



Planning Advisory Committee Meeting

September 14, 2023

4:00 p.m.

Hybrid in-person/Teams

Council Chambers

359 Main Street

Agenda

Call to Order

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Planning Advisory Committee Meeting, July 13th, 2023

3. Public Input / Question Period

PLEASE NOTE:

- Public Participation is limited to 30 minutes
- Each Person is limited to 3 minutes and may return to speak once, for 1 minute, if time permits within the total 30-minute period
- Questions or comments are to be directed to the Chair
- Comments and questions that relate to personnel, current or potential litigation issues, or planning issues for which a public hearing has already occurred, but no decision has been made by Council, will not be answered.

4. New Business:

- a. Committee Member Position
- b. DA 2023-001_234 Main Street Development Agreement



5. Old Business

- a. Housing Accelerator Fund update
- b. Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) project update
- c. [Active Transportation update](#)

6. Next Meeting

- a. October 12 2023 – 4:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment

ATTENDING

- Deputy Mayor Madeira-Voss, Chair
- Mayor Wendy Donovan,
- Councillor Wendy Elliott,
- Councillor Jennifer Ingham,
- Beverly Boyd,
- Kelly van Niekerk
- Michael Martin
- Corey Cadeau, and
- Recording Secretary Lindsay Slade

ABSENT WITH REGRETS

- Caroline Beddoe

ALSO ATTENDING

- Director of Planning & Development, Devin Lake
- Randy Acker, Province of Nova Scotia

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Deputy Mayor Madeira-Voss, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Agenda Item

Discussion and Decisions

1. Approval of Agenda

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED

CARRIED

2. Approval of Minutes

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 11 2023 BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

CARRIED

3. Public Input

- **No public input**

Agenda Item

Discussion and Decisions

4. New Business:

a. Housing Policy Review: Guest Speaker Randy Acker on Small Option Homes

- Randy Acker, Director of Disability Support Program at the Province of Nova Scotia provided a presentation on Small Option Homes, modular homes, and the Remedy which is the outcome of a human rights case against the Province.
- Small Option Homes provide a home-like setting for those living with disabilities and provides staff care 24/7. These housing types have been created as an initiative to close institutional style housing for those with disabilities and is limited to housing with a maximum of 4 bedrooms/occupants.
- Randy described that modular homes were selected for this type of housing due to the ability of these homes to meet the specific needs of the Disability Supports Program (DSP) participants.
- An overview of the Human Rights Remedy was provided. The Disabilities Rights Coalition summarizes the ruling around four grounds: 1. Unnecessary institutionalization, 2. Right to assistance, 3. Denial of community choice, 4. Delays in assistance.
- Randy clarified that any long-term care home must be brought down to 4 or fewer units/occupants.
- The Remedy is aiming to ensure first voice remains centre in all future work by providing more choices for participants, increased services and supports in community and stronger, more inclusive communities.
- Mayor Donovan described a situation in Ontario where the government closed institutions without providing alternative locations for users and asked how we can ensure this doesn't happen in NS. Randy stated that municipalities who have undergone this change have shared their experiences and knowledge with NS. NS is the last province in the country to close institutions and needs to build regional outreach teams and local area coordinators will be placed around the Province to ensure those who need care are not ending up institutionalized elsewhere or going without housing. Further details regarding the approach to ensure housing options are available were provided.
- Councillor Elliott asked what will happen to people who like living in the existing institutions. Randy stated that evidence shows that outcomes are better in smaller units and in community and the broader impact of small options homes has to be weighed against larger institutions. Working with existing residents of larger institutions to understand what their needs and wants are has been

Agenda Item

Discussion and Decisions

ongoing as well. Small option homes provide more self determination of where people can live as it opens more opportunities geographically where institutions historically have not been available.

- Councillor Ingham asked how long it takes to build a modular home. Randy stated that they take about 6 to 7 months. One can be viewed on Ashley Court and in Kingston near the cemetery.
- Director Lake asked if there is an idea of how many units the factories that build the modular homes can build in a certain timeframe. Randy stated that they engaged with Dora Construction to have 100 units built when the first institutions were shut down, but now the number of people needing housing has increased to up to 900 and modular homes alone are not sufficient to fill this gap in housing need and users will move into communities instead.
- Randy outlined 6 key directions to allow participants to build life in a community and live the way they want.
- Corey asked how many participants there are that will be needing housing. Randy stated that from institutions, group homes and other care homes exceeding 4 bedrooms, there are roughly 400 units needed.

**b. Staff Report:
Tattingstone Inn
Development
Agreement**

- Director Lake provided an overview of the Tattingstone Inn Development Agreement and clarified that the Planning Advisory Committee is acting today as both the Planning and the Heritage Advisory Committee. It was clarified that the property is registered as a Municipal heritage property.
- An overview of the Design Review Committee's feedback as well as the character defining elements of the existing building was provided.
- Motion: **That the Planning Advisory Committee and the Heritage Advisory Committee provide a positive recommendation to Council for the Draft Development Agreement for 620 Main Street (PID 55383137) and that it be forwarded to Council for initial consideration.**
- Councillor Ingham asked if there will be accessible units in the new building. Director Lake stated that the new building code applies to the proposed building and dining room addition which includes accessibility considerations.
- Councillor Elliott asked who owns the treeline to the west.

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Discussion and Decisions

- Beverly Boyd stated that there is nothing in the character defining elements regarding the property beyond the Thompson House and stated that from a heritage perspective there are no concerns.
 - Motion carried.
- c. Housing Accelerator Fund**
- Director Lake stated that issues such as rising housing cost, diminishing supply and slow construction have led to the creation of the Housing Accelerator Fund. In addition, interprovincial migration to Wolfville has impacted our population and housing situation significantly.
 - An overview of current home sales and rental costs was provided.
 - An overview of the Housing Accelerator Fund was provided.
 - The funding model was described, however there is a lot of uncertainty of what will be built and when that creates challenges for applying to this fund which has a very short application and funding window.
 - Director Lake outlined potential concept plans that the Town could considering in an application including an affordable university housing concept, using Town owned land to create affordable supply, regulatory review to create gentle housing opportunities (R1, approval processes), fee review or incentives to build housing, improvements to the permit and tracking process, and capital program contribution to support housing getting built.
 - Director Lake clarified that some of these plans will be followed through with the PAC regardless of whether the fund is applied for or not as part of the housing policy review work and that the fund is not required to do these projects.
 - Director Lake provided a description of the requirements of the Action Plan required as part of the application. The application is due on August 18th, 2023.
 - There is still time to apply to this fund and it could make sense with the right project. At this time, staff are leaning towards not submitting an application. Operational projects are going to be done regardless, and exploring the fund has been valuable, but the readiness or certainty for the concept projects is not there to make the required commitment. The active transportation plan work took nearly 3 years, whereas the timeline for this fund is very restrictive and many volatile issues such as insurance rates influence housing significantly at this time.

Question period:

Agenda Item

Discussion and Decisions

- Kelly asked if existing projects such as 292 Main Street would be included. Director Lake stated that it is included in the projected housing units.
 - Corey asked what the ramifications are if we submit an application and it is approved but the construction falls through. Director Lake stated that much of the funding is provided up front, and the remaining installments are based on permits issued. There could be some flexibility on start dates, however there could be a claw back of funds. There is a level of risk with this that the Town does not have the confidence to address at this time.
 - Mayor Donovan asked whether sharing the ideas with Kody Blois could be arranged.
- d. Tree Inventory and Policy work introduction**
- Director Lake provided the committee with an overview of the upcoming tree inventory. By the end of the summer the Town will have an inventory of all Town-owned trees, their condition and species. Initial site visits with the consultant suggest that there are few town owned trees in the streetscape. A plantable spots inventory is also being created to inform where trees should be planted. A tree policy will follow the inventory.
 - There will be 2 public tree walks and information is available on www.wolfvilleblooms.ca/tree-policy and further engagement or events are likely to occur as this work progresses.
 - Councillor Elliott stated that many trees have been lost in Town due to dutch elm disease.
 - Beverly Boyd asked if the consultant has shared information on Tree Plant Canada as it has many community projects that it has funded.
 - Director Lake stated that there is an initiative under 2 Billion Trees that staff will submit an expression of interest for and are open to other funding sources.
 - Michael Martin asked whether old trees on heritage properties are permitted to be removed or if they are protected.
 - Michael Martin asked whether builders are required to plant trees when a new site is developed. Director Lake stated that there has been hesitancy to plant street trees in Town, largely driven by maintenance concerns. Previous development agreements required trees to be planted on lawns, however homeowners may have many reasons as to why they want to remove a tree. Requiring streetside tree would be a better approach.
 - A discussion regarding requirements for tree removal occurred and requirements may be built into the forthcoming policy.

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions
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| 5. Roundtable | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Elliott asked for an updated on 292 Main Street. Director Lake stated that the developer is doing testing of the piles on site. A discussion around the progress of the building occurred.• Kelly asked if there are next steps for the C2 student project are. Director Lake stated that the C2 project will return to PAC in September to resume the discussion. |
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|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6. Next Meeting
a. DDMMYYYY | September 14 th , 2023 |
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- | | |
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| 7. Adjournment | July 13 th , 2023 – 5:41 p.m. |
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IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 5:41p.m.

CARRIED

Approved at the *** , 2023 Planning Advisory Committee Meeting.
As recorded by Lindsay Slade, Community Planner**

REPORT TO PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Development Agreement Proposal
234 Main Street

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Development



APPLICANT	Nancy Price
PROPOSAL	To construct a 3-storey residential building with up to 10 dwelling units.
LOCATION	234 Main Street (PID 55278626)
LOT SIZE	23511.3 square feet (.54 acres)
DESIGNATION	Neighbourhood Residential Designation.
ZONE	Neighbourhood Commercial Zone (C-2).
SURROUNDING USES	Residential, Harvest Moon Trail, nearby parks, museum and commercial uses.
ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES	The property is within the Neighbourhood Design Guidelines area.
NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION	Newspaper ads and notices mailed to surrounding property owners within 100 metres; Sign placed on property.

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PROPERTY LOCATION

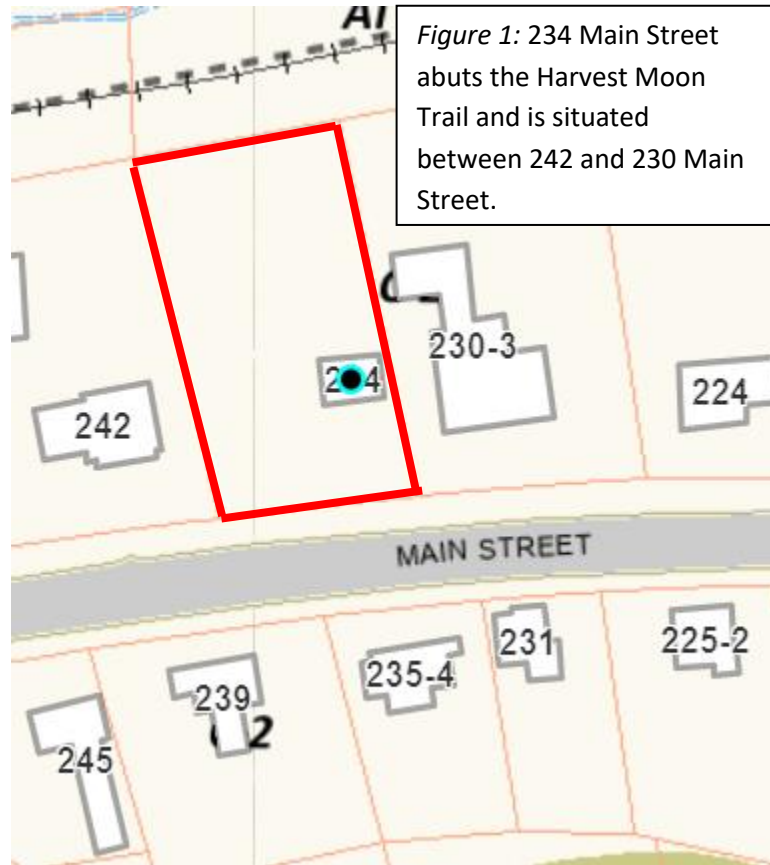


Figure 1 – Context map

PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking a Development Agreement (DA) to construct a 3-storey residential building with up to 10 dwelling units. A conceptual rendering of the proposal is shown below.



Figure 2 – Conceptual rendering of proposed building

The lot currently contains a small, 818 square foot single-family residential dwelling unit, shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Existing building.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The applicant is seeking to construct a multi-unit residential building in an effort to provide a greater range of housing options for residents to age in place. The proposed multi unit residential building is similar in scale to the two existing properties to the east and west, as shown in figure 4. The 10-unit dwelling can be considered through a development agreement as it is a unique and site-specific proposal.

Draft Proposed Site/Landscaping Plan (Figure 4)



Figure 4. Conceptual site plan

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Department: Planning & Development



Proposed Elevations

The proposed building will include underground parking and charging stations for electric vehicles, bicycle storage, barrier free access throughout with an elevator servicing all floors, energy efficient construction and mechanical services, an integrated solar array on the roof, and amenity spaces including a solarium/lobby, a snug, an at-grade rear terrace and gardens, a rooftop terrace, a fitness area and a music and art room.



Figure 5. Southeast elevation showing parking garage entry.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Proposed Elevations

South elevation (street facing)



North elevation (rear)



West elevation

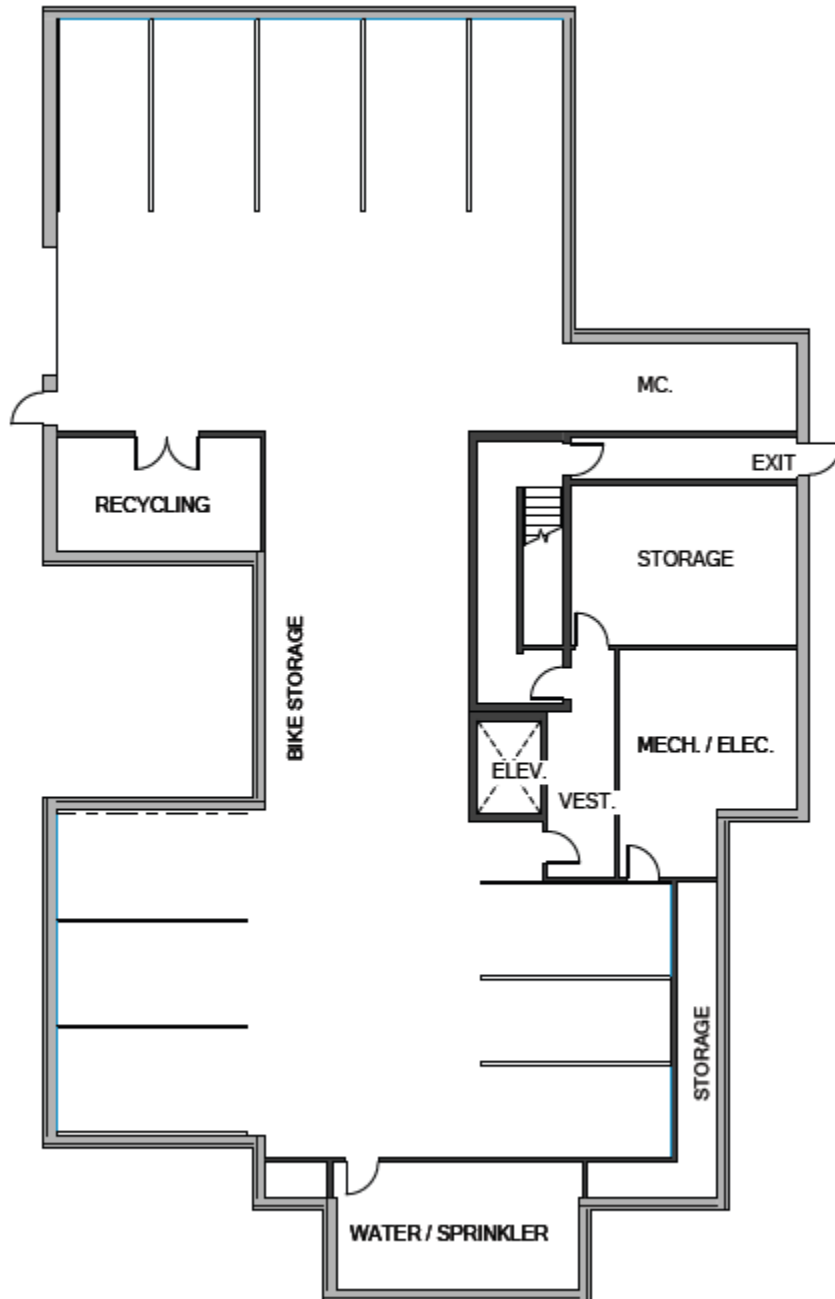


East elevation



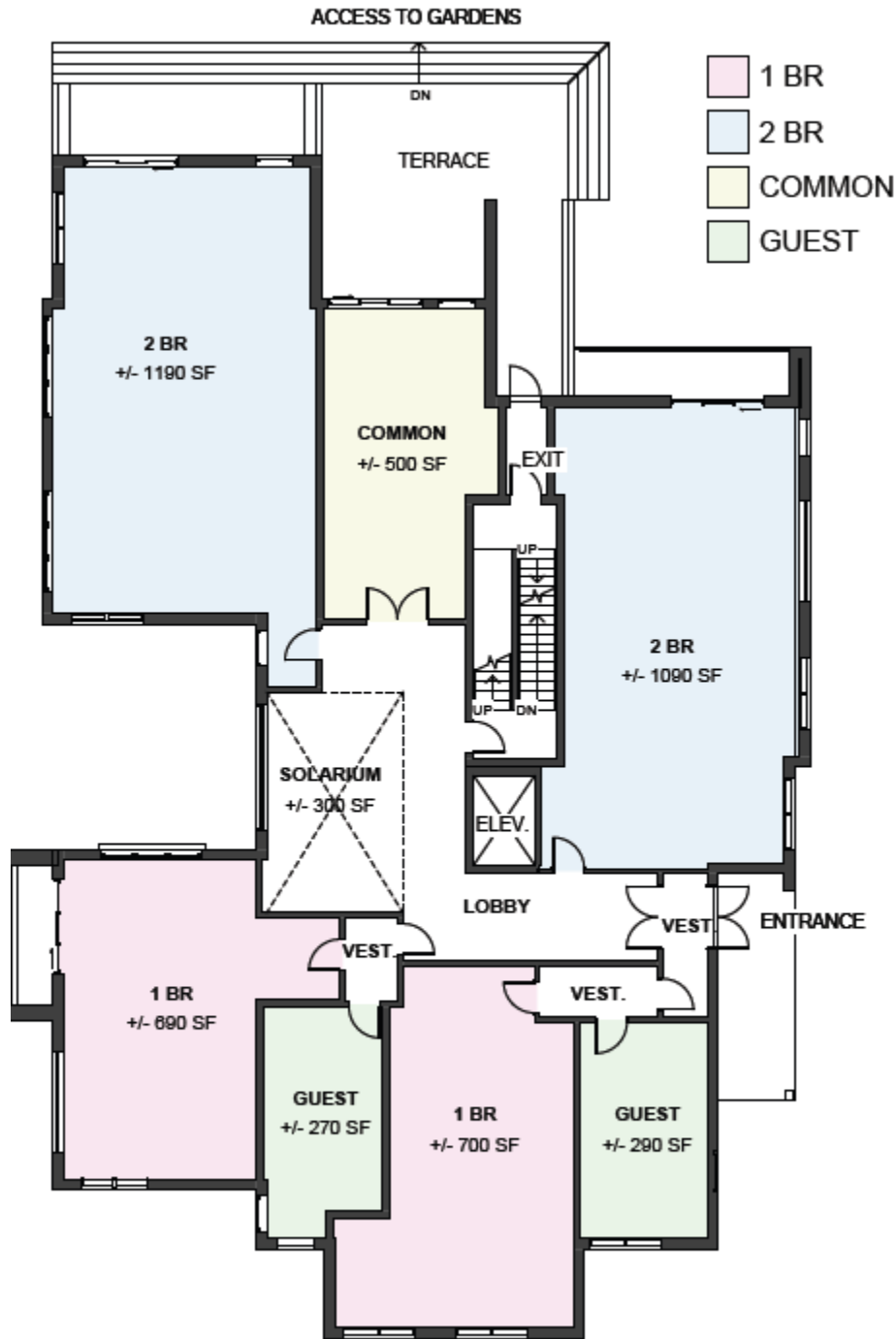
Proposed Floor Plans

Underground parking garage



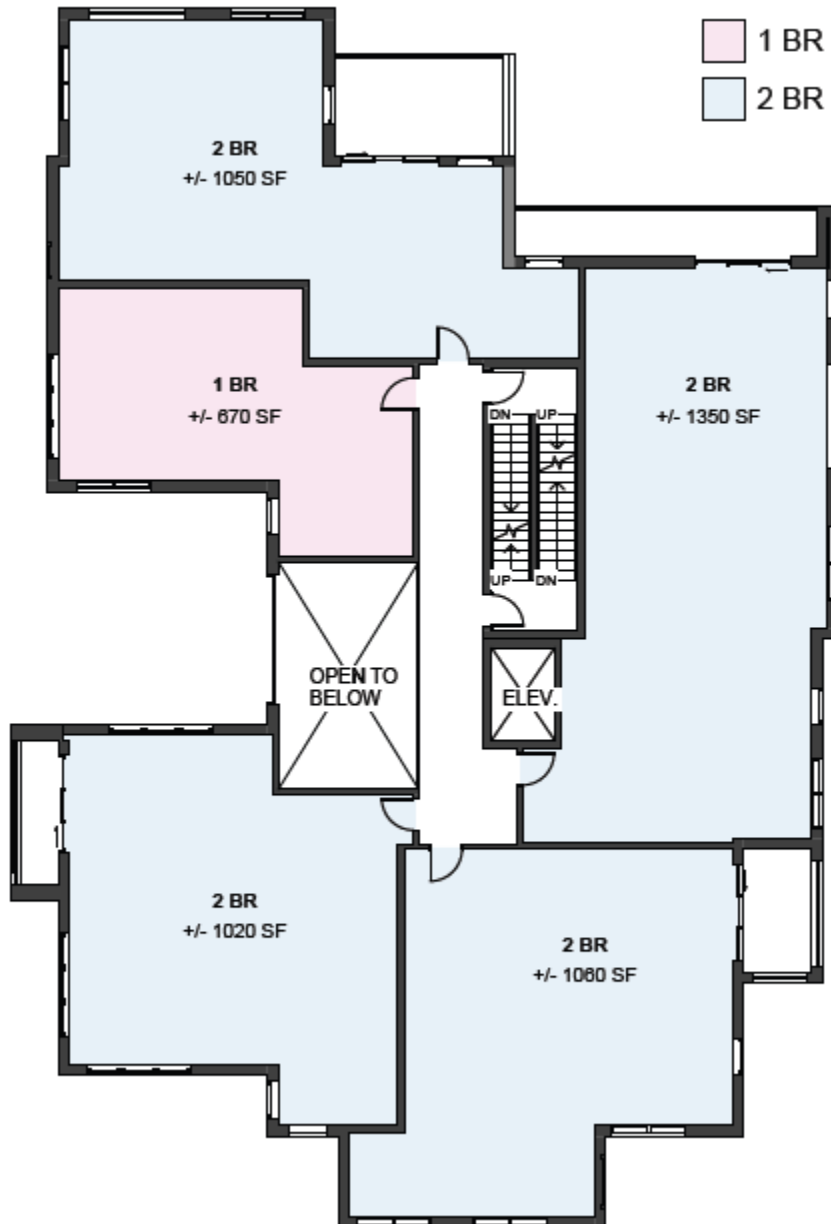
First floor

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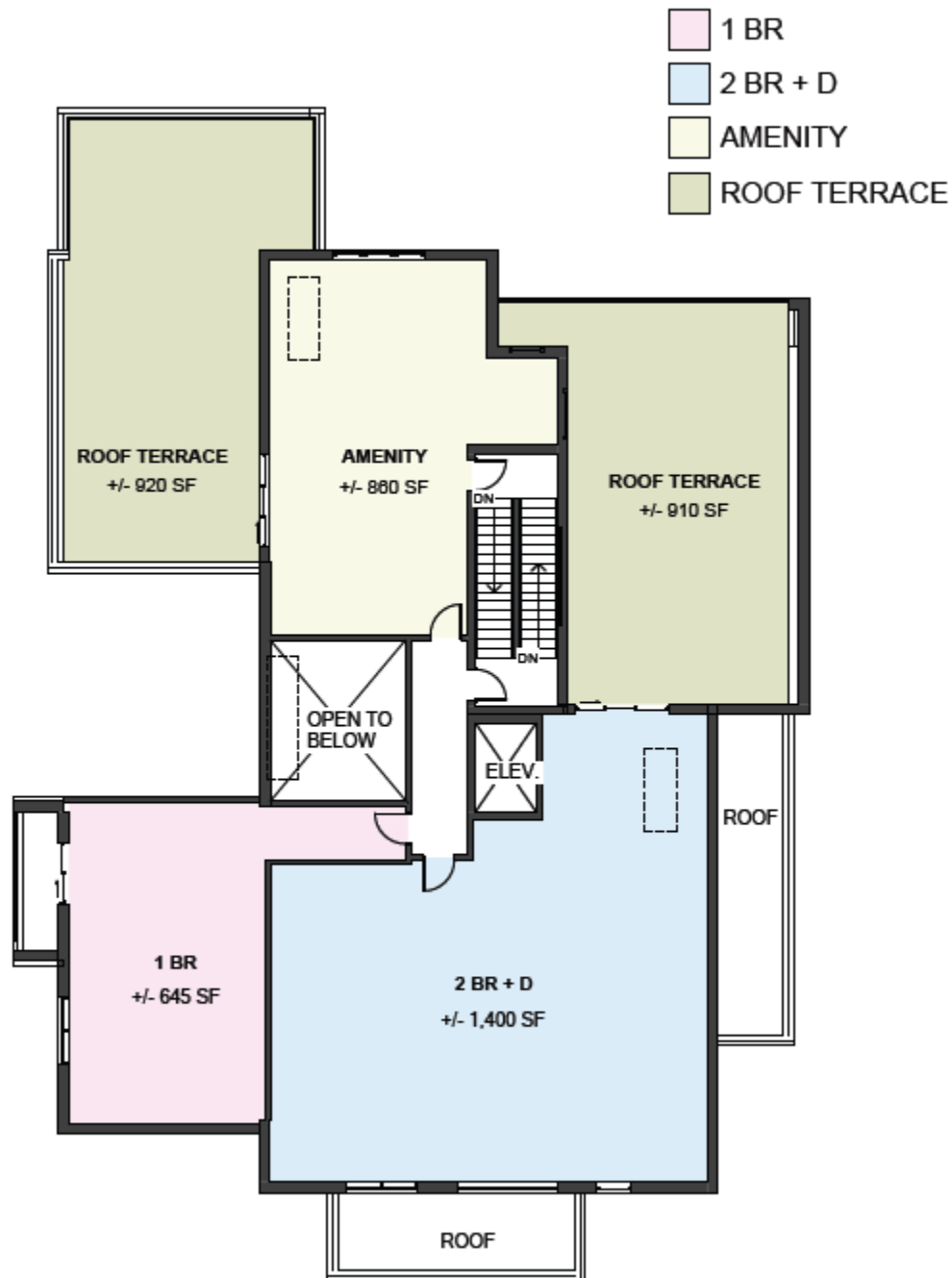




Second floor



Third floor



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POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

The property is designated as Neighbourhood in the [Municipal Planning Strategy](#) (MPS) and zoned Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) in the [Land Use Bylaw](#) (LUB). This property also falls within the Design Guidelines Area.

