



Planning Advisory Committee Meeting

January 9, 2025

4:00 p.m.

Hybrid - In-person (Council Chambers) and Teams

Agenda

Call to Order

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Planning Advisory Committee Meeting, October 10, 2024

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. Staff presentation – Housing Accelerator Fund Workplan
 - i. See [here](#) for Information Report on HAF Workplan from December Council Meeting.
- b. Workshop



5. Round Table

6. Next Meeting

a. DDMMYY 0:00 PM.

7. Adjournment

ATTENDING

- Councillor Madeira-Voss, Chair,
- Mayor Wendy Donovan,
- Deputy Mayor Wendy Elliott,
- Councillor Jennifer Ingham,
- Beverly Boyd,
- Michael Martin,
- Jason Hall,
- Corey Cadeau, and

ABSENT WITH REGRETS

- Kelly van Niekerk

ALSO ATTENDING

- Director of Planning & Development, Devin Lake
- Senior Planner, Mark Fredericks
- Community Planner, Lindsay Slade
- CAO, Glenn Horne

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 June 13, 2024 BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

CARRIED

3. Public Input

- **No public input**

Agenda Item

Discussion and Decisions

- 4. New Business:**
- a. Committee Vacancies**
- Director Lake notified the committee that vacancies will need to be filled on the Committee.
- 5. Continuing Business:**
- a. Housing Accelerator Fund Updates**
- i) Communications and Launch
 - ii) Acadia Secondary Plan
 - iii) Non-Market Housing
 - iv) Plan Review
- Director Lake provided updates on key initiatives:
 - Collaboration with Acadia University on housing projects.
 - Reviewing municipal planning documents for housing opportunities.
 - Development of non-market housing initiatives.
 - Challenges highlighted include traffic concerns, parking, and community narratives around growth.
 - Council and Planning Committee’s role in community engagement emphasized.
- b. Urban Forestry and Tree Policy Updates**
- Mark Fredericks provided a presentation including updates on:
 - The street tree inventory and potential planting sites.
 - Ongoing work in Reservoir Park, including removal of invasive species and replanting with native species.
 - Addressing hemlock woolly adelgid infestation and treatment options.
- c. Active Transportation Updates**
- Director Lake Provided an update on the Active Transportation Network.
 - Delays in tender submissions noted, with pricing under review.
 - Potential projects include completing Highland Avenue and Cherry Lane/Kent corridor improvements.
 - Larger tender package expected by early 2025 to ensure competitive pricing.
- d. Short-term Rentals Update**
- Director Lake provided updates on Short-term Rentals including the Provincial mandates and their implications for Wolfville discussed.
 - Existing regulations to be revisited in light of provincial changes and housing crisis considerations.

Agenda Item	Discussion and Decisions
e. Loblaw's Redevelopment Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An update on the Loblaw's Redevelopment site was provided and indicated that the existing grocery store will expand. This file is in the proposal stage and this project will go through Site Plan Approval and will be reviewed by the Design Review Committee.
f. 292 Main Street Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Construction of 292 Main Street is underway and Staff are working with the developer to mitigate impacts from construction near the sidewalk.
6. Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">January 9, 2025
7. Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">October 10, 2024 6:00 p.m.

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 6:00 p.m.

CARRIED

Approved at the ***, 2025 Planning Advisory Committee Meeting.
As recorded by Lindsay Slade, Community Planner, Town of Wolfville.**

INFORMATION REPORT

Title: IR 023-2024: Housing Accelerator Fund Plan Review and Growth Management Framework

Date: December 17, 2024

Department: Planning & Economic Development



SUMMARY

Housing Accelerator Fund Plan Review and Growth Management Framework

In February 2024, the Town entered into an agreement with the federal government under the Housing Accelerator Fund. Through this agreement, the Town has committed to completing six initiatives through our Action Plan. A copy of the signed agreement is attached and a summary of the Action Plan - endorsed by the previous Council - is below.

