

A Committee of the Whole meeting was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on November 27, 2023, at 2:00pm with Warden Morrison in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT

District #1- Paul MacNeil

District #3- Bruce Morrison, Warden

District #4 – Barbara Longva

District #5 – Fraser Patterson

District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden

District #7- Jackie Organ

STAFF PRESENT

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Jennifer Dagsvik, Communications and Marketing Coordinator

ABSENT

District #2- Perla MacLeod

District #8- Norman MacDonald

Warden Morrison welcomed everyone and acknowledged that this meeting is being held in Unama'ki, one of seven traditional districts of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People.

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Morrison called the meeting to order. One (1) member of the public was present.

Councillor Longva requested adding discussions about Coastal Protection Act and the Local Improvement By-Law to the agenda.

Warden Morrison requested some district concerns discussions.

On Motion of Councillor MacNeil seconded by Warden Morrison that the Agenda for November 27, 2023, be approved with the noted additions.

Motion Carried.

On Motion of Councillor Longva seconded by Councillor MacNeil that the Minutes for October 23, 2023, be approved.

Motion Carried.

ECOLOGY ACTION CENTRE PRESENTATION – CHRIS BENJAMIN

Energy Efficiency and Building Codes

November 27, 2023

Chris Benjamin
Senior Energy Coordinator
Ecology Action Centre
chris.benjamin@ecologyaction.ca
ecologyaction.ca/our-work/energy-climate



ecologyaction.ca



Ecology Action Centre

Buildings generate about 42% of the province's greenhouse gas emissions, including their oil, gas, and electricity use.



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 Ecology Action Centre

Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (2016); NS agreed to a netzero energyready (NZER) code for new construction by 2030



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 Ecology Action Centre

Includes New Houses

Canada created what are called step or tiered codes, with 5 levels of energy efficiency.

Includes residential buildings under 600m²—most buildings are covered.



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 Ecology Action Centre

Net Zero Energy...Ready



It could, with the addition of solar panels or other renewable energy technologies, produce as much energy from on-site renewable energy as it uses in its operation.

Does not necessarily account for embodied energy.

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 Ecology Action Centre

What NS Did



- August 14-Sept 29
“Public Input”
- “By adopting the national codes, building design and construction in Nova Scotia will be consistent with standards across Canada.”

Varies by Building



- Tier 1: Status Quo
- Tier 2: 25% reduction
- Tier 3: 50% reduction
- Tier 4: 60% reduction
- Tier 5: 70% reduction

The Time is Now



- Labour shortages
- Supply shortages
- Knowledge gaps

Financial



- Upfront cost premium of 8 - 9% to construct net-zero energy-ready buildings in Canada
- 24 - 35% reduction in operational costs

Energy Modelling

- NS has 3.4 Certified Energy Advisors per 10,000 households, among highest in Canada.
- Concern is a lack of inspectors, but compliance can be model driven



Affordable Housing



- Better and more innovative buildings adsumforwomen.org
- More appealing building jobs (NSCC Climate Micocredit)
- Premanufacturing; simple building shapes

Municipal Empowerment—NSFM



- Town of Bridgewater has recommended introducing voluntary Energy Step Codes
- Halifax motion to adopt tiered energy codes in new construction

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Federal Funding:



**New Dawn Enterprises
community solar
garden & updated
energy and heating
infrastructure at Pine
Tree Park Estates**

\$2.5 million
investment DNR + FCM
Green Municipal Fund

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Part of the Solution

Tier 5 Building Codes by 2030 is essential to meeting GHG emissions-reduction goals.

Collaboration, capacity building, local empowerment enable a smooth transition.

Drive economic growth through innovative energy efficient NS buildings.



ecologyaction.ca



Building to Net Zero

Confident in Nova Scotia's building community.

With the government support, we can make the transition.



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QUESTIONS

Councillor Longva said she thinks its important for municipalities to help support in any way they can to help the planet.

