

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NUMBER #2025-003-ADM
RESPECTING GRANTS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

WHEREAS the Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits Administrative Order allows money-in-lieu accepted for affordable housing to be spent under this Administrative Order.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED as an Administrative Order of the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality, as follows:

Short Title

1. The Administrative Order may be known as the *Grants for Affordable Housing Administrative Order*.

Interpretation

2. In this Administrative Order,
 - (a) “Acquisition Project” means the purchase of (i) an existing residential building for use as affordable housing or (ii) a building lot for future construction of affordable housing;
 - (b) “affordability standard” means
 - (i) the proportion of units in a development that are affordable housing;
 - (ii) the number of years that an applicant commits to keeping units affordable; and
 - (iii) the depth of affordability of a particular unit of affordable housing or room in a shared housing use;
 - (c) “affordable housing” means housing that meets the needs of a variety of households in the low to moderate income range;
 - (d) “Bonus Zoning Reserve” means the reserve established to hold the incentive or bonus zoning payments of money-in-lieu of a contribution under the applicable land use by-laws;
 - (e) “CAO” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality;
 - (f) “construction costs” means the direct costs of constructing the project, including but not limited to:
 - (i) municipal fees not eligible for waiver under the License, Permit and Processing Fees Administrative Order,
 - (ii) design, insurance, and legal fees,
 - (iii) materials,
 - (iv) labour, and
 - (v) site preparation;
 - (g) “contribution agreement” means an agreement signed between the Municipality and the non-profit organization under this Administrative Order through which the

Municipality agrees to provide the non-profit organization with a financial contribution for an eligible project;

- (h) “Conversion Project” means the conversion of an existing non-residential building to a residential building used for affordable housing;
- (i) “Council” means the Council of the Municipality;
- (j) “financial viability” is the ability for the building owner or manager to generate sufficient income from rent, fees, and subsidies to meet its operating payments and debt commitments, and save for future capital needs to maintain the building in good condition;
- (k) “fiscal year” means the period from April 1st in one year to March 31st in the following year, including both dates;
- (l) “Housing First principles” means an approach to people experiencing homelessness with regard for:
 - (i) immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements,
 - (ii) consumer choice and self-determination,
 - (iii) recovery orientation,
 - (iv) individualized and client-driven supports, and
 - (v) social and community integration;
- (m) “Municipality” means the Halifax Regional Municipality;
- (n) “New Construction Project” means the construction of a residential building or additional dwelling units in an existing residential building for use as affordable housing, or the purchase of a residential building that is currently under construction;
- (o) “non-profit organization” means a
 - (i) society incorporated pursuant to the Societies Act, R.S.N.S 1989 c.435, as amended,
 - (ii) non-profit association incorporated pursuant to the Co-Operative Associations Act, R.S.N.S c.98, as amended,
 - (iii) not-for-profit incorporated pursuant to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, S.C 2009, c.23,
 - (iv) non-profit organization otherwise incorporated pursuant to an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature, or
 - (v) a charitable organization registered pursuant to the Income Tax Act (Canada).
- (p) “pre-application meeting” means a meeting between a prospective Affordable Housing Grant Program applicant and staff, held prior to the end of the intake period, regarding the application the prospective applicant intends to submit;

- (q) “Pre-Development Project” means the completion of studies required to develop affordable housing, including but not limited to: studies to assess development feasibility of a parcel, preliminary design, and studies specifically requested by the Municipality or other approval bodies as part of a discretionary or as-of-right approval process;
- (r) “Regional Centre Area” means the Regional Centre Area shown on the most recent version of Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy;
- (s) “Repair Project” means the repair and/or rehabilitation of an existing residential building used for affordable housing;
- (t) “residential building” means a permanent structure that is used or intended for use primarily for human habitation; and
- (u) “staff” means one or more employees of the Municipality delegated by the CAO to administer this Administrative Order.

Purpose

- 3. The purpose of this Administrative Order is to provide grants to eligible organizations for the construction, acquisition, or repair of affordable housing.
- 4. In accordance with Administrative Order 2020-007-ADM Respecting Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits:
 - (a) funds that have been collected through incentive or bonusing zoning programs for affordable housing from development projects located inside the Regional Centre Area shall only be used to support projects within the Regional Centre Area; and
 - (b) funds that have been collected through incentive or bonus zoning programs for affordable housing from development projects located outside the Regional Centre Area shall only be used to support projects located outside the Regional Centre Area but within the Urban Service Boundary.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 5. Council hereby delegates to the CAO the authority to:
 - (a) approve grants under this Administrative Order;
 - (b) determine the amount of such grants; and
 - (c) approve and execute contribution agreements under this Administrative Order on behalf of the Municipality, including amendments to such agreements.

6. The CAO may further delegate to staff any or all of the authorities granted by Council to the CAO under this Administrative Order.

