with legislative requirements.

This approach maintains the integrity of the process while supporting Council's intent to recognize and protect heritage resources.

Attachments

- Appendix A – Proposed Heritage Property By-law Amendments
- Appendix B – CAC Staff Report – December 8, 2025



Town of Kentville Bylaw 204 HERITAGE

BE IT ENACTED by the Council of Town of Kentville under the authority of the *Municipal Government Act*, Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1998, Chapter 18, and *Heritage Property Act*, 1989, Chapter 199, and amendments thereto as follows:

1. SHORT TITLE

This Bylaw shall be known as Bylaw 204 and may be cited as the “Heritage Bylaw”.

2. DEFINITIONS

- a. “Act” means the *Heritage Property Act*;
- b. “Committee” means the Planning Advisory Committee established to carry out the provisions of this Bylaw;
- c. “Council” means the Council of the Town of Kentville;
- d. “Municipal Heritage Property” means a building, public-building interior, streetscape, cultural landscape or area registered in the Town of Kentville Registry of Heritage Properties;
- e. “Registered Owner” means an owner of land whose interest in the land is defined and whose name is specified in an instrument in the Land Registry Office;
- f. “Registry” means the Municipal Registry of Heritage Property of the Town;
- g. “Town” means the Town of Kentville.

3. PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- a. Town of Kentville Planning Advisory Committee shall be designated as the body responsible for implementing provisions of the Heritage Bylaw for Town of Kentville.
- b. The Committee may advise Council respecting:
 - i. the inclusion of buildings, public-building interiors, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, and areas in the Registry;

- ii. an application for permission to substantially alter or demolish a Municipal Heritage Property.
- iii. building and other regulations that affect the attainment of the intent and purpose of the Heritage Property Act;
- iv. an application to substantially alter the external appearance of or demolish a Municipal Heritage Property;
- v. the deregistration of Municipal Heritage Properties;
- vi. financial incentives to Municipal Heritage Properties;
- vii. the amendment of evaluation criteria, guidelines and standards for Municipal Heritage Properties; and
- viii. ensuring the designation of any property under this bylaw is strictly voluntary.

4. REGISTRY

- a. The Town shall establish and maintain a Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties where all prescribed documents relating to the registration of Municipal Heritage Properties pursuant to the Act of this Bylaw shall be filed.
- b. The Registry shall contain information with respect to recommendations, registrations, and deregistration's, recording particulars of documents required to be logged at the Land Registry Office.
- c. The Registry shall be accessible to the public at no charge during regular business hours of the Town.

5. NOTICE OF RECOMMENDATION

- a. The Town shall cause a Notice of Recommendation to be served upon each Registered Owner of a property that is the subject of the recommendation at least thirty (30) days prior to registration of the property in the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties and shall be in the form designated by the Town.
- b. The notice shall contain:
 - i. a statement that the property described in the notice has been recommended for registration in the Registry;
 - ii. a brief statement of the reason for the recommendation;
 - iii. a summary of the consequences of registration;
 - iv. a statement that no person shall demolish or substantially alter the appearance of the property for one hundred twenty (120) days after the notice is served; and
 - v. notification of the right of the Registered Owner to be heard and the date, time and place where they may be heard.

- vi. Inform the owner, while the property has been identified as a potential Municipal Heritage Property, it is voluntary, and the owner has a right to decline. Declining the opportunity is achieved by writing to the Chief Administrative Officer via letter or email.

6. REGISTRATION AND NOTIFICATION

- a. The Town may register a property as a Municipal Heritage Property in accordance with the provisions of the Act and notice of the registration shall include all the information set out in Section 5b. Notice of Registration shall be in the Town designated form.
- b. Notice of Registration shall be:
 - i. served upon each registered owner;
 - ii. deposited with the Land Registry Office;
 - iii. filed in the Municipal Registry of Heritage Property; and
 - iv. no registration shall take place until Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard and such opportunity shall be given not earlier than three (3) weeks after the service of the notice required.
- v. The Heritage Advisory Committee may receive from a Registered Owner, an application to have a property considered a Municipal Heritage Property.

