

Town of Yarmouth
Planning Review

**HAF Engagement
Summary**

2025





This **Engagement Summary** was prepared by
UPLAND Planning + Design for the Town of
Yarmouth.

November 2025

Yarmouth 

UPLAND

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

About the Project

In Spring 2023, the Government of Canada launched the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to help local governments make significant changes that will boost the number of homes being built across the country.

The Town of Yarmouth submitted an application to the program in the fall of 2024 and was awarded \$2.3 million to implement its Housing Action Plan, with a goal of adding 119 new homes over the next three years. To reach this goal, the Town has developed a detailed plan with five key initiatives designed to support and accelerate housing development. One of these initiatives, and the focus of this project, is “Regulatory Changes to Support Housing”. This involves amendments to the Town’s Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law in order to streamline regulations and enable faster housing development in the community.

The timing of the funding award aligned with the Town’s Planning Review project, already (and currently) underway. The first month of the planning review Draft Engagement phase was dedicated to the HAF amendments package and collecting resident feedback on the proposed changes to the planning documents.

The key changes proposed in the HAF amendments package include:

- changes to residential lot standards in the R-1 and R-2 zones
- clearly permitting accessory dwelling units;
- upzoning in key areas
- removing dwelling unit caps in the Downtown

A document with the full proposed amendments can be found on the project website.

Project Timeline

The Planning Review project began in Winter 2024 with a comprehensive background review, followed by initial community engagement in Spring 2024. Based on this input, Issues and Options Reports were developed, which informed the most recent engagement phase in Winter 2025. We are now in the draft engagement phase. This will be followed by the HAF Amendments Package formal adoption with Council in late fall of 2025, with the final draft engagement scheduled for winter 2026. The final plan is expected to be adopted in spring 2026.



PART 2

WHAT WE DID

Introduction

The engagement for the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) took place from Wednesday, October 29th to Thursday, November 20th, 2025. Engagement was included as a part of the wider Planning Review project, with certain activities and engagement materials targeted to the HAF amendments.

Engagement Activities

Multiple methods of engagement were used, including:

- In-Person Public Engagement Sessions
- Online Survey
- Housing Accelerator Fund Explainer Video
- Housing Accelerator Fund Amendments Fact Sheets

Engagement activities were promoted through multiple channels, including:

- The Town's Social Media
- The project website
- Landowner letters to affected residents

Engagement By the Numbers

Project Website Visitors
554 Visitors & 672 Page Visits

In-Person Public Engagement Sessions
8 Participants

Online Survey
21 Respondents

Housing Accelerator Fund Explainer Video
5 Views

Landowner Letters
23 Letters Sent (1 Response)



PART 3

WHAT WE HEARD

Introduction

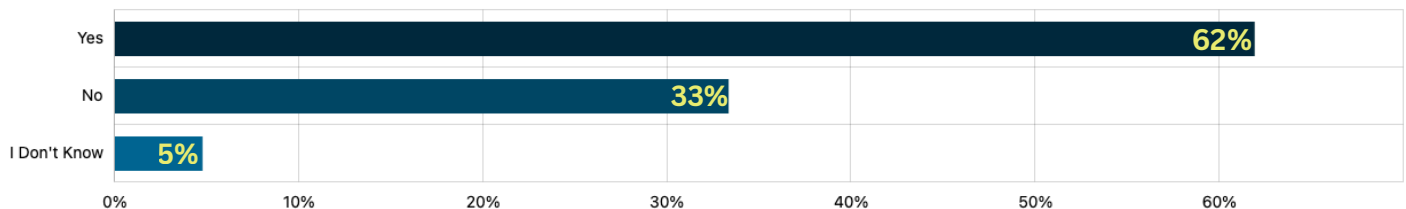
The majority of the feedback received came from the HAF Amendments Survey. The following section gives a summary of the responses.

Survey Results

The survey consisted of 13 questions and the responses were as follows.

Q1. Do you support allowing Accessory Dwelling Units in all residential zones within the town?

Number of responses: 21



Q2. Do you have any comments you would like to share about the proposed amendments regarding ADUs?

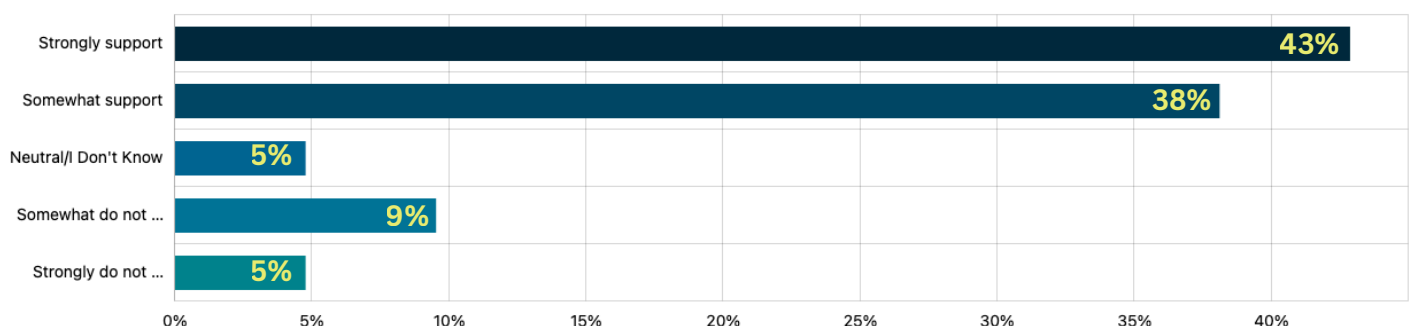
Number of responses: 6

Residents shared mixed views on allowing ADUs in all residential areas. Some worried that adding more units could overcrowd neighbourhoods, strain services, or impact the character of communities, and questioned why the Town is not working with the surrounding county to create new housing on available land instead.