Eligibility for Consideration for Affordable Housing Grant

7. To be eligible for consideration for a grant, an applicant must:
 - (a) be applying for a grant for one of the following project types:
 - (i) a New Construction Project;
 - (ii) a Repair Project;
 - (iii) an Acquisition Project;
 - (iv) a Pre-Development Project; or
 - (v) a Conversion Project;
 - (b) be a non-profit organization that has been incorporated for at least one year at the time of application; and
 - (c) Submit its application by the end of the intake period.
8. Projects must be located on a property owned (or to-be-owned) by the applicant, unless there is an agreement between the applicant and another person whereby the person owning the property agrees to:
 - (a) transfer ownership of the affordable housing to the non-profit organization prior to occupancy, or
 - (b) lease, for the life of the residential building, the affordable housing units to the non-profit organization prior to occupancy; or
9. In the case of an Acquisition Project or a Pre-Development Project the applicant must provide evidence to the satisfaction of staff that the property will be conveyed to the applicant.

Eligible Costs

10. Grant amounts are limited to the eligible costs for each associated project type as outlined in Table 1:

Table 1: Eligible costs for each project type

PROJECT TYPE	ELIGIBLE COSTS
New Construction Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs
Repair Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs • Building condition assessment • Accommodation and moving costs for displacement of tenants during repairs
Acquisition Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deed Transfer Tax amount paid or anticipated within 24 months of the deadline of application intake
Pre-Development Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies to assess development feasibility of a parcel • Preliminary building and site design • Studies required for a discretionary or as-of-right development approval process
Conversion Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs • Building condition assessment

Ineligible Costs

11. Except for those costs identified in Table 1 all other costs are ineligible for a grant, including:
- (a) for Repair Projects, work that has already been performed at time of application; and
 - (b) operating expenses of the non-profit organization, including wages of employees of the non-profit organization, debt payment, or losses from a previous fiscal year.

General Application Intake Requirements

12. (1) There will be a minimum of one intake per fiscal year.
- (2) Subject to subsection (1), the number of intake periods will be at the discretion of staff.
- (3) Intake periods will be advertised on the Municipality's website for a minimum of 30 days prior to the beginning of the intake period.
- (4) An intake period will last a minimum of 30 days.
13. (1) Applications will only be accepted during the intake period.
- (2) All applications must be received by the Municipality via the Permitting, Planning, Licensing, & Compliance System, or an acceptable alternative, as determined by staff.
14. Prior to submitting their application, all applicants must attend a pre-application meeting.

Required Information For All Applications

15. All applications must include the following information:

- (a) Federal charity registration number or Registry of Joint Stock Companies registry identification number;
- (b) the amount of financial assistance requested;
- (c) a statement summarizing the impact the grant would have on project financial feasibility and affordability, if awarded;
- (d) a financial viability summary that identifies hard and soft costs associated with the development, identifies all sources of financing (both confirmed and unconfirmed), and estimates the operational costs and rental income;
- (e) confirmation of ownership of the land subject to the application, or a letter from the current owner of the property outlining the intent to convey the land to the applicant and the circumstances under which it will be conveyed, or permission from the property owner to undertake pre-development work, in the case of a Pre-Development Project;
- (f) in the case of a partnership, copies of all existing agreements between the non-profit organization and the person, including a for-profit business, regarding the lease to or ownership transfer to the non-profit organization of the affordable housing;
- (g) a summary describing the project, including:
 - (i) the total number of affordable housing dwelling units (or the approximate number, for a Pre-Development Project), and the approximate number of bedrooms, or for a shared housing use, the total number bedrooms and their approximate size,
 - (ii) who the affordable housing is intended to serve, including whether the affordable housing will serve members of the priority groups identified in the National Housing Strategy as further defined and may be updated from time to time by the Government of Canada,
 - (iii) proposed rents and/or affordability standard,
 - (iv) the address and location of the proposed development,
 - (v) the ownership structure of the affordable housing and the development, and
 - (vi) how the project will achieve long term financial viability;
- (h) a summary describing the applicant, including who it serves and any examples of similar projects it has led or participated in;

- (i) a valid email address for communication by the Municipality; and
- (j) the information outlined in Table 2 for the respective project type.