To implement the Town's housing action plan and improve the Town's capacity to manage growth, Staff are conducting a review of the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw (Plan Review). This review is guided by a Growth Management Framework, which ensures a comprehensive approach is being taken to how the Town supports and manages growth and development.

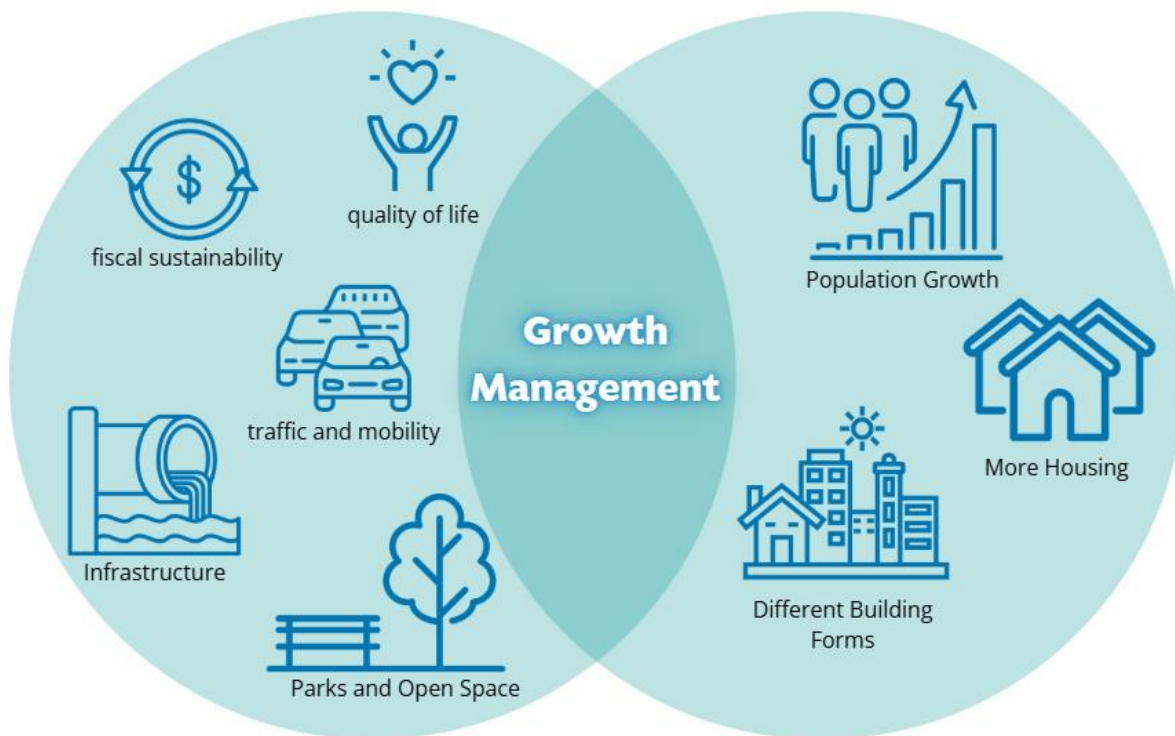


Figure 1. Comprehensive growth management framework for HAF Action Plan.

Council will be presented with summaries of key aspects of Growth Management (infrastructure, fiscal sustainability, parks, traffic and mobility) to assist in making decisions about increasing housing supply. It

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is not practical to make zoning decisions or increase densities without an understanding of where we are and where we want to go with these key aspects of community health and quality of life.

This information report is intended to provide a high-level overview of the commitments of the action plan and introduce the Growth Management Framework. Together, these pieces will provide the ability for the Town to grow in a manner that balances growth with fiscal sustainability, infrastructure, mobility and traffic, parks and open space and other opportunities.