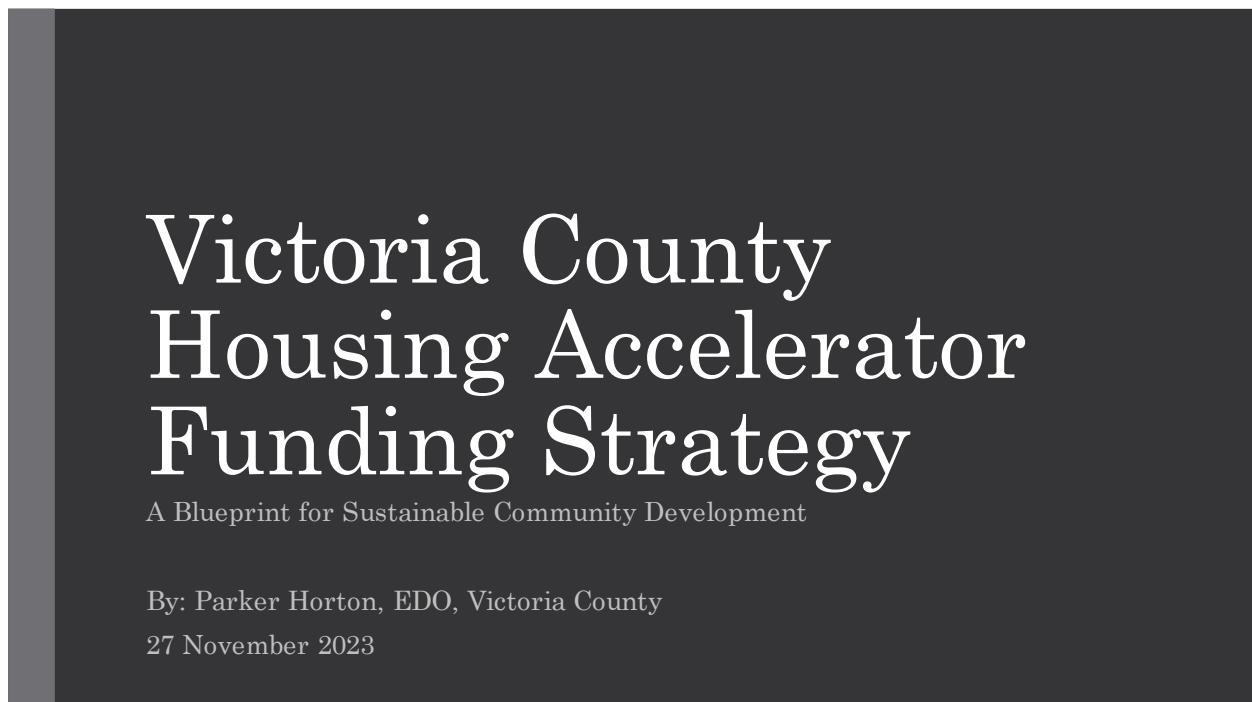
Councillor Patterson said it would be beneficial for everyone to have the same standards.

Warden Morrison said it is a little overwhelming looking at all the climate change options for new construction and asked where the best place is to look for this information and Mr. Benjamin said Cape Breton University has an energy efficient group they work with, and I will be happy to share contact information to Council.

Warden Morrison mentioned critical mass to make projects attractive, we are geographically large but small in population, so it comes with challenges.

EDO UPDATE – PARKER HORTON

Mr. Horton gave the following Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Strategy Update presentation:



Outline

- HAF Overview – 1 min
- Funding Application Overview – 2 mins
- Overview of Initiatives – 8 mins
- Q & A's – 10 mins

- Intent
 - Obtain Letter of Endorsement for Housing Accelerator Funding Strategy

Housing Accelerator Fund- Small, Rural, North, and Indigenous Streams

- The Housing Accelerator Fund is a transformative multi-billion dollar program designed by the Canadian government to boost the housing supply. It focuses on incentivizing local governments to undertake initiatives that not only increase housing availability but also promote the development of inclusive, equitable, low-carbon, and climate-resilient communities.
- Victoria County falls under the Small, Rural, North, and Indigenous streams of the Housing Accelerator Fund. This stream is dedicated to supporting housing initiatives in communities like ours, with a focus on sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development
- 7 Initiatives Required
- Total Funding Requested: \$9,525,500

Approach

- *Attending Key Conferences and Coordination Efforts: Tailoring to Our County's Needs*
- *Developed a Customized Plan*
- *Focused on Strategic Planning Guidance and Vision*

Funding Application Overview

	Without HAF	With HAF	Net Change (units)
Total number of housing units projected to receive bid permit over three years	135	430	295

Total projected permitted units			
Housing Type	Without HAF	With HAF	Net change (units)
Single	75	170	95
MU - Rapid Transit	-	-	-
MU - Missing Middle	60	260	200
MU - Other	-	-	-
Total	135	430	295

Percentage of affordable units projected to be permitted			
	Without HAF	With HAF	Net change (%)
Number of Affordable Units	-	65	
Percentage of affordable units projected to be permitted	0.00%	15.00%	15.00%

HAF Funding Eligibility Calculation			
Base funding			
	Net Units	\$/unit	\$
Base funding	295	\$ 20,000	\$ 5,900,000

