

West Hants Regional Municipality Municipal Document Review

Community Virtual Session

June 2, 2025



Purpose of the Meeting

- 1** Purpose of this Meeting
- 2** Project Overview
- 3** Key Changes to New Municipal Plan
- 4** Key Changes to New Land Use By-law
- 5** Discuss Next Steps

Purpose of the Planning Document Review and Update

Planning Legislative Framework

- **The *Municipal Government Act***
 - Requires every Municipal Government to have planning documents in place
 - Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)
 - Land Use By-law (LUB)
 - Subdivision By-law (SBL)
 - Reasonably Consistent with the Statements of Provincial Interest
 - Helps Municipal Council to **guide, regulate, and control land use** within their municipality



Current Planning Documents



Municipality of the District of West Hants
Municipal Planning Strategy (2008)
Land Use By-law (2008)
Subdivision By-law (2008)



Town of Windsor
Municipal Planning Strategy (2005)
Land Use By-law (2005)
Subdivision By-law (2012)



Town of Hantsport
Municipal Planning Strategy (2010)
Land Use By-law (2012)
Subdivision By-law (2010)

West Hants Regional Municipality
Municipal Planning Strategy
Land Use By-law
Subdivision By-law



Project Overview: Deliverables and Work Program

Phase 1 


Project Start-Up

- Introductory Project Team Meetings
- Council & Planning and Development Issues Identification Workshop
- Communications and Engagement Plan

Phase 2 


Background Review & Visioning

- Data Collection
- Background Review and Policy Directions Report
- Consultation Cluster #1

Phase 3 

Prepare Regional Planning Framework

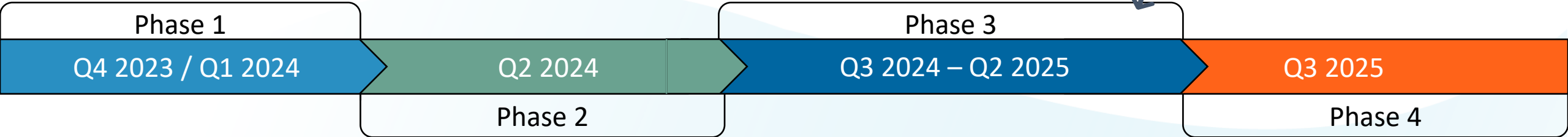
- Draft MPS, LUB, SBL
- Feedback from Project Team
- Consultation Cluster #2

Phase 4 

Refinement and Finalization

- Final MPS, LUB, SBL
- Feedback from Project Team
- Final Public Meeting
- Council Adoption and Public Hearing

We are Here!



Municipal Planning Strategy

What is a Municipal Planning Strategy?



A Municipal Planning Strategy is a planning policy document that:

- Vision for growth and development
- Details strategic objectives to implement the vision
- Guides where land uses (e.g., residential, retail, office, industrial, parks) should be located
- Directs what natural and cultural heritage features should be protected and/or enhanced
- Identifies future roads and new infrastructure
- Reflects Provincial and local interests and values

New Municipal Planning Strategy

- New MPS format with 6 sections and one section for Schedules (maps)
- Land Acknowledgement and Vision and Guiding Principles added
- Consolidated policies and designations of former municipalities, removed duplication, and kept geographic specific policies
- Added an enabling policy to allow for the creation of Secondary Plans
 - Provides more detailed policy direction than the MPS
 - Addresses specific issues related to the Secondary Plan Area

Section 2: Vision Statement & Guiding Principles

Added: Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

To help guide the overall direction of the Municipal Planning Strategy, a vision is established which helps shape the priorities and the basis of the plan. These are a set of expectations against which to measure the policies contained in the plan.

Vision Statement for West Hants Regional Municipality

“West Hants Regional Municipality envisions a future where inclusivity, innovation, and resilience create a vibrant community that balances urban and rural lifestyles. The Municipality is dedicated to preserving natural landscapes, rural character and agricultural heritage through sustainable development and economic prosperity, while honoring its rich history and diversity.”