As of December 2024, Staff are currently focused on:

- Onboarding consultants to support this work
- Finalizing scopes of work and delineating timelines
- Reviewing background and starting analysis
- Continue working toward a Non-Market Housing Strategy with the Non-Market Working Group
- Stakeholder meetings to refine approach
- Council onboarding/orientation

More information can be found below.

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1) CAO COMMENTS

Facilitating residential development to address the growing gap in supply is a complex undertaking. It is not solely an exercise of reviewing and amending planning policies and land-use bylaws. Wolfville is a vibrant town that provides a variety of services and amenities. As our population grows, additional demand will be placed on those services and amenities. The growth management framework introduced in this report and paired with the HAF Action Plan, aims to provide information related to the Town's infrastructure and asset management, parks and open space, mobility and traffic, and financial capacity. Taken together, Council will be in a better position to make informed decisions as the Town pursues its HAF Action Plan.

2) ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCES

1. Attachment 1. Housing Accelerator Fund Agreement
2. Attachment 2. Housing Needs Assessment
3. [Municipal Planning Strategy](#)
4. [Land Use Bylaw](#)
5. [Wolfville Blooms](#) – Housing Accelerator Fund page
6. [Wolfville Town Website](#) – Housing Accelerator Fund page

3) DISCUSSION

A review of municipal planning documents (plan review) is an opportunity to evaluate how effective existing policies and bylaws are at addressing current environmental, social and economic needs and challenges.

Wolfville's Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy, adopted in 2020, require updating due to significant global changes since then, including shifts in population, cost of living, property values, and public space priorities. These trends are echoed across the province and country.

Between 2016 and 2021, Wolfville's population grew by 20.5%, far exceeding the 2% annual growth previously projected. Residential construction in the same period has lagged, with an average of just 25 units built per year—well below the 1,705 units needed by 2032 (155/year), as outlined in the Town's Housing Needs Assessment (attached). To address the growing gap in housing supply and need, the Town agreed to implement the Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan, summarized in the table below.

The action plan is designed to create systemic and transformational change, meaning the actions should reduce barriers to construction of housing forms we know we need. Removing barriers where possible is essential, as the gap in supply will continue to grow with the current pace of construction, as shown below. More information on the Action Plan can be found on the [Town website](#) or [Wolfville Blooms](#), as well as in the attached HAF agreement.

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Town Planning Documents Review + Growth Management Framework	Affordable and Non-Market Housing Strategy	Secondary Planning Strategy for Acadia's South-East Campus
Simplify processes and work within our capacity to expedite more housing being built.	Non-market housing working group	Mixed housing models
Reduce parking requirements	Non-market housing grant program	Identifying opportunities for housing near Crowell Tower
Appropriate zoning that supports more housing	Leveraging Town-owned land for non-market housing	Coordinate parking management with Town
Growth Management framework/understanding of key areas (infrastructure, parks, mobility/traffic, fiscal) to support changes		

Table 1. Summary of Wolfville's Housing Accelerator Action Plan.

In addition to the HAF Action Plan, the Town has also committed to a residential unit target. The Town has committed to issuing building permits for a minimum of 120 dwelling units by the end of 2026. 110 of these building permits must be for "missing middle" housing (ground oriented, multi-unit housing like garden suites, duplexes-fourplexes, & low-rise apartments) and 20 must be affordable. To date, the Town has issued 72 permits including 4 affordable units. 60 of these permits were issued for the building at 292 Main Street, where all of the 4 affordable units will go.