7. DE-REGISTRATION

The owner(s) of a Municipal Heritage Property may apply to, or the Town on its own motion may, deregister a Municipal Heritage Bylaw.

8. ALTERATION OR DEMOLITION

- a. A Municipal Heritage Property shall not be substantially altered in appearance or demolished without the approval of the Town;
- b. An application for permission to demolish or substantially alter the appearance of a property which is entered in the Municipal Heritage Registry shall be in writing to the Town;
- c. The application shall be reviewed by the Planning Advisory Committee;
- d. Within thirty (30) days after receiving an application the Planning Advisory Committee shall submit a written recommendation to Council respecting the application.
- e. The Town may take you to three (3) months to consider an application.
- f. Council may grant the alteration of demolition permit either with or without conditions or may refuse the permit, and the Town shall advise the applicant of its decision.

- g. Where the Registered Owner of a property that is entered in the Registry has made application for permission to substantially alter the appearance or demolish the property and the permission is not granted, the Registered Owner may make the alteration or carry out the demolition at any time after one (1) year from the date of the application.
- h. Notice of Deregistration of a Municipal Heritage Property shall be sent to each registered owner of the Municipal Heritage Property and deposited in the Land Registry.

9. PENALTY

Any person or Corporation who contravenes any provision of this bylaw is punishable on summary conviction by a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$2,000, and to imprisonment of not more than thirty (30) days in default of payment thereof.

10. REPEAL

Town of Kentville Heritage Property Bylaw, Chapter 110, approved by Council on the 27th day of January, 2025, including any amendments thereto, is hereby repealed.

CLERK'S ANNOTATION FOR OFFICIAL BYLAW BOOK

Date of first reading: April 27, 2026
Date of advertisement of Notice of Intent to Consider:
Date of second reading:
Date of Approval by Minister:
Date of advertisement of Passage of Bylaw:
Effective Date:

I certify that this Heritage Bylaw was adopted by Council of the Town of Kentville on the 25th day of May, 2026 and published as indicated above.

SIGNED by the Mayor and Clerk this 26th day of May, 2026.

Mayor

Clerk

Recommendations from the Heritage Advisory Committee Regarding the Proposed Heritage Designation of Six Heritage Sites

To: Council Advisory Committee
Meeting Date: December 8, 2025
Department: Planning and Development

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Council Advisory Committee recommend to Council that consideration be given to adding the following six heritage sites to its Registry of Municipal Heritage Properties, and prior to doing so, provide the required notice to each property owner:

Heritage Centre (Former CN Rail Station) – 66 Station Lane
Cornwallis Valley Rail Bridge (north of Shannex)
Dominion Atlantic Rail Bridge (north of Curling Club)
Main Street Station (Former Cornwallis Inn) – 325 Main Street
Stagecoach Inn Properties (Multiple Addresses)
Oak Grove Cemetery – 95 Main Street

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to introduce the first six heritage sites recommended by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) at their meeting on November 13, 2025, for consideration as Municipal Heritage Properties under the Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law. This is the first set of candidate registrations reviewed through the new By-law. The Council Advisory Committee (CAC) is asked to review the information, consider the HAC's recommendations, and forward a recommendation to Council directing staff to proceed with the notification and registration steps outlined in the By-law.

Background: Heritage Property By-law Overview

The Provincial Heritage Property Act enables municipalities to register heritage properties with the purpose of providing *for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use.*

Authority

The Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law establishes the Registry of Heritage Property and sets out procedures for evaluating, recommending, and registering properties of architectural, historical, and cultural significance.

- Section 3.4 empowers the Heritage Advisory Committee to advise Council on the inclusion of buildings, streetscapes, and landscapes into the Town’s Registry.
- Section 4.2(a) states that the registration process may begin through recommendation of the Heritage Advisory Committee.

Purpose of the By-law

As outlined in Section 2.0, the Town maintains a Registry of Heritage Property for the purpose of recognizing and conserving properties of special heritage value. Registration ensures formal acknowledgment, public visibility, and long-term protection under the By-law.

