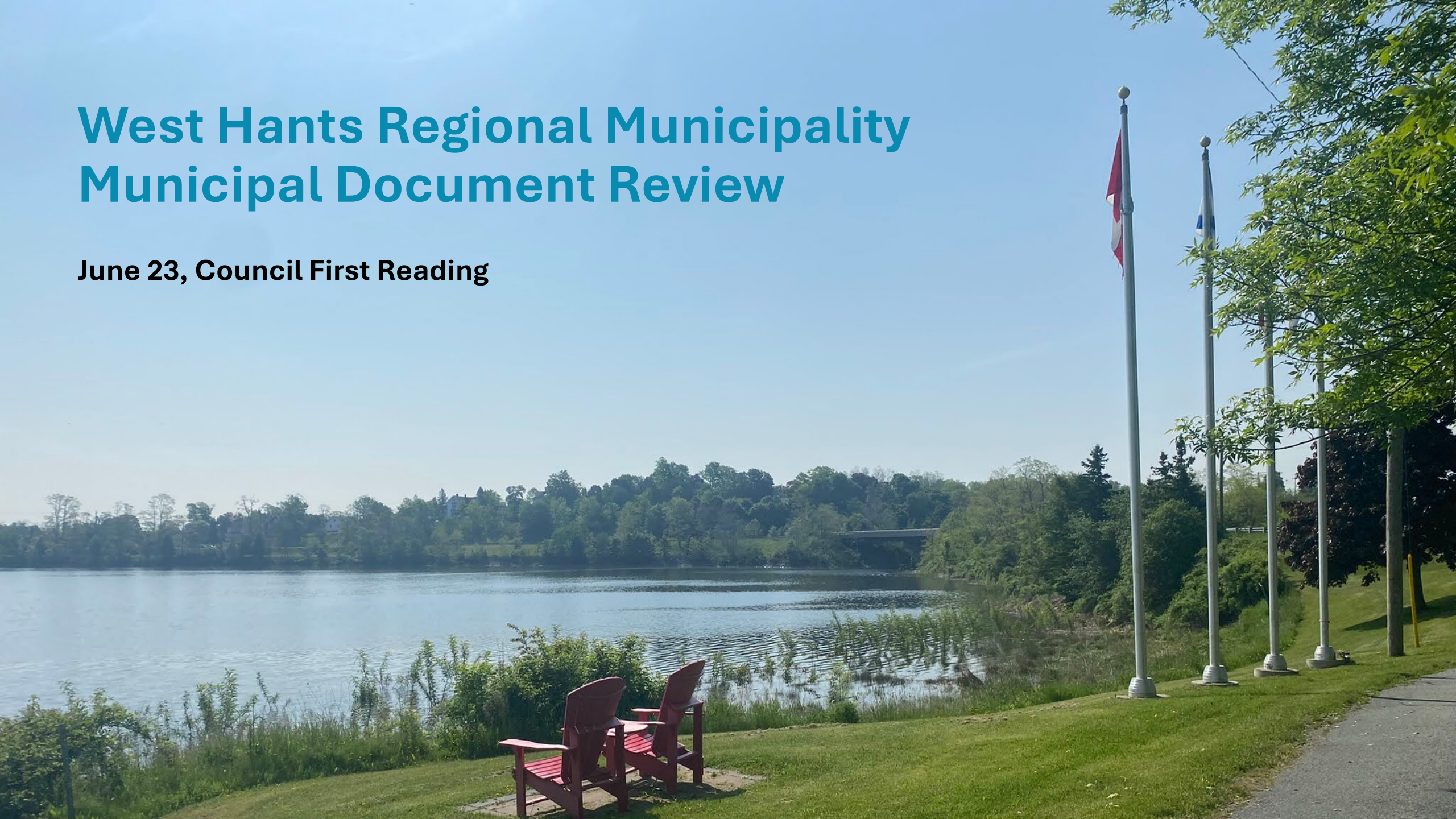


West Hants Regional Municipality Municipal Document Review

June 23, Council First Reading



Project Team Introductions



West Hants Regional Municipality

Key Role

- Project oversight and coordination of Consultant team
- Review of project deliverables
- Organization of public engagement activities