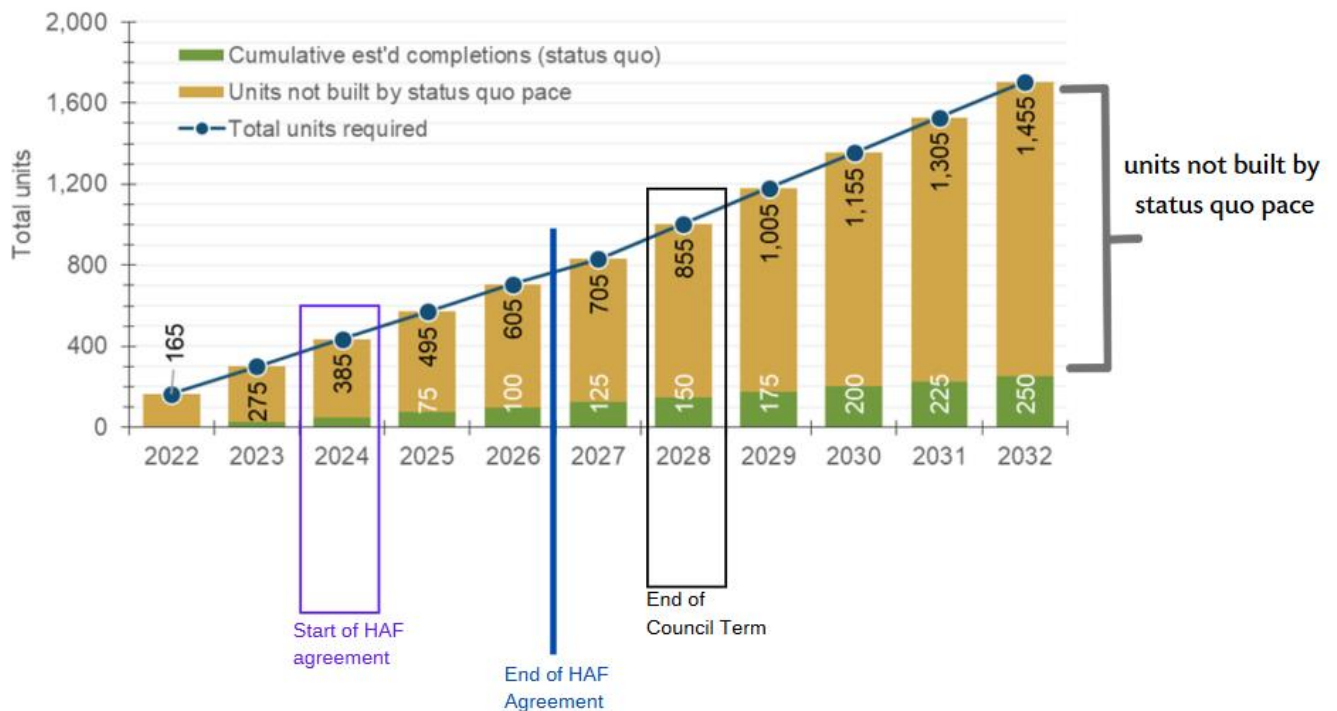


Figure 2. Estimated units needed versus units built year over year (Turner Drake & Partners).

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Housing construction often faces delays due to labor shortages, supply chain issues, material costs, and financing challenges. Despite the Town approving numerous rezonings and development agreements in recent years, few projects reach completion, and many will face delays in project lead times. With restrictive zoning regulations, developers can struggle to secure financing and meet feasibility requirements due to restrictive land use regulations and low unit maximums which impact return on investment. The reality is that the Town will have to issue significantly more than 120 permits to see that number built.

Staff estimate that there are currently (approximately) 500 housing units that have been approved in the Town. These are at different stages of readiness (early planning through to construction and occupancy). However, even if all these developments are completed within the next five years, this would amount to less than half of the projected housing units needed within that timeframe. By amending our Planning documents to reduce barriers to housing being built, the Town can better support developers in creating financially viable projects and help meet future housing demand. While doing this, the Town can also better support the non-profit housing sector to implement permanent affordable housing in the Town.