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

The MPS contains 19 objectives related to land use, economic prosperity, climate action and social equity, 3 objectives related to land use, 2 related to economic prosperity, 1 related to climate action and 1 related to social equity are particularly relevant to the proposed development:

OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE
<p>To create complete neighbourhoods to maximize our infrastructure and promote community health.</p>	<p>To ensure a full range of housing options for Wolfville residents of all ages and incomes.</p>	<p>To respect and strengthen existing neighbourhood character, while encouraging quality, inclusive urban design.</p>
<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <p>Create and incentivize neighbourhood commercial to create convenient access to services for all residents.</p> <p>Focus on walkability improvements.</p> <p>Strive to integrate Asset Management and Planning.</p>	<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase housing options based on community needs. • Encourage affordable housing options (including non-market). • Set housing targets and monitor over time. 	<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve processes and requirements for infill development. • Create tools for improved social inclusion of all residents. • Policies to support innovation.

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<p>OBJECTIVE EP</p> <p>To encourage growth and manage land use with a goal of balanced economic and environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE EP</p> <p>To support what works and encourage new opportunities and investments.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE CA</p> <p>To promote clean energy and reduce greenhouse gases (Climate Mitigation) by maximizing energy efficiency through conservation, local renewable energy opportunities, partnerships, and the use of sustainable infrastructure and green building design.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVE SE</p> <p>To provide age friendly, accessible, and affordable housing options for a mix of demographics to encourage social inclusion.</p>
<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand neighbourhood commercial opportunities. Focus on infill development and gentle density. 	<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better development approvals process (e.g. fewer development agreements, more site plan approvals). Focus on walkability and the Core Area. 	<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work toward advancing our position in the Partners for Climate Protection Program through GHG emissions reduction and energy planning work. 	<p>ANTICIPATED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure variety and adaptability in our housing options.

The MPS also states policies for Neighbourhood Focus Areas:

Policy 8.6.2.3 *To recognize the importance of considering increased densities and infill development throughout all residential neighbourhoods in Wolfville, save and except the R1 zone, to create inclusive mixed income neighbourhoods, and contribute to the community's vibrancy.*

Policy 8.6.3.4 *To recognize that a healthy, inclusive, and vibrant neighbourhood consists of a variety of housing types, designs, sizes and styles.*

Policy 8.6.3.7 *To recognize the importance of quality places in addressing social isolation and improving human connectivity and intermingling of both residents and visitors of all ages, incomes and abilities.*

Policy 8.6.3.10 *To support Social Inclusion through land use decision making by recognizing that planning does have a role to play in creating inclusive rather than exclusive built environments and that our built form should reflect our desire to be inclusive of all people.*

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Sections 11.4.2 and 11.4.3 of the MPS outlines the policies of Council when considering a Development Agreement. Attachment 1 outlines all the policies and analysis; however, the following lists the most pertinent considerations for this application

11.4.2 and 11.4.3 Development Agreements

- Policy 11.4.3 d.** Compatibility of the proposed land use with adjacent land uses; and*
- f.** Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of lighting, signage, outdoor display, outdoor storage, traffic impacts, and noise.*
- g.** Integration of the development into the surrounding area by means of appropriate landscaping, with screening provided by existing and new vegetation and fencing as required.*
- q.** The adequacy of active transportation infrastructure to support walking and cycling to and from the proposed development; and*
- r.** The provision of off-street vehicle and bicycle parking to prevent significant congestion, nuisance and inconvenience in the area.*

The Design Guidelines have been created to control or influence certain aspects of the Town's built form and the impact on the public realm. Council also recognizes that the Town is never finished and ever evolving, and that design and architectural innovation must be accommodated and encouraged. The following policies are those most relevant to this application. An analysis of the policies in section 11.4.4 can be found in Attachment 1.

11.4.4 Design Guidelines

***Policy 11.4.4.3** To use the Design Review Committee to complement the Design Guidelines when considering Development Applications, as outlined in the Land Use Bylaw.*

***Policy 11.4.4.4** To recognize that the Design Guidelines are used to inform development processes and that they are not prescriptive in nature. Mandatory requirements shall be defined in the Land Use Bylaw and Development Agreements.*

***Policy 11.4.4.7** To require that all developments located within a designated Design Guidelines Area respond to the design principles and guidelines of the Design Guidelines and that the Design Review*

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Committee and a Design Guidelines Checklist be used in certain circumstances, as defined in the Land Use Bylaw and Design Guidelines (Schedules of the Land Use Bylaw).

11. Implementation

Parts 11.4.2 and 11.4.3 contain general policies that are to be considered for all development agreement applications. A summary of the entire policy, with Staff comment to each criterion, is provided as *Attachment 1*.

Land Use By-Law (LUB)

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) establishes the following regulations:

Part 15. Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) Zone

The intent of the Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) Zone is to permit a mix of small scale commercial and residential uses. Council may consider unique and site-specific developments by development agreement.

16.4.2 The Development Officer may use the Design Review Committee for any aspect of an application in the C-2 zone.

PROCESS & NEXT STEPS

Section 230 of The Municipal Government Act (MGA) establishes the process for the approval of a Development Agreement. This process requires review by the Planning Advisory Committee and the holding of a Public Hearing by Council prior to a decision by Council to approve or reject the proposal. The decision by Council may be appealed to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board by an aggrieved person or by the Applicant.

The first stage of the application review process began at the Public Information Meeting (PIM) held on May 18th, 2023. Property owners within 100 metres of the development were notified by mail and a notice of the PIM was posted in the Saltwire newspaper indicating that the site was subject to a development agreement application. The purpose of the PIM was to provide the public with an opportunity to offer preliminary feedback on the request and allow the applicant to answer any questions that would arise. The subject property is located within the Neighbourhood Design Guideline area requiring review by the Town's Design Review Committee (DRC). The Application was reviewed by the DRC on July 6th, 2023. Notes

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Development Agreement Proposal
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from both the PIM and DRC have been included below and assist the review process in identifying issues, support or concerns raised by residents, business owners and committee members.

The next step in the Development Agreement process (as shown below), will be to have the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) review this report and provide a recommendation to Council. Council will then provide Initial Consideration, and if passed, a Public Hearing will be scheduled prior to a decision on the proposal from Council.

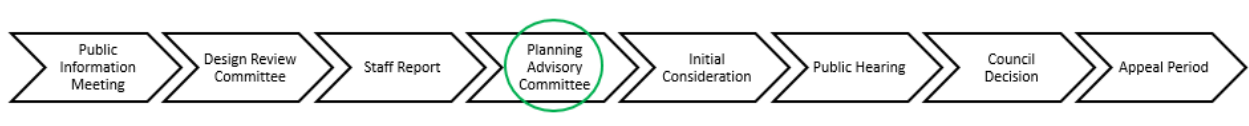


Figure 3 – Development Agreement Process

REVIEW FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

The Town held a Public Information Meeting on May 18th, 2023. Notes from this meeting are included as Attachment 2. Comments during this meeting focused on the provision of affordable units within the building and the need for housing suitable for various life stages in Wolfville.

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

This property is located within the Design Guidelines Area. The Design Review Committee met on July 6th, 2023 to consider how the proposed development aligns with the Design Checklist:

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DESIGN CHECKLIST

The following checklist shall be considered when an applicant is subject to these guidelines.

- CHARACTER
- PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE
- DIVERSITY
- PATTERNS
- PUBLIC REALM
- SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

Feedback from the Design Review Committee members was positive. Some suggestions include the use of natural materials for the façade to help the building integrate visually with the existing buildings in the area as well as suggestions for a street facing porch to improve the human experience from the sidewalk.

While no final decisions have yet been made regarding the exterior building materials, the applicant is intending to use black windows and doors, wood painted clapboard on the main body with metal siding in less prominent areas, and metal roofing on the sloped areas.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Advisory Committee provide a positive recommendation to Council regarding the Draft Development Agreement for 234 Main Street (PID 55278626) and that the attached Draft Development Agreement be forwarded to Council for Initial Consideration before a Public Hearing is held.

Staff believe the development proposal meets the overall intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy but is a unique and site-specific case given the multi-generational living and shared spaces design aspects.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Policy Summary Tables

REPORT TO PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Development Agreement Proposal

234 Main Street

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Development



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2. Public Information Meeting Notes and summary of other comments
 3. Draft Development Agreement

ATTACHMENT 1 – Policy Summary Tables

Policy 11.4.3 of the MPS states the general considerations for all development agreements. As part of the review for this section, staff may have contacted other departments or outside agencies to seek specific information. The following table outlines the policy and provides Staff comment:

11.4.3 CRITERIA FOR LUB AMENDMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	Staff Comment
<p>GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>a. The financial ability of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the proposal; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
<p>b. The proposal’s conformance with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy and to all other applicable Town Bylaws and regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development agreement amendment conforms with the intent of the MPS and would be regulated at the site level through a development agreement to cover specifics.
<p>c. The proposal’s conformance with relevant portions of the Town’s ‘Sustainability Checklist’, where applicable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
<p>COMPATIBILITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>d. Compatibility of the proposed land use with adjacent land uses; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed use is residential and is compatible with surrounding residential uses.
<p>e. Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of height, scale, lot coverage, density, bulk, and architectural style; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development is compatible with the surrounding properties in terms of height, bulk, lot coverage and architectural style.
<p>f. Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of lighting, signage, outdoor display, outdoor storage, traffic impacts, and noise; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lighting shall not negatively impact neighbouring properties, outdoor storage containing unsightly materials will be screened. The Town’s Noise Bylaw applies throughout Town to manage noise, and the proposed development does not pose any issues pertaining to traffic impacts.

<p>g. Integration of the development into the surrounding area by means of appropriate landscaping, with screening provided by existing and new vegetation and fencing as required; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape plan to come.
<p>h. The proposal protects and preserves matters of public interest such as, but not limited to:</p>	
<p>i. historically significant buildings;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development does not impact any historically significant buildings.
<p>j. public access to shorelines, parks, and public and community facilities; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan does not interfere with any shorelines, parks, or public and community facilities.
<p>k. important and significant cultural features, natural land features and vegetation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable.
<p>SERVICING CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>l. The adequacy of sanitary services, water services, and storm water management services; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Engineering to review
<p>M. Contribution of the proposal towards an orderly and compact development pattern that makes efficient use of existing and new municipal infrastructure and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development contributes to a compact development pattern that makes efficient use of existing municipal infrastructure.
<p>MOBILITY CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>n. The adequacy of the road network in, and adjacent to, or leading to the development, regarding connectivity, congestion and traffic hazards; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Engineering to review
<p>o. The adequacy of site access as determined by the Traffic Authority; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Engineering to review
<p>p. The ability of emergency services to respond to an emergency at the location of the proposed development; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Chief to review

<p>q. The adequacy of active transportation infrastructure to support walking and cycling to and from the proposed development; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site abuts the Harvest Moon Trail, has direct sidewalk access and includes indoor bicycle storage.
<p>r. The provision of off -street vehicle and bicycle parking to prevent significant congestion, nuisance and inconvenience in the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground parking is available as well as driveway parking.
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>s. Consideration of any previous uses of the site which may have caused soil or groundwater contamination; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
<p>t. Suitability of the site in terms of slope and flood and erosion risk in accordance with Schedule E of the Land Use Bylaw; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property is marginally located within the Existing Flood Risk Area (this assumes no raised dykes). The dykes are being raised. This will change the risk to the property. In the meantime, this risk is being communicated with the property owner and mitigating measures are being considered.
<p>u. Consideration of any anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the development, such as air and water pollution, soil contamination, and potential for the contamination or sedimentation of watercourses. Where Council determines, on the advice of a qualified person, that there is a significant risk of environmental damage from any proposed development, an environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the developer for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of any impact and no agreement shall be approved until Council is satisfied that the proposed development will not create or result in undue environmental damage; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable

<p>v. The application of sustainable design principles and energy efficient technology, including but not limited to renewable energy infrastructure; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development will include roof top solar arrays and electric vehicle storage. The applicant will be required to meet the minimum energy efficiency standards outlined in the National Building Code.
<p>w. Environmentally friendly paving alternatives, provision of alternative transportation parking, integration of landscaping into the design of parking lots, green roofs, etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development will include underground electric vehicle parking and charging stations and bicycle storage.

ATTACHMENT 2 - Public Information Meeting and Other Public Input

**Public Information Meeting
6.00 PM – Council Chambers
Development Agreement Proposal
249 Main Street**

Attending

Director of Planning Devin Lake, Community Planner Lindsay Slade, Applicants Nancy Price with architect Michael Napier. 11 members of the public were in attendance, though most were attending due to another application presented at this meeting.

Director Lake began the PIM at 6:00 PM with a presentation on the development proposal, beginning with a look at the existing property as well as an overview of the development proposed. Director Lake then reviewed the policy relating to this application and the requirements of the DA process. Director Lake then looked to the attendees for questions.

One member of the public asked whether there will be affordable units in the proposed development. The applicant responded that the price per unit had not yet been determined.

Director Lake adjourned the meeting at 7.00 PM.

General Public Input

Public input that has been received outside of DRC and the PIM has included one request to apply to live in the building once it is built, and one other comment was regarding the need for more multi-generational homes in Wolfville to allow more people to age in place.

ATTACHMENT 3 – Draft Development Agreement (subject to legal review)

This **Development Agreement** is made this _____ day of _____, 2023.

BETWEEN:

Nancy Price

(Hereinafter called the “Developer”)

OF THE FIRST PART

- and -

TOWN OF WOLFVILLE

A municipal body corporate,
(Hereinafter called the “Town”)

OF THE SECOND PART

WHEREAS the Developer has requested that the Town enter into a Development Agreement relating to the use and development of the Lands (PID 55278626) pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act and the Municipal Planning Strategy for the Town of Wolfville;

AND WHEREAS a condition of granting approval for the development of the Lands is that the parties enter into this Development Agreement;

AND WHEREAS the Town Council of the Town, at its meeting on **DDMMYYYY** approved entering into this Development Agreement to permit the establishment of one building containing seven guest suites on the Lands, subject to the registered owner of the Lands entering into this Development Agreement;

NOW THEREFORE THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSES THAT in consideration of the covenants made in this Development Agreement and other valuable consideration the Developer and the Tenant and the Town agree to the following terms.

1. Schedules

The following schedules form part of this Development Agreement:

Schedule “A” – Legal Parcel Description of Lands

Schedule “B” – Site Plan

Schedule “C” – Landscape Plan

Schedule “D” – Architectural Design

Schedule “E” – Design Guideline Areas Map

2. Definitions

2.1 In this Development Agreement:

“Building By-Law” means Chapter 65 of the By-Laws of the Town of Wolfville.

“Developer” means the owner(s) of the lands, their heirs, successors, assigns, and all subsequent owners of the lands.

“Development” means the expansion of the existing heritage property.

“Development Officer” means the Development Officer appointed by the Town of Wolfville under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*.

“Engineer” means the Engineer appointed by the Town of Wolfville under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*.

“Effective date” means the date on which this Development Agreement is deemed to be entered into under the terms of this Development Agreement.

“Lands” means the real property in the Town of Wolfville owned by the Developer, PID 55278626, and as described in Schedule “A”.

“Land Use By-Law” means the Land Use By-Law of the Town of Wolfville in force from time to time, adopted and amended by the Wolfville Town Council under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*. At the date of this Development Agreement, it is the Land Use By-Law effective September 3, 2020.

“Municipal Planning Strategy” means the municipal planning strategy of the Town of Wolfville in force from time to time, adopted and amended by the Wolfville Town Council under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*. At the date of this Development Agreement, it is the Municipal Planning Strategy effective September 3, 2020.

“MGA” means the *Municipal Government Act*, S.N.S. 1998, c. 18, as amended.

“Planning Documents” means Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Planning Strategy, and Subdivision Bylaw.

- 2.2** Where terms (words or phrases) are not defined in this Development Agreement, definitions in the Town’s planning documents shall apply. Where terms are not defined in the planning documents, definitions in the MGA shall apply. Where terms are not defined in the aforementioned sources, their ordinary meaning shall apply.

3. Relevance of Planning Documents and Other Regulations

- 3.1** This Development Agreement contains definitions and regulations for the Development. It complements the Town’s Planning Documents. Unless specified in this Development Agreement, requirements in the Town’s Planning Documents shall apply. Where there is a conflict between this Development Agreement and the Planning Documents, this Development Agreement shall prevail.

- 3.2** Regulations outside of this Development Agreement or the Town’s Planning Documents may be applicable to the Development. However, the terms of this Development Agreement shall not be materially changed in order to comply with such regulations without an amendment to this Development Agreement.

4. Background

The Developer wishes to construct a 3-storey multi-unit residential building containing up to 10 dwelling units.

5. Terms

5.1 Development Conditions

5.1.1 Permits and Approvals

- 5.1.1.1** This Development Agreement allows the Developer to obtain development permits, other permits, and permissions to allow uses permitted by this Agreement.

- 5.1.1.2** The Developer shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals required by law for the Development, including but not

limited to development permits, building permits, and any approvals required from the Province of Nova Scotia.

5.1.1.3 Obligations or other requirements in this Development Agreement are those of the Developer, unless otherwise specified.

5.1.1.4 No occupancy permit shall be granted for this Development until all provisions of this agreement are met, except for landscaping requirements that cannot be met due to seasonal restrictions.

5.1.2 Land Use

5.1.2.1 The following uses are permitted:

- (a)** Continuation of existing use and,
- (b)** other accessory uses permitted as by the Land Use Bylaw for the corresponding zone.

5.1.3 Landscaping & Site Requirements

5.1.3.1 The Development shall conform to the zone standards of the Land Use By-law, except as otherwise established by this Agreement.

5.1.3.2 All Development shall occur on the Lands.

5.1.3.3 Development on the Lands shall be built generally in accordance with the Site Plan and Specifications of Schedule "B", which may be varied to accommodate location of outdoor decks, patios, porches and vegetation.

5.1.3.4 The Developer shall establish and maintain all non-hard surface areas on the Lands as landscaped areas.

5.1.3.5 Storm water runoff from the Lands shall not be directed onto adjacent properties unless permission is obtained from the adjacent property owner for the direction of such storm water runoff.

5.1.3.6 No parking shall be permitted on non-hard surfaced areas of the site.

5.1.3.7 The Developer shall provide sufficient onsite lighting for all driveways and walkways on the Lands to provide for the reasonable safety and security of

vehicles and pedestrians. All exterior lighting fixtures shall direct light toward the ground as to prevent the unreasonable illumination of adjacent properties.

5.1.4 Municipal Services

5.1.4.1 The parties agree that municipal sanitary sewer and water services are available.

5.1.4.2 The Town makes no warranties, guarantees or claims as to the adequacy of the Town's water supply to provide the recommended Fire Flow amounts for protection of the building from fire. The Developer shall satisfy itself that the available fire flows are satisfactory to meet its needs.

5.1.5 Refuse Storage and Utility Equipment

5.1.5.1 Refuse, compost, recyclables, and other similar matters shall be stored within the building(s), or within accessory structures or containers pursuant to the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw, Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management By-Law, and other applicable regulations.

5.1.5.2 Containers referenced in 5.1.5.1 shall be located so that they are visually screened.

5.1.5.3 Utility equipment such as mechanical and electrical equipment shall be visually screened by fencing or landscaping.

5.1.6 General Maintenance and Operation

5.1.6.1 Buildings, landscaping, and other related features shall be maintained in good condition, pursuant to the Town's Property Minimum Standards By-law.

5.1.7 Architecture

5.1.7.1 The developer shall build the development generally as illustrated in Schedule "D", Architectural Design.

5.1.8 Timing

5.1.8.1 This Development Agreement shall be deemed entered into on the day following the day on which the time for appeal of Town Council's approval has elapsed, or the day on which any appeals have been disposed of and the policy of the Wolfville Town Council approving this Development Agreement has been affirmed by the Nova Scotia Utilities and Review Board, under the provisions of the MGA, or other judiciary body as applicable.

5.1.8.2 This Development Agreement does not come into effect until the requirement of Section 228(3) of the Municipal Government Act are fulfilled and this development agreement is filed in the Registry of Deeds. All other time requirements imposed in this Development Agreement shall be calculated from that date, the effective date.

5.1.8.3 All Development enabled by this Agreement shall be completed within three (3) years. Upon failure to meet this timing requirement, the Town may discharge this Development Agreement without the consent of the Developer or Tenant.

5.1.9 Amendment

5.1.9.1 With the exception of matters which the Town and the Developer do not consider to be substantive, the amendment of any other matter in this Development Agreement can only be made under the provisions of Section 230 of the MGA, including the holding of a Public Hearing.

5.1.9.2 Following are matters in this Development Agreement which the Town and the Developer do not consider to be substantive:
(a) The requirements for completion imposed by section 5.1.8.3.

5.1.10 Expenses

5.1.10.1 The Developer shall pay all costs and expenses incurred by the Town related to this Development Agreement.

5.1.11 Liability

5.1.11.1 The Developer shall be liable for any damage caused to persons or public or private property by the Developer or any contractor or other individual doing work related to the Development. The Developer shall indemnify the Town and save it harmless from any claim, cause of action, or liability in any way relating to the Development. The Developer shall obtain and maintain in force

throughout the course of construction on the Development, liability insurance coverage to insure the responsibilities which the Developer is assuming in this section.

5.1.12 Default

5.1.12.1 If the Developer fails to comply strictly with any term of this Development Agreement or any legislation applicable to this Development Agreement, the Town may, after 30 days notice in writing to the Developer, enter the lands and perform any obligation with which the Developer has failed to comply strictly. All expenses arising out of the entry of the Lands and performance of the obligations may be recovered by the Town from the Developer by direct suit and shall form a charge upon the Lands. The Developer shall pay interest on any sum so expended by the Town at the same monthly rate charged by the Town for tax arrears on the outstanding balance from time to time. Such interest costs shall be treated as an expense.

5.1.12.2 If the Developer breaches any of the terms of this Development Agreement, the Town, at its sole option, may:

- (a)** Terminate this Development Agreement;
- (b)** Exercise its rights under paragraph 5.1.12.1 above; or,
- (c)** Take no action.

5.1.12.3 Any election by the Town to take no action on a breach of this Development Agreement by the Developer shall not bar the Town from exercising its rights under this Development Agreement on any other breach.

5.1.12.4 Any expenses incurred by the Town in exercising its rights under sections 5.1.12.1 and 5.1.12.2, or either of them, shall be paid by the Developer to the Town.

5.1.13 Administration

The Development Officer administers this Agreement. Their decision is final and binding on all parties.

6. Warranties by the Developer

6.1 Title and Authority

6.1.1 The Developer warrants as follows:

- (a)** The Developer has good title in fee simple to the Lands or good beneficial title subject to a normal financing encumbrance or is the sole holder of a Registered Interest in

the Lands. No other entity has an interest in the Lands which would require their signature on this Development Agreement to validly bind the Lands or the Developer has obtained the approval of every other entity which has an interest in the Lands whose authorization is required for the Developer to sign this Development Agreement to validly bind the Lands.