WSP

Key Role:

- Project management
- Preparation of project deliverables
- Delivery of public engagement activities

Municipal Staff

Kari Fougere, MCIP, LPP – Acting Director of Planning and Development

Alex Dunphy, MCIP, LPP – Senior Planner

Will Hong – Planner

Consultant Team

Gregory Bender, MCIP, RPP - Project Manager

Courtney Laurence, MCIP, LPP – Deputy Project Manager

Erin Sauve, MCIP, LPP – Senior Planner



Purpose of the Meeting

- 1 Welcome and Introduction
- 2 Overview of Project Process and Updates
- 3 Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- 4 Overview of Final Draft Municipal Planning Strategy & Final Draft Land Use By-law
- 5 Next Steps

Current Planning Documents



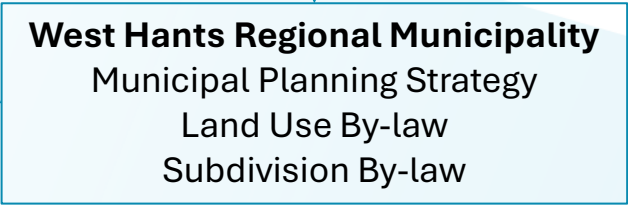
Municipality of the District of West Hants
Municipal Planning Strategy (2008)
Land Use By-law (2008)
Subdivision By-law (2008)



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)



Project Objectives

- Consolidate, modernize and align the planning framework
- Improve clarity, efficiency, and predictability
- Support complete, inclusive communities
- Plan for sustainable and resilient growth
- Reflect community values and priorities



Project Work Plan

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

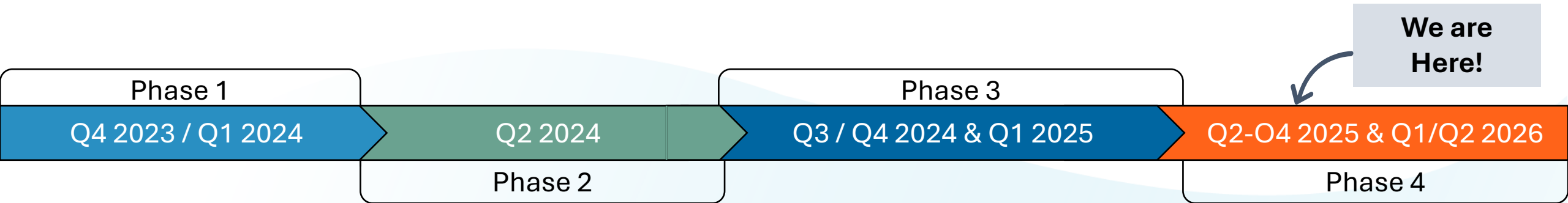
- Draft MPS, LUB, SBL
- Feedback from Project Team
- Consultation Cluster #2

Phase 4



Refinement and Finalization

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



Community & Stakeholder Engagement

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Public Open Houses

Public Open House #1

Project Introduction and Launch of Community Survey
March 27, 2024

Virtual Public Open House #2

Key Changes to Draft Documents
June 2, 2025

Public Open House #3 #4

Key Changes to Draft Documents
June 3 and 5, 2025

Online Visioning Survey

Open from March 28th , 2024 to April 17, 2024
Total of **279** Survey responses

Stakeholder Meetings

Issues & Options Workshop – March 25, 2024

Council & PAC/HAC Meetings

PAC/HAC Visioning Workshop – March 18, 2024
Council Workshop – October 1, 2024
Council Key Changes Presentation – September 18, 2025

Project Website

Ongoing updates to Municipality project website:
<https://www.westhants.ca/plan-review.html>
and Social Media Blasts on Facebook

Draft Documents were available December 18, 2025
for public review and comment

Preliminary Provincial Review

Final Draft Documents were sent to the Province on December 19, 2025, for preliminary review and comment

What We Heard – Growth & Housing



Planned Growth, Right-Sized for Our Communities: Residents support growth that is deliberate and well planned, with development directed to appropriate areas while protecting local character and rural identity.