HAF Work Plan

To support the completion of the action plan in an accelerated timeframe, the Town has awarded Standing Offers for planning services to 5 consulting firms to support with specific areas of work over the next 3 to 4 years:

- [Turner Drake & Partners](#) – This firm will support the Community Profile aspect of the Plan Review through population projections and demographic data analysis. They will further explore the housing needs assessment findings (they created our existing needs assessment), provide insight into local and regional challenges and opportunities (including short-term rentals), assess impacts of immigration, finance and provide analysis for the gap in housing starts and completions nationally and provincially.
- [Fathom Studio](#) – Fathom Studio has worked closely with the Town on a number of initiatives over the years. They will support the Growth Management Framework and lead the overall document preparation (they created our existing Planning documents) and take on specific pieces of work – including growth scenario analysis, parking study and recommendations, community engagement, graphic design, etc.
- [Happy Cities](#) – Happy Cities is an urban design, engagement and consulting firm and has been hired to lead the Downtown Planning aspect of the Plan Review as well as support community engagement efforts.

Local Architect Vincent den Hartog has also been hired to resume work that began in 2010 for the lands along the rail line. This work will inform the Secondary Planning Strategy for those lands.

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To meet the specified deadlines, Staff plan to present a draft final package to Council by June 2025. The timeline below highlights the key milestones and dates required to achieve this goal.

PLEASE NOTE: this is based on information known as of December 2024 – many factors could impact the delivery of this work as per the schedule outlined below.

PHASE 1 – Start-up, Background and Initial Package Preparation

December 2024 – Plan review and growth management launch

- Onboarding consultants
- Finalizing scopes of work and delineating timelines
- Reviewing background and starting analysis
- Continue working toward a Non-Market Housing Strategy with the Non-Market Working Group
- Stakeholder meetings to refine approach
- Council onboarding/orientation

January – February 2025

- Consultants carrying out studies and analysis
- Different land use scenarios preparation and analysis - some detailed area work included (eg rail line, Acadia South-East Campus, downtown, agricultural lands)
- Community profile updated
- Continue working toward a Non-Market Housing Strategy with the Non-Market Working Group

PHASE 2 – Public Information, Feedback and Council Direction

March 2025

- Work-to-date presented to PAC, which will act as steering committee
 - Growth Management Framework
 - Overview of where we are + what's to come with: Infrastructure and Asset Management; Parks and Open Space; Mobility and Traffic; Fiscal Sustainability
 - Updated Community Profile
 - Description of where we are and where trends are pointing
 - Growth Scenarios
 - Land Use / Zoning scenarios that meet our Housing Accelerator Fund Commitments (3 scenarios anticipated).
 - These will be updated zoning maps with associated analysis
- Detailed Public Engagement approach
- Non-Market Housing Strategy Considerations

April 2025

- Work-to-date and summary of PAC discussion presented to Council at Committee of the Whole
-

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- Public Consultation and Information Sessions on Scenarios, Community Profile and Options
 - Mail outs
 - Website, Blooms
 - Open Houses with PAC members and Council as co-hosts with Staff
 - A detailed public engagement plan would be presented with the PAC package. Additional engagement at the Direction of Council

May 2025

- What we Heard Report and additional analysis goes to PAC for a recommendation and Direction to Council

June 2025

- Council presented with What we Heard, PAC recommendation and Non-Market Housing Working group strategy
- Recommendation to Staff on selected direction to finalize changes to planning documents

PHASE 3 – Detailed work on finalizing Planning Documents and implementing changes

July-September 2025

- Detailed work on Municipal Planning Strategy
- Finalizing proposed Land Use Bylaw amendments
- Finalizing Student Housing work and Non-Market work

October 2025

- Draft (final) planning documents and recommendations will be presented to PAC and Council for consideration
- This work will be shared with the community for feedback through open houses, mail outs, and website updates.

Community Engagement

The community engagement approach to be used for the plan review will be similar to that which was used for the [East End Secondary Plan](#) and will involve significant participation from Council, the Planning Advisory Committee and Non-Market Housing Working Group.

The process and level of feedback obtained through the East End Secondary Planning Strategy process has also helped to inform the Housing Accelerator Fund plan review and growth management framework as it provides an excellent case study for understanding concerns and needs around growth and change in town.