- (b) The Developer has taken all steps necessary to, and it has full authority to, enter this Development Agreement.

7. Full Agreement

7.1 Other Agreements

7.1.1 This Development Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and contract entered into by the Town and the Developer. No other agreement or representation, whether oral or written, shall be binding.

7.1.2 This Development Agreement shall not be a precedent for any other agreement either between the Town and the Developer or between the Town and any other party.

8. Notice

Any notice to be given under this Development Agreement shall be made in writing and either served personally or forwarded by courier or by registered mail, postage prepaid, if to the Town to:

Town of Wolfville
359 Main Street
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
B4P 1A1
Attention: Development Officer

and if to the Developer:

Nancy Price

9. Headings

The headings used in this Development Agreement are for convenience only. If any of the headings are inconsistent with the provisions of the Development Agreement which it introduces, the provisions of the Development Agreement shall apply.

10. Binding Effect

This Development Agreement shall ensure to the benefit of and be binding upon the parties to this Development Agreement, their respective successors, administrators, and assigns.

11. Execution

In witness of this Development Agreement the parties have signed and delivered it to each other on the date set out at the top of the first page.

SIGNED AND DELIVERED)
In the presence of:)
)
) TOWN OF WOLFVILLE
)
)
) By _____
) MAYOR
_____)
Witness)
)
) By _____
) TOWN CLERK
)
)
SIGNED AND DELIVERED)
In the presence of:)
)
)
) By _____
_____)	Nancy Price
Witness)
)

CANADA
PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA
COUNTY OF KINGS

I certify that on _____, 2023, _____ a
witness to this agreement came before me, made oath, and swore that the **TOWN OF WOLFVILLE**,
caused the same to be executed by its proper officers who affixed its Corporate Seal and subscribed
their hands in its name and in its behalf in his/her presence.

A Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia

CANADA
PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA
COUNTY OF KINGS

I certify that on _____, 2023, _____ a
witness to this agreement came before me, made oath, and swore that **Nancy Price** caused the same to
be executed by its proper officers who affixed its Corporate Seal and subscribed their hands in its name
and in its behalf in his/her presence.

A Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia

Schedule "A" – Property Description

ALL that certain lot, piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being on the North side of Main Street in the Town of Wolfville, in the County of Kings and Province of Nova Scotia, bounded and described as follows:

COMMENCING at a point on the North side line of said Main Street, said point marking the Southwest corner of lands of one Hayes;

THENCE in a westerly direction by the North limit of said Street, one hundred eleven (111) feet more or less to the East limit of a driveway serving the Wheaton Apartments so called;

THENCE northerly in a straight line passing through a point one and one half (1 1/2) feet West of the centre line of the shade tree located approximately one hundred (100) feet in a northerly direction from the Southwest corner of the herein described lands;

THENCE continuing in such straight line to the Southern boundary of the right of way to the Dominion Atlantic Railway;

THENCE in an easterly direction by the said Southern limit of the said right of way to the said Dominion Atlantic Railway to the West boundary line of the said lands of Hayes;

THENCE in a southerly direction by the West boundary line of the said Hayes lands to the point of beginning;

TOGETHER WITH a right of way for all purposes over the right of way now used along the Western boundary line herein;

BEING AND INTENDED TO BE the same land and premises as conveyed from Ian Long Allen in his personal capacity and as the Executor and Trustee of the Estate of Ian James Allen to Jacqueline Dophe Gifford by Deed dated September 17, 2008 and recorded in the Kings County Registry of Deeds as

Document No. 91835067.

*** Municipal Government Act, Part IX Compliance ***

Not Subject To:

The parcel was created by a subdivision that predates subdivision control or planning legislation or by-laws in the municipality and therefore no subdivision approval was required for creation of this parcel.

Schedule "B" Site Plan

Schedule "D" – Landscape Plan

Schedule "D" – Architectural Design

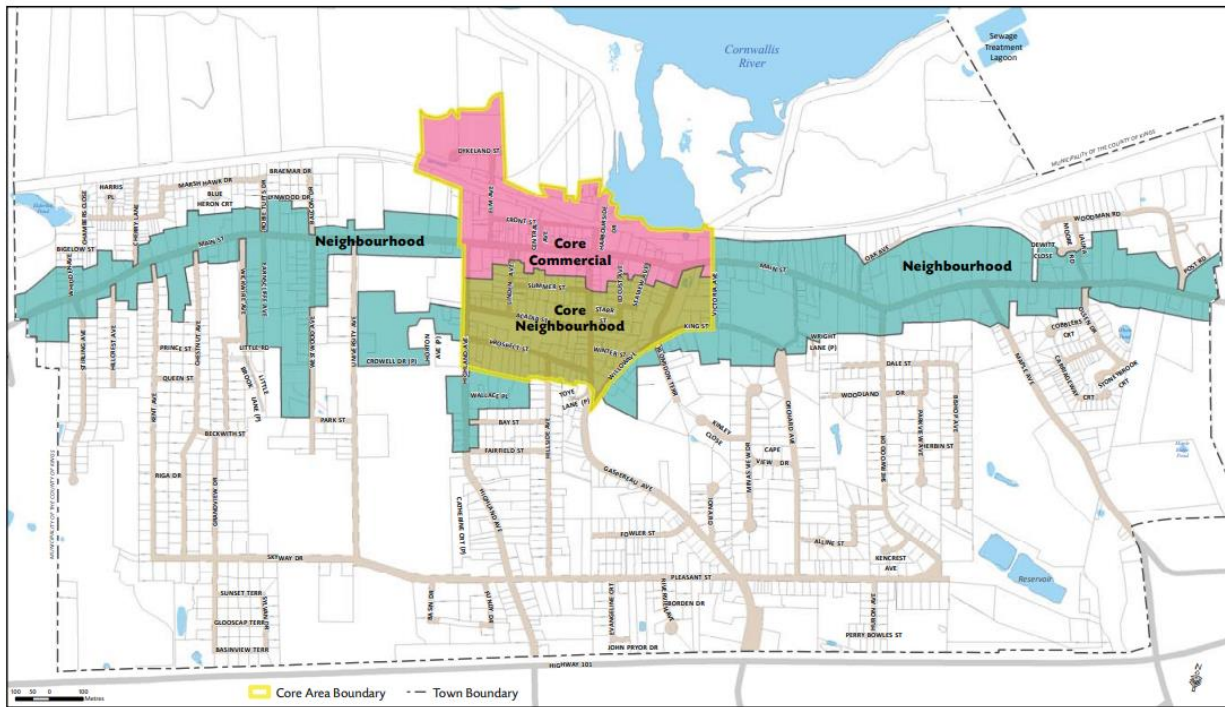
South Elevation

North Elevation

East Elevation

West Elevation

Schedule C: Design Guidelines Area Map



PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Housing Accelerator Funding Information Report

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



SUMMARY

Housing Accelerator Fund Update

An information report describing the CMHC's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) was brought to the Planning Advisory Committee in July, 2023. This report provides an update on the status of the Town's application.

The application period for the HAF has been extended until September 29, 2023. The extension was granted largely to allow more time for small and rural municipalities with fewer staff to complete the application. For the Town of Wolfville, this extension has provided an opportunity for staff to engage directly with developers in the east end who are questioning the state of Maple Avenue against the level of investment they are bringing to Town.

1) ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCES

1. Wolfville Housing Needs Assessment (PDF) EMBARGOED
2. [Housing Accelerator Fund](#)
3. [July PAC Information Report](#)

2) DISCUSSION

25 new dwelling units have been built in Wolfville per year on average over the past 5 years. Wolfville has a housing shortage of 165 units as of December 2022, and this number will jump to 830 units by 2027. If construction continues at the same pace over time, the housing shortage increases to 1,703 units by 2032, emphasizing the need to explore new models for increasing housing supply now.

Growth is measured by the number of permits issued for new units. Wolfville's baseline growth for net-new permits based on historical data is 25 units per year. Applicants of the HAF must commit to increasing growth by at least 10 per cent over the next three years. This report includes an update on the Town's action plan.

To help the Town meet the housing needs as outlined in the Housing Needs Assessment, Developers of both the Kenny Lands and Maple Ridge Lands have stated interest in beginning construction. The development of these lands, however, can be supported by the reconstruction of Maple Avenue. The cost of rebuilding a 700 metre section of Maple Avenue (Main Street to the compost site) is estimated at \$2,800,000.00 (using \$4,000 per metre as an estimate). It is estimated that Maple Avenue will not be rebuilt in the next 5 years under the Town's Capital and Operating Budget. Therefore, rebuilding Maple Avenue has become the focus of the Town's HAF application, as the rebuild unlocks the potential for

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Housing Accelerator Funding Information Report

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



construction much sooner. If the application is successful, the developers have agreed to build a minimum number of dwelling units by 2027. This exact number of units is yet to be determined, but is estimated to be approximately 100 units. Staff are in conversation with developers around this number.

Applying to the HAF:

To apply, municipalities must develop a Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan. The Action Plan must receive formal approval from Council ahead of the HAF contribution agreement being signed.

If approved, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the contribution agreement between the municipality and CMHC. The HAF program also requires an updated housing needs assessment for the municipality. A draft housing needs assessment for the Town has been completed and is pending final approval from the Province. Participating municipalities must also commit to scheduled reporting to the CMHC annually on growth numbers, progress on initiatives, and how HAF funding has been utilized.

Using the funds:

The funds can be used for the initiatives or for broader capital investments in housing infrastructure and community-related infrastructure that supports housing. The Town is looking to receive funding for capital investments in community-related infrastructure that supports housing (road construction). HAF funding must be spent within the four years of the program. The funding is stackable with most other federal funding and can also be used to displace municipal funds already committed in the budget.

The Action Plan:

The Action Plan details a housing supply growth target and five or more specific initiatives the Town will undertake to meet the growth targets. All initiatives must be implemented and completed within two years of the beginning of the HAF program. The CFO must also provide an attestation on the viability of the Action Plan at the time of submitting the application.

The initiatives:

A minimum of 5 initiatives are required. The initiatives should incentivize the creation of units to maximize funding potential. Initiatives that support improvements to the broader housing system and indirectly increase housing supply are also encouraged.

Staff have selected some initiatives from the list provided by CMHC and have included initiatives specific to Wolfville:

1. Capital improvement on Maple Avenue to facilitate housing supply.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Housing Accelerator Funding Information Report

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



2. Review regulatory requirements to better facilitate housing supply, including revised parking requirements, development agreement requirements.
3. Promoting and allowing more housing types that serve vulnerable populations. I.e. Small Option Homes and other innovative housing options.
4. Improving our permit and tracking system to increase efficiency.
5. Create a process for the disposal of town-owned land assets for the development of affordable housing as-of-right.
6. Hiring consultants to assist with the development of a non-market housing strategy.
7. Working with Acadia University to develop a Student Housing Strategy.

The following details are required for each initiative: a brief description of the initiative, the start and end date, the estimated number of permitted units the initiative will incent within a 10-year timeframe, and any other expected results of the initiative.

Barriers to creating more housing

The current planning documents create barriers to increasing housing in Town. The primary way housing is restricted is through the low-density residential (restricted) R-1 zoning. This zoning limits housing to 1 unit per lot. The R-1 zone comprises 9% of all land in Town and contains only 388 dwellings across 155 acres of land, a density of 2.5 units per acre.

The Community Profile and Housing Needs contained in the MPS reflects an outdated image of and inaccurate needs of Wolfville residents. Removing this section from the MPS and ensuring it is updated on a regular basis will provide a more accurate picture of the community and its needs.

Other barriers to housing are being looked at as Staff work through the housing policy review with PAC.

NEXT STEPS

Council must approve the Action Plan (September 26th Council meeting).

Director of Finance must provide an attestation of the viability of the plan.

Staff will continue discussions with developers regarding housing provisions as they relate to the application.

Staff will submit a completed application to the HAF by September 29th, 2023.

Successful applicants will be notified in November or December 2023.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Housing Accelerator Funding Information Report

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) project update

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) Zone Project Update

Despite commercial uses being enabled in the C-2 zone, there has been little commercial growth and interest in this zone, primarily driven by the housing demand in the area and the lack of incentive to convert space. Staff worked with students of the Dalhousie Master of Planning program in early 2023 to identify barriers and opportunities for commercial expansion in 3 key nodes: Harbourside Drive, East Main Street, and Summer Street, as well as to explore how the phased-in assessment tool, Bill 177, may be applicable to this zone. Some barriers identified by the students include certain Town approval processes and a lack of adequate infrastructure in key C2 areas.

The students provided a list of 12 recommendations for the C2 zone as a whole and for each of the 3 study nodes to attract more businesses to the area (pg. 60). While Staff are still digesting this work, some reform of the C2 zone is believed to be required to attract businesses.

At this time, Staff believe changes are required to the C-2 zone that is located in the core area – if Council wants to attract investment there. The C-2 zoned areas outside of the Core area are believed to be functioning fine and this zoning could continue there (e.g. Inns and other uses).

The core area C-2 properties are currently zoned with suburban regulations attached (e.g. parking, lot coverage, etc). If change is desired in this area, these regulations need to be amended. Given the difference in the planning context from when the C-2 zone was conceived of and now – it is appropriate to bring forward amendments that can better meet the goals of Council (as outlined in our Planning Documents). Further discussions with landowners are needed. Some initial discussion on this work has indicated that something closer to the C-1 zone is needed to attract projects that will create more commercial space and the type of commercial expansion desired.

Many properties in the C2 zone are residential rental units. To increase commercial offerings in this zone, some rental units may need to be converted to commercial spaces. This is a difficult ask of property owners and may come with the adverse side effect of displacing residents. There is opportunity in this zone for redevelopment of some sites and for new development that would not result in displacement.

As a first step to resuming this work, Staff are seeking feedback from the Planning Advisory Committee on the C-2 work to date. Following feedback, further community consultation will occur, and recommendations will be brought to PAC and on to Council.

Some imagery to assist with committee feedback is shown below.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) project update

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development



Image 1. C2 zone

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) project update

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development

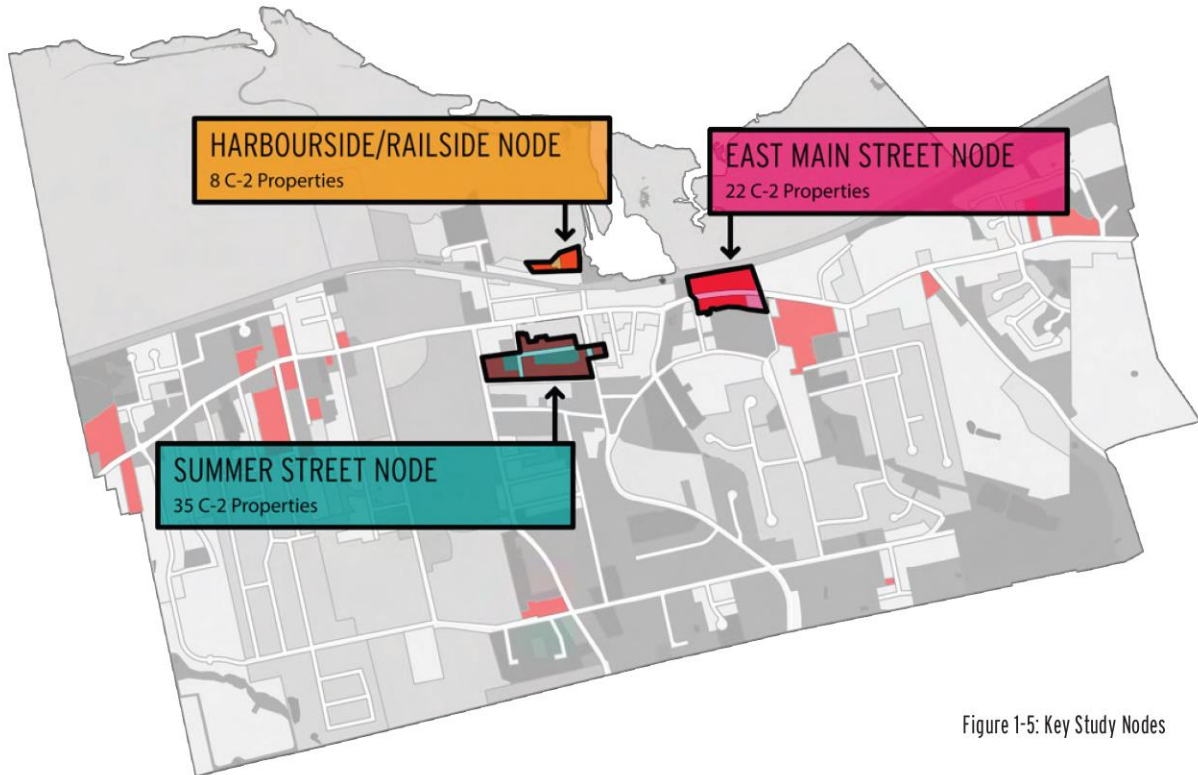


Figure 1-5: Key Study Nodes

Image 2. Study nodes

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Department: Planning & Economic Development

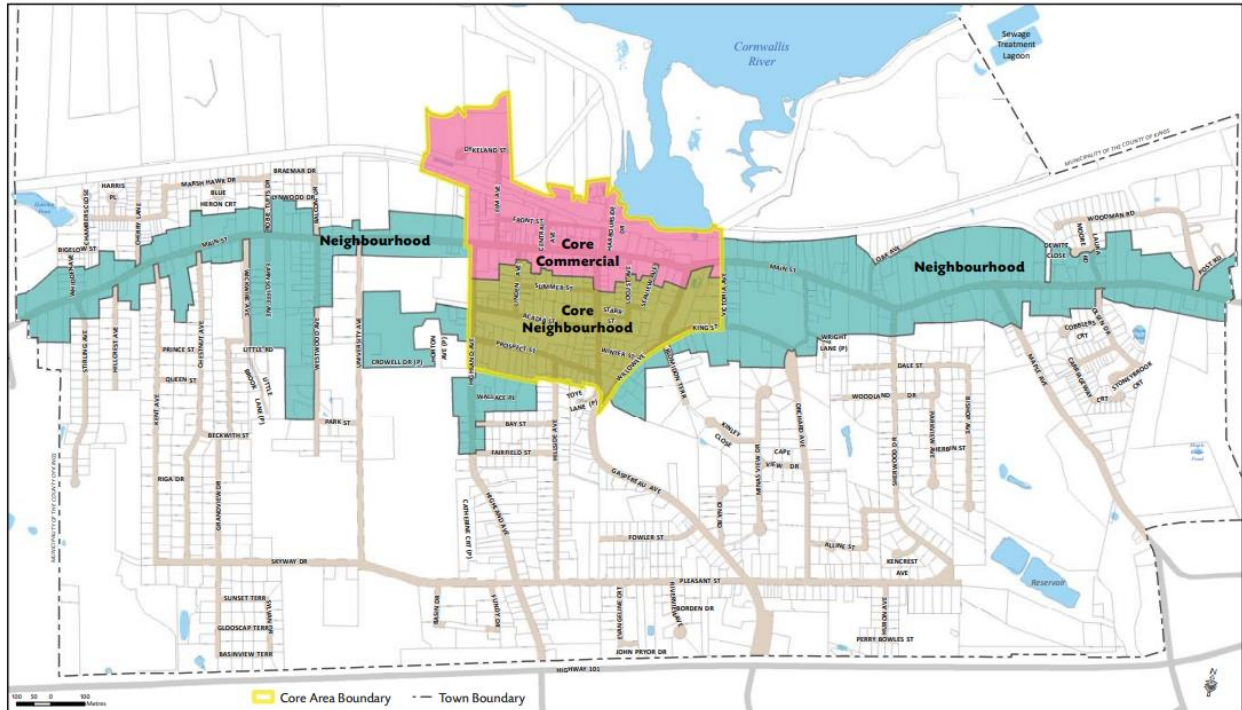


Image 3. Core areas

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title: Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) project update

Date: September 2023

Department: Planning & Economic Development

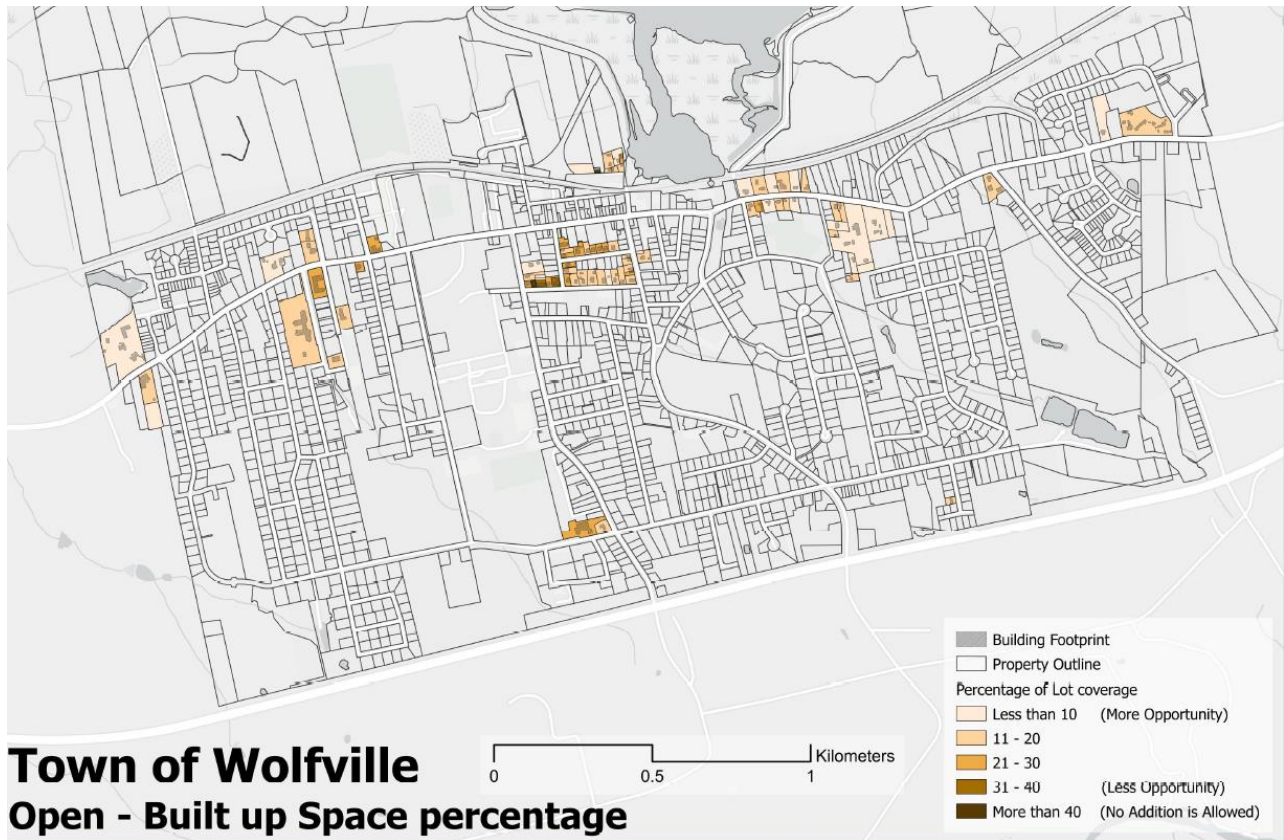


Image 4. Lot coverage per property in the C2 zone.



APRIL 2023

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN WOLFFVILLE'S C2 ZONE:

Identifying Barriers and Opportunities



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Land acknowledgment

The Town of Wolfville and Dalhousie University are located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional unceded lands of the Mi'kmaq people. We would like to recognize their past, present, and future stewardship of this land. As students and researchers, we give thanks for our opportunity to learn, live, and work on these lands and hope to uphold the values of reconciliation and inclusion in all our planning activities, both as students and future practitioners.

Foreword

This report was completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Integrative Team Project (PLAN 6500) in the Master of Planning Program at Dalhousie University.

Acknowledgements

Our team would like to acknowledge and thank our client, the Town of Wolfville, for allowing us this opportunity to learn through practice. Special thanks is extended to Devin Lake, Director of Planning, and Lindsay Slade, Community Planner, who have offered us invaluable insight and support throughout this project. We would also like to thank our instructors, Reid Shepherd and Dr. Eric Rapaport for their assistance and guidance.





about WOOLF

Woolf is a team of five Master of Planning students at Dalhousie University. Our team came together in January of 2023 with the mission to support walkable slow towns that are created with and for community.

Our slogan is *"We're here to listen"*. As consultants we aspire to learn from the vast experience of our clients and the communities we work within.

The Woolf team:

Samantha Horner

Jacob Macpherson

Harpal Singh

Mohammad Nemati Keyvan

Bridget Taylor

Executive Summary

Mixed-use development promote walkable, vibrant communities. Small scale commercial spaces are a key part of introducing commercial uses into established residential areas. While uncommon in modern residential neighbourhoods, “like public spaces, local-level retail provides venues for social activities necessary for building... authentic communities” (Grant & Perrott, 2011, p. 178).

Wolfville is a small municipality in Nova Scotia’s Annapolis Valley with 5057 year-round residents in the most recent census. Like many municipalities, the Town is facing high population growth, with a 20% increase between 2016 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023). The region also attracts over 191,000 visitors each year to the local shops, galleries, festivals, events, and other activities found within the Town.

