

Fact Sheet: Summary of Changes Municipal Planning Strategy

The following Fact Sheet outlines the key changes to the **Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS or Plan)** from the 1st Draft (released in the Fall of 2025) to the current (2nd) Draft. It clearly indicates the changes that have been made since the first iteration of the draft.

Have a comment you want to make about the 2nd Draft MPS? Visit the project website (at the bottom of the page, or scan the QR code to the right) and fill out a feedback form, or send us an email at planningreview@townofyarmouth.ca

Community Input

In Fall 2025, the draft Planning Documents were made available to the public to review and share feedback.

Community members were able to share feedback through an Interactive Draft Zoning Map, an online Feedback Form, or by emailing the project team.

All feedback was reviewed and informed the changes made to the final iteration of the Planning Documents.

*Want to review the Draft Planning Documents or provide your feedback?
Scan the QR code →*



The Key Changes in the Updated MPS



General Formatting and Typography Edits

The updated MPS document includes minor wording changes, to improve consistency and clarity, and corrected cross-references and typographical errors.



Streamlined References and Updated Front End of Document

The updated document includes generalized references to provincial departments for consistency. The front end of the document has also been updated to remove the Land Acknowledgement and include a description of Draft Engagement. (Section 1.4)



Updated Zone References

The Neighbourhood 1 through 3 zones (N-1, N-2, N-3) have been renamed as the Housing 1 (H-1), Housing 2 (H-2), and Housing 3 (H-3) zones.



Updated Amendments Process

The approach for logging amendments has been simplified, no longer requiring a change code.

The Key Changes in the Updated MPS (continued)



Updated Housing Policies

Policy 5.2.9(f) has been updated to remove limits on ground floor residential uses on Starrs Road and Pleasant Street.

Policy 5.2.9(i) includes updated policy for when residential uses require site plan approval.

Policy 5.2.9(j) includes updated policy for when residential uses require development agreements.



Relaxed Permissions for Medical Clinics

Based on what we heard during the last round of engagement, the updated documents include new direction for medical clinics in Section 5.3.4, relaxing permissions for medical clinics to allow them in a wider area of town.



New Policy for Automotive Uses

A policy has been added, requiring site plan approval of automotive uses in the Mixed Use 1 Zone (Policy 5.3.9(e)vi).



Removed Policy Related to Kennels

The updated document removed the development agreement policy for kennels in the Downtown and Mixed Use 3 Zones (Policy 5.3.9(k)ii in the previous draft).



Automobile Parking Requirements

Based on the results of the 2025 Parking Management Strategy, the updated document includes the recommendation to maintain residential parking requirements outside of downtown, but provide mechanisms to allow the number of required parking spaces to be reduced where appropriate.



Updated Transportation Policies

The wording of Policy 5.6.8(j) has been refined to support completion of the town's street grid. Policy 5.6.8(k) supports the completion of pedestrian connections and investments in Sawdust Trail.

Policy 5.6.8(p) supports the implementation of the Parking Management Strategy.

Policy 5.6.8(q) allows for the provision for off-site parking lots by site plan approval.



New Policy for the Comprehensive Development Zone

A new policy has been added to allow for some development via site plan approval in the Comprehensive Development (CD) Zone (Policy 5.8.1(b)).



Updated Secondary Planning Section

The updated MPS includes new content about and policy support for secondary Planning (Section 6.10).



Fact Sheet: Summary of Changes Land Use Bylaw

The following Fact Sheet outlines the key changes to the **Land Use Bylaw (LUB)** from the 1st Draft (released in the Fall of 2025) to the current (2nd) Draft. It clearly indicates the changes that have been made since the first iteration of the draft.

Have a comment you want to make about the Draft LUB? Visit the project website (at the bottom of the page, or scan the QR code to the right) to fill out an Online Feedback Form, or leave a comment on the Updated Draft Zoning Map. You can also send us an email at planningreview@townofyarmouth.ca

Community Input

In Fall 2025, the draft Planning Documents were made available to the public to review and share feedback.

Community members were able to share feedback through an Interactive Draft Zoning Map, an online Feedback Form, or by emailing the project team.

All feedback was reviewed and informed the changes made to the final iteration of the Planning Documents.