Top up funding			
Housing Type	Net Units	\$/unit	\$
Single	95	-	\$ -
MU - Rapid Transit	-	\$ 15,000	\$ -
MU - Missing Middle	200	\$ 12,000	\$ 2,400,000
MU - Other	-	\$ 7,000	\$ -
Total	295		\$ 2,400,000

Affordable housing bonus			
	Net unit share change	\$/unit	\$
Affordable Units	65	\$ 19,000	1,225,500

Total Estimated HAF Funding - \$	\$ 9,525,500.00
Total Funding - \$/unit	\$ 32,289.83

Section B: Targets and Other Estimates

Projections should be based on a three-year period ending no later than September 1, 2026.

1. Total number of housing units projected to be permitted **without** any support afforded by HAF. If this projection does not align with historical trends as provided in Section E: Historical Building Permit Issuances, use the comment box below to explain and provide supporting details or analysis.

135

Comments

As per enclosed Housing needs assessment

Provide a breakdown by type of housing:

1.1 Single detached homes	75
1.2 Multi-unit housing (in close proximity to rapid transit)	0
1.3 Multi-unit housing (missing middle)	60
1.4 Multi-unit housing (other)	
Total:	135

2. Total number of housing units projected to be permitted **with** the support afforded by the HAF. This is referred to as the "HAF housing supply growth target."

430

Provide a breakdown by type of housing:

2.1 Single detached homes	170
2.2 Multi-unit housing (in close proximity to rapid transit)	
2.3 Multi-unit housing (missing middle)	260
2.4 Multi-unit housing (other)	
Total:	430

Provide a breakdown by year of the HAF program:

2.5 For the year ending September 1, 2024	110
2.6 For the year ending September 1, 2025	110
2.7 For the year ending September 1, 2026	210
Total:	430

3. Total number of "HAF incented units" (units projected with HAF minus units projected without HAF).	295
4. Percentage of affordable units projected to be permitted without any support afforded by HAF.	0.00%
5. Percentage of affordable units projected to be permitted with the support afforded by HAF.	15.00%
6. Total number of dwellings (i.e., current housing stock).	3,080
7. Projected average annual housing supply growth rate without HAF.	1.46%
8. Projected average annual housing supply growth rate with HAF aka Annual Growth Rate - Min. Target to exceed 1.1%	4.65%
9. Projected increase in the housing supply growth rate aka Annual Growth Rate percentage change - Min. Target 10%	218.52%

3. Other Information		
Section E: Historical Building Permit Issuances		
Summarize the number of net new units permitted (Column D) for residential buildings over the prescribed reporting period and associated number of permits issued (Column E) (i.e., the new construction permit/first permit issued only).		
	Number of Units Permitted	Associated Number of Permits Issued
For the year ending December 31, 2022	47	45
For the year ending December 31, 2021	45	44
For the year ending December 31, 2020	28	27
For the year ending December 31, 2019	36	36
For the year ending December 31, 2018	42	42
Section F: Permitted Use of Funds		
For information purposes only. Using the illustrative examples provided by CMHC in its published program material, the applicant estimates that they may be eligible for a total of \$ under HAF.		
		\$ 9,525,500.00
Based on this assumption, it is estimated that HAF funding will be used for the following purposes:		
Permitted Uses	Applicant's Estimate %	Applicant's Estimate \$
Investments in HAF action plan items (include estimates by year of program) YR1	3.67%	\$ 350,000.00
Investments in HAF action plan items (include estimates by year of program) YR2	3.67%	\$ 350,000.00
Investments in HAF action plan items (include estimates by year of program) YR3	3.67%	\$ 350,000.00
Investments in affordable housing	3.67%	\$ 350,000.00
Investments in housing-related infrastructure	83.99%	\$ 8,000,000.00
Investments in community-related infrastructure that supports housing	1.32%	\$ 125,500.00
Total	100.00%	\$ 9,525,500.00

Comprehensive Overview of Housing Initiatives

Initiatives and Proposed Budget:

1. Infrastructure Enhancement: \$8,000,000
2. Land Offset Program: \$500,000
3. Transportation Connectivity: \$400,000
4. Regulatory Streamlining: \$250,000
5. Community Engagement and Education: \$100,000
6. Affordable Housing Incentives: \$150,500
7. Partnering with Nonprofit Housing Providers: \$125,000

Total Proposed/Requested Budget: \$9,525,500

Infrastructure Enhancement

- **Budget Request:** \$8,000,000.00
- **Overview:** This comprehensive initiative seeks to upgrade essential utilities and transportation links, laying a robust foundation for sustainable and inclusive housing development.
- **Key Points:**
 - Thorough assessment of infrastructure to identify upgrade needs .
 - Development of a phased upgrade plan aligned with HAF goals .
 - Pursuit of additional funding through grants and partnerships .
 - Efficient execution of upgrades with minimal disruption .