The Town of Wolfville’s 2020 MPS aims to increase walkability and create vibrant, complete communities. To meet the Town’s goals the C-2 zone permits smallscale commercial uses in predominantly residential neighbourhoods. Despite the use being permitted, there has been limited new commercial in the C2 zone. Our research has two objectives:

1. Identify BARRIERS to commercial development in the C-2 zone
2. Identify OPPORTUNITIES for commercial development in the C-2 zone

Our Approach

Our research utilizes a mixedmethods approach to identify barriers and drivers to commercial development in the C-2 zone. Town staff have identified three priority study nodes with the opportunity for commercial development.



Barriers & Opportunities:

1. Barriers in municipal approval processes;
2. Lack of adequate infrastructure in key nodes;
3. Opportunities to utilize unique strengths of key nodes;
4. Financial incentives such as a phased-in assessment program;
5. Opportunities to learn from other municipalities;
6. Incubator and kiosk pilots

Recommendations for the C-2 Zone

1. Revisit the Town's Land Use By-Law with the goal of making permissions and requirements surrounding the C-2 zone more effective and easy to interpret and apply both for the general public and staff.
2. Work with the Commercial Phase In Assessment Tool (Bill 177) to provide a five year rebate for commercial development through the site plan approval process. The rebate would be weighted towards the first few years and would be open to size of business over a limited time frame. The tool would also be combined with other incentives, such as reductions in permit fees or priority approval processing.
3. Work with the Provincial Government and Property Value Services Corporation of Nova Scotia for the ability to charge commercial tax rates on short term rentals.

Recommendations for East Main St. Node

1. Prioritize the East Main St. Node for improvements to the pedestrian environment including sidewalks, benches, and signage.
2. Encourage smaller commercial units and kiosks placed along property setbacks line through policy and engagement.

Recommendations for the Summer St. Node

1. Address the gap in the C-2 zone in this area by rezoning the properties on the South side of Summer Street to C-2.
2. Conduct a feasibility analysis to evaluate the impacts of turning Summer Street into a shared street during the summer through features like paving details, planting, and signage.
3. Complete a visioning process for the Node as a whole to understand how current residents, including renters and those not in the C-2 zone, want to see the area change.

Recommendations for the Harbourside Node

1. Conduct a feasibility study on adding temporary commercial kiosks to the Waterfront Park. While this park is not located within the node or zoned C-2, it offers a sizable public space that is being improved through major private investment and has the potential to become a lively gathering place. Considerations would include using seasonal facilities, looking at partnership opportunities to reduce operational costs and burden, and working with the local businesses to establish leasing rates.

Chapter 1

Project Overview



Project Origins

Up until the 1960s small corner stores, bakeries, office uses, and other commercial spaces were a normal part of otherwise residential neighbourhoods (Sutton, 2010). These spaces provided access to goods and services for local residents and income opportunities for homeowners (Grant & Perrott, 2011). Home-based businesses were of particular importance to women in the early 20th, offering an avenue to participate in the labour force and contribute to household costs while remaining in the home (McCarthy, 2018). As commercial and residential uses became increasingly separated following the 1960s, corner stores and other neighbourhood commercial spaces disappeared.



Figure 1-1: Examples of neighbourhood commercial development in the City of Vancouver (Matthews, 1928a & 1928b)

While mixed-use development has made a resurgence as a part of many modern planning approaches, such as New Urbanism, Smart Growth, and sustainable development, Hirt (2007) found that implementation typically focuses on bringing residential uses into commercial areas as opposed to re-introducing commercial uses into low-density residential neighbourhoods. Focusing only on bringing residential to commercial does not acknowledge that single-family homes continue to account for over half of dwellings in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2023) making it essential that approaches that work in the other direction are also considered. Neighbourhood commercial spaces provide one opportunity to allow for the inclusion of commercial uses in established residential neighbourhoods and expand the benefits of mixed-use development outside of urban cores (Sutton, 2010).

The Town of Wolfville's 2020 Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) recognizes the importance of neighbourhood commercial development, referencing it in connection to two of their six community priorities (see Figure 1-2). The MPS establishes a neighbourhood commercial (C-2) zone which enables commercial development in select properties in predominantly residential neighbourhoods. The vision and goals of this zone are described in the Town's MPS:

Council recognizes that there is a need to create new commercial spaces and studios in Wolfville that can attract and retain

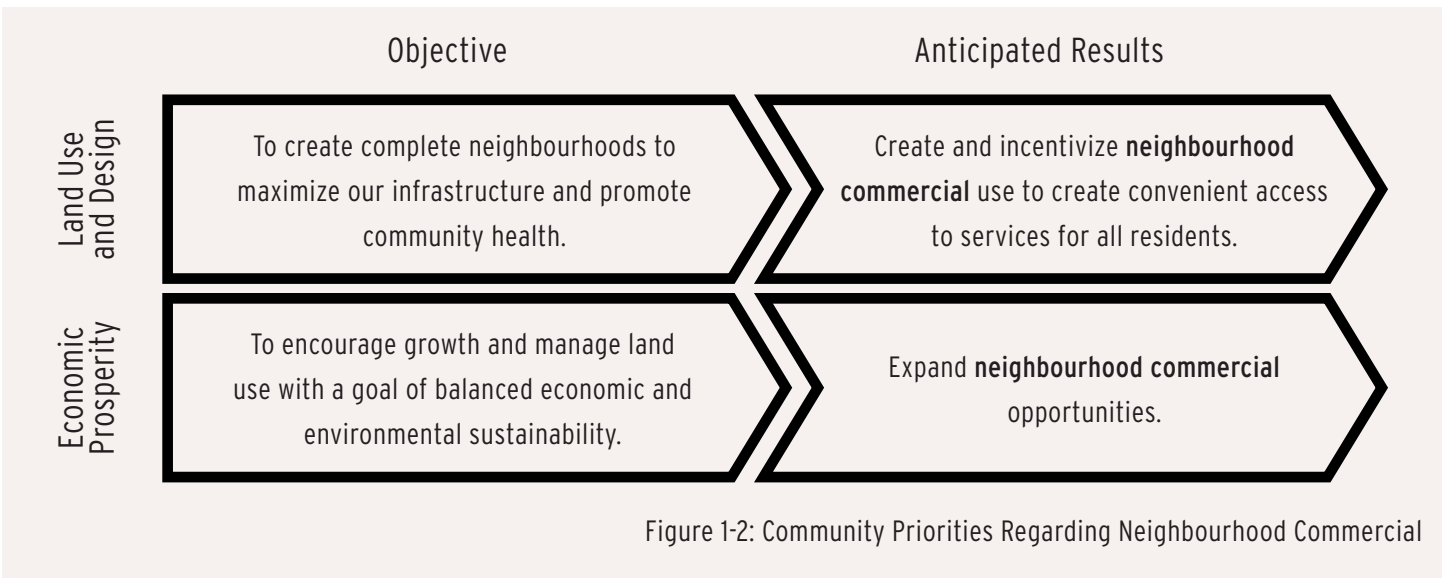


Figure 1-2: Community Priorities Regarding Neighbourhood Commercial

*entrepreneurs and small business which add value to our local economy. Council also recognizes the need to add additional walkability and density to neighbourhoods. **Fostering home-based or live-work opportunities in existing Neighbourhood areas can support these goals.** Council has the opportunity to consider Neighbourhood Commercial zoning (C-2) on properties that would add to the diversity and walkability of neighbourhoods outside of the Core Area. C-2 zoning can enable amenities or services - beyond a Home Based Business. Adding flexibility in the policies and permitted locations for neighbourhood entrepreneurship opportunities throughout Wolfville is considered an effective way to support local products, local artists/craftspeople, the local economy, walkability and the growing need for more commercial spaces.*

(Town of Wolfville, 2020b, p. 81)

Despite the zone's intent, since the approval of the MPS in 2020, Town staff have observed few projects in the C-2 zone that include

commercial uses. This lack of uptake is seen in other municipalities who have implemented policies to allow more mixed-use development. Grant and Perrott (2011) found that even in cities where land use policies were updated to enable mixed-use development, the success of the policies in encouraging mixed-use, complete neighbourhoods was limited. While land use policy tools present an impactful way to enable mixed use development, the study indicates a need to look at other tools outside of that scope. To this end, the Town is evaluating opportunities to promote mixed-use development through the C-2 zone that go beyond enabling policy.

Policy cannot guarantee that developers build the kind of developments that planners believe will produce good communities. Mixed use will not thrive simply because planners plan.
(Grant & Perrott, 2011, p. 192)

Our Approach

Project Framework

Our project is guided by a purpose, goals, and research questions. The purpose outlines the larger intent of the project and the role we see it playing in planning research and practice. The research questions outline the key questions that we intend to answer and which will guide our research. The goals reflect the concrete outcomes we hope to achieve through our research.

Purpose

To expand on understandings of how to promote the benefits of mixed-use development by focusing on avenues to re-introduce commercial development in established residential neighbourhoods.

Research Questions

1. What are the barriers to commercial development in the Town of Wolfville's Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) zone?
2. What opportunities are there for the Town to support commercial development in the Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) zone?

Goals

1. To understand barriers and drivers to re-introducing commercial development in Wolfville's residential

neighbourhoods.

2. To provide feasible recommendations to the Town on how to address barriers and capitalize on opportunities for commercial development in the C-2 zone.
3. To develop graphical resources to support the Town in furthering our recommendations.

Study Area

Our project examines the Town of Wolfville in Nova Scotia, Canada. Specifically, our study area includes the 79 properties in the Town of Wolfville that are currently zoned C-2 (see Figures 1-3 and 1-4). In instances where uses on properties adjacent to C-2 zoned properties are relevant, they are also addressed.

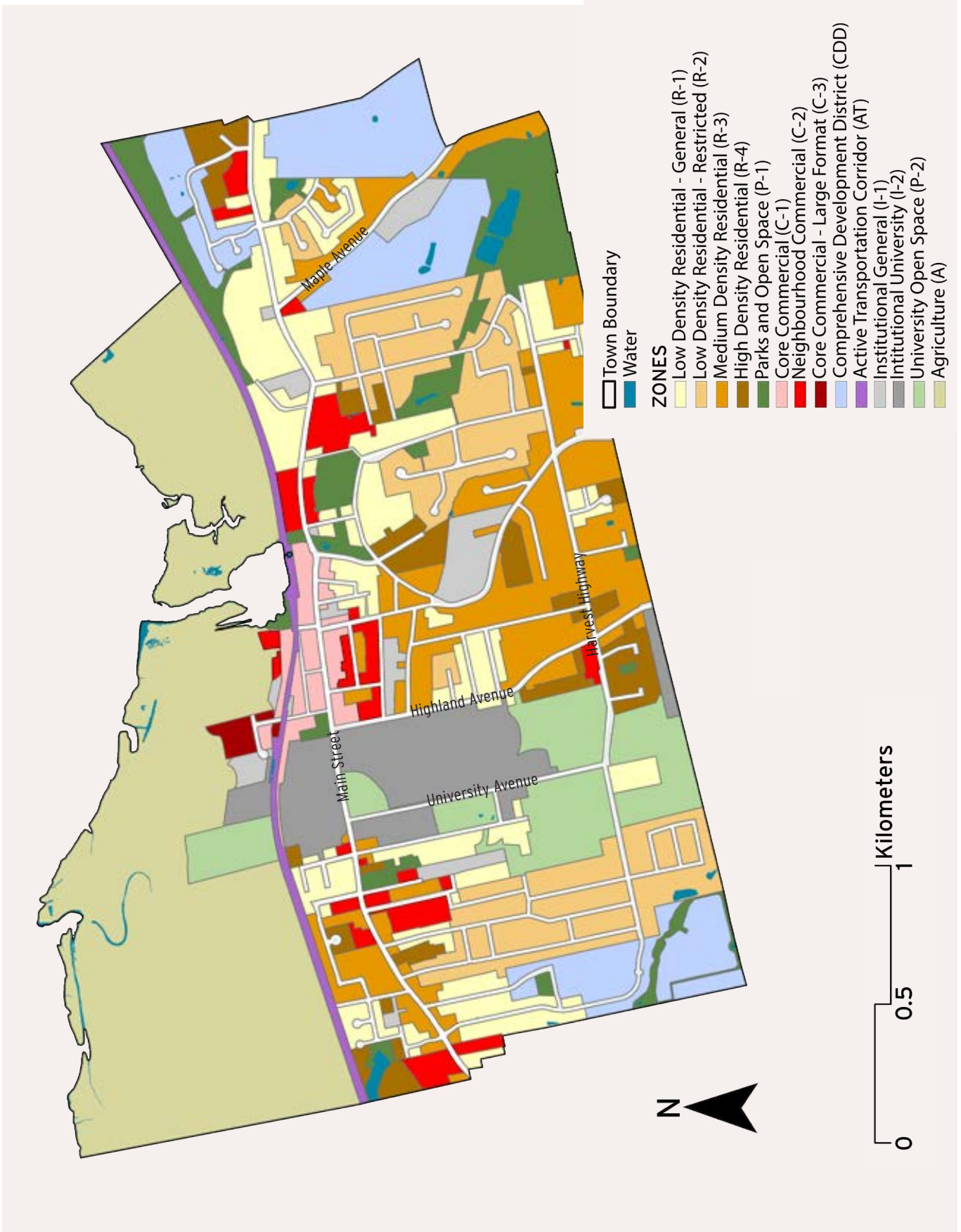


Figure 1-3: Town of Wolfville zoning map

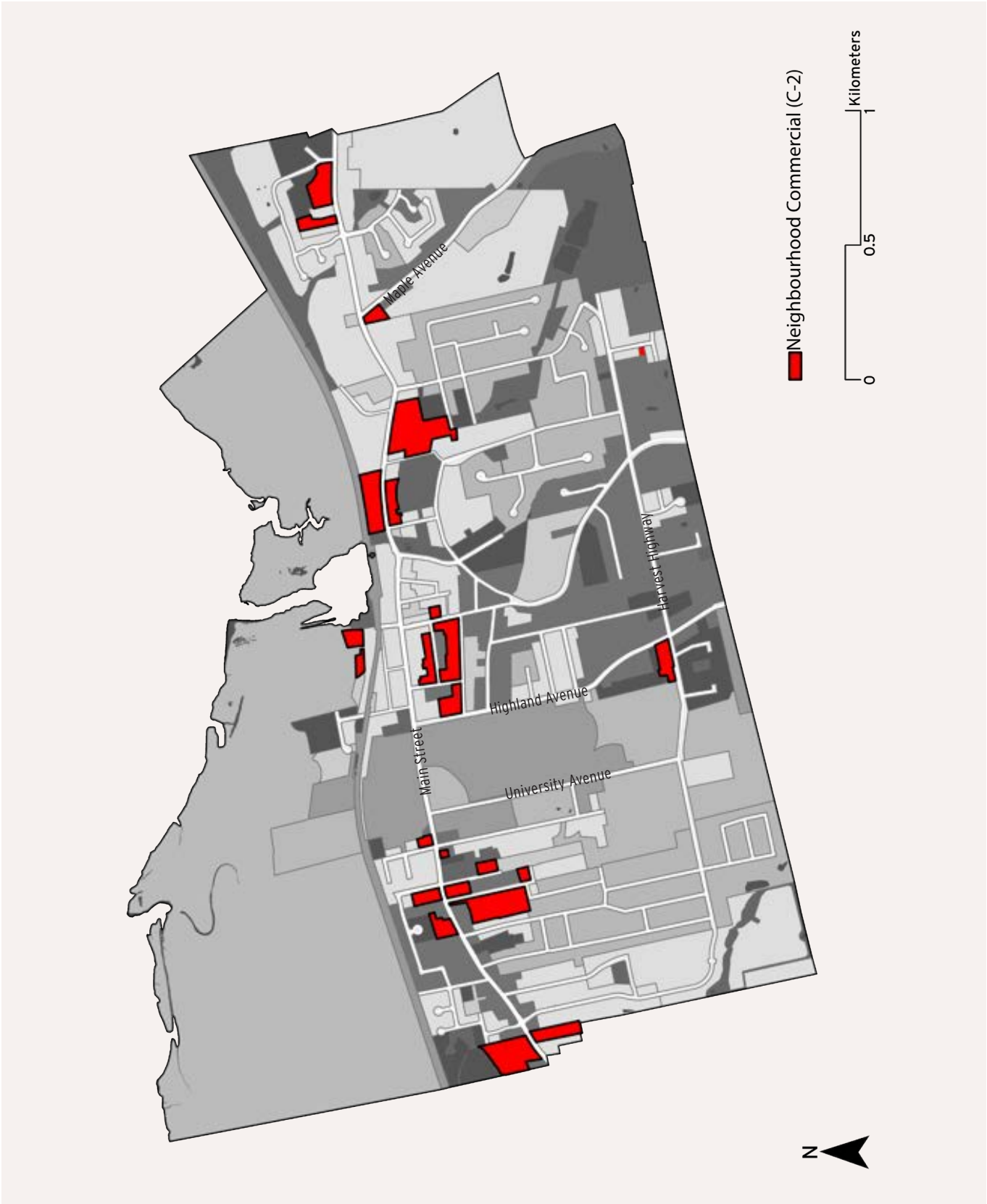


Figure 1-4: Neighbourhood Commercial (C-2) zone, Town of Wolfville

Study Nodes

Three key study nodes were identified for further analysis (see Figure 1-5). While they vary in size, these three nodes were chosen with the Town based on their potential to support mixed use commercial development because of their proximity to Downtown Wolfville, access to good pedestrian infrastructure, or because of predicted growth within the area. The nodes are:

- **Harbourside/Railside Node.** This node contains 8 C-2 zoned properties. The Harbourside Node is found north of Wolfville's Downtown and south of the Minas Basin, near a defunct railway that has been converted to

a trail that connects Annapolis Royal to Grand Pré.

- **East Main Street Node.** This node contains 22 C-2 zoned properties and is found to the east of Wolfville's Downtown. Main Street is a part of Highway 1, and is the main route into the Town for visitors taking them directly into the Town's Downtown.
- **Summer Street Node.** The largest of the three, this node contains 35 C-2 zoned properties. The Summer Street Node is located directly south of Wolfville's Downtown and backs onto the Wolfville School.

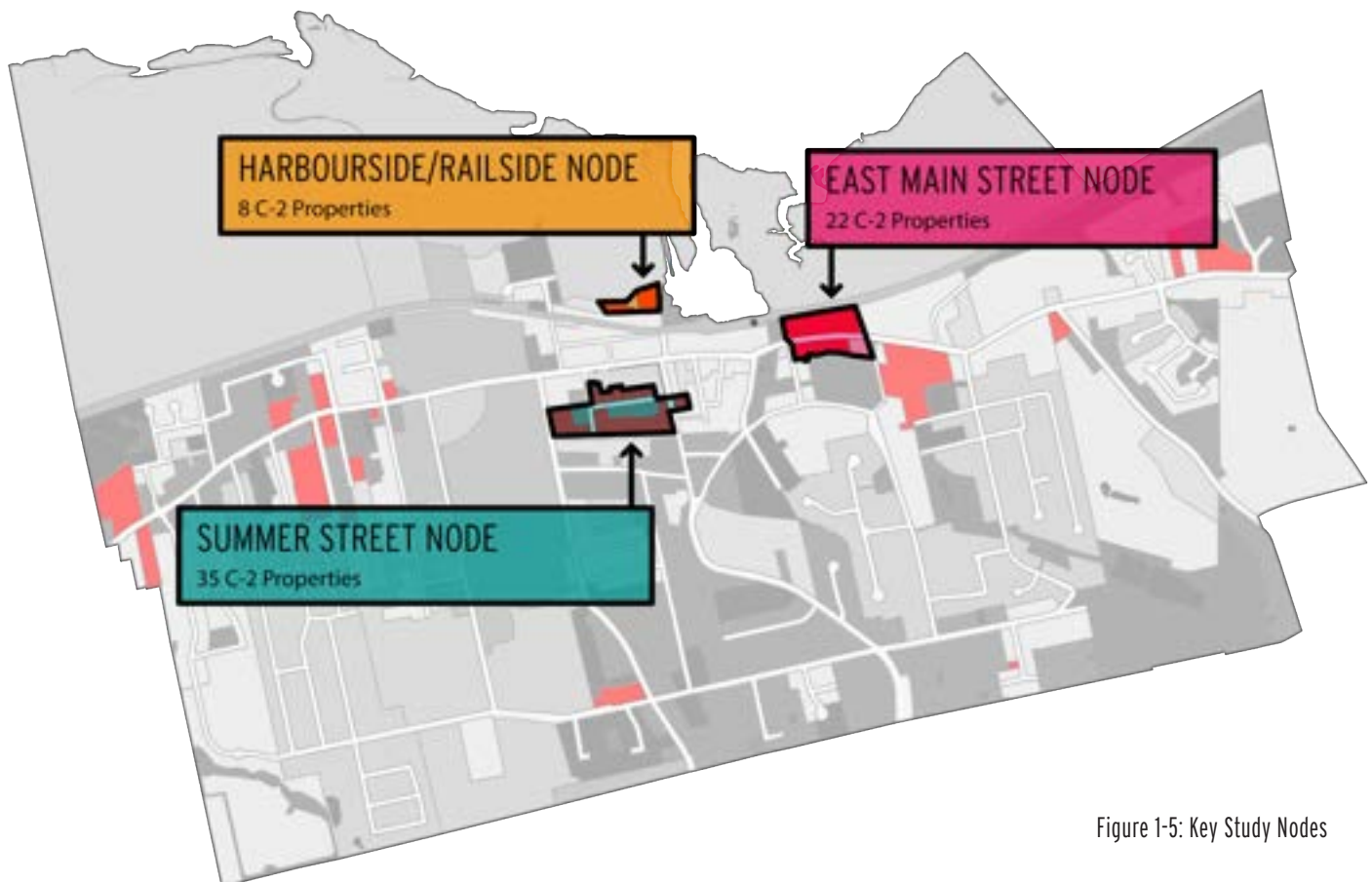


Figure 1-5: Key Study Nodes

Methodology

We employ a mixed-methods approach including quantitative and qualitative research methods. Mixed-methods approaches are key for projects with real-world impacts on the community which involve public spending decisions (Harris-Lovett et al., 2019). Pluye and Hong (2014) argue that mixed-methods approaches “combine the power of stories and the power of numbers” (p. 30). Our approach followed a cyclical pattern, with analysis used to inform engagement and then engagement results used to inform further analysis.

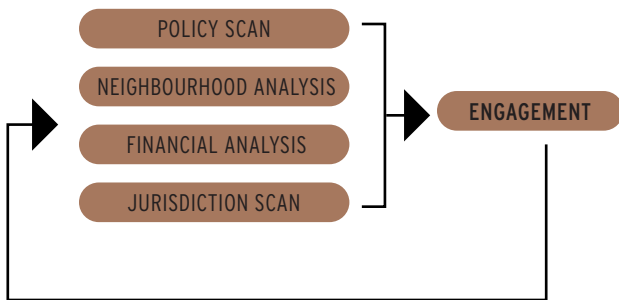


Figure 1-6: Research process diagram

A high-level overview of each of our analysis methods is outlined below. More detailed descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

Policy Scan

We identified and reviewed provincial and municipal policies related to neighbourhood commercial development and the incentivization of commercial development. Three relevant documents were identified:

1. The Town of Wolfville Municipal Planning Strategy
2. The Town of Wolfville Land Use Bylaw
3. The Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act (MGA)

This analysis provides an understanding of how neighbourhood commercial development is currently regulated within the Town and what powers are enabled under the MGA to support commercial investment.

Jurisdictional Scan

Jurisdictional scans are one method for promoting the exchange of knowledge and strategies for new problems (Parks Canada, 2023). There are limited programs targeted specifically at incentivizing neighbourhood commercial development. However, practices targeted at regulating mixed-use or supporting commercial and economic growth in municipalities more broadly provide valuable insight. We identified a series of diverse programs and policies designed to either control mixed-use development or incentivize commercial development. These included:

1. Financial incentive programs;
2. Municipal regulations for neighbourhood commercial zones; and
3. Commercial incubator programs

Financial Analysis

An important component of engagement is providing landowners with an accurate understanding of the economic realities of

proposed programs. Therefore, this project includes an economic analysis designed to estimate the potential costs of different commercial programs (including micro-commercial, small-scale retail, and mixed-used options). This analysis includes a jurisdiction scan of phased-in assessment programs in Nova Scotia and a demonstration of the impact of a commercial tax incentive for property owners and the Town.

Neighbourhood Analysis

Because of the low number of C-2 zoned properties, the opportunity arises to perform a neighbourhood analysis by considering each lot nearly individually. As such, a micro-level neighbourhood analysis was completed to provide a solid understanding of the existing conditions (physical, social, and economic) of the three study nodes identified previously. The analysis was completed using a combination of on-the-ground and desktop GIS analysis. Demographic data were collected from Statistics Canada. Data is only available at the dissemination area (DA) scale for the Town of Wolfville. The 2021 census included 7 DAs (12070156, 12070157, 12070158, 12070159, 12070160, 12070161, 12070162).

The criteria under analysis were:

- **Connectivity.** Proximity to the Wolfville Downtown, multi-use trails, and major corridors. Good connectivity indicates the

potential to support customer traffic.