*Want to review the Draft
Planning Documents or
provide your feedback?
Scan the QR code →*



The Key Changes in the Updated LUB



General Formatting and Typography Edits

The updated LUB includes minor wording changes, to improve consistency and clarity, and corrected cross-references and typographical errors.

This includes an updated definition for the term “may” (Section 2.1.1), and separating defined uses from defined words (Sections 2.3 and 2.4).



Streamlined References and Updated Front End of Document

- The updated document includes generalized references to provincial departments for consistency.
- The front end of the document has also been updated to remove the Land Acknowledgement.
- Language around development agreements in each zone has been clarified throughout the document. (Sections X.4.1)



Section Reorganization

Sections of Part 2, 3, and 31 have been reorganized to improve the clarity and the flow of reading.



Updated Amendments Process

The approach for logging amendments has been simplified, no longer requiring a change code.

The Key Changes in the Updated LUB (continued)



Administration and Permitting Updates

Part 3 updates include:

- adding lobster trap storage facilities to the list of uses not requiring a development permit (Section 3.4).
- Refining the provisions for rainwater management plans (Section 3.11.2).
- Section 3.9 and 3.10 from the previous draft have been combined and are now Section 3.12 in the updated document.
- “Slope stability study” has been added to Section 3.13 (Additional Studies and Plans).
- Section 3.16 (effective Date and Repeal) have been moved to Part 1.



Updated Zone References

- The “Neighbourhood Zones” category has been renamed to “Residential Zones”. Neighbourhood 1 through 3 Zones
- (N-1, N-2, N-3) have been renamed as the Housing 1 (H-1), Housing 2 (H-2), and Housing 3 (H-3) zones.
- The “Health Campus Zone” has been renamed to “Hospital Campus Zone”.



Updated Encroachment Permissions

Table 5A has been updated to expand encroachment permissions for fire escapes and exterior staircases.



Updated Regulations for Fences

Section 5.12 (Fences) has been updated to:

- exempt some uses (correctional facilities, etc) from fence provisions.
- limit fence height to 1.3 metres (4 feet) in the front and flanking yards of residential and mixed use zones.
- limit other fence heights to 2.0 metres.
- add prohibition on barbed and electric fences in front and flanking yards.



Updated Regulations for Outdoor Displays

- Section 5.20 has been updated to expand permissions for outdoor displays.
- Section 6.7.5 has been updated to allow for small outdoor displays for home occupations.



New Provisions for Solid Waste Storage

Section 5.27 has been added to include provisions for screening solid waste areas.



Updated Heritage Building Incentive Relaxations

Table 5B has been updated to increase the magnitude of heritage building incentive relaxations.



Clarifying Commercial Instruction of Students in Dwellings

Section 6.5 has been updated to clarify provisions for commercial instruction of students in dwellings (e.g., piano lessons).



The Key Changes in the Updated LUB (continued)



Updated Housing 1 (H-1) Zone Regulations

The H-1 Zone has been updated to:

- reduce permitted supporting housing to 1-2 units permitted and 3-4 by site plan approval.
- add community centre and public recreation as permitted uses.
- add daycare centres and places of workshop to uses requiring site plan approval.
- remove community-based transitional housing from uses considered by development agreement.
- increase the number of permitted accessory buildings from 2 to 3.



Updated Housing 3 (H-3) Zone Regulations

The H-3 Zone has been updated to:

- change as-of-right supportive housing sleeping units to 8.
- remove cap on number of dwelling units and supportive housing sleeping units approved via site plan approval.
- remove development agreement requirements for larger dwellings and supportive housing.
- add daycare centres, manufactured homes, nursing homes, and places of worship to uses requiring site plan approval.
- increase the number of permitted accessory buildings from 2 to 3
- reduce the number of permitted sleeping units in a boarding or rooming house from 20 to 8, with more than 8 now requiring a development agreement.
- add landscaping and amenity space requirements.



Updated Housing 2 (H-2) Zone Regulations

The H-2 Zone has been updated to:

- change as-of-right supportive housing sleeping units to 4.
- remove cap on number of dwelling units and supportive housing sleeping units approved via site plan approval.
- remove development agreement requirements for larger dwellings and supportive housing.
- add daycare centres, manufactured homes, nursing homes, and places of worship to uses requiring site plan approval.
- increase the number of permitted accessory buildings from 2 to 3
- add landscaping and amenity space requirements.