Vision Statement & Guiding Principles

Added: Guiding Principles

- Foster a welcoming, inclusive community that offers a high quality of life for residents and attracts both tourists and new residents, including youth, young professionals, and families.
- Create healthy, safe, vibrant, and mixed-use neighbourhoods.
- Encourage an adequate supply and diverse range of different housing types including affordable and supportive housing that meet the housing needs for all residents.
- Promote climate resilience by implementing strong adaption measures to help protect against extreme weather and coastal risks, and encourage sustainable practices among residents, businesses, and organizations.
- Support a balanced economy that values both traditional and modern economic sectors, fostering innovation and investment.
- Promote connectivity through integrated transportation systems and infrastructure.
- Celebrate and protect the cultural and built heritage values and resources.

Growth and the Municipal Structure

Municipal Structure provides guidance and direction for the development and growth of the WHRM for 20+ years

Growth Centres

- Future growth will be directed with higher densities
- Capitalize on existing infrastructure, active transportation links
- **Includes:** Windsor, Hantsport, Three Mile Plains, Falmouth

Local Centres

- Serves the local community & supports surrounding Agricultural Areas
- Limited infill through intensification and only permitted subject to servicing capacity
- **Includes:** Brooklyn, Newport Station, St. Croix, Ellershouse, Newport Corner, Ardoise-Cameron Lake, Wentworth Creek, Gypsum Mines- Sweets Corner, Newport Landing, Summerville, Cheverie and Mount Denson

Agricultural Areas

- Comprised of robust and productive lands
- Protected lands
- Supports a sustainable agri-food network and agriculture related business

Resource Areas

- Made up of forested and mineral rich lands where minimal development is anticipated to occur
- Supports renewable energy generation (e.g., wind/solar) projects



New Policy Directions

Transportation

- Policies to facilitate and encourage Active Transportation and Ride Share Programs
- Explore/study feasibility of a public transportation system
- Develop a Transportation Master Plan

Road Network

- Roads will be referenced on the Transportation Map rather than listed in the text

Environment

- Considerations for development in flood prone areas (e.g., potential development restrictions, expanded flood mapping)
- Policies that support new renewable energy generation (e.g., wind farms and solar) projects
- Stormwater Management regulations

Cultural Heritage Resources

- Architectural Control Districts (e.g. ability to development additional districts in the municipality)
- Implementing view planes to limit building heights and protect historic view points, such as Fort Edward



Source: Parks Canada

New Policy Directions

Housing

- Additional dwelling units in an existing single detached dwelling as of right
- Carrying forward the recent WHRM Housing Accelerator Funding (HAF) policy changes approved May 13, 2025:
 - Replaced the Single Unit Residential (R-1) zone with a new Low Density Residential (R-1) zone which permits up to 4 units as-of-right
 - Permit up to 6 units as-of-right in the Medium Density (R-2) zone
 - Permit more than 6 units and to a maximum of 12 units as-of-right in the High Density (R-3) zone
- Streamline the application process to only require a development agreement for more than 12 units.