More Housing Options for All Stages of Life: The community consistently called for a wider range of housing including affordable, multi-unit, and seniors' options, located where infrastructure already exists.



Building Up Where It Makes Sense: There was general support for increased density and height when focused in Growth Centres, while protecting viewplanes and neighbourhood character.

What We Heard – Mobility & Community



Improving Transportation Choice and Safety: Participants emphasized safer walking and cycling routes, better connections between communities, and exploring transit options, while recognizing rural travel realities.



Valuing Parks, Trails, and Access to Nature: Trails, natural areas, waterfronts, and open spaces are highly valued and should be protected, enhanced, and remain accessible to residents.



Honouring History and Sense of Place: Protecting historic sites, cultural landscapes, and community identity was seen as essential to shaping growth that feels local and meaningful.

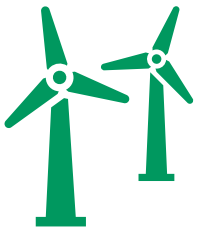
What We Heard – Environment & Climate



Protecting Water, Land, and Natural Systems: Protecting freshwater, forests, wetlands, agricultural lands, and coastal areas was a top priority across all engagement phases.



Planning for Climate Resilience: Residents highlighted the need to address flooding, erosion, wildfire risk, and infrastructure vulnerability through more climate-resilient land use decisions.



Supporting Sustainability with Care: Participants generally support sustainability and renewable energy, with strong emphasis on appropriate siting, environmental protection, and local community benefit.

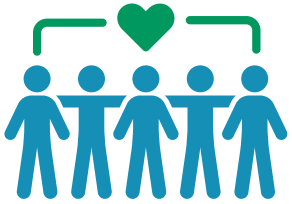
Vision & Guiding Principles

New Vision for the Municipality's Municipal Planning Strategy

The new Municipal Planning Strategy will include a refreshed vision for WHRM for the next 25 years.

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 honouring its rich history and diversity.

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, seniors 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

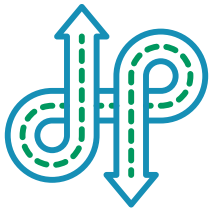
Guiding Principles



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

Questions?

Summary of Major Changes - General Changes to the LUB and MPS



- **Improvements/Format and Structure**

- Documents have 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.
- 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.
- Consolidated and reduced the number of zones.

Summary of Major Changes - Settlement and Growth

Growth Hierarchy:

- Growth Centers (Falmouth, Windsor, Hantsport, Three Mile Plains)
- Local Centers
- Agricultural Areas
- Resource Areas

Growth Centre Policies:

- Windsor:
 - Higher Density
 - Downtown Windsor as the Commercial Core of the community
- Three Mile Plains and Falmouth:
 - Medium to low density development by as-of-right or site plan approval.
- Hantsport:
 - Medium-low density development in the interim. Plan to bring forward amendments once capacity is no longer an issue.



Summary of Major Changes - Settlement and Growth Cont.



Housing Accelerator Fund Initiatives:

- Density Bonusing, increased density as-of-right and adjusted parking requirements carried forward in drafts.

Industrial Development:

- Zones were evaluated and combined and streamlined where appropriate, within and outside of Growth Centres.

General Resource Zones:

- Only area for private road developments.
- Maintain consistency with this zone and designation being the primary focus for resource related uses. Area not intended for increased residential density.
- Zone and designation allow for some rural development, while protecting the area for future resource type uses.