First Implementation of the By-law

This report represents the first occasion on which properties have been evaluated and brought forward under the By-law. As such, this report also outlines the process for the benefit of CAC and Council.

Summary of the Registration Process

Step 1 — Identification & Evaluation (HAC)

Using the heritage evaluation criteria in the By-law (age, architect/builder, historic associations, architectural style, craftsmanship, integrity, and contextual value), HAC reviewed submitted materials and completed a checklist for each candidate property.

Step 2 — HAC Recommendation to Council (Section 3.4)

HAC passed motions the November 13, 2025 meeting recommending that each of the six heritage sites be forwarded to Council for consideration of registration.

Step 3 — Council Direction to Staff (Section 4.2(a))

If Council accepts CAC’s recommendation, staff prepare and send a Notice of Recommendation to each property owner, as required by the By-law.

Step 4 — Owner Notification (Sections 14(2)–(3) of the Act)

The Notice of Recommendation must include:

- reasons for registration,
- the consequences of registration,
- a statement that no person shall alter or demolish the property for 120 days after service of the notice, and
- notification of the owner’s right to be heard before Council, including the time and place for the hearing.

Step 5 — Council Decision (Section 15 of the Act)

After serving notice for at least 30 days and providing the owner an opportunity to be heard, Council may:

- confirm registration,
- refuse registration, or
- defer pending additional information.

Step 6 — Entry into the Registry

If approved, the Town Clerk records the property in the Registry, consistent with Section 2.0.

Candidate Properties Recommended by HAC

The following six heritage sites were evaluated using the criteria outlined in the Heritage Property By-law (Pages 7–8). Each summary below provides a concise description of the property’s significance and justification for consideration of registration.

Heritage Centre (Former CN Rail Station at 66 Station Lane) and Rail Bridges

The Heritage Centre is a well-preserved early 20th-century railway station with strong associations to the growth of the Cornwallis Valley Railway and the development of Kentville as a regional transportation hub. The building demonstrates high architectural integrity, retains original massing and materials, and continues to convey its historic rail-era character. The property meets the criteria for architectural design value, historical associations, and contextual importance to the town’s railway heritage.

In addition to the former CN Rail Station, there are two rail bridges which represent the last few intact elements of Kentville’s rail age. The western bridge (Cornwallis Valley Rail Line) located just north of the Shannex Complex and is comprised of two properties; PIDs

55520423 (north side of Cornwallis River) and 55495972 (south side). The eastern bridge (Dominion Atlantic Rail Line) is located on PID 55374573 north of the Curling Club. While the decking of the bridges have been upgraded to accommodate the trail systems, the remaining steel superstructure retains the enough of the original elements to remain relevant.

Main Street Station (Former Cornwallis Inn) – 325 Main Street

Main Street Station is a landmark brick structure constructed during the early 20th century as a hotel in part of the domain of Sir William Mackenzie’s rail network. The property exhibits period architecture, significant craftsmanship, and strong associations with Kentville’s role as a regional service centre. Its scale and prominence contribute materially to the downtown streetscape. The property meets the criteria for architectural style, age, historic associations, and contextual value.

Stagecoach Inn Properties (Multiple Addresses)

The Stagecoach Inn properties include historically significant commercial buildings associated with early transportation, commerce, and main-street development patterns. Their forms, façades, and contextual relationships contribute strongly to the heritage character of the downtown. Although some alterations have occurred, key architectural elements remain intact. The properties meet criteria related to streetscape value, age, and historical use.

Oak Grove Cemetery – 95 Main Street

Oak Grove Cemetery is a historically important burial ground containing grave markers dating to Kentville’s early settlement period. The site reflects local cultural history, community identity, and funerary practices. Integrity of layout, materials, and marker craftsmanship remains high. The property meets criteria for age, historical association, and cultural landscape value.