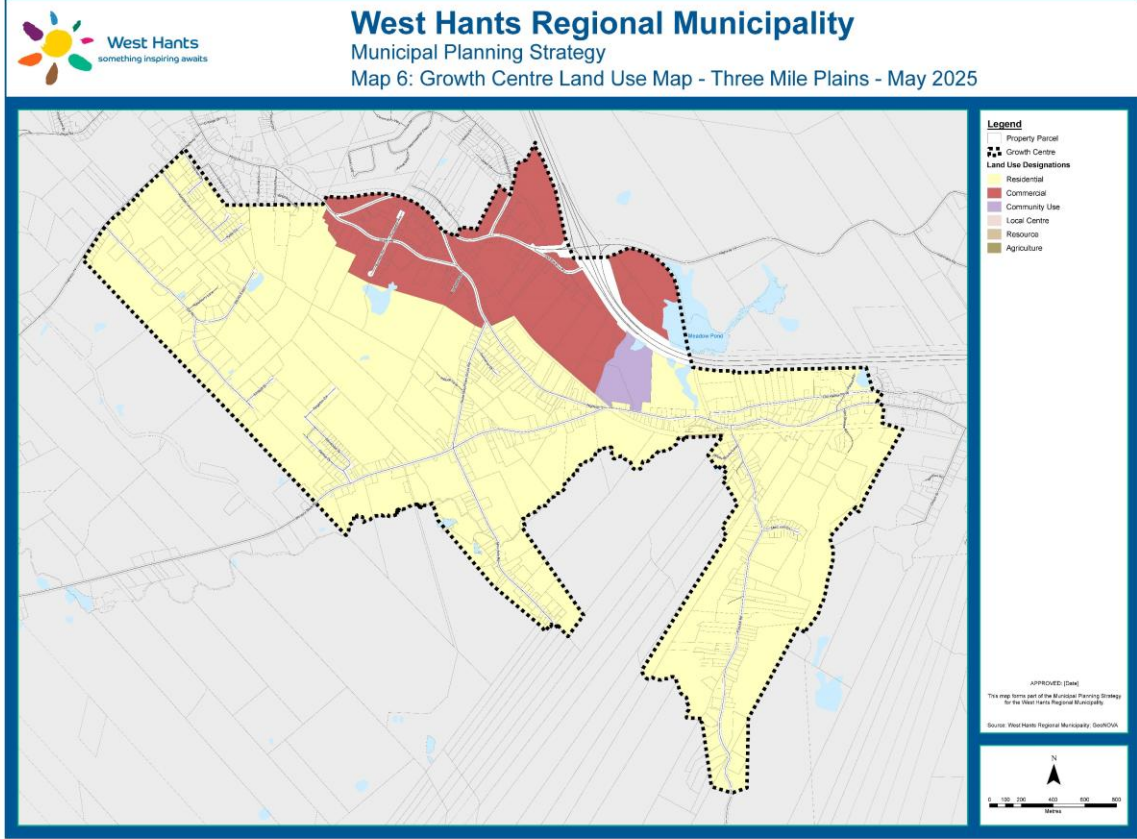
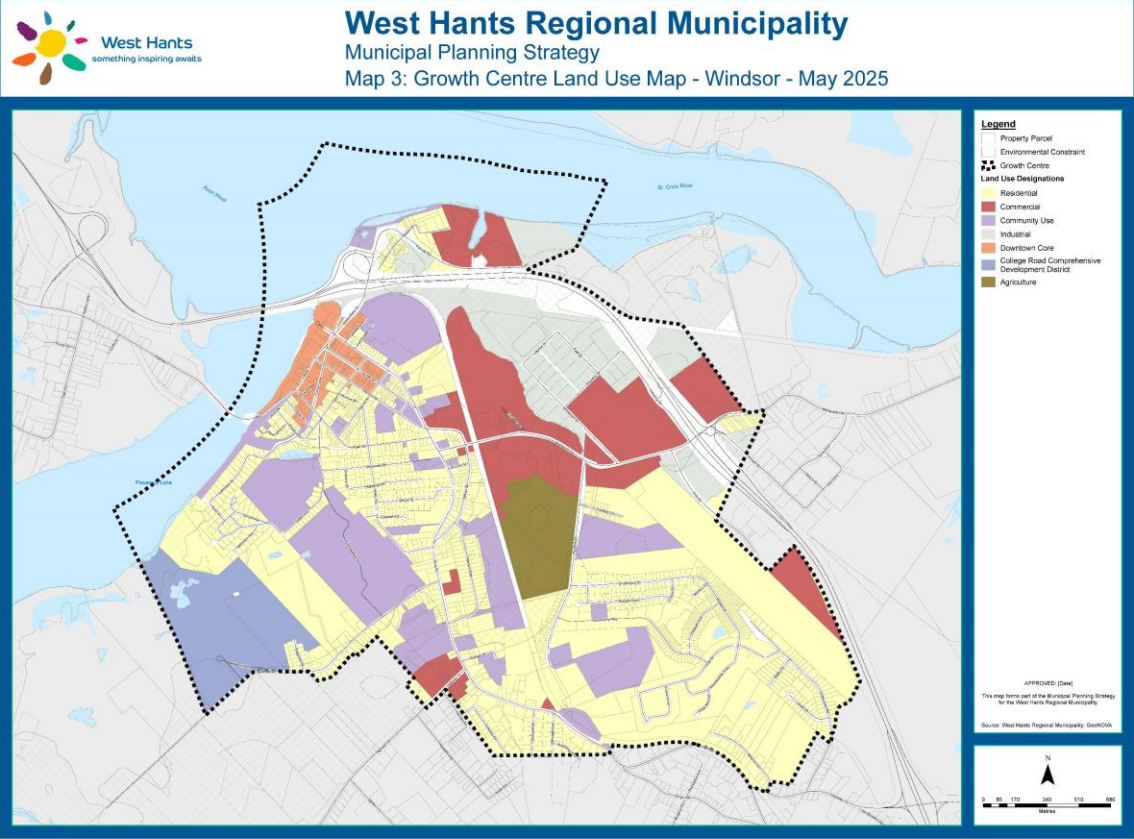
Land Use Designations