Updated Downtown (DT) Zone Regulations

The DT Zone has been updated to:

- add a cap of 20 sleeping units on as-of-right permission for supportive housing.
- add funeral home to permitted uses.
- add supportive housing with more than 20 sleeping units to uses considered by development agreement.
- remove kennels from uses considered by development agreement.
- reduce minimum main building height from 5.5 metres (18 feet) to 4.5 metres (15 feet).
- increase the number of permitted accessory buildings to 2.



The Key Changes in the Updated LUB (continued)



Updated Mixed Use 1 (MU-1) Zone Regulations

The MU-1 Zone has been updated to:

- add automobile sales by site plan approval.
- add a floor area cap on banks and financial institutions.
- add large (>1,000 m² floor area) medical clinics as a permitted use.
- remove kennel from permitted uses.
- add call centres as a permitted use.
- move automobile fueling and washing, dwellings, drive-thru restaurants, and supportive housing to site plan approval.
- reduce minimum lot frontage to 10 metres (33 feet).
- remove footprint limit on accessory buildings.
- remove limitations on ground floor residential.
- remove provisions for kennels.



Updated Mixed Use 2 (MU-2) Zone Regulations

The MU-2 Zone has been updated to:

- add limit of 200 square metres of floor area to banks and financial institutions.
- add medical clinics to permitted uses.
- move dwellings and supportive housing to site plan approval, with no limit on the number of units.
- reduce minimum lot frontage to 10 metres.
- reduce minimum streetline setback to 3 metres.
- reduce minimum side yard setback to 3 metres.
- increase maximum main building height to 13.5 metres.
- remove limit on number of accessory buildings.
- remove limit on footprint of accessory buildings.



Updated Mixed Use 3 (MU-3) Zone Regulations

The MU-3 Zone has been updated to:

- add medical clinics as permitted uses.
- remove size limit on restaurants.
- move dwellings and supportive housing with 5-8 units to site plan approval.
- remove kennels from uses considered by development agreement.



Updated Commercial Industrial (CI-1) Zone Regulations

The CI-1 Zone has been updated to:

- move kennels from permitted to site plan approval.
- reduce minimum lot frontage to 10 metres.
- reduce minimum rear yard setback to 6 metres.
- reduce minimum streetline setback to 6 metres.
- increase maximum height to 12.2 metres.
- remove footprint limit on accessory buildings.
- add daycare centres as a permitted use.
- remove prohibition on drinking establishments in the former Forest Street Industrial Park.



The Key Changes in the Updated LUB (continued)



Updated General Industrial (M-1) Zone Regulations

The M-1 Zone has been updated to:

- reduce minimum lot frontage to 10 metres.
- reduce minimum streetline setback to 6 metres.
- reduce minimum side yard setback to 3 metres.
- reduce minimum rear yard setback to 3 metres.
- remove building height limits.



Updated Waterfront Industrial (M-2) Zone Regulations

The M-2 Zone has been updated to:

- move kennels to site plan approval.
- add public parks and playgrounds to permitted uses.
- add open air markets to permitted uses.
- reduce minimum lot size to 500 m2.
- reduce minimum lot frontage to 10 metres.
- reduce minimum side yard setback to 3 metres.
- reduce minimum rear yard setback to 3 metres.
- refine provisions for subdividing existing industrial buildings.



Updated Hospital Campus (HC) Zone Regulations

The HC Zone has been updated to:

- add medical clinics to permitted uses.
- add dwellings and supportive housing to site plan approval.



Updated Comprehensive Development (CD) Zone Regulations

The CD Zone has been updated to:

- add ability to develop up to 8 dwelling units on an existing sewer serviced lot by site plan approval.



Updated Regulations for Downtown Architectural Control

Section 26.2.1 has been updated to include composite materials as permitted cladding in the Downtown Architectural Control Overlay.



Signage Updates

Part 30 has been updated to:

- remove prohibition on signs with more than two faces (Section 30.2.1(g) in the previous draft).
- include illustrative graphics showing sign types.
- include simplified sign provisions for fuel pumps (Section 30.1.1(k)).