Others supported ADUs as a way to increase affordable housing but felt they should come with safeguards such as neighbour approval and clear limits on size, height, and number of units.

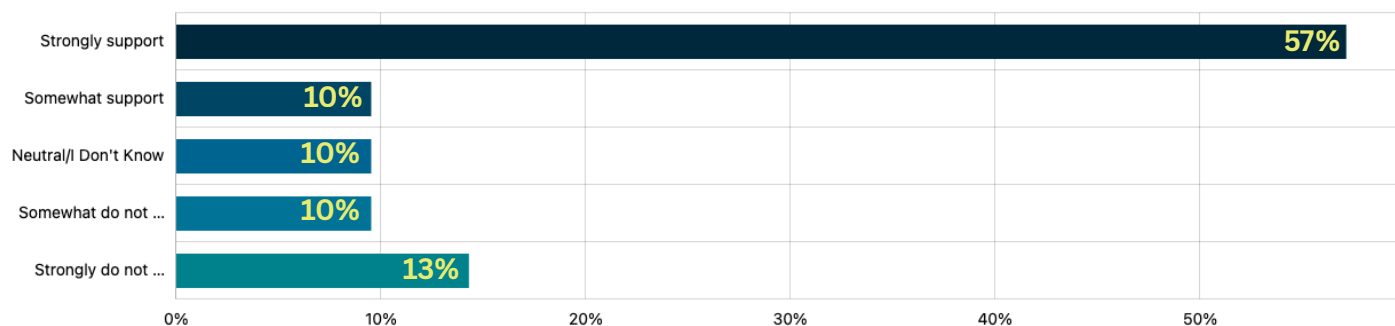
Q3. What is your level of support for the proposed zoning changes around Parade and School Streets?

Number of responses: 21



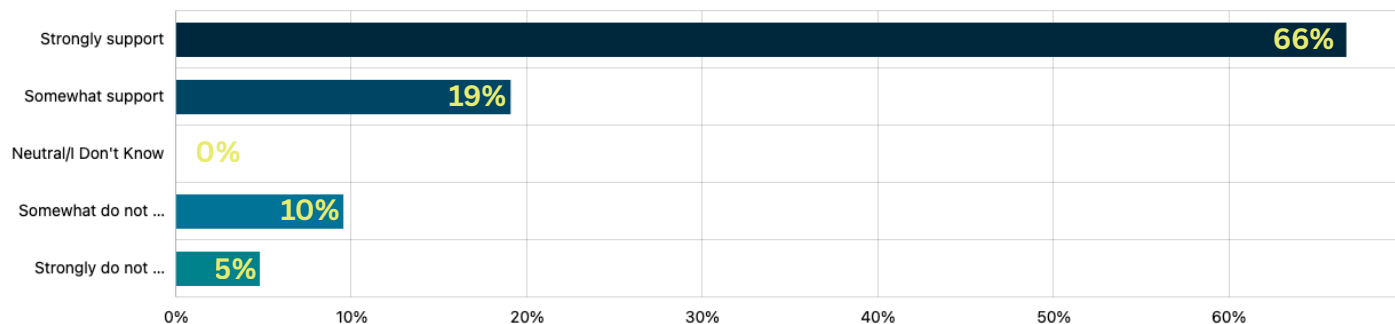
Q4. What is your level of support for the proposed zoning changes around the Yarmouth Hospital?

Number of responses: 21



Q5. What is your level of support for the proposed zoning changes around the NSCC campus?

Number of responses: 21



Q6. Are there parcels that are proposed to be rezoned that you feel should NOT be? Please place a marker on the parcels you do not think should be rezoned.

Number of responses: 6 (8 comments total)

There were 4 comments expressing concern about the rezoning of parcels near the Yarmouth Hospital on Vancouver Street, citing infrastructure capacity and traffic as key issues. There is a perception that multi-unit apartments cannot be accommodated here due to infrastructure capacity.

There were 2 comments about the Parade/School Street rezonings, with both respondents citing that they feel the area is already dense enough and there are issues such as parking, noise and garbage. One of the respondents noted that new buildings are welcome, but should take the existing neighbourhood context into consideration.

There were 2 comments about the proposed rezonings around the NSCC campus - one simply stating that they do not want the area rezoned, and another was from the landowner at 369 Pleasant Street, requesting that their property not be considered for rezoning at this time.

Q7. Are there parcels that were not proposed to be rezoned that you feel should be? Please place a marker on the parcels you feel should be considered for rezoning.

