

Re: Item No. 5  
**HALIFAX**

# Centre Plan Package B

**Committee of the Whole**

**August 17, 2021**

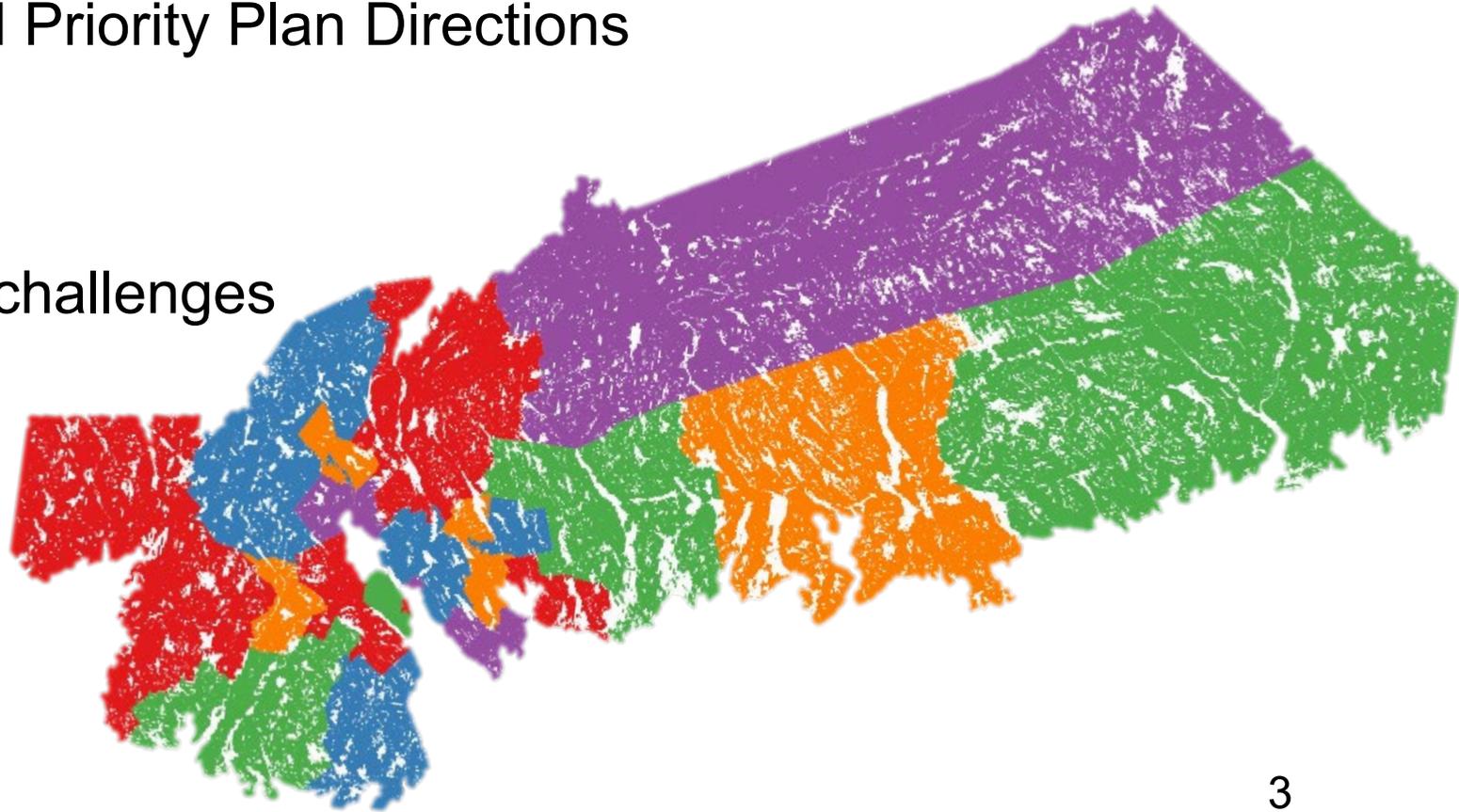
# Outline

- Overview of Centre Plan Planning Process, Package A, and Package B
- Repeal and Amendments to Existing Planning Documents
- Governance
- Committee and Community Council Recommendations
- Changes Identified and Recommended by Staff
- Review and Adoption Process
- Recommendations



# Secondary Plan and By-law Simplification Program

- Update and consolidate 23 SMPS and 24 LUBs
- Implement Regional Plan and Priority Plan Directions
- Streamline administration
- Improve user experience
- Respond to current planning challenges
- First Phase – Centre Plan