Parking and Loading Management Updates

Part 28 has been updated to include:

- minimum parking requirements for dwellings (Section 28.1.1).
- some parking exemptions for Downtown and Mixed Use 3 Zones (Section 28.3).
- parking cash-in-lieu exemption for registered not-for profits (Section 28.4.1).
- ability to do offsite parking by site plan approval (Section 28.5).



The Key Changes in the Updated LUB (continued)



Updated Regulations for Tree Planning

Tree planning requirements have been added to site plan approval criteria for residential uses.



Site plan approval criteria have been added for:

- automobile fueling and washing
- automobile sales
- daycare centres
- drive-thru restaurants
- kennels
- offsite parking
- places of worship



New and Expanded Definitions

A new part (Part 32) has been added for Definitions. New or expanded definitions have been added for the following terms:

- accessory use
- automobile rental
- automobile sales
- banks and financial institutions
- department of public works
- development
- dwelling
- levels of electric vehicle charging
- home occupation
- housekeeping unit
- retail store
- stepback
- town



To learn more about the project, please visit <https://getinvolvedyarmouth.ca/planningreview>

Fact Sheet About the Project

The Town of Yarmouth Planning Review is a project that was launched in Winter 2024 to revise the Town's core planning documents. **The Municipal Government Act**, which governs how municipalities operate in Nova Scotia, requires planning documents to be reviewed at least once every 10 years. The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS or Plan), Land Use Bylaw (LUB), and Subdivision Bylaw guide all future growth and development in Yarmouth. While they have been amended regularly, they last underwent a major review in 2016. The goal of this project is to create a new MPS and updated bylaws that will better meet the needs of the Town and guide development over the next 10 years.

One of the main priorities of this Planning Review is to collaborate with stakeholders and community members to ensure that the planning documents align with the community's vision for itself and address topics and issues that are important to the town's residents. This Plan will be reflective of the residents' needs and aspirations, aiming to better serve the community over the coming decade.

Alongside the Planning Review, the Town is undertaking planning changes under the federal Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) program. More information about this can be found in the Housing fact sheet, as well as a separate set of detailed HAF fact sheets available on the project website.

The Planning Review is being carried out by UPLAND Planning + Design Studio in collaboration with municipal staff.

Project Timeline

The project began in Winter 2024 with a comprehensive background review. Previous rounds of community engagement were conducted in Spring 2024, Winter 2025, and Fall 2025. Based on feedback from each of these rounds, the updated MPS and LUB documents have been drafted and refined. The final drafts of the planning documents are now ready for public review and feedback. The final draft engagement phase is happening now, and will be open from April 13th to 27th, 2026. The final plan is expected to be adopted in Summer 2026.



What is Planning?

Planning is the process by which communities can control change and development in their physical environment. Planning seeks to balance the needs of people, the economy, and the environment by determining where, at what intensity, and in what form certain land uses should take place. It plays a significant role in keeping populations safe and healthy and allocates growth through proactive (or deliberate) transportation and infrastructure planning, making it easier and more efficient for people to get around. Planning matters because:



It helps us prepare for change such as environmental change, like sea level rise, or social change, like an aging population.



It supports our community's character and culture by promoting good urban design, a quality public realm, and by keeping development consistent and complementary.



It protects special and sensitive environments by preventing or limiting development in these areas.



It helps to protect people from developing in areas where the natural environment presents a high risk.



It enables different types and densities of housing to make sure there are lots of options for residents to call home.



It helps to maintain a healthy, sustainable economy by ensuring there is a good balance and proximity between places of work and places to live.



It ensures there is enough available land for resource, industrial, and commercial uses.

Main Themes

These fact sheets outline the primary topics discussed during the project's first two phases of engagement, including:

- 1 **Housing**
- 2 **Economic Development**
- 3 **Environment**
- 4 **Transportation & Recreation**
- 5 **Culture & Heritage**

Each section includes an overview of “What We Heard” during the Issues and Options engagement, followed by a summary of the “Key Changes” proposed.

The “Key Changes” are the primary differences between the existing planning documents and the draft planning documents. Each one includes a brief explanation of its purpose and references to the relevant sections of the planning documents for more information.