Land Offset Program

- **Budget Request:** \$500,000.00
- **Overview:** Seeking funding for a program designed to utilize municipal land assets to spur housing development, specifically targeting affordable housing.
- **Key Points:**
 - Sale of city-owned land at below-market values to foster affordable housing projects .
 - Comprehensive plan to identify and assess land parcels suitable for development .
 - Development of agreements ensuring developer compliance with affordability .
 - Reinvestment of proceeds into further housing growth initiatives .

Transportation Connectivity

- **Budget Request:** \$400,000.00
- **Overview:** This initiative aims to improve transit services, increasing accessibility to community resources and enhancing overall mobility.
- **Key Points:**
 - Collaborate with local and regional transport agencies for service assessment and enhancement.
 - Launch awareness campaigns for sustainable transportation.
 - Engage the community in transportation planning and enhancements.
 - Develop infrastructure supporting improved connectivity.

Regulatory Streamlining

- **Budget Request:** \$250,000.00
- **Overview:** This initiative is designed to expedite housing projects by simplifying the permitting and approvals process, fostering a more efficient and predictable environment for developers.
- **Key Points:**
 - Accelerate housing project approvals and reduce administrative burdens.
 - Revise current permitting procedures for efficiency.
 - Explore the feasibility of an online permitting portal.
 - Engage in staff and developer training for a smooth transition to streamlined processes.

Community Engagement and Education

- **Budget Request:** \$100,000.00
- **Overview:** This initiative underpins our commitment to fostering a well-informed and actively involved community in housing matters, ensuring that the development aligns with the residents' needs and contributes positively to the county's growth.
- **Key Points:**
 - Facilitate informed participation and decisionmaking through extensive outreach.
 - Raise public awareness on the benefits of housing growth.
 - Collect community feedback to refine housing strategies.
 - Organize educational events to deepen understanding of housing issues.

Affordable Housing Incentives

- **Budget Request:** \$150,500.00
- **Overview:** A pivotal initiative aimed at promoting the inclusion of affordable units within housing developments, aligning with our vision for a diverse, equitable community. We plan to establish a program that provides developers with incentives for including affordable housing in their projects.
- **Key Points:**
 - Research and adapt successful affordable housing models.
 - Develop transparent eligibility criteria and a comprehensive incentive framework.
 - Communicate program benefits to housing developers and foster active collaboration.

Partnering with Nonprofit Housing Providers

- **Budget Request:** \$125,000.00
- **Overview:** Focused on collaborating with nonprofit organizations to preserve and increase the affordable housing stock.
- **Key Points:**
 - Partner with local nonprofits experienced in affordable housing.
 - Increase and preserve the stock of affordable housing units.
 - Leverage nonprofit expertise and resources for community-oriented projects

Closing Remarks

- **Overview:** The HAF Strategy is a comprehensive proposal aimed at addressing the current and future housing needs of Victoria County.
- **Flexibility in Funding:** We recognize that as our community grows and priorities evolve, our funding allocations may also shift to adapt to these changes.

QUESTIONS

Councillor Patterson asked if the affordable housing units would be rented or owned, and Mr. Horton said there are a few options, but developers would be looking to partner with non-profit organizations.

Councillor Patterson said the intention of the whole package is to make it easier for developers and individuals to build easier and Mr. Horton said the intention is to build more housing and creating a framework for everything to grow together, there would be a regulatory streamlining structure so its easier for developers to know the regulations easier and right away.

Councillor Organ asked about the \$400,000 for transit services, and questioned if that was adequate. Mr. Horton said he can't really say if it or isn't. The system needs to be enhanced but if \$400,000 isn't enough, this plan is designed to be flexible and up to Council where to allocate the funds.

Warden Morrison asked about housing and the need for it and Council haven't established where our role is in it. If Victoria County gets the funding, how does that get rolled out, whose responsibility is, and Mr. Horton said it could look a few different ways and it depends on what they say after the review is done.

Warden Morrison asked if there are incentives for the Municipality as well and Mr. Horton said yes there is, especially with land offset allocation.

Warden Morrison asked about low carbon communities and if the HAF includes those and Mr. Horton said that low carbon communities is the backbone of the HAF strategy.

Councillor Longva asked about the selling of municipal land and Mr. Horton said the municipality can set the parameters.