Table 2: Required additional submission content for each project type

PROJECT TYPE	SUBMISSION CONTENT
New Construction Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Repair Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a description of the work to be completed, including the extent of required repairs. • a description of the importance of that work in maintaining the availability of the affordable housing. • estimates from two professional contractors for the proposed repairs or renewal work.
Acquisition Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an independent appraisal of the fair market value of the property being considered for purchase. • a description of the importance of the acquisition in maintaining the availability of the affordable housing.
Pre-Development Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a description of the importance of the work in establishing project feasibility. • a description of the project goals in contributing to provision of affordable housing.
Conversion Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

Application Prioritization for Affordable Housing Grants

16. Applications will be prioritized based on the following criteria:

- (a) projects that have applied for and are eligible for funding by the Province of Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada, or other funding organizations;
- (b) projects that have a stronger affordability standard;
- (c) projects that serve populations experiencing homelessness in accordance with Housing First principles;
- (d) projects that clearly demonstrate how the proposed funds would be used, including impact of an award on financial viability;
- (e) projects with clearly defined scope and diligently prepared quotes;
- (f) applicants that demonstrate capacity to complete project goals in a timely manner, on budget and with financial viability;

- (g) projects that demonstrate a stronger performance in matters of environmental sustainability, accessibility, and social equity; and
- (h) The criteria outlined in Table 3 for the respective project type.

Table 3: Prioritization criteria for each application type

PROJECT TYPE	PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA
New Construction Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicants that demonstrate capacity to support additional housing units. • projects that target members of the priority groups of the National Housing Strategy as further defined and may be updated from time to time by the Government of Canada;
Repair Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects that keep existing affordable housing units habitable and affordable by improving building safety and integrity.
Acquisition Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicants that demonstrate capacity to support additional housing units. • demonstrated project quality, evidenced by building condition assessments, maintenance history, and independent property appraisals. • projects that maintain affordability of housing units.
Pre-Development Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects that are eligible for pre-development funding from other funding sources, and which demonstrate need for additional funding to reach financial viability for funding applications as a New Construction Project. • projects that target members of the priority groups of the National Housing Strategy as further defined and may be updated from time to time by the Government of Canada;
Conversion Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicants that demonstrate capacity to support additional housing units. • projects that convert an oversupplied land use to a residential use. • projects that target members of the priority groups of the National Housing Strategy as further defined and may be updated from time to time by the Government of Canada;

Application Review Process

17. Applications will be evaluated by staff, who may seek input from members of the Housing and Homelessness Partnership and representatives of other funding bodies.
18. Applications may be screened by staff for eligibility as they are received.
19. Applicants will be notified if their applications are ineligible.
20. Eligible applications will be evaluated and prioritized by staff.
21. Final approval of all grants, and the amount thereof, is a decision of the CAO in their sole discretion.

22. Applicants will be notified of the CAO's decision by e-mail.
23. Submission of an eligible application does not guarantee a grant award.
24. Due to limited funds, not all eligible applications will receive funding.
25. Staff will inform Council of the grants approved by the CAO.
26. A successful applicant must sign a contribution agreement with the Municipality prior to any funds being disbursed.
27. A successful applicant must not have any outstanding debts to the Municipality at the time of signing a contribution agreement.
28. Financial assistance provided through this Administrative Order will be detailed in the contribution agreement including the following items:
 - (a) the amount to be received;
 - (b) conditions for securing additional funds needed to complete the proposed project;
 - (c) the work to be completed and the timeframe by which it must be completed, including award installments associated with project milestones;
 - (d) the process for reporting to the Municipality;
 - (e) money received being used for the purposes outlined in the recipient's funding application;
 - (f) repayment or recourse if:
 - (i) the project is not completed,
 - (ii) the project is not completed by a date specified in the contribution agreement,
 - (iii) the scope of the project is changed, or
 - (iv) any portion of the money received from the Municipality is used for any purpose other than the approved project;
 - (g) to notify the Municipality if:
 - (i) there is a change in scope of the project from that description in the application,
 - (ii) the project does not proceed, or

- (iii) the project is not completed.
 - (h) commitments relating to the affordability standard for the project; and
 - (i) any other matter needed to ensure that the money received from the Municipality is used to support the proposed project.
29. Nothing in this Administrative Order shall be interpreted to limit Council's general discretion to provide grants and contribution agreements under the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, Administrative Order 2020-007-ADM Respecting Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits, or otherwise.
30. (1) Applicants recommended for an award will be screened by the Finance Department for any outstanding payments owed to the Municipality.
- (2) If payments are identified to be outstanding under subsection (1), an application may be declined or a grant payment withheld pending resolution of the debt or the execution of a signed payment plan.

Transition & Repeal

31. A reference in an enactment to the former *Grants for Affordable Housing Administrative Order* is to be read as including a reference to the provisions of this Administrative Order relating to the same subject matter.
32. Administrative Order 2020-008-ADM, the *Grants for Affordable Housing Administrative Order*, is repealed.

Done and passed in Council this 24th day of June, 2025.

Mayor Andy Fillmore

Municipal Clerk

I, Iain McLean, Clerk of Halifax Regional Municipality, hereby certify that the above noted Administrative Order was passed at a meeting of Halifax Regional Council held on June 24, 2025.

Iain McLean, Municipal Clerk

Notice of Motion:
Approval:

June 10, 2025
June 24, 2025