Number of responses: 2

- one respondent suggested the area next to the Meadows
- another respondent suggested the area near the end of Charles Crosby Drive



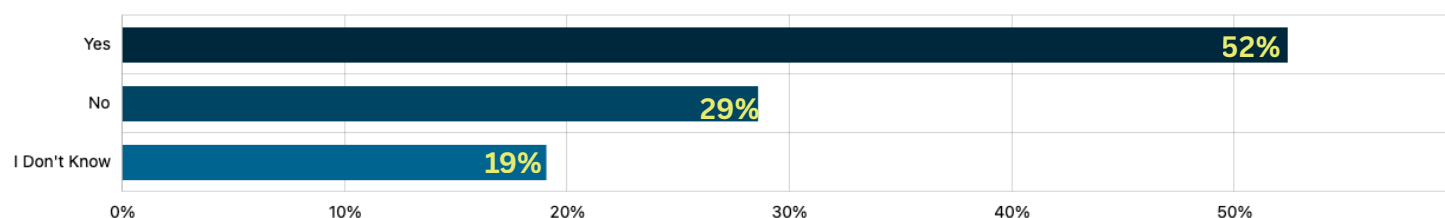
Q8. Do you have any other comments about the proposed rezonings in the HAF amendments package?

Number of responses: 8

Residents told us they want a balanced approach to housing that includes both affordable and market-rate options, but many stressed that existing homeowners should be consulted before any rezoning occurs, especially when homes (not vacant lots) are affected. We heard concerns that adding more units in already dense neighbourhoods is inappropriate, and that growth should instead be directed to less developed areas. Some also felt that high property taxes and restrictive zoning prevent homeowners from adding tiny homes or converting existing buildings to support rentals or housing for adult children. A few simply expressed opposition to further changes.

Q9. Do you support reducing lot standards in the R-1 and R-2 Zones to promote infill development?

Number of responses: 21



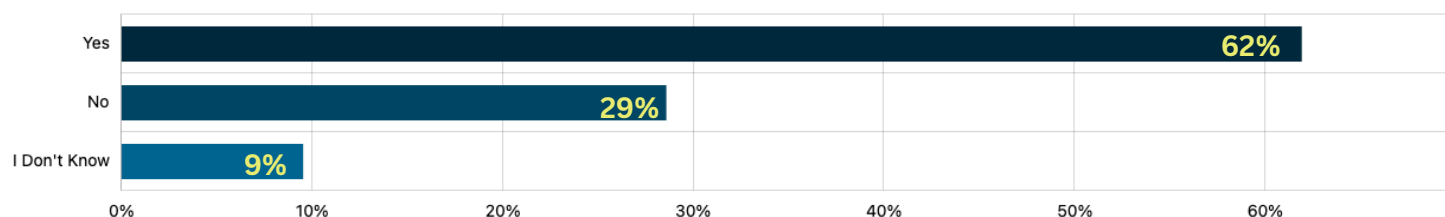
Q10. Do you have any other comments you would like to share about the proposed amendments to lot standards in the R-1 and R-2 Zones?

Number of responses: 2

We heard from one respondent who felt that rezonings should only be considered for vacant lands. The other respondent expressed concern about minimum lot size reductions and how this could impact properties with heritage homes.

Q11. Do you support the removal of the unit limit for upper floor residential units in the Downtown Commercial Zone?

Number of responses: 21



Q12. Do you have other comments you would like to share about the proposed amendments to the Downtown Commercial Zone?

Number of responses: 3

There was some concern about the Downtown Commercial Zone being too congested. One respondent cited issues that would need to be addressed, including parking and access to parks and green space. One respondent simply stated that growth should happen elsewhere.

Q13. Do you have any additional comments about the proposed amendments that you would like to share?

Number of responses: 5

Residents emphasized that they would like to see new residential units directed to undeveloped areas of town, where growth would be less disruptive to established neighbourhoods. They cautioned against “cramming” units into already small or dense areas, noting that this can lead to increased congestion, noise, and other quality-of-life impacts.

We also heard strong concerns about insufficient parking, with residents insisting that every unit should include at least one dedicated parking space to avoid further narrowing streets already crowded with on-street parking.

Other Feedback

We received one response from a landowner at 369 Pleasant Street who requested that their property be excluded from the rezonings in the amendments package. Town Staff spoke with the landowner to provide information about the proposed rezoning and it was decided that the conversation would be revisited at a later date, but the property would be removed from the HAF amendments package.

PART 4

NEXT STEPS

Formal Adoption Process

The next step for the project is to make a series of edits based on feedback from this report to be presented to Planning Advisory Committee for review and recommendation to Council for their approval.

The Draft Engagement Phase for the wider Planning Review process will finish on January 11th, 2026. A What We Heard Report will be issued in early Winter 2026, followed shortly thereafter by the final drafts of the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw which will undergo a final public review in Winter 2026 with the formal adoption process taking place later in the Spring.

Project Timeline - Final Steps



For more information about the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), the HAF amendments package or the Planning Review project, visit the project website:

getinvolvedyarmouth.ca/planningreview