- Establishes the **land use designations**, including the **permitted uses** and **associated land use policies** that direct the general pattern for growth and development over the planning period
- Direction is provided for the type of development and built form that is permitted within each land use designation (i.e., height)
- The **Land Use By-law** will prescribe the precise regulations and land use permissions, in conformity with the policies of this Plan
- New subsection on land uses permitted in all designations

Draft Designations

- Residential
- Commercial
- **Downtown Core** (e.g., former Town Centre)
- **College Road Comprehensive District**
- **Local Centre** (e.g. former Village and Hamlet)
- Agriculture
- Industrial
- Resource
- Community Use
- Nesbitt Island
- Overlays
 - Environmental Constraints Overlay
 - Comprehensive Development Districts

Growth Centres Boundary Changes



Land Use By-law

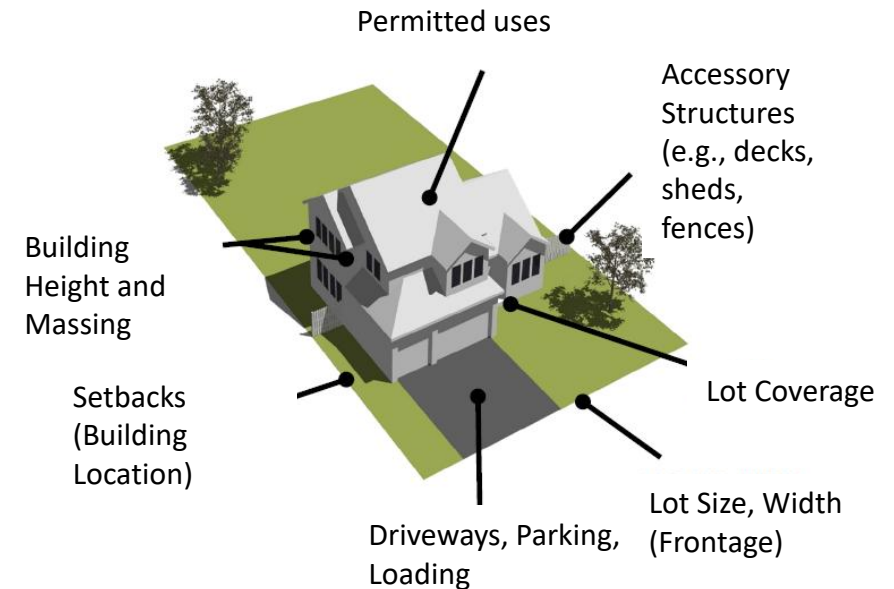
What is a Land Use By-Law?

The Land Use By-law **implements** the **objectives and policies** of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

The Land Use By-law states:

- How land may be used;
- Where buildings and other structures can be located;
- The types of buildings that are permitted and how they may be used; and
- The lot sizes and dimensions, parking requirements, building heights and setbacks from the street.