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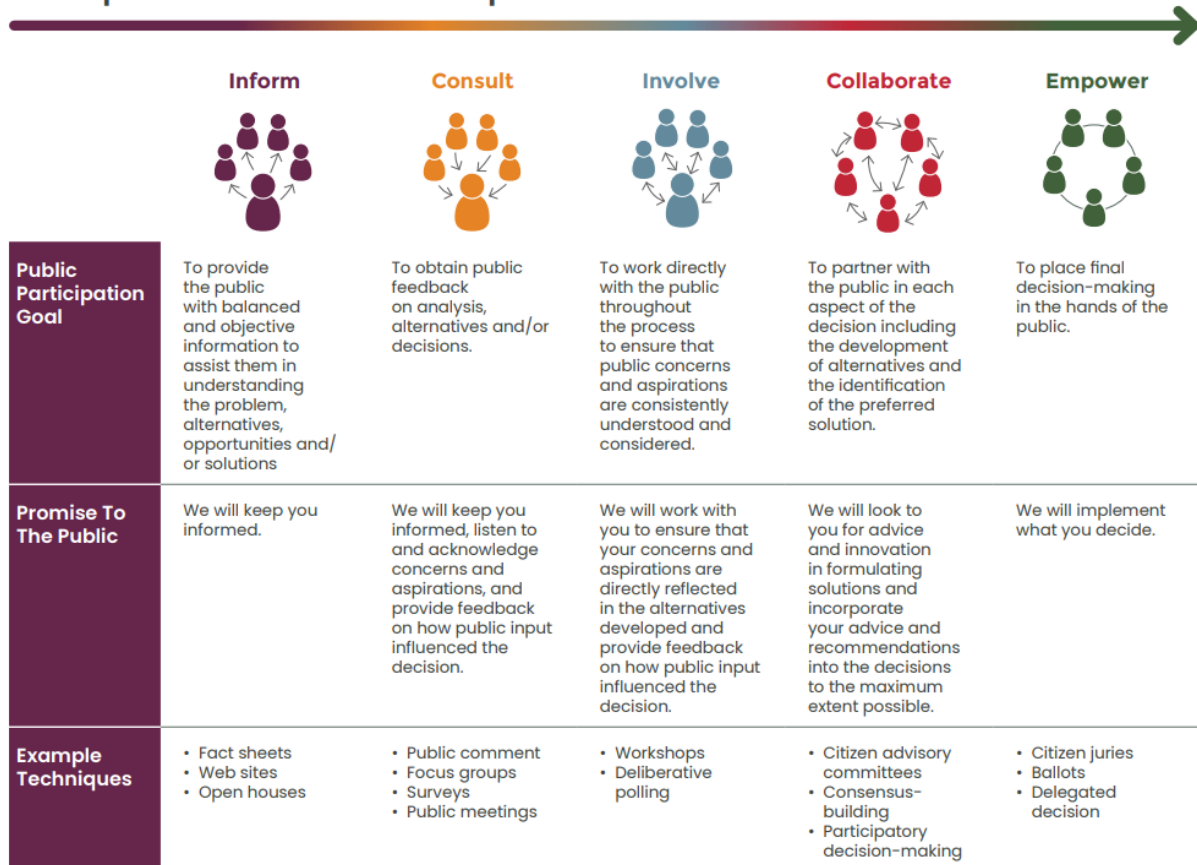


Staff are recommending a 3-phase approach to the overall workplan. There will be public involvement throughout the process. Given that the action plan was approved and is being funded through the attached Agreement, Council should be thoughtful about the public engagement approach. The International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation is included below for Council’s benefit.

Phase 1 and 2 (now till April 2025) will include an overview of potential paths forward with scenarios shown to demonstrate how different levels of change could impact various areas of Growth Management (infrastructure, parks and open space, traffic and mobility, and fiscal sustainability).