- **Walkability.** Sidewalks, crosswalks, curb cuts, lighting, tree lining, building walkup accessibility. Includes a GIS analysis of accessibility based on surrounding sidewalk infrastructure. The presence of existing pedestrian infrastructure means fewer improvements are required when aiming to support commercial use.
- **Existing use.** Does the node already contain mixed uses? Existing mixed use implies some level of existing synergy for commercial use.
- **Building orientation.** Are buildings facing major corridors? Are they near the street? Dwellings backed away from the street suggest the potential to support a commercial addition, whereas dwellings built up to the street are more amenable to conversions.
- **Lot coverage.** Based on a GIS analysis of lot coverage on C-2 zoned properties, what building lots contain a large amount of unoccupied space that could support commercial additions?

Engagement

For many stakeholders and residents, this project serves as an introduction to the Town's initial investigation of how the C-2 zone can support additional commercial use. For this reason, engagement efforts were aimed at providing a proper introduction to the future potential of Wolfville's C-2 zone to the public while also noting stakeholder reactions to and general

understanding of the C-2 zone. Additionally, it is important to engage directly with residents in this project because its recommendations may influence municipal spending or impact resident's use of their land.

Engagement for this project took two forms. First, an online survey prepared and launched during the project kick-off. Second, an in-person open house held at the end of the research phase. The online survey consisted of thirteen open- and closed-ended questions. It was distributed through a variety of methods, including a mail-out invitation sent directly to each C-2 zoned property owner, and the Town of Wolfville Facebook page. Seven survey responses were collected between February 14, 2023 and March 29th, 2023. The survey asked respondents a number of questions, focusing on identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the C-2 zone. A full list of questions can be found in Appendix B.

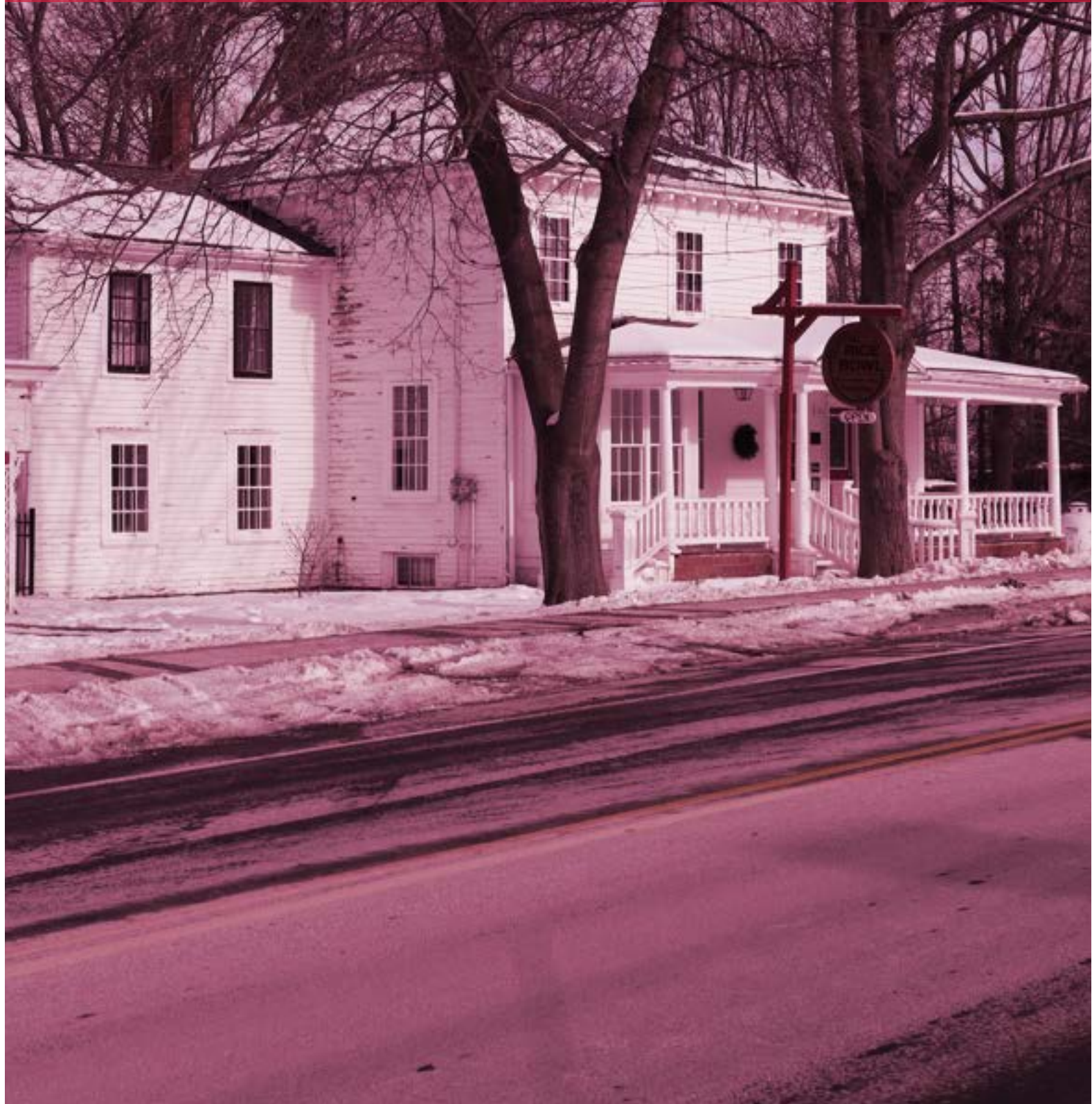
The end of the survey was coordinated with an open house held on March 22nd, 2023 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the Town's Council Chambers. Community members and other stakeholders were invited to attend this open house to share their experiences and ideas around neighbourhood commercial development in Wolfville. Eleven poster boards were prepared for the event, providing participants with

information about the research conducted thus far and offering avenues to engage by using red and green stickers to mark what they liked/disliked, and post-it notes to leave more detailed comments. Team members were also present at the open house to discuss the project with participants, hear thoughts, and answer questions. All team members prepared a summary of verbal feedback received after the event.

The results of the survey and open house have been collected and synthesized into a What We Heard report. This report is presented in Chapter Three.

Chapter 2

Background Analysis



Neighbourhood Commercial

Two key things differentiate neighbourhood commercial and other forms of mixed-use development:

- **Scale.** Neighbourhood commercial spaces are small in scale and focused on “local” commercial businesses which provide focused services.
- **Location.** Neighbourhood commercial is located within low-rise, residential neighbourhoods. Commercial spaces operate as an accessory to otherwise residential uses.

Types

We identified the dominant forms that neighbourhood commercial spaces take. These were identified through a series of image searches for terms including:

- Neighbourhood commercial
- Front yard businesses
- Accessory commercial units

We created renderings based on these forms to communicate how these spaces can integrate into traditional residential neighbourhoods.



Figure 2-1: Rendering of a Purpose Built Mixed Use Building



Figure 2-2: Rendering of an Accessory Commercial Kiosk



Figure 2-3: Rendering of Attached Accessory Commercial Units



Figure 2-4: Rendering of an Accessory Commercial Kiosk



Figure 2-5: Rendering of a Front End Conversion With a Residential Entrance on the Side



Figure 2-6: Third Story Addition to Support Ground Floor Commercial

Demographic Profile

Population

The Town of Wolfville has a population of 5,057 (2021)². The Town saw 20.5% growth between 2016 and 2021 - or 862 individuals, significantly above the provincial growth rate of 5%. This follows

inconsistent growth over the previous years, including a slight decline of 1.7% between 2011 and 2016. Figure 2-6 shows population growth for the Town, as compared to Kings County and Nova Scotia between 1986 and 2021.

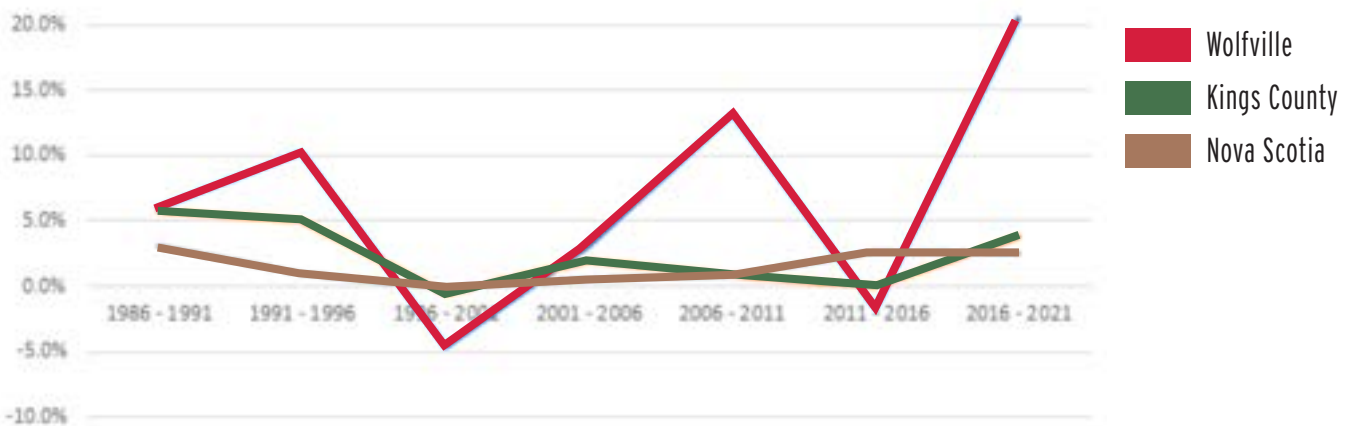


Figure 2-7: Population Growth Rates in Wolfville

²All demographic data collected from Statistics Canada census data (Statistics Canada, 2023)

Age Profile

The largest age group in Wolfville by a significant margin is the 20 to 34 year age group, which comprises almost one-third of Wolfville’s total population. This is followed by 65- to 79-year-olds (18.1%) and 50- to 64-year-olds (17.3%). This population distribution paints a picture of Wolfville’s demographic makeup, which is largely dominated by students at Acadia University and retirees.

Wolfville’s demographic changes between 2016 and 2021 are unique when compared to Kings County and Nova Scotia. While both the County and Province are seeing the highest growth in the 65- to 79-year-old age group, Wolfville’s largest growth source was in the 20- to 34-year-old age demographic, with an increase of almost 5% between 2016 and 2021.

The influence of this change can be seen in the Town’s median age, which declined from 47.4 in 2016 to 41.6 in 2021. This differs from both the County and Provincial medians, which both increased between 2016 and 2021 with Kings County having a median age of 47.2 and Nova Scotia having a median population age of 45.6 in 2021. A summary of the changing demographics for the Town, County, and Province are shown in Table 2-1.

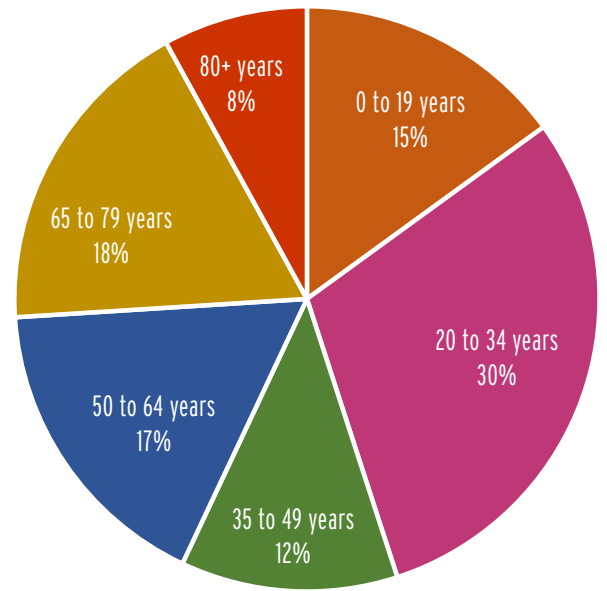


Figure 2-8: Age Profile of Wolfville (2021)

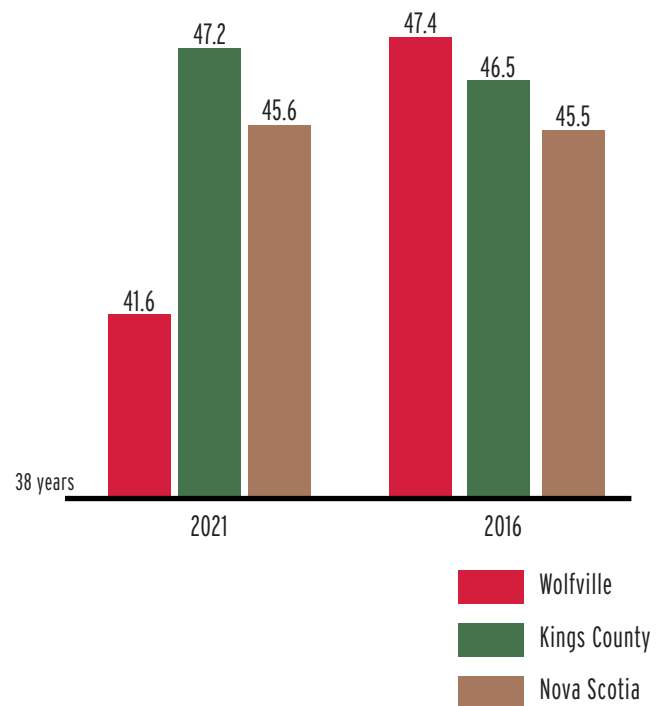


Figure 2-9: Median Population Age in Wolfville (2021)

Table 2-1: Demographic Change in Wolfville

Age group	WOLFVILLE			KINGS COUNTY			NOVA SCOTIA		
	2016	2021	Change	2016	2021	Change	2016	2021	Change
0 to 19 years	15.10%	14.80%	-0.30%	20.90%	19.60%	-1.30%	20.00%	19.10%	-0.90%
20 to 34 years	25.00%	29.90%	4.90%	15.90%	16.90%	1.00%	17.50%	18.30%	0.80%
35 to 49 years	12.40%	11.70%	-0.70%	17.70%	16.90%	-0.80%	18.50%	17.90%	-0.60%
50 to 64 years	19.90%	17.30%	-2.60%	24.40%	23.00%	-1.40%	24.10%	22.50%	-1.60%
65 to 79 years	18.10%	18.10%	0.00%	15.80%	17.90%	2.10%	15.20%	17.30%	2.10%
80+ years	9.10%	8.20%	-0.90%	5.20%	5.70%	0.50%	4.70%	5.00%	0.30%
Median Age	47.4 years	41.6 years	-5.8 years	46.5 years	47.2 years	0.7 years	45.5 years	45.6 years	0.1 years

Household characteristics

Wolfville has 2,440 total households occupied by usual (year-round) residents. Households in Wolfville are predominantly renters, who account for 61% of total households. This is an 8% increase from 2016, where renters made up 53% of all households. It is also significantly higher than both Kings County (31.9%) and Nova Scotia (32.6%), likely a result of the Town’s high student population. 11.8% of homeowners and 40.1% of renters paid over 30% of their income towards shelter costs.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) only releases vacancy rates and other housing data for locations with a population

over 10,000. Therefore, we can only make estimates based on data available for the Province and nearby communities. Nova Scotia’s overall residential vacancy is at 1%. Kentville has a vacancy rate of 0.9% and Truro, 0.7% (CMHC, 2022). We estimate, based on these rates and feedback from Town staff, that Wolfville has a similarly low vacancy rate. This puts additional pressure on demand for housing, particularly given the high proportion of renters in Wolfville. Based on this, it is important that programs intended to promote commercial development do not do so at a cost to existing residential units.



Transportation mode

The dominant mode of transportation in Wolfville remains private vehicles, which account for 78% of commuting trips. Of the remaining 22%, 3% travel by public transit, 14% walk, and only 2% (around 30 residents) commute by bike.

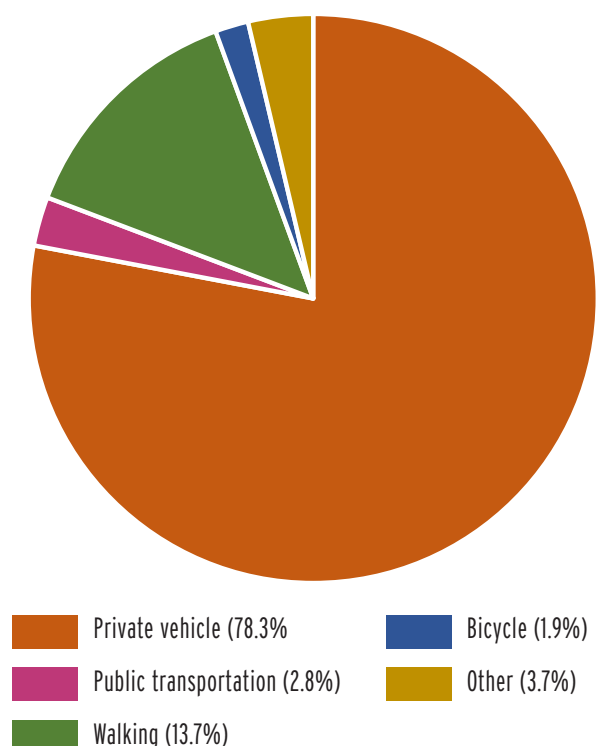


Figure 2-10: Commuting modes in Wolfville (2021)

Income & employment

Wolfville's median individual income was \$31,200, and the median household income was \$58,400. 11.3% of the total population is classified by Statistics Canada as low-income according to the LICO-AT measure (2020). The LICO-AT measure indicates residents that are likely to devote a larger portion of their after-

tax income to basic necessities than average. This is slightly more than double the rates for Kings County (4.1%) and Nova Scotia as a whole (4.7%). 17.7% of households in Wolfville earn less than \$25,000, while 19.3% earn over \$100,000.

Table 2-2: Household after-tax income groups (2020)

Household after-tax income group	Proportion of households
Under \$24,999	17.7%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	30.5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	33.0%
\$100,000 and over	19.3%

Labour force

The Town has an unemployment rate of 18.7%, 6% higher than the provincial rate (12.7%) and 7.7% higher than Kings County (11.0%).

Table 2-3 Labour Force Statistics

In the labour force	58.5%
Employed	47.4%
Unemployed	10.9%
Not in the labour force	41.5%
Participation rate	58.5%
Employment rate	47.4%
Unemployment rate	18.7%

The largest sources of employment included educational services (19.1%), accommodation and food services (13.5%), health care and social assistance (12.9%), and retail trade (11.6%). This illustrates Wolfville's biggest economic drivers

as being Acadia University, tourism and related services, and health care.

Table 2-4: Labour force employment by NAICS sector

Industry - not applicable	3.3
All industries	96.7
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2.9
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.6
22 Utilities	0
23 Construction	3.1
31-33 Manufacturing	4.6
41 Wholesale trade	0.8
44-45 Retail trade	11.6
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	2.5
51 Information and cultural industries	2.3
52 Finance and insurance	2.1
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	2.1
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	6
55 Management of companies and enterprises	0
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	3.1
61 Educational services	19.1
62 Health care and social assistance	12.9
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	3.3
72 Accommodation and food services	13.5
81 Other services (except public administration)	2.9
91 Public administration	3.9

Land Use Mix

The Town's current zoning is displayed in Figure 1-3. Commercial zoning is predominantly found along Main Street and focused in the Downtown core. The C-2 zone is the exception to this rule and can be found in predominantly residential neighbourhoods. Residential zoning (R-1, R-2, R-3, & R-4) takes up the majority of land area in the Town, accounting for 32.27% of total land area. Commercial zoning (C-1, C-2, & C-3) accounts for 4.66% of total land area. The Nova Scotia Provincial government recommends that commercial land account for 10% of a municipality's total land area (Town of Wolfville, 2020b).

Zoning provides an indication of the future intent of land use but does not always provide an accurate assessment of what is actually there. The Town has data on current land uses, but there are a few limitations with this data:

1. It was collected in 2009 and therefore misses any new development or changes in use that have occurred in the past 14 years.
2. It is based on a visual exterior assessment of the property and is open to error.

Despite these limitations, we still believe it is valuable to examine the state of the land use mix at this time, to provide a baseline for assessment but also a tool through which the success of the C-2 zone in promoting mixed-use

development can be assessed. Figure 2-11 shows a map of building uses. The data identifies 1834 total buildings in the Town. 66 buildings (3.6%) were classified as businesses, and 30 buildings (1.63%) were classified as mixed use. As shown

in Figure 2-13, very few businesses or mixed-use buildings could be found outside of the Town's core area in 2009.

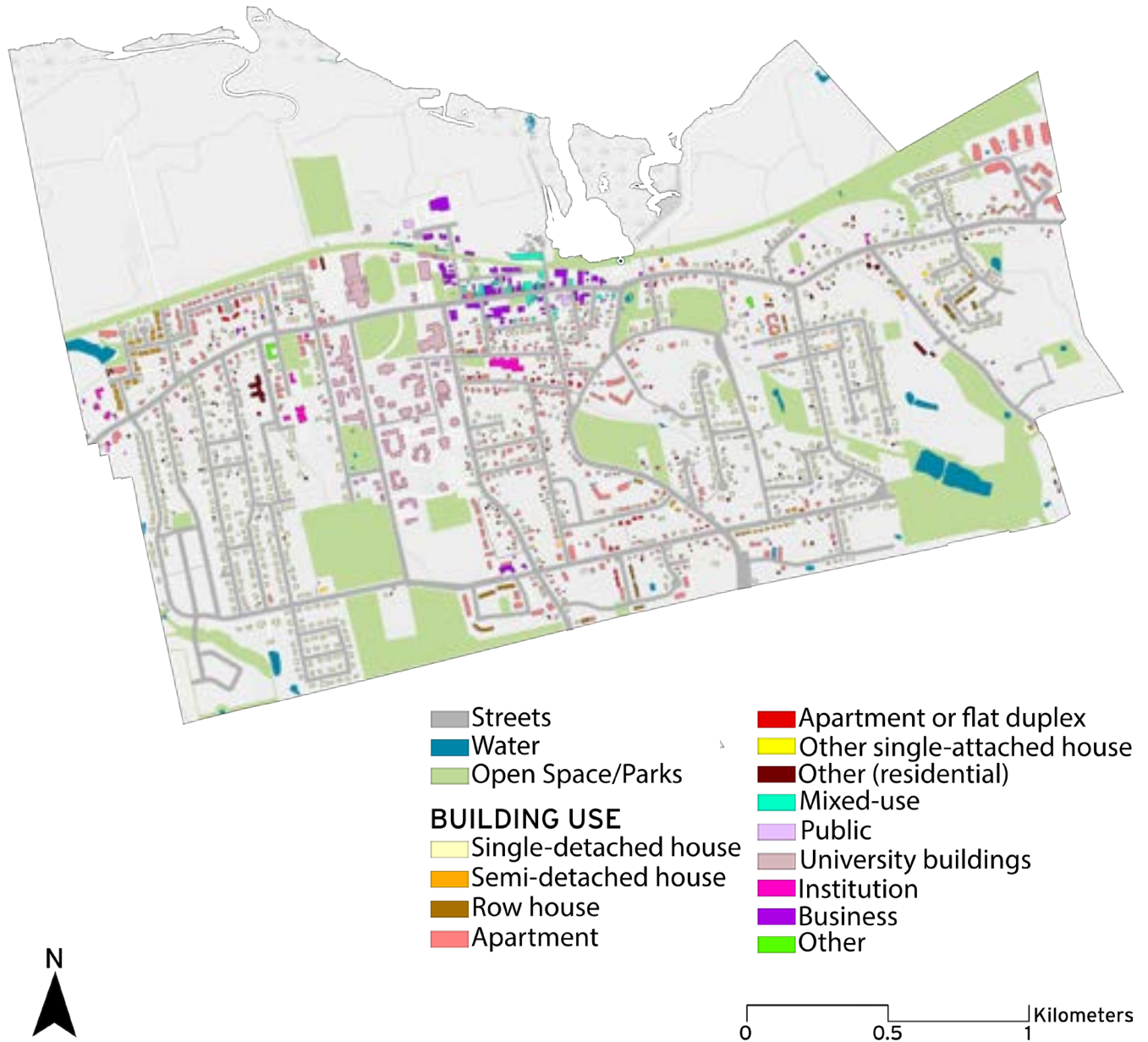


Figure 2-11: Building Use in Wolfville



Figure 2-13: Mixed Use & Business Buildings in Wolfville

Taxation

Wolfville’s residential tax rate for 2022/23 is \$1.4575 per \$100 of assessed value, while the commercial property tax rate is \$3.575 per \$100 of assessed value (Town of Wolfville, 2022). When Wolfville’s commercial rate is compared with other Towns in the Province (Table 2-5), it is similar to other nearby municipalities, including Kentville (\$3.5142) and Middleton (\$4.29). Overall, the Town’s commercial rate comes in below the average for all Towns in Nova Scotia (\$4.0394).

Development Costs

Creating an estimate of the costs of commercial development may provide some insight into what scale of investment is required for neighbourhood commercial development.

Simple costing assessments were conducted for three potential redevelopment scenarios:

- Scenario 1 - Conversion of an existing main level to commercial ready state
- Scenario 2 - New 800 sq foot commercial addition
- Scenario 3 - New 800 sqft commercial accessory unit (detached)

Table 2-6 shows a summary of the estimated costs. These costs are very high level, development costs will vary significantly over time and for each individual project. A more detailed analysis is included in Appendix E.