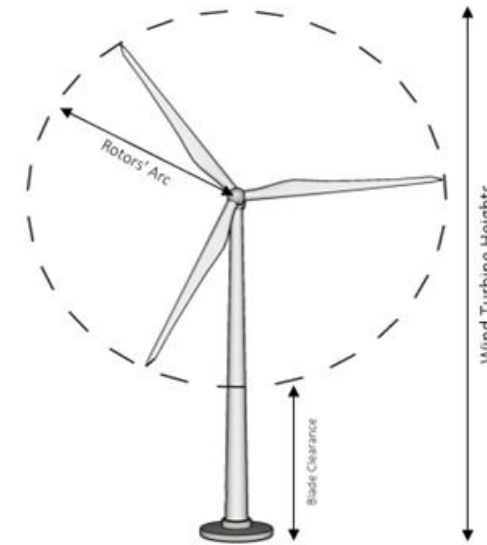
The Land Use By-law provides a **legal way** of managing land use and development, protecting from conflicting and potentially hazardous land uses in WHRM.



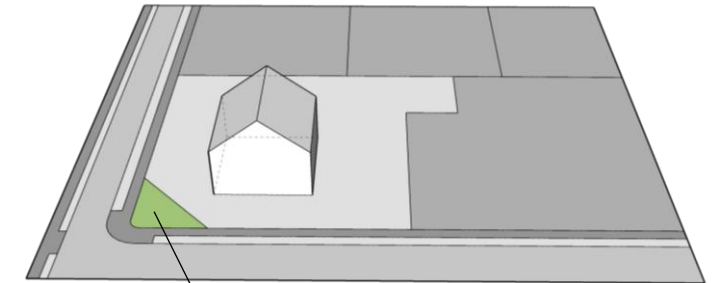
New Land Use By-law

- **Improvements/Format and Structure**

- Document has been reformatted to be more readable/user friendly
- Diagrams/illustrations have been included where clarification is needed
- Consolidated and renamed some sections for greater clarity (e.g., “Right to Enter” to “Inspection”)
- General provisions will be consistent
- New regulations to be reasonably consistent with provincial legislation and the New MPS (e.g., Buffers)
- Updated Definitions with illustrations where necessary



WIND TURBINE



DAYLIGHTING TRIANGLE

Land Use Zones

Within the existing Land Use By-laws, there is a total of **55 zones**.

The new Land Use By-law proposes to consolidate a number of zones which have similar intent and/or similar provisions. **A total of 30 zones are proposed** across 6 zone categories.

Zone Category	Existing Land Use By-laws # of Zones			# of Zones in New Land Use By-law
	West Hants	Windsor	Hantsport	
Residential	5	3	3	5
Commercial	5	8	2	9
Industrial	6	3	1	5
Agriculture	3	1	-	3
Resource	4	-	-	4
Community Use	2	2	3	2

General Provisions

General Provisions are overarching regulations that apply across all or most zones within WHRM.

New or Improved General Provisions

- Licensed Cannabis Uses
- Dog Parks
- Kennels
- Skate Parks
- A number of General Provisions were combined and/or simplified, such as:
 - Automobile Service Stations
 - Home-Based Businesses
 - Height Exemptions
 - Landscaping



Land Use By-law Updates

Parking and Loading

- Refined minimum off-street parking space requirements by type of use, and parking space and area regulations.
- Updated to include **Barrier-free Parking** (New Subsection for Hantsport) and **Cash-in-lieu Parking** (New Subsection for West Hants and Hantsport)
- **Bicycle Parking** (New Section)
 - Introduced bicycle parking requirements within Growth Centres and Local Centres, including minimum bicycle parking spaces and dimensions

Use	Minimum Number of Bicycle Spaces Required
Dwellings	Up to 12 units: 2 spaces 13-24 units: 6 spaces Above 24 units: 8 spaces
Any commercial or institutional use up to 3,000 m ² of gross floor area	2 spaces
Any commercial or institutional use greater than 3,000 m ² of gross floor area	6 spaces

Table illustrating the minimum bicycle space requirements by use.

What's next?



NEXT STEPS

June 2025 – Complete Public Engagement

Summer 2025 – Refine & Finalize Planning Documents

Fall 2025 – Council Adoption and Public Hearing

Thank you!

Questions?

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