Policy Context

The following sections of the By-law and Act support the evaluation and registration process:

- Heritage Property By-law Sections 3.4, 4.0, and 4.2(b)
- Heritage Evaluation Criteria (By-law Pages 7–8)

- Heritage Property Act Sections 14 and 15, which establish the notification, hearing, and registration requirements.

Financial and Administrative Considerations

There are no direct financial implications associated with issuing Notices of Recommendation and completing the registration process. Staff time is required to prepare notices, manage any owner responses, and update the Heritage Registry.

Respectfully submitted,

Darren Shupe
Director of Planning and Development

Appendices:

APPENDIX A — HERITAGE PROPERTY COVERSHEETS

A1 — HERITAGE PROPERTY COVERSHEET

Property: Kentville Heritage Centre (Former CN Rail Station)

Property Information

- Civic Address: 66 Station Lane
- PID: 55496673
- Owner(s): Town of Kentville
- Year Built: 1988

Heritage Description (Summary)

The Heritage Centre is a former CN rail station associated with the Cornwallis Valley Railway line. It retains original form, roofline, materials, and rail-era massing. The structure has high architectural integrity and conveys the character of Kentville's transportation history. Its cultural value is strengthened by its continued use and its contextual prominence near the rail corridor.

Heritage Value Checklist (per Heritage Property By-law)

- Architectural / Design Value — ✓
- Historical / Cultural Significance — ✓
- Integrity / Condition — ✓

- Context within Community — ✓

HAC Recommendation

- Register as Municipal Heritage Property
- Defer
- Do not recommend

Motion Reference: “That the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the property known as the Heritage Centre (Former CN Rail Station) be considered for registration as a Municipal Heritage Property under the Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law, and that this recommendation be forwarded to the Council Advisory Committee.”

Date of HAC Meeting: November 13, 2025

A2 — HERITAGE PROPERTY COVERSHEET

Property: Main Street Station (Former Cornwallis Inn)

Property Information

- Civic Address: 325 Main Street
- PID: 55246870
- Owner(s): Private Owner
- Year Built: 1920s (railway hotel)

Heritage Description (Summary)

The Main Street Station building is a large brick edifice originally constructed as a hotel, part of the railway-driven development of downtown Kentville. The building features period brickwork, grand scale, landmark presence, and historically intact elements reflective of early 20th-century commercial rail-era architecture. It has strong historical associations with regional transportation, tourism, and Kentville’s development as a commercial centre.

Heritage Value Checklist

- Architectural / Design Value — ✓
- Historical / Cultural Significance — ✓
- Integrity / Condition — ✓
- Context within Community — ✓

HAC Recommendation

- Register as Municipal Heritage Property
- Defer

Do not recommend

Motion Reference: “That the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the property known as the Main Street Station be considered for registration as a Municipal Heritage Property under the Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law, and that this recommendation be forwarded to the Council Advisory Committee.”

Date of HAC Meeting: November 13, 2025

A3 — HERITAGE PROPERTY COVERSHEET

Property: Stagecoach Inn Properties (Multiple Addresses)

Property Information

- Addresses: Multiple
- PID(s): 55260012, 55246771, 55260004, 55259998
- Owner(s): Private Owner
- Year Built: Approximately late 19th to early 20th century

Heritage Description (Summary)

The Stagecoach Inn properties represent an intact cluster of early transportation-related commercial buildings in downtown Kentville, historically connected to stagecoach routes and main-street commercial development. Despite some alterations, the structures retain defining features such as scale, rooflines, window proportions, and façades that contribute strongly to the heritage streetscape. They hold significant contextual and associative value.

Heritage Value Checklist

- Architectural / Design Value — ✓
- Historical / Cultural Significance — ✓
- Integrity / Condition — ● (partially intact)
- Context within Community — ✓

HAC Recommendation

- Register as Municipal Heritage Property
- Defer
- Do not recommend

Motion Reference: “That the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the properties collectively known as the Stagecoach Inn Properties be considered for registration as Municipal Heritage Properties under the Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law, and that this recommendation be forwarded to the Council Advisory Committee.”