Table 2-5: Property tax rates among Nova Scotia’s towns (Province of Nova Scotia, 2023).

Area	Commercial property tax rate (\$) per \$100 of assessed value
ANTIGONISH	2.63
ANNAPOLIS ROYAL	3.2
MAHONE BAY	3.055
KENTVILLE	3.5142
LUNENBURG	3.358
STEWIACKE	3.45
WOLFVILLE	3.575
WESTVILLE	3.69
SHELBURNE	3.88
BERWICK	3.9
BRIDGEWATER	3.97
TRENTON	4.1
DIGBY	4.15
STELLARTON	4.15
PORT HAWKESBURY	4.16
OXFORD	4.2804
MIDDLETON	4.29
YARMOUTH	4.31
PICTOU	4.34
NEW GLASGOW	4.45
AMHERST	4.47
MULGRAVE	4.5257
TRURO	4.5475
LOCKEPORT	5.41
CLARK'S HARBOUR	5.58
AVERAGE	4.0394

Table 2-: Development costing scenarios

Scenario	Cost
1	\$84,814
2	\$132,354
3	\$138,672

Current development costs are high and construction is being impacted by labour and supply shortages (Altus, 2023). This makes development of all types challenging.

Policy

The C-2 zone permits a variety of residential and commercial uses. Generally, low-density residential uses (up to 3 units) and home based businesses¹ (under 80 square meters) are the only uses permitted as-of-right. While the Town recognizes the importance of neighbourhood commercial development to achieving its social and economic goals, this is balanced against other priorities such as increasing housing options and protecting existing neighbourhood character. Council uses policy to mediate potential tension between different uses, including policy 3.2.8, which states:

Policy 3.2.8

It shall be the policy of council to ensure that commercial uses are designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses, including consideration of built heritage and the impacts of land use on neighbourhood character. (Town of Wolfville, 2020b, p. 31)

This policy is realized through the Town's LUB, which includes tools to reduce the negative impacts of commercial development. Tools include only allowing most new commercial uses through a site plan approval process, allowing the Town to consider each new commercial use on a case-by-case basis and ensure appropriate steps are taken to minimize negative impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood. Minimum parking requirements also ensure adequate parking is provided for each property and mixed-use properties are required to provide the required parking for all uses (see Appendix C for residential and commercial parking requirements). Design guidelines for the Town's core area (see Appendix D) also help ensure that all new development in the Town's core aligns with Wolfville's architectural character.

1. Home based businesses include: Arts and crafts workshop, catering establishment, daycares up to four children/persons, online/digital sales, offices, studios, short term rental with a max of three rental room.

Chapter 3

What We Heard



What We Heard

This What We Heard report summarizes feedback received from C-2 property owners and other stakeholders. Feedback was collected via an online survey and in-person open house.

Survey

Surveys are an important tool for gathering community input on a particular topic or idea. This survey specifically targeted property owners in the Town of Wolfville whose land is currently zoned C-2. It should be acknowledged that the scope of this survey was intentionally limited due to time and capacity constraints. Results should not be considered indicative of public opinion, but reflect only a small subset of perspectives.

We received a total of seven survey responses between February 14, 2023 and March 29, 2023. The Town has opted to keep the survey open to continue gathering feedback, but any responses received after March 29th are not captured in this report.

Respondent locations

Survey respondents were not asked to provide identifying information. However, respondents were asked to note whether their property was within one of the key study nodes and if not, which street they were located on. Two respondents had properties within East Main Street Node, and one respondent within Summer Street Node. Five respondents stated they did

not live within the study nodes, but two had properties on Gaspereau Avenue, which connects to the Summer Street Node.

C-2 zone uses & development

Six of seven respondents were familiar with the uses permitted within the C-2 zone. Three respondents also stated that they had recently, or were considering, completing changes to their property. Of these, one had completed a major renovation within the past five years, one was considering the addition of a small eating space on their property, and one did not provide details on the changes they intended to make.

Perceived barriers to commercial development

Three property owners listed barriers that may (or have) prevent them from developing new commercial space on their property. All three listed cost as one of the concerns, with two specifically referencing high commercial property tax rates. Other barriers mentioned by respondents included:

1. Approval requirements
2. Lack of clarity on short term rentals
3. Renovations (unclear if this was in reference to cost or approval barriers to renovations)

Of the three respondents who listed barriers, all three stated that if these barriers were addressed they would pursue commercial development on their lands.

Of the four respondents who did not list barriers, three expressed disapproval of commercial development in the C-2 zone. Concerns listed by these respondents included:

- Impact on Wolfville’s residential market, particularly in conjunction with pressures created by student housing needs;
- Negative impacts on surrounding properties, including diminished property values;
- Loss of “small town” character and harmful impact on neighbourhood appearance.

Incentives to support commercial development

Respondents were asked what incentives could make commercial development on their property a reality, and what other ideas they had to incentivize commercial development in the C-2 zone overall. Four respondents provided answers to these questions, which included:

- Lower taxes to maintain existing businesses;
- Caps on property tax or phasing-in property taxes;
- Flexibility in approvals to respond to individual cases;
- Support for “low key” additions;
- Clarity on how short term rentals are taxed (commercial or residential); and
- Taxing rental properties at commercial rates

Respondents were also asked to consider whether the implementation of a phased-in

assessment program (see Section G for a more detailed description) would increase their willingness to pursue commercial development. Two respondents said yes, four said no, and one did not respond.

Development form in the C-2 zone

Respondents were presented with graphics included in the Wolfville LUB to demonstrate how the Town visualizes future development in the area (see Appendix B). They were then asked if they would consider these forms of development on their property.

Only one respondent stated that they would consider the type of the development shown in the Town’s graphics. However, they also noted they would only consider them “if it does not change the character of the neighbourhood in a dramatic way”. Another respondent stated that they wanted the flexibility to design something for the space and the business and not be restricted to specific designs provided by the Town. They also noted that they did not want to be restricted by height. All other respondents either didn’t answer the questions or stated that they were not interested in these development forms.

Envisioning the C-2 zone

The survey asked respondents to describe how they see the neighbourhood around their property developing over time. This will help

the Town understand how residents visualize their broader communities and what role the C-2 zone plays in this vision. Responses generally included:

1. Continued residential development and “family homes”;
2. Concern that properties would not change because of high taxes;
3. Maintaining the character while still creating opportunity for small extensions to existing businesses;
4. More neighbourhood businesses, including coffee shops, artist spaces, shared/co-working spaces, including test kitchens, hot desks, and event spaces; and
5. Creating opportunity for all residents, regardless of social tier.

Open House

The Open House took place on March 22nd, 2023 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the Town’s Council Chambers and had 10-15 participants. Participants included member of Wolfville’s Town Council, members of the Town’s Planning Advisory Committee, and several property owners in the C-2 zone.

Feedback received at the open house was overall positive, with all visitors open to commercial development in the C-2 zone. Respondents were able to mark examples they liked with green stickers and examples they didn’t like with red

stickers.

Commercial uses in the C-2 zone

Participants were provided a list of permitted uses in the C-2 zone and asked to mark which ones they could/couldn’t see on their property. Responses that were marked green by at least one participant included:

- Dwelling, Multi-unit- Small (3-8 units)
- Art galleries & studios
- Catering establishments over 80 sqm
- Daycare facilities over 4 children per person
- Neighbourhood Commercial upto 100% of ground floor of a multi unit building
- Nursing homes
- Short term rentals

In discussion, participants talked about wanting to see small local commercial spaces, such as bakeries, delis, and small specialty retailers.

Only two uses were marked with red stickers, which were:

- Dwelling, Multi-unit- Small (3-8 units)
- Dwelling, Multi-unit- Large (max of 16 units per acre)

The use of site plan approvals for some uses (e.g. cafes) was also mentioned by one resident to ensure that sufficient parking and size controls were put in place.

This is my fave :)

Building in C2 but not in core

Doesn't feel welcoming or accessible



Figure 3-1: Open house feedback on C-2 development types

Visualizing commercial development in the C-2 zone

A variety of visual materials depicting forms of commercial development were provided to participants, including photos or real world images and renderings of different development forms. A summary of responses as well as comments left on the board can be seen in Figure 3-1. In general, key things raised in discussion with participants included:

1. Appropriate scale for neighbourhood;
2. Cohesiveness with existing neighbourhood and architectural character; and
3. Limitations on size and use to avoid negative impacts on neighbouring properties.

Cost & financial incentives

One of the primary concerns raised at the open house by multiple participants was around costs associated with commercial development. This included not just property taxes but also costs associated with bringing properties up to commercial code and meeting accessibility requirements. One note left on the board stated that property taxes should be capped similarly to residential taxes following an assessment increase.

The Open House provided an opportunity to gather questions that residents still had after reviewing the provided information. Understanding not

only respondents perspectives, but also what they still want to know allows us to understand further avenues for analysis and investigation. The phased-in assessment program raised many questions, including:

1. If a business does not prove sustainable and the property owner converts back to residential would they continue to qualify for the rebate?
2. Is a short-term rental considered a “commercial use” in the C-2 zone and would that allow property owners to qualify?
3. Will there be a cap on the amount of the assessment increase that can be phased in?

Participants also expressed concern that short term rentals function as “commercial” uses that are taxed under residential rates, creating a challenge when it comes to encouraging traditional commercial development which would cause property owners to pay commercial tax rates and remove them from the provincial CAP program which limits property assessment increases.

C-2 zone boundaries

The map shown in Figure 3-2 was intended to create discussion around how much open space was available on most C-2 zoned properties for new development. However, most comments and discussion surrounded the boundaries of the zone itself. Residents raised questions about why so few properties were zone C-2 and

whether there was a strategy to continue to grow the zone as the Town grows. A comment left on the board noted the desire to see C-2 zoning expanded out of the Town's core and at the top of the hill.

Several comments mentioned Summer Street. Participants recommended getting rid of the gap in the C-2 zone on the South side of Summer Street, noting that it could:

1. Create a "character of commercial"
2. Create opportunity for a secondary commercial hub in the Summer Street node,
3. Create an opportunity for a vibrant pedestrian only or shared street

Harbourside/Railside Node

Through discussion with staff and as part of our

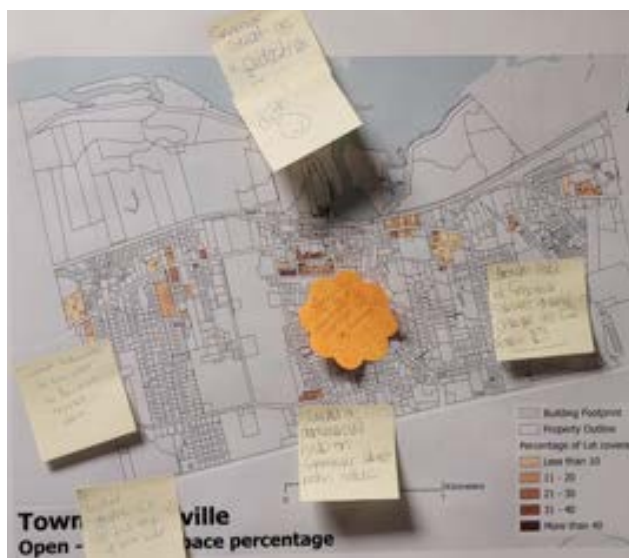


Figure 3-2: Open house feedback regarding the C-2 zone boundaries

jurisdiction scan we identified the opportunity for small commercial kiosks based off of those found on the Halifax Waterfront. The Open House provided an opportunity to put this idea in front of stakeholders to get their initial perspectives. Sticky notes left on the boards included:



Residents generally reacted positively to this approach, with the main concerns being appropriately managing safety and garbage. There were questions about the operations of these kinds of spaces which could not be answered at this early stage but should be more fully investigated, such as:

1. Would the kiosks be permanent or temporary?
2. Would the Town own and manage the kiosks?
3. What utility access would the kiosks have?

Further engagement once plans for the waterfront are more finalized could address some of these questions.



Figure 3-3: Rendering of proposed waterfront kiosks



Figure 3-4: Rendering of proposed waterfront improvements

Key Takeaways

We summarize the key takeaways gained from both phases of engagement as follows:

1. Development and ongoing costs are a significant concern for commercial development, particularly given the differences between residential and commercial property tax rates.
2. Phased-in assessments, or capped assessments are seen as a viable tool to support commercial development in C-2 zoned properties.
3. Most residents, even those who are open to commercial development, want to preserve the unique character of their neighbourhoods and minimize the negative impacts of commercial development on the surrounding area.
4. Waterfront kiosks could provide a good opportunity to better serve residents and tourists in the summer, but further investigation into project logistics is necessary.
5. Each project should be considered on a case-by-case basis to both allow flexibility for developers to design around their unique property and business needs and to make sure negative impacts on surrounding properties are fully addressed.
6. Design matters, property owners do not want to see “ugly” buildings in their neighbourhood (residential or commercial) and want to make sure that controls are placed to facilitate “good” development.
7. The profitability of short and long term rentals and the fact that they are taxed as residential (and therefore subject to the CAP) is a threat to the establishment of traditional commercial spaces in these zones.

Chapter 4

Barriers to and Opportunities for Neighbourhood Commercial Development



Policy

Municipal Approval Processes

The Town’s Land Use Bylaw is largely permissive of commercial uses in the C-2 zone through a site plan approval. The process of a site plan approval is relatively straightforward and simple, and plays an important role in navigating tension between commercial uses and surrounding properties. However, our policy scan did identify some potential barriers and drivers for commercial development:

1. Allowances for up to two main buildings on a lot provide an opportunity to add commercial space while not impacting residential space.
2. 4.5m front yard setbacks may prevent businesses from engaging with the street directly, and on some properties with more significant slopes, may make meeting accessibility requirements for commercial businesses more challenging.
3. Overlap between neighbourhood commercial uses and differing approval processes which may cause confusion or misunderstanding. For examples, please see Appendix F.
4. Minimum parking requirements, which necessitate that property owners provide parking for all uses on the property, or cash-in-lieu. This does not align with the walkable intent of the zone, and creates additional costs for

property owners who may only wish to add a small business use. The Town currently allows the Development Officer to vary required parking by up to 10% through a site plan approval, but for a use that potentially only requires a few spots, this threshold is much too low.

Neighbourhood Analysis

Wolfville Spatial Analysis

Lot Coverage

This portion of the spatial analysis calculates and visualizes the amount that each C-2 zoned lot is occupied by a building. The purpose of determining lot coverage is twofold: firstly, the Wolfville Land Use By-Law states the total amount of coverage in C-2 zoned lots must not exceed 40% of the total area including main and accessory buildings, so it is important to observe how close or far individual lots are to meeting that limit. Secondly, the amount of available space on a lot indicates where and what kind of commercial could be developed.

As illustrated in the Figures 4-1 and 4-2, many lot owners have the potential to increase their lot coverage to the threshold of 40%. The mean percentage of lot coverage (15.75%), is far below the 40% limit prescribed by the Wolfville LUB.

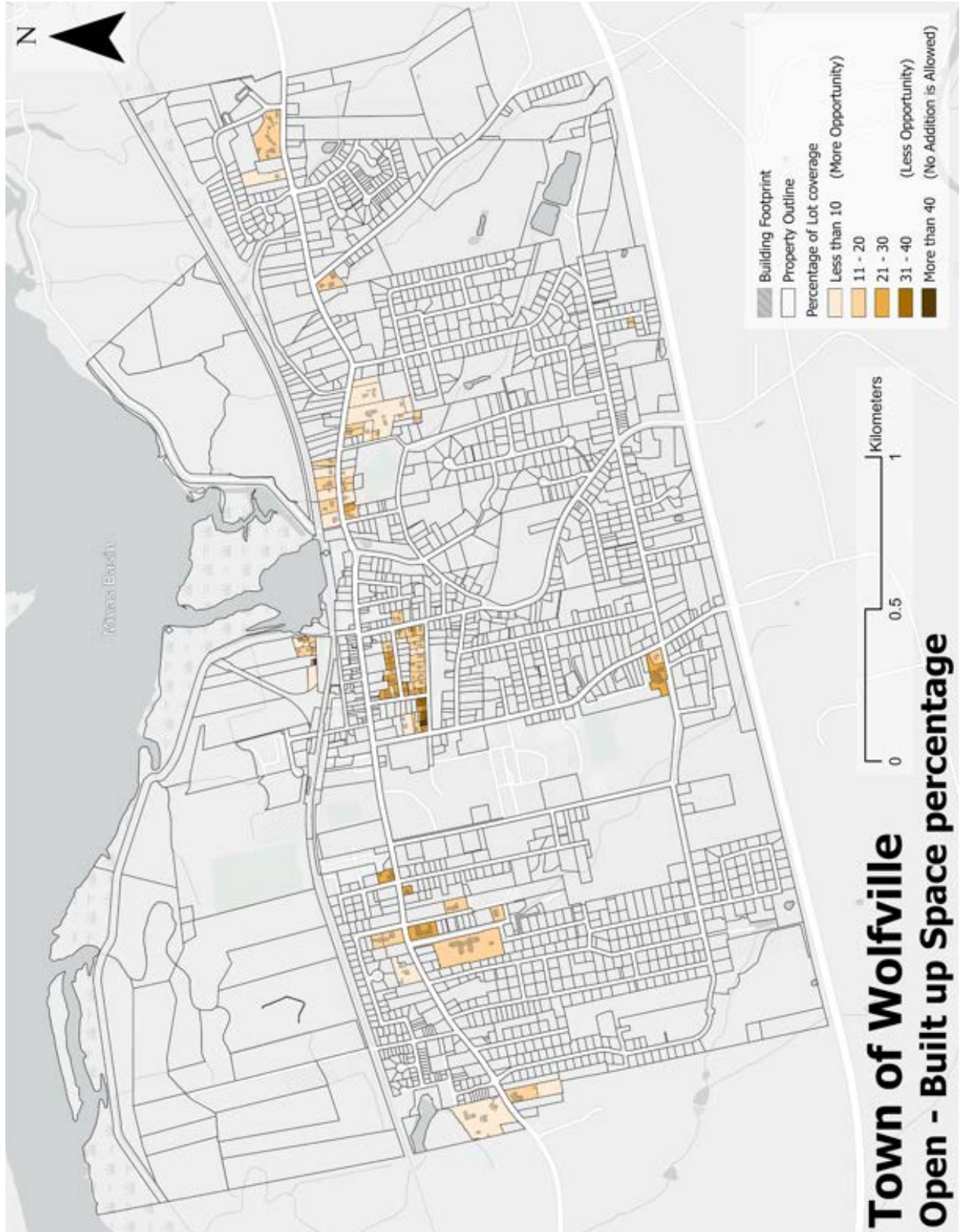


Figure 4-1: Percentage of Lot Coverage of C-2 Zoned Lots

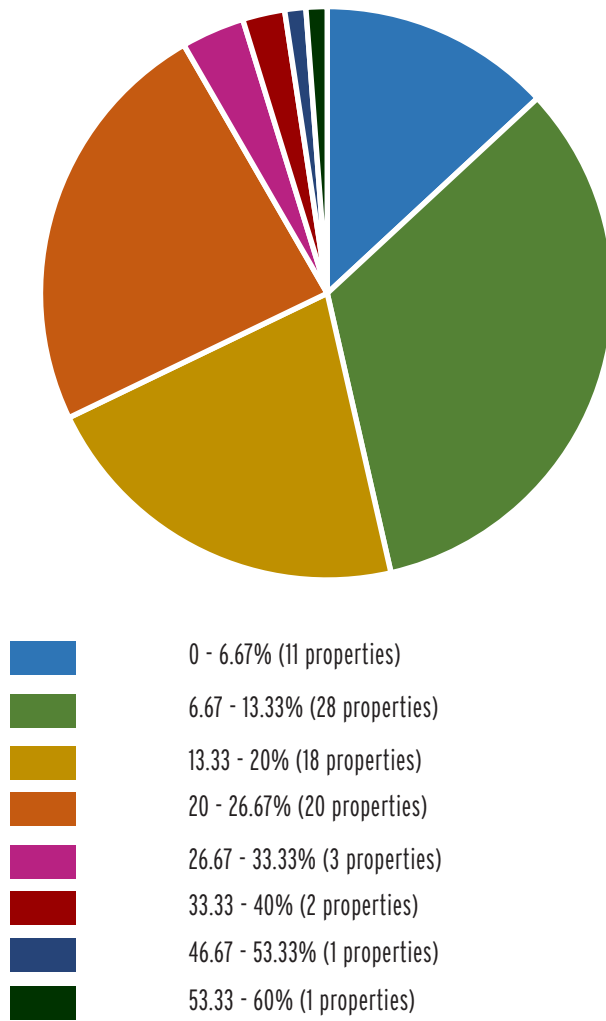


Figure 4-2, Lot coverage in C-2 zoned properties

Connectivity

In consideration of how Wolfville can approach fostering a mixed use, walkable community, this portion of the GIS analysis considers the connectivity of sidewalks and trails near and along C-2 zone lots. This provides important information when considering where investment in pedestrian infrastructure could best be invested to allow C-2 zoned areas to reflect their

mixed use nature. For instance, the Wolfville King's County Rail Trail provides good walking and biking access, especially during the summer when recreational biking and hiking are more popular.

As illustrated in Figure 4-3, there are a significant number of C-2 zoned lots that are not accessible by a sidewalk. In the three nodes considered a priority to this study, most lots do have sufficient connectivity, although not all sidewalks are of the same quality or have the same level of supporting infrastructure as explored by the micro-analysis.

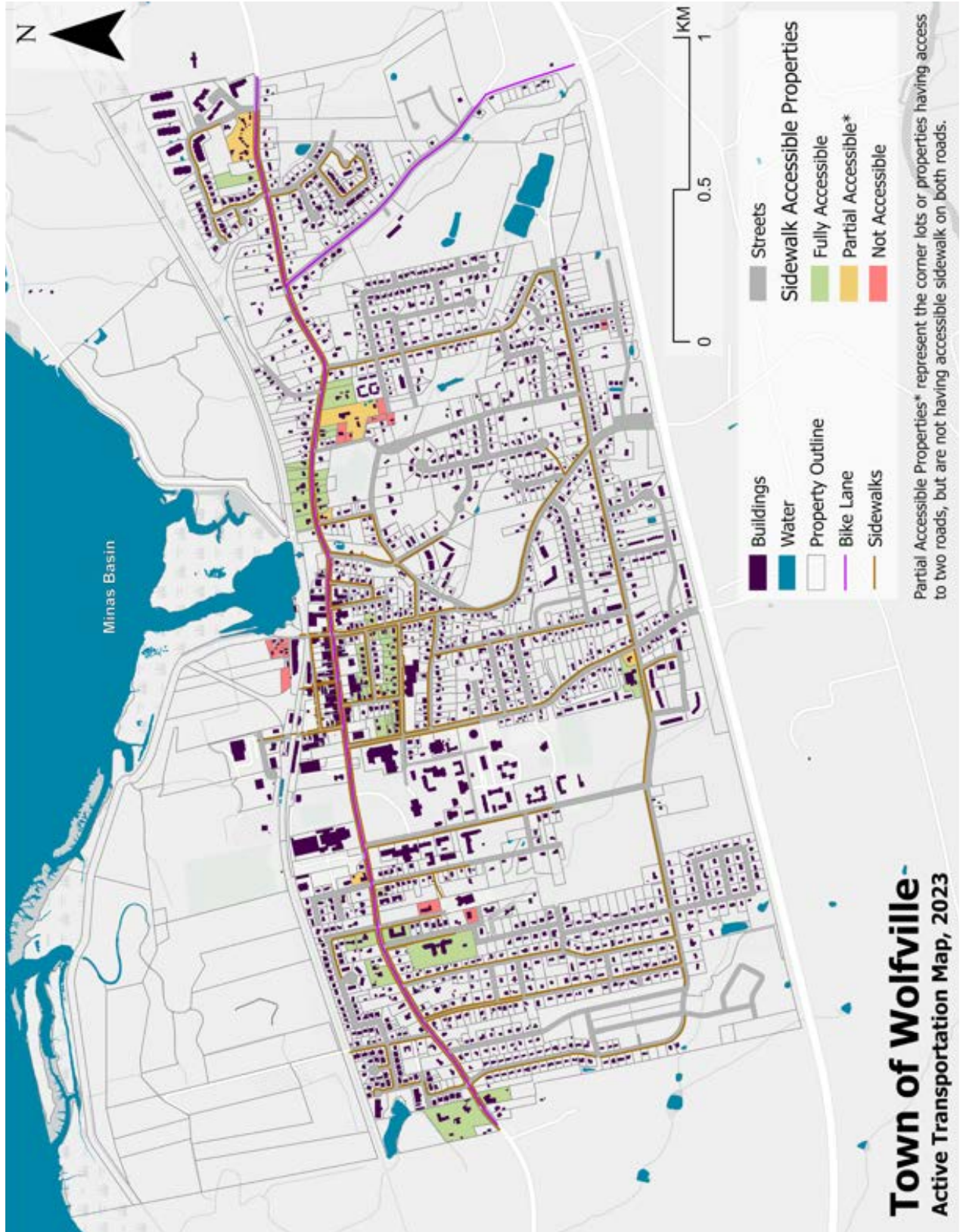


Figure 4-3: Connectivity of C-2 Zoned Lots

East Main Node Analysis

The East Main Node begins on the eastern edge of Wolfville’s downtown. The C-2 zoning in this node spans both sides of Main Street. Existing commercial use in the area includes Southwest Nova (insurance group) and the Ricebowl (Asian catering and take-out).