Summary of Major Changes - Environment & Sustainability



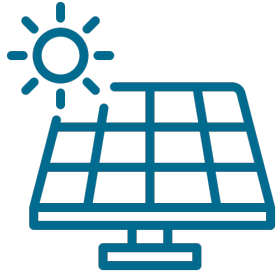
Coastal Protection and Watercourse Separation:

- Policy direction to do future work with Minas Basin Flood Mapping and future work to differentiate watercourse setbacks between coastal shorelines and all other watercourses.
- Establish clear classifications of watercourses.

Flood Risk Areas (Environmental Constraints Overlay):

- Combine the previous overlays
- Enable staff to establish additional regulations regarding infilling, topsoil removal, and alternation of topography within the Environmental Constraints Overlay.
- Continue permitting necessary infilling and alteration of topography for the development of recreational uses not involving any buildings.

Summary of Major Changes - Environment & Sustainability Cont.



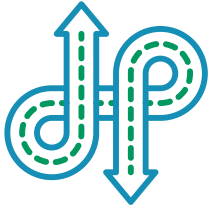
Protection and Access to Fresh Water Resources:

- Policy direction to support the implementation of the Source Water Protection Plan, and review and update the Plan, as needed.
- Enable regulations to control erosion and sedimentation (e.g., buffers, site plan criteria)
- Ensure equitable access to freshwater resources (e.g., minimizing impacts on water resources, future work on climate risk and drought mitigation)

Solar Energy

- Establish requirements for solar arrays in all zones, addressing the absence of solar energy provisions in previous planning documents.
- Establish requirements for community solar arrays and agrivoltaics by site plan approval
- Discourage placing community-scale solar farms on land where municipal services are available.

Summary of Major Changes - Transportation and Mobility



- Policy direction to develop and implement a Transportation Master Plan, which covers the entirety of the Municipality.
- Incorporated recommendations from the Active Transportation Plan (e.g., bicycle parking requirements, active transportation connection, trails permitted widely).
- Policy direction to develop and implement a Public Transportation Feasibility Study for a public transportation system in collaboration with existing transit and rideshare providers.
- Road classifications referenced in mapping rather than text.

Summary of Major Changes - Infrastructure/Stormwater Management



- Updates to stormwater management requirements :

Stormwater Management Plan Required:	Lot Grading Plan Required:
Residential development exceeding 7 units in the R-3 zone	All other new main buildings within Growth Centres (unless waived)
Development within Area of Concern	
Development Agreements and rezonings*	

- Any new or upgraded sanitary sewer connection will require a downstream wastewater capacity assessment.

Summary of Major Changes - Recreation and Parks



- Policy direction to maintain park and open space priorities in line with municipal goals and resources.
- Enable regulations on skate parks and dog parks to reduce the impact on neighboring properties (e.g., min lot size, setbacks, buffers, etc.).

Summary of Major Changes - Culture and Heritage



- Requirements to help protect the view plane from Fort Edward, extra requirements for any development proposal that may impact the views.
- Architectural Control Districts (e.g. ability to development additional districts in the municipality).

Summary of Major Changes - Agriculture



Agriculture:

- Consolidated policies, updated definitions, and adding clarity.
- Strengthen Prime Agriculture zone to add more protection of farmland.

Urban Agriculture and Household Livestock:

- Combined the two and limitations household livestock within Growth Centres and more clarity around where household livestock is permitted:
 - Not permitted in Hantsport
 - Other Growth Centres permit up to 4 laying hens
 - Limits on roosters and turkeys for lots under 3 acres (outside Growth Centres)

Summary of Major Changes - Plan Implementation and Amendments



Development Agreement and Amendment Criteria:

- Revised criteria for considering development agreements, rezonings, and other amendments to the Land Use By-law. These include:
 - Revised language to remove subjectivity where possible;
 - Considerations around stormwater management;
 - Considerations around mix of housing types;
 - Recreation;
 - Connection to active transportation infrastructure;
 - Mitigation of impacts on existing uses;
 - Considerations for universal accessibility and barrier-free design
- Increased options for development by development agreement as an alternate to rezoning.