Councillor Longva commented on the vacant, private homeowners to fix up their homes, is there funding available to those people if they wanted to rent it out to people and Mr. Horton said the strategy is vague right now, but it does allow the municipality to have a say on how they want the strategy to be implemented.

Councillor MacNeil asked if there are certain areas where this HAF can be implemented right away and Mr. Horton said there are so many ways this needs to roll out and so many organizations that need to come to the table as well so as opportunities present themselves more organizations will get on board and start where its needed or where is makes the most sense right now, like Iona for example, with the LNG plant opening up, there will be a massive housing need there.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said the biggest thing for developers are tax incentives and infrastructure assistance before they go ahead with projects and Mr. Horton said hopefully the HAF will assist with this.

Mr. Horton requested Council's endorsement for the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Strategy and presented the following letter:

Councillor Organ and rest of Council accepted the recommendation of sending this letter of endorsement.

FCM REPORT TO COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR PATTERSON

Councillor Patterson shared highlights from the following report:

[FCM-Report-Council-Sept2023.pdf](#)

- Municipal Revenue tools that grow with the economy.
- Increasing the Canada Capacity Fund.
- Provincial Sales Tax, some municipalities in Saskatchewan receive a portion of this from their Province, something that should be looked at for municipalities in Nova Scotia.
- Broadband and cell service discussions.

Council recommended that a letter be sent to MP Batiste to say the Community Building Capacity Fund should be sent directly to the municipalities.

OTHER

Councillor Longva discussed the following items:

- Coastal Protection Act:
 - Councillor Longva has been discussing the Act with the Ecology Action Centre. They are applying for funding for the energy efficient coastal adaptation, requesting Council to give a letter of support and to have a member on staff that could assist with working on this initiative with Ecology Action Centre. Deputy warden instructed Councillor Longva to send the information to CAO MacEachen.
- Local Improvement By-Law:
 - Councillor Longva said she thinks this bylaw is good for some projects and asked if it was worth taking another look at it? Councillor Longva said that some residents were in favour of it and how it could work for certain projects but added that there were some residents who wanted to take the document and reword it and give it back to Council.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said he was against taking another look at it as he now knows how his residents feel and Councillor Organ agreed.

Warden Morrison asked where these residents were, when we needed them, and Councillor Longva said they didn't like the way it was worded.

Councillor MacNeil said he didn't think it was a good idea to look at it right now, he thinks it would be better for when a new Council is elected to take a look at it again if they want.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
November 27, 2023

CFO Redden commented that we had a municipal lawyer that looked at this bylaw and a lot of work went into this and to say that we have residents who want to take it and rewrite it and give it back to Council, I think is a little unfair and we have capable staff here, and we have resources to rely on too. Deputy Warden Dauphinee added that it's a Council decision too, that is what we are here for.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee also said residents had a lot of opportunity to bring forward their concerns, since 2022.

Councillor MacNeil said Council saw the benefit of it initially and it was a council decision for approving the first reading.

- Nova Scotia Power meeting

Thursday November 30th at Indian brook fire hall at 7pm.

I want to talk to them about giving back to the community. We need washrooms on the north shore and there will be a representative from NSP that can discuss this.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said if a group want a washroom they can come to Council with a proposal.

- Two Eyed Seeing Conference

Indigevisor Team, would like Council to be involved in a blanket exercise with other Councils and Council requested for more information before making a decision on participation in this exercise. Councillor MacNeil said there is a cost to this as well and Deputy Warden Dauphinee asked Councillor Longva to include the cost as well.

DISTRICT CONCERNS

District 2:

There was an incident near the Red Barn with a hunter and requested a letter be sent to DNRR for an update on this incident.

District 7:

Held office hours and a concern was raised over a walking trail at the old legion site. CAO said to apply through the Trail Fund.

Asked if there were "Sharing the Road" signs? CAO will check and get back to Councillor Organ.

Inquired about an environmental study done on the White Point Road and CAO said there was one done and CAO will contact resident with information.

There is illegal dumping at the new transfer station site.

Asked about a noise bylaw and the County does not have one.

District 1

CB Ventures asked for a letter of support for an ACOA funding application and Councillor MacNeil will write and send in.

District 4:

Asked if there can there be signs made saying that Victoria County doesn't accept black garbage bags, and can they be put on residents' garbage cans and CAO said we can't place signs on peoples garbage cans and Deputy Warden Dauphinee suggested residents put locks on their garbage bins.

NEXT MEETING

Next Committee of the Whole meeting is TBA.

ADJOURN

Councillor MacNeil made a motion to adjourn at 3:45pm.