The residential buildings in this node are predominantly two stories tall and backed away from the street. The only parking available in

this area is found on sidestreets, although the low lot coverage suggests possible room for new parking.

The majority of these buildings have front steps that pose accessibility concerns for commercial use. The sidewalk on this portion of Main Street provides good access on both sides of the street but transitions from the downtown style to a more residential style of construction. A rail trail connects to this node via Victoria Avenue.



Figure 4-4: The East Main Node (C-2 Zoned Lots Shown in Red)



Figure 4-5: Note the Change in Sidewalk Quality

There is one crosswalk at the beginning of the street, no street lights, and sparse tree lining. Where the higher quality pedestrian infrastructure stops, so too does the commercial use.

Compared to the western side of the East Main node, the east side has seen less commercial use and the makeup of the streetscape reflects this. There is a considerable amount of vacant space that could support commercial additions. The East Main Node boasts adjacency to the Downtown, availability of vacant space, and potential for some building conversion. It has the potential to support additional commercial use, particularly through additions. However, the current pedestrian infrastructure is far more suggestive of a residential neighbourhood due to the sidewalk and lack of street lighting.



Figure 4-6, Accessibility in the East Main Node



Figure 4-7: East End of East Main Node



Figure 4-8: Lot Coverage in the East Main Node



Figure 4-9: Parking Availability in the East Main Node

Harbourside Node

The Harbourside node is found on the North end of Wolfville’s downtown. This area is unique to the other two in that it has a public space between the railway and waterfront where significant investment is being spent on improvements. Notably, there is a twenty five row, three story

building featuring a mix of office, commercial, and residential space surrounded by student housing and additional office space in this node. One cluster of these rentals is found in a prime location for commercial use both due to its connectivity to the Downtown and its scenic positioning.



Figure 4-10: The Harbourside/Railside Node (C-2 Zoned Lots Shown in Red)



Figure 4-11: End of Harbourside Drive



Figure 4-12: Mixed use development adjacent to C-2 zoned properties in Harbourside/Railside Node



Streets
 Sidewalk Accessible Properties
 Fully Accessible
 Partial Accessible*
 Not Accessible

Figure 4-13: Accessibility in the Harbourside Node



Building Footprint
 Property Outline
 Percentage of Lot coverage
 Less than 10 (More Opportunity)
 11 - 20
 21 - 30
 31 - 40 (Less Opportunity)
 More than 40 (No Addition is Allowed)

Figure 4-14: Lot Coverage in the Harbourside Node



Figure 4-15: Parking Availability in the Harbourside Node

Parking Lots
 Public
 Private
 Institutional
 No Parking
 Property Outline
 Property in C-2 Zone

The node is mainly occupied by parking and lacks pedestrian infrastructure for those buildings beyond the rail trail. There are homes found behind the row building that could serve commercial use, but such use would be limited as they are overshadowed and tucked away from the public eye. Future developments in this node are expected to increase its viability for commercial use, particularly the upcoming development of Devour! Studios, an event space for culinary and cultural innovation. While the exact location has not yet been publicly specified, it is known that the development will occur within this node.

Like the East Main node, its proximity to Wolfville's Downtown makes this area an ideal location for commercial conversions and additions. One long standing barrier to development in this node is the rail line which, although out of service, remains in place and is not owned by the Town. If that land were made available to the Town

or willing developers, the location and thin, linear shape of the parcel could support smaller commercial developments such as kiosks.

Summer Node

The Summer Node is located directly south of Wolfville's Downtown and contains the most C-2 zoned lots of the three nodes. These lots surround a Medium Density Residential (Re3) zone and back onto the Wolfville School (I-1 zone). Overall, there is a significant amount of room for commercial opportunities in this node, although the overall level of lot coverage tends to be higher.

Linden Avenue

Linden Avenue consists of old homes converted into rentals and traditional single detached homes. On the eastern side of the street which is C-2 zoned, sidewalks are of good quality, have street lighting, and connect to all-day downtown



Figure 4-16: The Summer Node (C-2 Zoned Lots Shown in Red)

parking. While current use on this street is entirely residential, Linden Avenue has great visual connectivity to the downtown and much of the appropriate pedestrian infrastructure to support mixed use commercial development. Typically, Linden Avenue is occupied with on-street parking which spills out from the downtown, meaning certain businesses like cafes could struggle to provide consistent parking for clientele without relying on parking provided by the downtown itself.

Summer Street

Summer Street currently features a mixture of rentals and family homes, all of which are single detached. The C-2 zoned side of this street has a good quality sidewalk, tree lining, and street lighting. While the western portion of the street is oriented to face Linden Avenue, buildings on the eastern side face the street. Finally, there is a large vacant space on the easternmost side of the street.

Acadia Street

This street runs along the front side of the Wolfville School and is the furthest from the Downtown. The existing residential use on this street is predominantly built close to the street, with one exception. The street has tree lining lighting, but the sidewalk is more typical of a residential neighbourhood. Because of the Wolfville School, there is good pedestrian connectivity through crosswalks and accessible

curb cuts that lead to the sidewalk, but the walkway itself is of lower quality.

Highland Ave

This residential portion of the Summer Node has direct visibility from the Downtown but is also spatially separated by the Beveridge Arts Center and the Wolfville Baptist Church. There are three homes on this street – one is backed away from the street, the next is not, and the last home faces the corner of Highland and Acadia. The C-2 side of this street has good sidewalks and street lighting. It is possible that a building like 13 Highland Avenue (pictured) could support a commercial addition.



Figure 4-17: Example of Vacant Space on a C-2 Zoned Lot, Gaspereau Ave



Figure 4-18: Example of a 'Pedestrian' Style Sidewalk, Acadia Ave.



Figure 4-19: Accessibility in the Summer Node



Financial Incentives

Our engagement with residents highlighted that cost is a significant perceived barrier to commercial development. This is particularly true given the difference between commercial and residential tax rates. While other costs were mentioned as concerns, property taxes are one of the few costs relating to development that the Town can influence and according to BOMA Nova Scotia (2022), property taxes are one of the top three operating costs for a typical commercial property.

Besides a blanket reduction in the commercial tax rate, which would have to be part of a more

comprehensive budgeting process, the Town is limited by the MGA in how much they can influence the tax rate. The Town's is only able to forgive or reduce property taxes under specific circumstances, such as reducing property taxes for low income households, or properties that have been damaged by fire or storms. There are two sections that allow for taxes to be waived on commercial uses. One, that allows for commercial properties containing a daycare to be taxed under the residential rate. And another that allows assessment increases for commercial properties within a "commercial development district" to be phased in over time.

HOW DOES A PHASE-IN ASSESSMENT TOOL WORK?

Example of a four-year phase-in program:

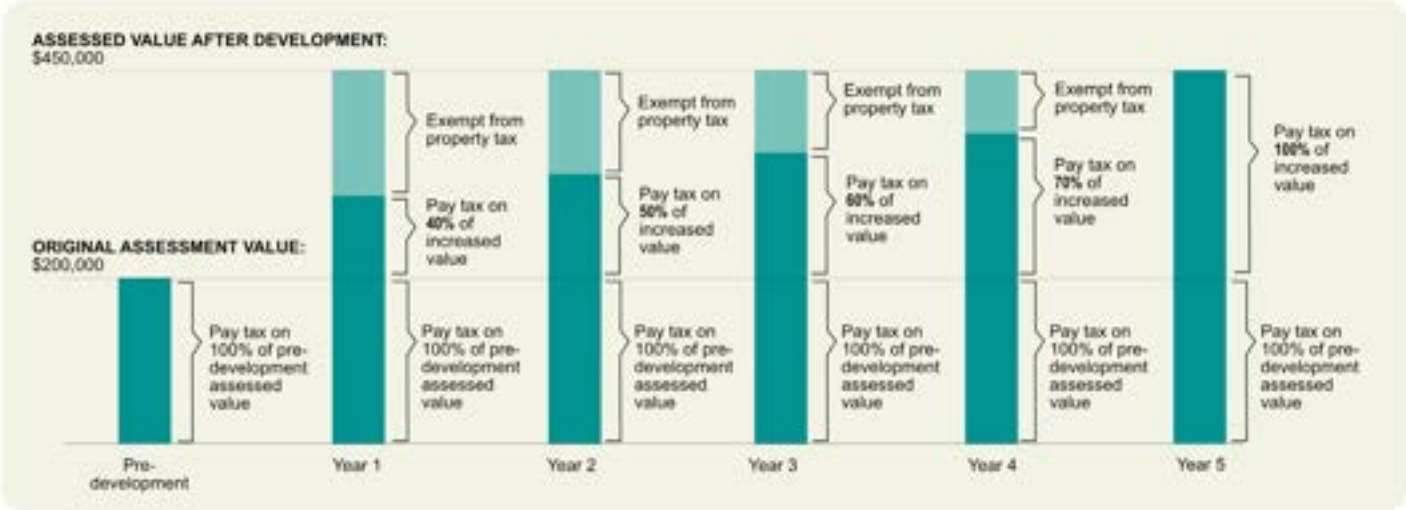


Figure 4-20, Bill 177 Annual Rebates

Commercial development district

The establishment of a commercial development district is the clearest opportunity for the Town to support commercial uses. This tool was introduced by the Province of Nova Scotia when they approved Bill 177 in May of 2016 (Province of Nova Scotia, 2016). This tool amended the Municipal Government Act, and allowed municipalities to phase in increases to the taxable assessed value of commercial or contaminated properties over a period of up to 10 years. The Bill was introduced to promote new economic development in the mixed-use zoned areas and encourage retrofitting upgrades to existing buildings. Figure 4-20 shows one example of how this tool can work.

To apply the incentive, municipalities must establish a Commercial Development District through their MPS and LUB. Only properties that are serviced by water and wastewater facilities can be included in the Commercial Development District and only properties in the Commercial Development District are eligible for the incentive. Incentives can be structured as a reduction to property taxes upon payment, or a refund received after payment. Either way, the total amount of property tax reduced or refunded cannot exceed 50% of the total municipal tax that would be paid on the increase over the time frame of the program. The tool can be triggered by a natural assessment increase

(caused by upward pressure in the market), or by an increase following property improvements. There are several key considerations:

There are also budget implications for the Town, as they forgo potential property tax revenue. There are several factors that the Province recommends municipalities consider when evaluating the impact of the program on municipal finances (Province of Nova Scotia, 2016):

1. Period over which the tool is phased in - the longer the time frame the more uncertainty a municipality takes on in accounting for the tools impact on revenues and budgets.
2. The rebate formula and implications for municipal finances. The tool is restricted to a maximum of 50% of the total tax payable over the phase-in period. However, municipalities may choose an even lower rebate amount to ease impact on their budget.
3. Whether properties already under a phase-in schedule can re-qualify if they meet the eligibility criteria second time, which adds additional complexity for Town staff to track, as well as uncertainty regarding budgetary implications.

4. Whether properties are automatically enrolled following an assessment increase or must go through some form of permit process to enroll (e.g. building permit).
5. How many properties are capable of meeting the eligibility criteria and is the Town capable of supporting the program for that number of properties.

Jurisdictional Scan

The intent of the jurisdiction scan is to discover and consider how other municipalities, both from within and outside of Nova Scotia, have worked to promote mixed-use and neighbourhood commercial development. This benefits the study overall by providing best practices and lessons learned that can then be translated to considerations in the Wolfville context.

Financial Incentives (within NS)

To understand how the tool is being used so far, we conducted a jurisdiction scan. Our review found that very few municipalities have implemented Bill 177 since its approval. Of those identified (Amherst, Stewiacke, Windsor, and Yarmouth) each has used an identical formula (Table 4-1). This formula provides property owners with the maximum permitted timeline (10 years) and the maximum permitted rebate (50%). However, there is no clear reasoning

given in any municipality behind why this specific rebate formula was selected.

Table 4-1: Bill 177 Annual Rebates

Year	Annual Rebate
1	90% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
2	80% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
3	70% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
4	60% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
5	50% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
6	50% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
7	40% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
8	30% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
9	20% Rebate of Eligible Taxes
10	10% Rebate of Eligible Taxes

Additional important factors about how the tool is structured in each municipality are broken down in Table 4-2. Overall, all factors are generally the same. To qualify for the tool, properties must undergo some form of development and application to the program is tied to obtaining a building permit. All municipalities also provide the tool as a rebate, rather than a reduction. Only Amherst sets a minimum project cost requirement.

To understand the implications on municipal budgets, we examined each Town's financial statements. We were unable to find information for the Town of Windsor and the Town of Amherst that demonstrated the cost of the phase-in program. Impacts identified by the

Table 4-2: Jurisdiction Scan of Bill 177 Applications in Nova Scotia

Municipality	Eligible area	Development (including renovations/additions) required?	Opt in process	Additional criteria	Reduction or rebate	Multiple opt-ins allowed (yes/no)
Amherst	All industrial, comprehensive development districts, and commercial zones that include neighborhood commercial, highway commercial, downtown commercial and limited commercial.	Yes	Application required. Must be submitted prior to issuance of a Building Permit.	Minimum project cost of \$25,000.	Rebate	Yes
Stewiacke	Downtown commercial (C1), highway commercial (C2) and highway commercial architectural control area (C2ACA) zones.	Yes	Properties must apply to participate in the program following the granting of a building and development permit.		Rebate	Not stated
Windsor	Mixed commercial (C2) zone	Yes	Not stated		Rebate	Not stated
Yarmouth	Town's Central Business District (Downtown core)	Yes	Application required. Must be submitted prior to issuance of a Building Permit.		Rebate	Yes

Town of Stewiacke and the Town of Yarmouth are outlined as follows:

- In the Town of Stewiacke's 2022/2023 general operating budget, the total commercial taxes due was \$396,854 and the total of commercial tax rebates provided was \$39,800 (10.0%). In 2022, they budgeted for \$378,282 in commercial tax revenue, and \$31,000 in commercial rebates (8.2%) (Town of Stewiacke, 2022). Given the limitations in commercial rebates available, we believe it is likely this amount primarily reflects the phase-in program.
- The Town of Yarmouth's 2022 financial statement identifies that taxes reduced totalled \$208,857. This includes taxes reduced through the phased-in commercial assessment program, but also includes taxes reduced for low-income households making it difficult to know what proportion can be attributed to the phase-in program. Total commercial property taxes collected were \$5,654,696. This means that even if phased-in assessment rebates accounted for the total \$208,857 reduction (which is unlikely), it would still only reduce commercial taxes by approximately 3.7% (Town of Yarmouth, 2022).

Financial Incentives (outside of NS)

Bill 177 has been applied almost identically in other Nova Scotian municipalities. To incorporate

more diverse examples of incentives we looked to similar programs in municipalities in other Canadian provinces. We identified programs in four municipalities, two in British Columbia and two in Ontario. These included the City of Greater Sudbury (2018), the City of Sault Ste Marie (2018), the City of Trail (2019), and the City of Mission (2020).

Eligibility

Programs in Mission, and Trail establish minimum eligibility requirements. Trail requires a minimum construction value of \$50,000 and Mission requires a development cost of \$500,000 for new construction or \$200,000 for renovations. In Sault Ste Marie, applicants must invest at least \$500,000 into development. In Sudbury, there is no minimum value required, however each addition to the program must be approved through Council.

Several of the programs also have limited application periods. For example. In the City of Trail applications must have been received between January 1, 2019 and December 30, 2022 to qualify. In the City of Mission, projects must receive a building permit by December 31, 2022 and completed construction by December 31, 2024 to qualify.

Of the four programs, three use a four or five year time frame and all four offer a 100% rebate in the first year following the assessment

Table 4-3: Rebate Structure in Jurisdictions Outside of NS

	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	Sudbury, ON	Trail, BC	Mission, BC
Years since project completion	Percentage of tax increase rebated			
1	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	75%	100%	100%	100%
3	50%	100%	100%	100%
4	25%	50%	60%	100%
5	-	50%	40%	100%
6	-	-	-	80%
7	-	-	-	60%
8	-	-	-	40%
9	-	-	-	20%
Average rebate over program period:	50%	80%	80%	77.8%

increase. This completely removes the property tax burden on new developments at the earliest state where they may still be addressing construction costs and establishing new tenants (City of Greater Sudbury, 2018). Sudbury, Trail, and Mission provide more significant rebates, averaging out to around 80% over the phase-in period with the first three years completely tax free in Sudbury and Trail and the first five years in Mission.

Additional incentives

Both Greater Sudbury and Mission also offer reductions of municipal fees for eligible projects (such as building permit fees). Mission also waives cash-in-lieu requirements for variances to off-street parking and offer priority

processing of planning applications for projects in the program.

In Greater Sudbury, the incentive program is extended for new development proposed on vacant lots to support infill development. A new development on a vacant lot that includes ground-floor retail and above-grade residential may be eligible to receive 100% of the tax increase rebated for the first four years following project completion, and then 50% of the increase rebated for the next six years after that. This is a good example of a two-tiered approach, wherein municipalities can offer enhanced rebates for projects that meet additional policy goals.

Program outcomes & lessons learned

Current information available from the municipalities differs significantly. Therefore, below we provide a summary of program outcomes and lessons learned gleaned from various municipal documents:

- a. A 2021 report from the City of Greater Sudbury stated that almost \$10,000,000 in incentives had been approved since the program's initiation in 2018 (City of Greater Sudbury, 2021).
- b. In December of 2022 the City of Mission approved the reduction of the eligible renovation cost from \$200,000 to \$50,000 to help more small businesses qualify. They also extended the deadline for applications to December of 2024 and the deadline for construction completion to December 2026 to projects that are in ongoing approval processes to be eligible (City of Mission, 2022).
- c. The City of Trail ran a similar incentive to the one they currently have between 2013 and 2017. This program had a lower eligibility threshold (construction value of \$10,000) and longer time frame (10 years instead of 5). Between 2013 and 2017, 35 projects with a total construction value of \$8.8 million were approved (Regnier, 2016).

Regulating neighbourhood commercial areas

The three study nodes are predominantly residential, as outlined in Chapter 2. Introducing commercial development in these areas and respecting the existing character requires assessment of what urban design elements are needed to supporting new neighbourhood commercial businesses, and how businesses should be designed to respect the surrounding neighbourhood. Therefore, we examined how neighbourhood commercial zones in other regions are regulated.

City of Austin, Texas, US

Traditional Neighborhood District

Austin, Texas establishes traditional neighbourhood districts (TNDs) focused on creating compact, walkable, mixed-use communities (City of Austin, 2016). This zone attempts to create individual, self-contained "Towns" within the city making it an interesting learning opportunity for a true "Town". Within the zone, there are mixed residential areas, which are most similar to how the C-2 zone is imagined (predominantly residential with small scale commercial uses). All development in a TND must comply with the TND Criteria Manual (City of Austin, 2014). Criteria in the manual most relevant to the C-2 zone includes:

- a. Buildings must incorporate architectural styles, materials, and colors used in surrounding buildings;

- b. The appearance of commercial or mixed-use buildings within a Mixed Residential area must integrate with the surrounding community and cannot exceed twice the height and massing of adjacent structures;
- c. Commercial spaces must provide weather protection for pedestrians, such as awnings, covered walkways, colonnades, etc.
- d. All buildings in mixed residential areas must have pitched or gabled roofs to reflect the residential character
- e. Parking lots have to be at the rear or side of the building, and if its in the side yard, it has to be visually screened.
- f. Streetwalls should not exceed 4' in height.
- g. Mixed residential streets should have wide sidewalks (minimum 10') on each side that include trees between the walkway and roadway.
- h. 55-70% maximum lot coverage
- i. 0-10' front yard setback dependent on use. New structure must be at the required setback.

All new development in a TND must meet the above criteria and provide sufficient architectural drawings during approval to ensure they conform with this criteria. All applications do through a discretionary process where they are first reviewed by staff, and then approved by Council.

Town of Orangeville, Ontario. Commercial Urban Design Study: Neighbourhood Commercial

In this report, the Town of Orangeville examined urban design guidelines for five land use designations, including neighbourhood commercial. The document suggests that design guidelines for neighborhood commercial areas should aim to create inviting and functional spaces that serve the needs of the local community (Town of Orangeville, 2005). Criteria identified by the Town most relevant to the intent of the C-2 zone are summarized as:

- a. Front setbacks should be minimized and buildings should be located at the minimum setback whenever possible (especially on corner lots);
- b. New development or additions should be encouraged in the front of buildings to create a more pedestrian oriented streetscape;
- c. Corner lots should be accentuated through taller, non-habitable decorative elements;
- d. New development should reflect the vernacular of surrounding buildings;
- e. Access to commercial spaces should be barrier-free;
- f. Awnings should be provided to provide weather protection for pedestrians;
- g. Strong geometric patterns and vibrant colours should be avoided;
- h. Pitched or sloped roofs should be required where found in the surrounding neighbourhood;

- i. Streets should include consistent feature paving and pedestrian lighting. Visual amenities (e.g. hanging flower baskets and banners) are encouraged;
- j. Benches and seating should be installed to facilitate interaction and create a sense of belonging;
- k. Parking areas should be screened from the street but tall fences, opaque fencing, or tall hedges should be discouraged;
- l. Signs should be located at the gateway to create a sense of “arrival” and clearly visible to both pedestrians and drivers.

Incubator and Kiosk Programs

The Town has expressed interest in a potential pilot program that would see micro commercial units added to Waterfront Park, adjacent to the Railyard/Harbourfront Node. This may create an opportunity for small businesses or startups the chance to access affordable commercial space, provide more retail and food opportunities to tourists in the summer, and pilot the idea of commercial space in the Railyard/Harbourfront Node. To better understand the requirements and specifications of a kiosk program, we examined the pop-up opportunities organized by Build Nova Scotia on the Halifax Waterfront

In 2017, Build Nova Scotia (then Develop Nova Scotia) transformed a former asphalt parking lot into this seasonal small business district. The intention of the program is to support local

makers and small businesses and increase local retail offerings for visitors to the waterfront (Build Nova Scotia, 2023). Some kiosks are on the waterfront year-round, while others are temporary.

There are different opportunities provided through the kiosks, including:

1. One week pop-up shops housed in the modified shipping containers. These shops do not allow the preparation of food, but support retail sale or service opportunities. Businesses are required to pay a base licensing fee of \$300/week, plus 5% of gross sales to Build Nova Scotia. Shops are only serviced by electrical. Kiosks include a service desk, four wall-hung shelves, one freestanding shelf with four tiers, and a slatted wall with eight hanging rods.
2. Seasonal, temporary chalets that can be leased for four-month terms between June and September. These chalets can be used for the sale of goods and services (not food preparation). Business pay a base licensing fee of \$500/month and 4% of their gross sales. Shops are only serviced by electrical. Build Nova Scotia provides the chalet a blank sign, but all interior fit ups are the responsibility of the tenant and must be temporary. Chalets are also used



Figure 4-21: Kiosks on the Halifax Waterfront (Build Nova Scotia, 2022)

during events to create markets, such as for the annual Evergreen Festival in December.

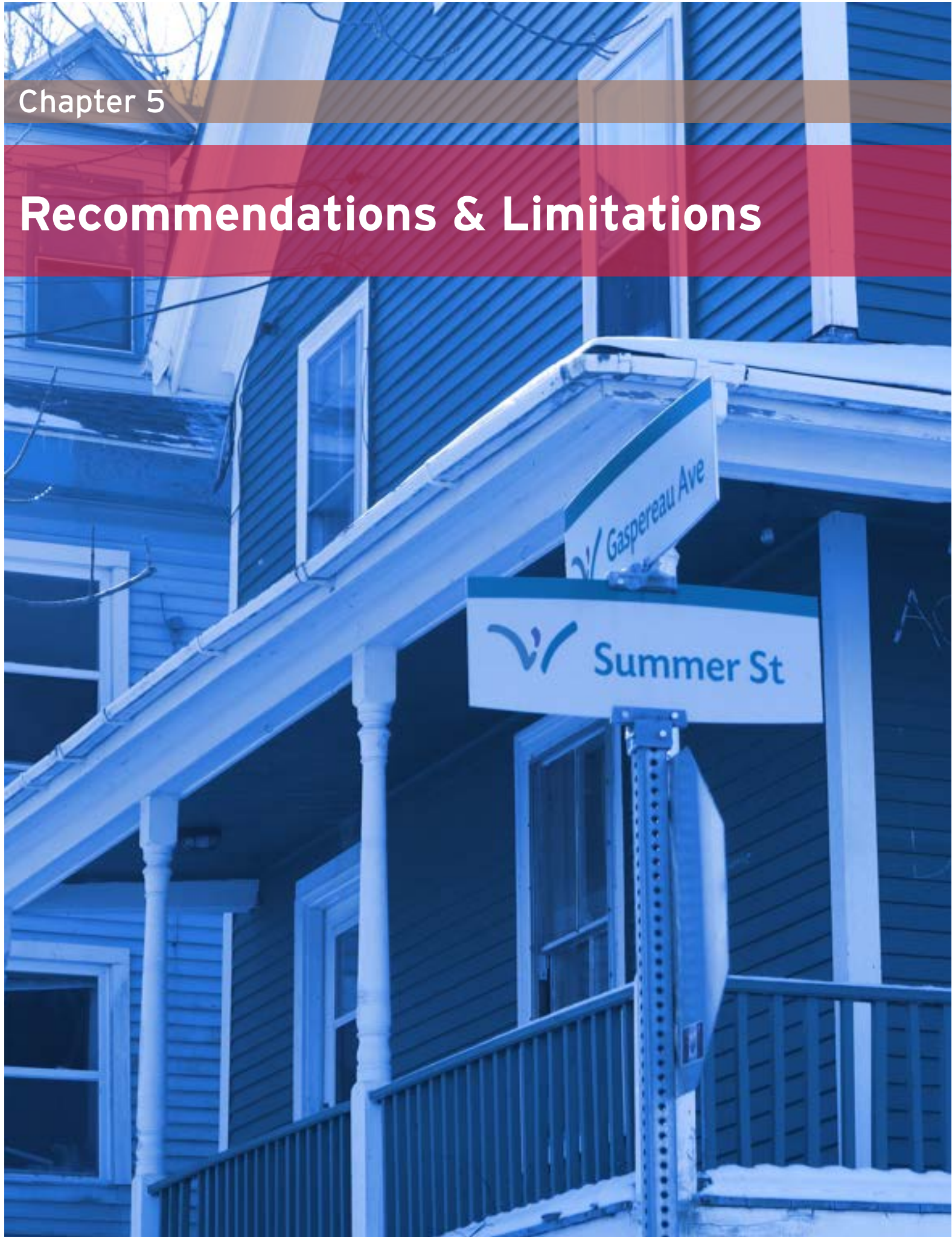
3. Three to five year leases for seasonal commercial spaces that operate from May to October. There are approximately 25 businesses currently operated under this program. Tenants must pay a base licensing fee of \$2000/month for a 16' by 16' wood frame kiosk, or \$800 per month for a modified shipping container (Build Nova Scotia, 2022). Servicing differs

depending on unit. Kiosks are provided as-is and all interior fit ups are the responsibility of the tenant.