Public engagement during this phase will include letters, updates to the Town website and Wolfville Blooms page, as well as a full week of open house events to ensure adequate time and opportunity has been made for the public to be engaged. This phase will be instrumental in delivering a refined option in Phase 3.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



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Phase 3 (May-November 2025) taking feedback from Phase 1 into consideration, this phase will include detailing the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law changes (and other refinements) that ensure we meet our Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan Commitments.

The majority of the HAF work will be focused in the Inform and Consult areas of the IAP2 spectrum; however, as Staff work towards delivering recommendations, a significant amount of time has and will continue to be spent engaging and working collaboratively with key stakeholders such as the Non-Market Housing Working Group members, property owners, WBDC, Acadia University and others.

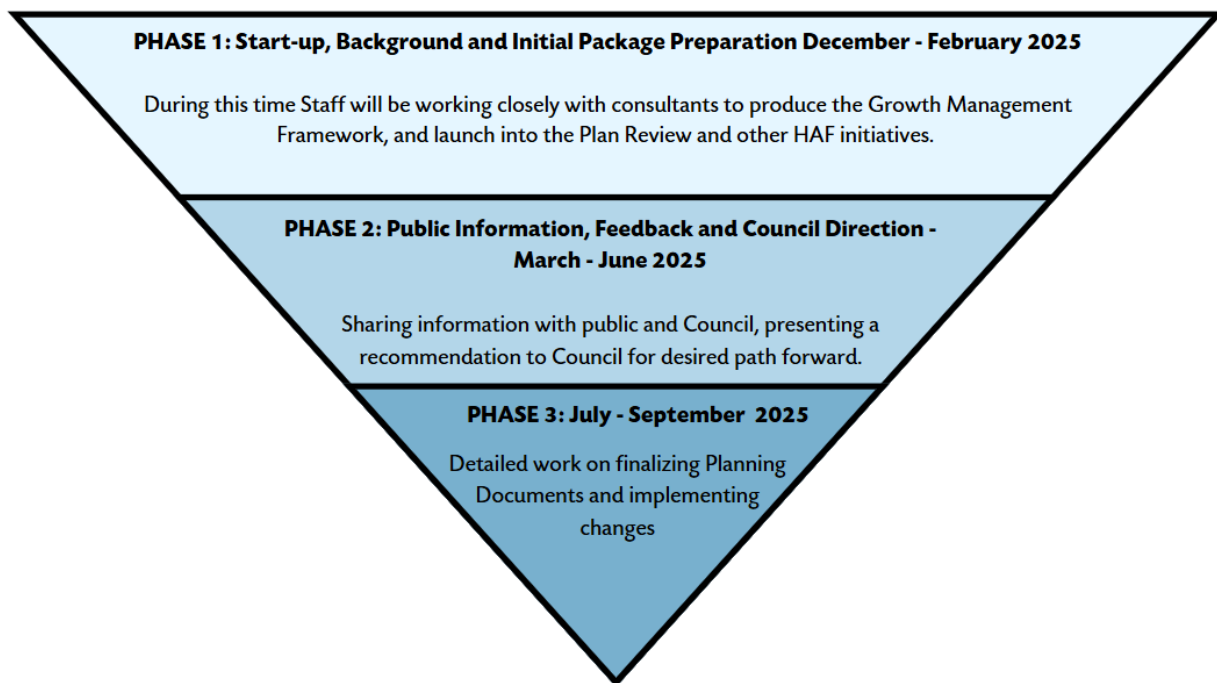


Figure 3. High level workplan summary.

4) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

This project impacts all existing strategic directions and plans of Council and forms the basis of work-to-come.

5) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Key Message: The Town is working on a growth management framework and review of the planning documents (Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law) as part of the Housing Accelerator Funding received. Project information can be found at wolfvilleblooms.ca and Wolfville.ca.

6) FUTURE COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

See above.