Questions?

Summary of Information Session for PAC/HAC - May 14th



- Information session held with PACHAC on May 14th
- Number of topics discussed and feedback receive including:
 - View plane policies
 - Household livestock in Hantsport
 - General Resource zoning
 - Height allowances
 - Other questions and discussions around general items and clarification of policies.
- Staff made updates to the view plane policy, and recommended the Committee add additional recommendations on additional topics if there were still concerns.

Motion from PAC/HAC-June 11th

Whereas, PAC/ HAC requests a summary of all changes to the MPS and Land Use By-Law and followed up with a workshop opportunity with planning staff to provide clarity and understanding of the updated MPS and Land Use By-law to make its best recommendation to council.

Therefore be it resolved that PAC/HAC is requesting that council considers delaying the plan review to allow additional time to provide an in-depth and comprehensive recommendation.

Important Considerations

- While these documents provide a framework for growth over a long horizon of 25 years, they will be **“living documents”** and updated and amended from time to time.
 - Reviews often completed on a 5-10 year cycle
 - Amendments will happen throughout the life of the documents including:
 - Staff led amendments based on Council direction, new priorities, responding to new plans and studies
 - Developer/resident requested amendments to respond to proposed developments
 - House keeping amendments to allow for continuous improvement to the documents
 - Provincially mandated amendments.
- This project has been on-going for several years, and is an important next step post-consolidation.
- The documents improve our current framework, reduce inconsistencies across communities, create more certainty for landowners, and allow staff to respond to new priorities (e.g., stormwater management).
- Having a consolidated set of documents will improve workflow and allow staff time and resources to focus on other major projects and initiatives such as coastal planning.

Next Steps

- Council hold First Reading and schedule Public Hearing
- Public Hearing and Second Reading
- Approval by the Province

Questions?

Recommendation for the Municipal Planning Strategy

...that Council give First Reading and holds a Public Hearing to consider adopting the new Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and repeals the Town of Windsor Municipal Planning Strategy (2005), the Town of Hantsport Municipal Planning Strategy (2010) and the Municipality of the District of West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy (2008).

Recommendation for the Land Use By-law

...that Council give First Reading and holds a Public Hearing to consider adopting the new Regional Land use By-law and repeals the Town of Windsor Land Use By-law (2005), the Town of Hantsport Land Use By-law (2012) and the Municipality of the District of West Hants Land Use By-law (2008).

Recommendation for the Subdivision By-law

...that Council give First Reading and holds a Public Hearing to consider adopting the new Regional Subdivision By-law and repeals the Town of Windsor Subdivision By-law (2012), the Town of Hantsport Subdivision By-law (2010) and the Municipality of the District of West Hants Subdivision By-law (2008).

Recommendation for New Applications

...that Council direct staff not to accept new applications for Municipal Planning Strategy amendments, Land Use By-law amendments, or Development Agreements following First Reading of the proposed Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law and until Council has rendered a final decision on the proposed planning documents.

This direction shall not apply to:

- (a) applications deemed complete prior to the date of First Reading;
- (b) development permits, subdivision applications, and other applications that may proceed as-of-right under the existing planning documents; and
- (c) any application specifically exempted by Council resolution.

PAC/HAC Recommendation

...that Council directs staff to provide a summary of all changes to the MPS and Land Use By-Law to PAC/HAC and follow up with a workshop opportunity with PAC/HAC to provide clarity and understanding of the updated MPS and Land Use By-law to make its best recommendation to Council.

Therefore, be it resolved that Council delays the plan review to allow additional time for an in-depth and comprehensive recommendation from PAC/HAC.