Businesses must apply for all opportunities, but the selection process differs. For the pop-up shops, all qualified applicants enter a pool from which tenants are drawn at random. For the longer-term leases, tenants are selected based on their alignment with Build Nova Scotia's goals and objectives, the strength of their business case, their experience, and the financial feasibility of their business.

Chapter 5

Recommendations & Limitations



Recommendations

We have prepared a list of twelve recommendations based on the analysis above. These recommendations have been separated between recommendations that span all C-2 zones and specific recommendations for each study node: East Main, Summer Street, and the Harbourside node.

C-2 ZONE RECOMENDATIONS

1

Land Use By-Law Review

Changes to the Town's Land Use By-Law (LUB) to improve the general public's understanding of the permissions within the C-2 zone and align the Town's regulations with best practices observed elsewhere. While we do not believe substantial amendments are necessary, changes that we believe would better support commercial development include:

- a. A review of approval processes for all current permitted uses to identify opportunities to streamline approvals;
- b. Simplification of permitted uses to avoid redundancies and confusion;
- c. Expanding the ability of the Development Officer to vary parking through site plan approval beyond 10% where it aligns with the walkability and active transportation goals set out in the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) or waive cash-in-lieu requirements for parking variances in the C-2 zone as is done in Mission, BC; and
- d. Reduction of front yard setbacks for commercial uses and requirements that new development be located at the front setback to create a better pedestrian environment as outlined by Orangeville and Austin;

2

Use of the Phased-In Assessment Tool

Implementation of a phased-in assessment tool through Bill 177 (Section 71 of the MGA). Given the prevalence of this tool in municipalities outside of Nova Scotia, we believe it offers a valuable opportunity for the Town to impact operational costs for new commercial development. Suggestions for the implementation of this tool include:

1. Tying the application of the program to a successful site plan approval (SPA). This would restrict the tool to new development, ensure the Town is able to

- set appropriate limitations on the design and use of the property, and create an incentive for property owners to go through the SPA process.
2. Due to current high inflation and the uncertainty of sustained population growth at the time of writing, we would recommend a shorter phase-in period, as found in Ontario and BC municipalities. This would minimize the impact of the tool on the Town's budget in the long run.
 3. Provide the most significant rebates in the earliest years following development, and lower rebates in the last five years. This provides the most substantial benefit to businesses when costs are highest. It also allows the Town to have some of the certainty provided by a shorter term by diminishing the rate significantly in the last few years of the phase-in, when the Town's budget is most uncertain.
 4. Not setting a minimum project value or cost to allow small businesses to benefit from the rebate.
 5. Setting a timeframe for applications to come in, as seen in examples in Ontario and BC. This would allow the Town to trial the program with the potential to renew or extend the timeframe if it proves successful. It may also generate interest in development sooner, by establishing an incentive for owners to develop now rather than in the future.
 6. Combining the program with other incentives, such as reductions in permit fees or priority approval processing.
 7. Appendix G shows two different potential rebate structures and includes an applied demonstration of how they would have impacted a property that was developed in 2021 to include commercial use.

3

Work With the Province of Nova Scotia to Manage Short Term Rentals

Advocate to the Provincial Government and Property Value Services Corporation of Nova Scotia (PVSC) for the ability to charge commercial tax rates on short term rentals. With the ability to identify short term rental locations through the new provincial registry, there is an opportunity to even the playing field and ensure short term rentals are treated the same as all other commercial uses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EAST MAIN STREET NODE

This node has the best existing access to sidewalks and active transportation infrastructure of the nodes, and has significant open space available on the properties due to the large lot sizes. It also has the benefit of being located along the main route into the Town for visitors, and is in close proximity to a new proposed development in the East End of Wolfville expected to add 5,000 new residents. The area has already seen several C-2 zoned properties converted fully or partially to commercial uses.

1

Prioritize the East Main node for Municipal Investment in Infrastructure Improvements

Investments should focus on improving the pedestrian environment by aligning with design guidelines used in the City of Austin and the Town of Orangeville. This could include:

- a. Widening/smoothing sidewalks and adding tree planting to buffer pedestrians from the road.
- b. Adding street benches to encourage idling and interaction, as well as garbage cans to deal with waste.
- c. Adding signage to mark the area as mixed-use and create a distinct neighbourhood character.

2

Encourage Smaller Commercial Units Along the Property Setback Line

As mentioned above, existing properties have a large portion of undeveloped land, and most properties are set back significantly from the roadway. Therefore we would also recommend that the Town encourage the development of commercial kiosks and accessory commercial units at the properties setback line. This is important to developing the “active frontage” that the communities of Orangeville and Austin argue see as necessary for neighbourhood commercial uses. Tools to encourage this type of development could include:

- a. Policy to require new structures or additions in the node be built to the property line;

- b. Policy that provides the developer benefits for new development that build to the property line (e.g. reduced parking requirements, increase height or density, etc.);
- c. Increased education for property owners on the potential on their lands and the benefits of an active streetscape.
- d. Showing property owners what accessory community units or kiosks could look like on their property.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUMMER STREET NODE

Investigate the Full Potential of the Summer Street Node

Existing infrastructure in the node lacks the recommended traits outlined in our jurisdiction scan, but the street right-of-way is narrow which prevents some of the changes that would promote a more pedestrian friendly environment such as widening the sidewalk or adding another sidewalk on the other side of the street. However, the Node does have good surrounding connectivity via sidewalk and active transportation route. Additionally, public feedback at the Open House encouraged seeking innovative approaches to create a new mixed-use hub in this node. Therefore, our recommendations are:

- 1** Address the gap in the C-2 zone in this area by rezoning the properties on the South side of Summer Street to C-2.
- 2** Conduct a feasibility analysis to evaluate the impacts of turning Summer Street into a shared street by adding design elements indicated by the jurisdictional scan including paving details, planting, and signage. Because Summer Street is not a through road, impact on traffic would be limited. The event could be held in the Summer to capitalize on tourist staying in short term rentals in the area as opposed to predominantly students, and could allow local vendors and makers to set up temporary shops in the roadway. This pilot could also double as a visioning process for the Summer Street Node, encouraging residents to think of how the area could change in the future.
- 3** Complete a visioning process for the Node as a whole to understand how current residents, including renters and those not in the C-2 zone, want to see the area change.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE HARBOURSIDE NODE

1

Conduct a feasibility study on adding temporary commercial kiosks to the Waterfront Park.

While this park is not located within the node or zoned C-2, it offers a sizable public space that is being improved through major private investment and has the potential to become a lively gathering place, especially during the summer when tourists abound in Wolfville. Piloting commercial kiosks in this area could help generate a better commercial environment and pilot the success of commercial use in this area with minimal investment. Based on review of the Halifax Waterfront's kiosks, we recommend considering:

- a. Using seasonal facilities with minimal utility access to allow for the use of creative structures (shipping containers, in the case of Halifax) and minimize cost and safety concerns.
- b. Looking for partnership opportunities, such as with Build Nova Scotia, to minimize operational costs and burden for the Town.
- c. Require businesses to apply for spaces to ensure alignment with Town goals and to provide diversity in retailers.
- d. Begin with longer-term leases as was done with the Halifax kiosks to establish ongoing revenue to support expansion and re-investment in the program.
- e. Work with the business community to establish leasing rates that are affordable for local businesses, but cover ongoing operational costs and other investments into improving the space and expanding the program.

Limitations

There are two key limitations with our research:

Limited engagement scope and response.

Due to the project timeline and team capacity, engagement was focused only on current property owners in the C-2 zone. This means that the perspectives of other key stakeholders, such as current renters in the areas, local business owners, and the local community more broadly, were not a part of the conversation. We also had limited responses to our engagement, gathering only seven survey responses and with participants at our Open House largely limited to local Councillors and members of the Town's PAC. Where the Town chooses to follow through on the recommendations above, we would suggest a more robust engagement strategy follow to ensure that all stakeholders are fully informed and engaged.

Limited Data Availability

Due to limited data availability and diversity in commercial spaces and their associated requirements and form, we were unable to compare potential profits for residential rental versus commercial rental spaces. This information may have been helpful to better gauge the potential success of projects directed at encouraging commercial development.

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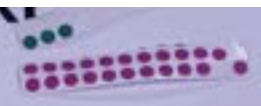
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Appendix



↑
Odds' ends
great street!
Love the look

Love these
+ don't know
how to like

would like
to see houses
- duplex
- more variety
shops - C-2



What are
your
thoughts?
Add your
comments on
a post-it
note!



APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Policy Scan

As mentioned in the methodology overview, the policy scan considers the Town of Wolfville's Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and the Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act. These documents provide the groundwork for the identity of the C-2 zone and the regulations that enable and limit its application. There is no formal policy scan section as the findings of the scan apply to the entire study as a whole. As such, all team members were expected to be familiar with the policy scan documents and to cite them when and where was necessary.

Jurisdiction Scan

Capitalizing on work already completed by other municipalities and groups is a key opportunity for the Town. A jurisdiction scan of programs and policies intended to promote mixed-use development and neighbourhood commercial development provides insight into innovative best practices and lessons learned in other locals which can be carried forward into the implementation of new programs to support commercial development.

Instead of examining a specific tool or type of tool (e.g. financial incentives, policies, etc.), we focused on identifying programs in different subcategories to reflect the diversity of opportunities available and form a more holistic approach. Table A-1 outlines the characteristic

subcategories and the jurisdictions used for each.

Each jurisdiction has a set of unique circumstances that distinguishes it from other cases. Wolfville, with its population of approximately 6,000, is coloured by Acadia University's students, campus, and staff. Unlike other university towns, Wolfville remains active outside of school terms by drawing in tourists and other visitors, especially during the summer. To accommodate what makes the Town unique, these criteria and more were taken into consideration when exploring how the plans of other jurisdictions could be incorporated into the Wolfville context.

When surveying jurisdictions proposing financial incentives, Canadian cases were given priority so that the hierarchy of government resource allocation (federal, provincial, municipal) matched the Town's. This was not always possible, as some approaches could only be found, or were best exemplified, outside of Canada. Other relatable factors considered include cases where jurisdictions are adding mixed use to a predominantly residential area, where the jurisdiction has a significant student population, and where the jurisdiction fits the identity of a North American small town.

Table A-1, Table of Jurisdictions Used by Topic

Regulating neighbourhood commercial areas	Financial incentivization programs	Incubator and kiosk programs
Town of Orangeville, Ontario. Commercial Urban Design Study: Neighbourhood Commercial	City of Sudbury, Ontario. Town Centre Community Improvement Plan	Halifax, Nova Scotia. Waterfront Kiosks
City of Austin, Texas. US. Traditional Neighborhood District - Criteria Manual	The City of Mission, British Columbia. Downtown Development Incentive	
	The City of Trail, British Columbia. Downtown Revitalization Tax Incentive	
	Sault Ste. Marie Incubators and kiosks programs Halifax, Nova Scotia. Waterfront Pop-up Business Opportunity	

Neighbourhood Analysis

Neighbourhood Micro-Analysis

The intent of the qualitative neighbourhood micro-analysis was to visually observe the built environment features of each node (East Main, Harbourside, and Summer) that contribute to or detract from opportunities to support commercial mixed-use. Observations were made using Google Street View using captures which went back as far as 2016. Photos from the site visit were also consulted. Because of its size and internal variance, the Summer node was also

analyzed on a street by street basis.

Neighbourhood GIS Analysis

Compared to the eye-level approach of the micro-analysis, the GIS portion of the neighbourhood analysis pulls in data about the C-2 zoned properties and visualises each node as a whole in order to draw out overall trends in Wolfville as they related to the inclusion of commercial use in the C-2 zone. The data for the GIS analysis was provided by the Town of Wolfville.

The first aspect of the GIS neighbourhood analysis is a lot coverage map, which measures the percentage of each C-2 lot that is not occupied by a permanent structure. A lot which is largely unoccupied signals the potential to add additional commercial structures, whereas a well occupied lot might have more potential as a conversion.

The second aspect of the GIS neighbourhood analysis considers the pedestrian accessibility of each C-2 lot. 'Accessibility' is defined by whether or not a lot is connected to a sidewalk or trail. Lots with frontage on multiple streets are marked as "partially accessible" where there is sidewalk access only along one street.

Financial Analysis

For the purpose of understanding and communicating the economic potential of commercial development and the Commercial

Phase In Assessment Tool, a financial analysis was undertaken as a part of this project. The analysis estimate the potential costs of different commercial programs (including micro-commercial, small-scale retail, and mixed-used options). The financial analysis also included a jurisdiction scan on the implementation of Bill 177 in other Nova Scotian municipalities and review of the impacts of the tool on other municipal finances.

Engagement

Engagement undertaken during this study functioned as a two-way street of information between the team and various stakeholders. Through the survey, open house, and other informational materials, engagement serves to raise awareness about the C-2 zone and the commercial phase in assessment tool, while also gathering stakeholder perception and feedback on how these things might be improved.

Property owners in the C-2 zone were contacted on February 14th, 2023 by the Town via letter to inform them of the project and link them to the survey on the Town's WolfvilleBlooms site. Town staff also directly contacted property owners they knew to encourage their participation. The survey remains open at the time of publishing. Due to the complexity and relative obscurity of the topic, the website provides property owners with background information on the C-2 zone itself and potential financial incentives prior to

the survey.

The survey consisted of 13 questions which were developed in collaboration with Town staff. All responses were recorded anonymously. The questions were designed to build upon our research questions and identify both existing barriers for commercial development as well as opportunities for the Town to support it.

Our open house occurred in collaboration with Town staff on Wednesday, March 22nd from 6 to 8 PM at the Town Hall. Participants were welcomed at the front entry throughout the duration of the event and introduced to the project based on their overall level of understanding. Once participants have been introduced to the topic and purpose of the open house, they were able to go around the room to different information and engagement stations.

Wolf team members and Town planning staff were available around the room to respond to questions or feedback. Post-it notes were provided at each station, and participants could leave these in any open spaces on the boards where they wanted to leave more in-depth comments. Significant white space was included on all posters to facilitate this.

APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS

Survey Questions

1. Are you aware of what uses are permitted in the C-2 zone?

- Yes
- No

2. Are you planning or considering any changes to your property in the near future (e.g., renovation, redevelopment, etc.)? Please briefly describe these changes.

- [Text response]

3. What barriers (including financial barriers, lack of infrastructure, or approval requirements) do you think may (or have) prevent you from creating new commercial space on your property?

- [Text response]

4. If these barriers were addressed, would you pursue commercial development on your lands?

- Yes
- No

5. If no, please explain why:

- [Text response]

6. What incentives or municipal improvements do you think could make new commercial space on your property a reality?

- [Text response]

7. As part of this study, the Town is considering implemented a phased-in property tax assessment tool. This tool would allow the Town to forgive up to 50% of the increased municipal tax following a commercial development for a period of up to 10 years. If a phased-in

commercial assessment tool was implemented by the Town of Wolfville, would you be more interested in developing new commercial space on your property?

- Yes
- No
- I do not have enough information to say

8. What other ideas do you have to incentivize commercial use in the C-2 zone?

9. The Town envisions the C-2 zone offering small-scale commercial space in combination with residential units to support the development of complete, walkable communities and to support local businesses and employment. Four form types have been highlighted by the town:



(Town of Wolfville, 2020a)

Please note if you would consider any of the development types pictured above on your lands.

- [Text response]

10. How do you envision the neighbourhood around your property developing in the future?

- [Text response]

11. The Town has identified three nodes as priorities for this study and ideal locations for new mixed-use development. Is your property located within one of the three key nodes identified in the map?

- East Main Street (between Victoria and Orchard)
- Summer Street (including Linden Ave and the north side of Acadia St.)
- Harbourside/Waterfront (Behind Railtown)
- My property is not located in one of the three nodes

12. If your property is not within one of the three nodes, what street is your property located on?

- [Text response]

13. Please share any additional comments here:

- [Text response]

APPENDIX C: PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Table C-1: Residential Parking Requirements

Type of Use	Minimum Parking Requirement
Single-detached, Semi-detached, Duplex	1.25 parking spaces for each dwelling unit plus $\frac{1}{2}$ space for each bedroom in excess of 3 bedrooms per dwelling unit.
Townhouse and Multi -Unit Dwellings (three units or more)	1 space for each dwelling unit plus $\frac{1}{2}$ space for each bedroom in excess of 3 bedrooms in a dwelling unit in the Core Area. 1.25 spaces for each dwelling unit plus $\frac{1}{2}$ space for each bedroom in excess of 3 bedroom in a dwelling unit outside the Core Area.
Short Term Rentals	0.5 parking space per rental unit.
Single Room Occupancies	1 parking space per rental room in excess of 3 (in addition to normal parking requirements for the dwelling)
Home Based Business	1 parking space
Any residential use not specified above	1 parking space per 30 square metres of total floor area.

Table C-2: Commercial Parking Requirements

Type of Use	Minimum Parking Requirement
Clubs, Educational Facilities, Places of Assembly, Places of Entertainment, Places of Worship, Restaurants, Sports Facilities and other places of assembly.	Fixed seats: 1 parking space per 5 seats, or 3 metres of bench space. No fixed seats: one parking space per 10 square metres of total floor area.
Day-Care Facilities	1 parking space per 50 square metres of total floor area.
Curling Rinks and similar facilities	1 parking space for each 2 persons in the designed capacity of the establishment (designed capacity shall mean 6 persons per bowling lane and 8 persons curling per sheet). In other parts of the building, additional parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with the requirements set out in the Bylaw for the use to which the other parts of the building may be used.
Accommodations	1 parking space per suite or rental unit plus requirements for restaurants or other facilities contained therein
Warehouses, transport terminals and general industrial uses.	1 parking space per 50 square metres of total floor area.
Any commercial use not specified above	1 parking space per 30 square metres of total floor area.

APPENDIX D: TOWN OF WOLFVILLE CORE AREA



APPENDIX E: DEVELOPMENT COSTING

Survey Questions

Construction estimates were taken from Altus Group Canadian Cost Guide 2023 using the estimated construction costs for Halifax (Altus Group, 2023). Woolf uses the highest construction estimates given in the range to avoid providing lower than possible costs. The Altus Group Canadian Cost Guide 2023 does not factor in rapid market inflation or extra costs for tradesmen to travel from outside the Halifax Regional Municipality for service calls. The following costing is not “true project cost” but is a rough estimate pricing used only to reflect the scale of investment expected to create a neighbourhood commercial space. Accessibility upgrades were estimated using StopGap (StopGap, year). Permit fees are identified in Town of Wolfville Policy No. 140-015, approved in 2017 (Town of Wolfville, 2017).

- Scenario 1 uses the cost estimate for a Class A interior fit-out - \$95 square/ft - A fit-out includes basic finishes to the floors, walls and ceilings (Altus Group, 2023). This would be what is necessary to make the space “commercial ready” but due to the diversity in construction costs for different types of commercial, does not include any of the specific fixtures or fittings needed to make the space operational.
- Scenario 2 uses the cost estimate for a Single Family Residential with unfinished

basement - \$165 square foot - Any addition or accessory building would more closely align with residential construction than larger scale commercial development (Altus Group, 2022).

Scenario 1

Costs	Discount
<i>Construction costs</i> \$95 sq/ft x 800 sq/ft = \$76,000	\$460 - Ramp funding application for this cost can be fully funded by Stop.Gap. foundation org
<i>Permit fees</i> \$50 + \$4 x for estimated \$1,000 construction = \$354	
<i>Accessible commercial upgrades</i> \$6,500 - Door equipment \$1,500 - Labour install \$460 - ramp depending on step height (between 2”-9”).	
TOTAL COST \$84,814 **No additional parking included	



Scenario 2

Construction costs

$\$165 \text{ sq ft} \times 800 \text{ sq/ft} = \$132,000$

Permit fees

$\$50 + \$4 \times \text{for estimated } \$1,000 \text{ construction} =$
 $\$354$

TOTAL COST

$\$132,354$

****No additional parking include**

Scenario 3

Construction costs

$\$165 \text{ sq/ft} \times 800 \text{ sq/ft} = \$132,000$

Sanitary Sewer connection fee (if combined with
Water Utility hookup)
 $= \$1,500$

One new parking spot

$\$17 \text{ sq/ft}$ for surface parking

8 ft wide by 16 ft long = $\$2,176$

Two curb cuts $\$650 = \$2,826$

Permit fees

$\$50 + .15 \text{ cent per square foot} = \170

TOTAL COST

$\$138,672$

APPENDIX F: APPROVAL EXAMPLE

To appreciate how current by-laws could confuse or dissuade those interested in incorporating a commercial use on their C-2 property, consider the difference between a 'studio' and 'craft workshop' use. Each retail use would go through an approval process which would differ based on three different regulations that can be difficult to decipher (Town of Wolfville, 2020a):

- Art galleries and studios are permitted as-of-right in the C-2 zone regardless of size. There is no definition provided in the LUB for art galleries, but studios are defined as "A building or part thereof used for the study, or instruction of any fine or commercial art including photography, music, visual arts, and commercial design or the sale of craft products".
- Craft workshops under 80 sqm are permitted as-of-right. However, if they are over 80 sqm, they must be approved through a site plan approval. A craft workshop is defined in the LUB as "a building or part of a building where craft products are produced and offered for sale, and where craft instruction may be offered".
- Neighbourhood retail spaces under 100 sqm are permitted through a site plan approval, but neighbourhood retail is not defined in the LUB.

Craft workshops and studios both allow for the production, instruction, and sale of arts locally made craft goods. Studio spaces are defined as being spaces use for the "study, or instruction of any fine or commercial art [...] or the sale of craft products". Despite their interchangeable aspects, studio spaces are permitted as-of-right with no size limitation, while any craft workshop over 80 sqm must go through a site plan approval. For this reason, a small clothing retail space under 100 sqm may require a site plan approval, while a large pottery shop would not.

APPENDIX G: PROPOSED PHASE IN ASSESSMENT REBATE AND EXAMPLE

Rebate Option 1

Rebate option one assumes that the Town adopts the same rebate formula used by all other municipalities in Nova Scotia, shown below.

Table G-1: Phase-in assessment rebate, option 1

Year	Rebated amount (%)
0 (pre-development)	-
1	90
2	80
3	70
4	60
5	50
6	50
7	40
8	30
9	20
10	10

Rebate Option 2

Rebate option two provides an option that provides a greater up front rebate with lower rebates in the long run. This option still averages out to 50% over the phase in period.

Table G-2: Phase-in assessment rebate, option 2

Year	Rebated amount (%)
0 (pre-development)	-
1	100
2	100
3	100

4	75
5	50
6	25
7	25
8	10
9	10
10	5

Rebate Example

To provide a comparison between the two, we looked at an existing C-2 zoned property that was expanded to include a commercial use in 2022. This addition raised their property assessment by \$96,600.

Under the phased-in assessment, the property owner would be rebated the amount shown in Table G-3 (assuming a commercial property tax rate of \$3.575 per \$100 of assessed value). In total, under both options, the property owner would receive just over \$17,000 in rebates over the 10 year term.

Table G-3: Phase-in assessment rebate, option 1

Year	Rebate amount (Option 1)	Rebate amount (Option 2)
0	-	-
1	\$3,108.11	\$3,453.45
2	\$2,762.76	\$3,453.45
3	\$2,417.42	\$3,453.45
4	\$2,072.07	\$2,590.09

5	\$1,726.73	\$1,726.73
6	\$1,726.73	\$863.36
7	\$1,381.38	\$863.36
8	\$1,036.04	\$345.35
9	\$690.69	\$345.35
10	\$345.35	\$172.67
TOTAL:	\$ 17,267.25	\$ 17,267.25