Date of HAC Meeting: November 13, 2025

A4 — HERITAGE PROPERTY COVERSHEET

Property: Oak Grove Cemetery

Property Information

- Civic Address: 95 Main Street
- PID: 55260756
- Owner(s): Private Owner
- Year Established: 19th century

Heritage Description (Summary)

Oak Grove Cemetery is one of Kentville's earliest burial grounds, containing gravestones and funerary monuments significant to the Town's early settlement and cultural history. The site retains original layout, historic plantings, and marker craftsmanship. It contributes a unique cultural landscape value and holds strong historic associations with early residents and community development.

Heritage Value Checklist

- Architectural / Design Value — ✓ (stonework, monument craft)
- Historical / Cultural Significance — ✓
- Integrity / Condition — ✓
- Context within Community — ✓

HAC Recommendation

- Register as Municipal Heritage Property
- Defer
- Do not recommend

Motion Reference: "That the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Oak Grove Cemetery be considered for registration as a Municipal Heritage Property under the Town of Kentville Heritage Property By-law, and that this recommendation be forwarded to the Council Advisory Committee."

Date of HAC Meeting: November 13, 2025

Plan Review – Discussion Regarding the Statement of Provincial Interest on Housing

Planning Advisory Committee Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 15, 2026
Department: Planning and Development
Strategic Priority: Housing and Planning

REQUEST

Staff are requesting direction on where and how the Town should accommodate future growth as part of the Plan Review specifically areas of growth opportunity and the role of housing in shaping development patterns.

Background

Under the Municipal Government Act, municipal planning documents must be reasonably consistent with the Province’s Statements of Provincial Interest (SPI). These statements establish a framework for addressing matters of provincial importance through local land use planning, while allowing municipalities flexibility in how those interests are implemented.

Town of Kentville is initiating a Plan Review to ensure that its planning documents reflect current conditions, emerging priorities, and evolving approaches to planning and development. In particular, the Town is experiencing increased pressure related to housing supply, changing development patterns, and the need for greater clarity in how and where growth should occur.

To support a focused and effective review process, staff are proposing a phased approach, beginning with an emphasis on growth. This initial phase is intended to establish a clear understanding of where development can and should be accommodated within the Town, based on factors such as existing infrastructure, servicing capacity, and areas of development opportunity.

While environmental considerations, including flood risk and natural systems, remain important components of the Municipal Planning Strategy, these will be examined in greater detail in a later meeting. This approach allows the Town to first define a growth structure, which can then be refined and adjusted through additional layers of analysis.

Recent policy and regulatory amendments have also begun to reflect a shift in how the Town approaches development. In particular, the Town has explored and implemented changes to support more flexible development processes, including the consideration of larger-scale developments and the ability to phase construction and servicing over time. These changes are intended to facilitate more efficient housing delivery and better align approvals with how development occurs in practice. This evolving approach further supports the need for a clear and coordinated growth strategy within the Municipal Planning Strategy, ensuring that policy direction aligns with current practice and enables the Town to effectively accommodate future growth.

This report provides an overview of the relevant Statements of Provincial Interest and introduces a growth-focused framework to guide the initial phase of the Plan Review. Staff are seeking early direction from the Planning Advisory Committee on how growth should be structured and where development should be directed within the Town.

Alignment with Council Strategic Priorities

The Plan Review is also informed by Council's adopted Strategic Priorities Plan 2025–2029, which establishes a clear direction for growth, infrastructure investment, and community development within the Town.

A central theme of the Strategic Priorities Plan is the need to proactively plan for growth. The Plan recognizes that Kentville is experiencing increasing development pressure, particularly related to housing, and emphasizes the importance of managing this growth in a way that is sustainable, coordinated, and aligned with infrastructure capacity. It highlights that growth is already occurring and will continue, particularly as water and sewer services are extended to new areas of the Town, and that planning must anticipate and guide this change rather than respond to it after the fact.

The Strategic Priorities Plan also emphasizes the importance of infrastructure investment as a foundation for growth. It identifies the need to upgrade and expand systems such as roads, stormwater management, and water and sewer services in order to support new development. This reinforces the need for a clear growth framework that aligns land use planning with infrastructure capacity and long-term financial sustainability.

In addition, Council has identified growth and development as a key strategic priority, including a commitment to reviewing and updating the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to reflect current conditions and enable future development. This includes supporting increased housing supply, facilitating development through

improved processes, and planning for expansion areas where infrastructure can be extended in a coordinated manner.

Taken together, the Strategic Priorities Plan establishes a clear direction for the Plan Review: the Town must take a proactive approach to identifying where growth should occur, ensure that infrastructure investments support that growth, and create a planning framework that enables development while maintaining long-term sustainability.

Growth-Supporting Infrastructure Investment

Recent municipal investment in infrastructure further reinforces the Town's direction toward proactive growth planning. In particular, the development of a portion of the Donald E. Hiltz Connector Road represents a significant step toward enabling future growth within Kentville.

The Connector Road is intended to improve connectivity between existing and emerging neighbourhoods while opening up new areas of the Town for residential development. As identified in Council's Strategic Priorities Plan, this project is expected to support the development of additional housing units over time and is directly linked to broader efforts to increase the Town's housing supply .

This investment reflects a shift toward aligning infrastructure planning with anticipated growth, rather than responding to development pressures after they occur. By extending transportation and servicing capacity into new areas, the Town is actively shaping where growth can be accommodated and creating opportunities for more coordinated and efficient development.

The Connector Road also illustrates the importance of identifying growth areas within the Municipal Planning Strategy. As infrastructure investments are made, it becomes increasingly important that land use policy provides clear direction on how these areas should develop, including the scale, form, and sequencing of growth.

This example highlights the need for the Plan Review to establish a clear and proactive growth framework that aligns:

- Infrastructure investment;
- Housing development; and
- Land use policy direction

Overview of Statements of Provincial Interest

Province of Nova Scotia has established a set of Statements of Provincial Interest that must be considered in municipal planning. For the Town of Kentville, the most relevant include Drinking Water Supply, Flood Risk Areas, Agricultural Land, Infrastructure, and Housing. Collectively, these statements require municipalities to balance growth and development with the protection of environmental systems and the efficient use of infrastructure.

Statements of Provincial Interest establish a clear expectation that municipalities will enable development, particularly housing, while also ensuring that such development does not compromise public safety, environmental integrity, or long-term infrastructure sustainability. This dual obligation is central to the Town's MPS review.

Key Themes and Observations

A review of the Statements of Provincial Interest highlights several interconnected themes that will shape the Plan Review.

Housing has emerged as a primary driver of planning policy. There is an increasing expectation that municipalities will enable a broader range of housing types, reduce regulatory barriers, and support the timely development of new housing. This reflects broader demographic trends, affordability challenges, and provincial direction. For the Town of Kentville, this reinforces the need to proactively plan for where and how housing can be accommodated, rather than responding to development proposals on a case-by-case basis.

At the same time, there is a growing need for greater clarity in how growth is structured across the Town. While the current planning framework supports compact and efficient development, it does not clearly define where growth should be directed. As development pressure increases, a more explicit growth structure is required—one that aligns land use planning with infrastructure, servicing capacity, and areas of opportunity, including those supported by recent municipal investment.

Environmental considerations, including flood risk and natural systems, remain an important component of land use planning. These considerations include both natural assets, which contribute to the Town's environmental health and livability, and areas of constraint, which may limit development or require additional consideration. As part of the phased approach to the Plan Review, these factors will be examined in greater

detail in a subsequent stage and used to refine and guide the growth structure established through this initial phase.

Together, these themes frame the central question for the Town of Kentville at this stage of the review:

Where and how should the Town accommodate future growth, particularly housing, in a way that aligns with infrastructure, supports development, and provides clear direction for decision-making?

This question forms the foundation of the initial phase of the Plan Review and will guide the development of a growth strategy for the Town.

Plan Review Context – Growth and Environment

The Plan Review is being initiated with a focus on growth, with particular emphasis on identifying areas of the Town that are well-positioned to accommodate future development.

This initial phase is intended to establish a clear understanding of where growth can and should occur, based on existing infrastructure, servicing capacity, development patterns, and areas of opportunity. This includes considering lands that are currently underutilized, areas experiencing development pressure, and locations supported by recent or planned municipal investment.

By focusing first on growth opportunities, the Town can establish a clear and proactive growth structure to guide future development. This represents a shift from a reactive, application-based approach toward one that provides greater clarity and predictability for both decision-makers and the development community.

Environmental considerations, including flood risk and natural systems, will be incorporated in a subsequent phase of the review. These factors will be used to refine and guide the growth structure established through this initial phase, ensuring that development is directed to appropriate and sustainable locations.

Growth Strategy Framework

To support discussion, staff have identified three broad approaches to accommodating growth within the Town. These approaches are intended to help frame how growth could be structured and directed.

The first approach is intensification, which focuses on accommodating growth within existing serviced areas. This includes infill development, increased density, and the introduction of a wider range of housing types within established neighbourhoods.

Intensification supports efficient use of infrastructure and builds on existing development patterns.

The second approach is strategic expansion, which involves directing growth to new areas where infrastructure can be extended in a coordinated and cost-effective manner. This approach can support larger-scale development and increased housing supply, particularly in areas where recent or planned infrastructure investments create new opportunities for growth.

The third approach is constraint-based planning, which considers how environmental factors may limit or influence development in certain areas. While these considerations are not the primary focus of this phase of the review, they will play an important role in refining growth decisions as the Plan Review progresses.

In practice, these approaches are not mutually exclusive. A combined or hybrid approach is anticipated, where growth is directed to appropriate areas within the Town, supported by infrastructure, and refined over time through additional analysis.

Alignment with Current Municipal Planning Strategy

As part of the Plan Review, staff have undertaken a comparison between the current Municipal Planning Strategy (excerpts in Appendix A) and the Town's current planning practices and emerging priorities. This comparison highlights areas where the existing framework continues to provide a strong foundation, as well as areas where policy direction has evolved.

The current MPS supports compact and efficient development by encouraging infill and concentrating growth in serviced areas. While this establishes a sound policy basis, it does not clearly define where growth should be directed. As a result, development decisions are often made on a case-by-case basis rather than within a clearly articulated growth structure. Current practice is moving toward a more explicit approach that identifies growth areas and provides greater clarity for both decision-makers and the development community.

The MPS also recognizes the importance of housing diversity and affordability. However, housing is framed as a supporting objective rather than a primary driver of land use decisions. In practice, there is an increasing emphasis on enabling housing

through more flexible and efficient processes, reflecting current development pressures and Council priorities.

With respect to environmental considerations, the current MPS identifies areas of constraint, including flood-prone lands, and allows development subject to mitigation measures. While this approach remains relevant, there is a growing recognition that these considerations should be used to help guide broader growth patterns over time. As outlined in this report, this will be addressed in a subsequent phase of the review.

Overall, the current MPS provides a strong foundation; however, it reflects a framework that manages growth rather than one that clearly directs it. The Plan Review presents an opportunity to build on this foundation by establishing a more explicit growth structure, aligning policy with current practice, and improving clarity in how development decisions are made.

Implications for the MPS Review

The findings of this review have several implications for the Municipal Planning Strategy update. The new MPS will need to establish a clear and explicit growth structure that identifies where development should be directed. Housing should be positioned as a primary driver of land use policy, with regulatory tools aligned to support a range of housing types and more efficient development processes.

Environmental constraints, particularly flood risk, should be integrated as a foundational layer in planning decisions, informing where growth is appropriate and where it should be limited. Finally, the implementation framework should be updated to align with current practice, emphasizing clarity, predictability, and reduced reliance on discretionary processes.

PAC Discussion – Growth Strategy Direction

At this stage of the review, staff are seeking high-level, directional input from the Planning Advisory Committee. The intent is not to finalize policy but to establish a clear

understanding of priorities and trade-offs that will guide the next phase of work. This includes developing a growth framework, supporting mapping, and drafting policy directions for inclusion in the updated MPS.

Questions for PAC Consideration

To guide discussion, staff request that the Planning Advisory Committee consider three key questions.

First, where should future growth in Kentville be primarily directed? This includes consideration of whether growth should be focused within existing serviced areas through intensification, directed toward new expansion areas, or accommodated through a combination of both approaches.

Second, to what extent should increasing housing supply and diversity be a central objective of the Municipal Planning Strategy? This includes consideration of whether housing should be treated as a primary driver of land use decisions and how much flexibility should be introduced to enable different housing forms.

Third, how should the Town plan for a mix of residential, commercial, and employment uses as part of its overall growth strategy? This includes consideration of where commercial and industrial uses should be directed, and whether there are opportunities to support more mixed-use areas that integrate housing with services, employment, and community amenities.

Conclusion

Town of Kentville is entering a new phase of planning that reflects evolving priorities and changing conditions. The current Municipal Planning Strategy provides a strong foundation; however, the Town's approach to growth, housing, environmental constraints, and implementation has evolved.

The updated MPS will transition from a framework that manages growth to one that actively directs and enables it. Direction from the Planning Advisory Committee will inform the development of a growth strategy, supporting analysis and mapping, and the preparation of draft policies for the next stage of the review.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darren Shupe
Director of Planning and Development

Appendix A – Excerpts from Municipal Planning Strategy (2019)

1.3 Provincial Statements of Interest

5. Housing

Goal: To provide housing to meet the needs of all Nova Scotian's

This Municipal Planning Strategy recognizes the changing demographics and the need not only for a full range of housing types, but also the growing need for affordable housing. Town Council will support infill housing on undersized lots; reduced parking requirements in the downtown and increased density where affordable housing is contained within.

3.2 Key Element of this Municipal Planning Strategy

3.2.2 Housing/Residential

The housing objectives of this Strategy strive to facilitate a mix of quality housing types which reflect the diversified needs, income levels, ages and lifestyles of Town residents. A further objective of this strategy is to achieve a greater proportion of the regional housing market within the Town. The policies will address issues such as affordability, quality design, alternative housing needs and density in all residential areas while maintaining the character of existing residential neighborhoods within the town.

Chapter 5 Residential

5.1 Objectives and Goals

Residential development is one of the main land uses in a town. The Town of Kentville has a relatively diversified, young, and healthy household demographic and residential growth has been consistent over the past 10 years. This Strategy's goal, in terms of housing and residential neighborhoods, is to promote and accommodate an array of dwellings with different prices, locations, and tenure. Furthermore, the Town is committed to protecting each neighborhoods sense of identity and diversity as well as fostering connectivity within the different neighborhoods.

For many years residential development within the Town has primarily consisted of traditional Single Family Dwellings. However, over the last few years there has been a significant shift away from this demand for traditional single family homes towards semi-detached dwellings, townhouses and apartments. This trend is indicative of the changing demographics: an ageing population, an increase in single-parent families, people living alone, all of which has contributed to the increasing need for alternative and affordable housing. Although this trend suggests a need for more diversity in the residential sector, single unit detached dwellings are anticipated to continue to supply the majority of housing in Kentville.

Objectives

1. To meet the mandate of the Province relating to housing opportunities for all of Kentville's citizens, particularly for those citizens of low to moderate income;
2. To provide a variety of housing types to accommodate the various needs and desires of Town residents;
3. To protect the character and development form of established residential neighbourhoods;
4. To encourage residential infill development on appropriate under-utilized lands;
5. To ensure that future residential development occurs in suitable locations with adequate water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, transportation and recreational services available;
6. To actively promote and facilitate the development of housing within the town in order to attract a greater proportion of the regional housing market; and
7. To encourage the conservation, retention and improvement of the existing housing stock.