# Centre Plan Process

## Engage and Define

- Sept. 2015 – Mar. 2016
- Background Studies & Community Engagement Strategy

## Guiding Direction

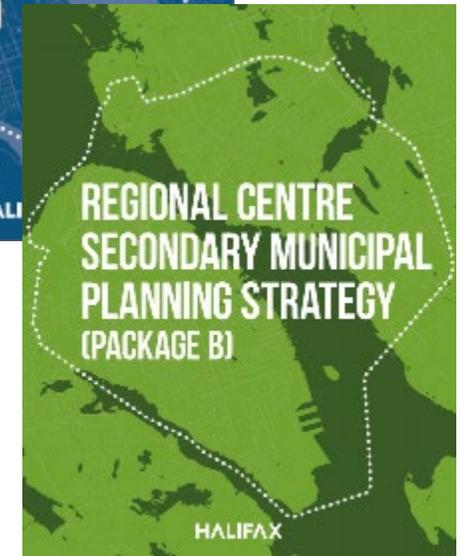
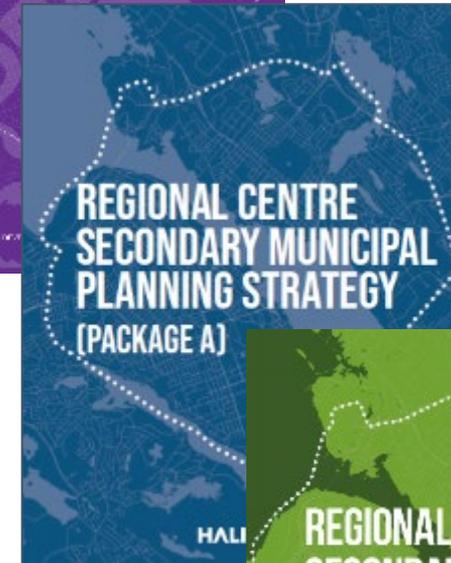
- May 2016 – June 2017
- Consultation on Centre Plan Framework document (Purple Document)
- Council direction

## Package A (2018-2019)

- High growth areas
- Approved in Sept. 2019

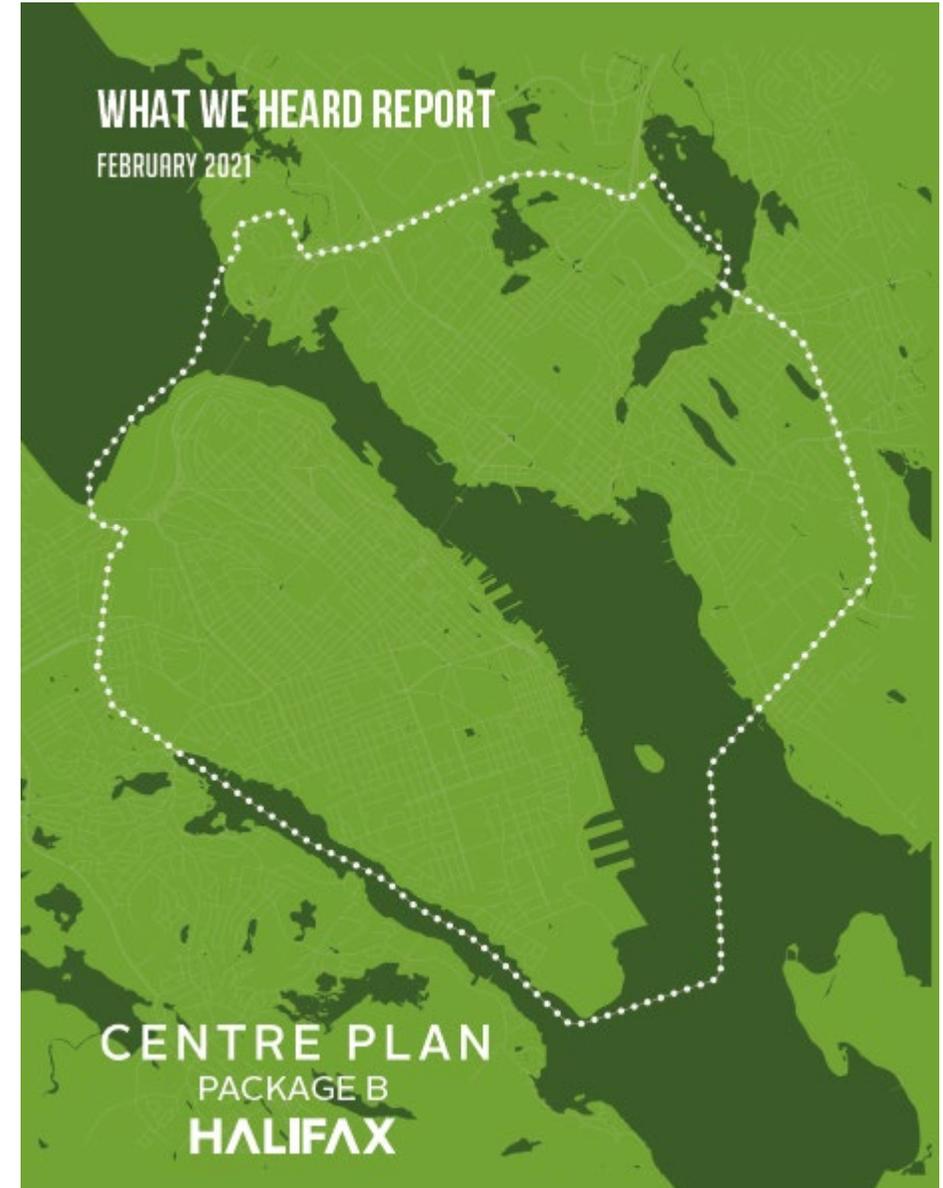
## Package B (2020-2021)

- All remaining areas, resulting in one comprehensive plan



# What We Heard Report

- Package B Engagement Process
- Participation and feedback from key consultation activities
- Key themes of feedback
- Detailed survey summaries
- Saint Patrick's Alexandra Consultation
- Correspondence
- Site Specific Requests



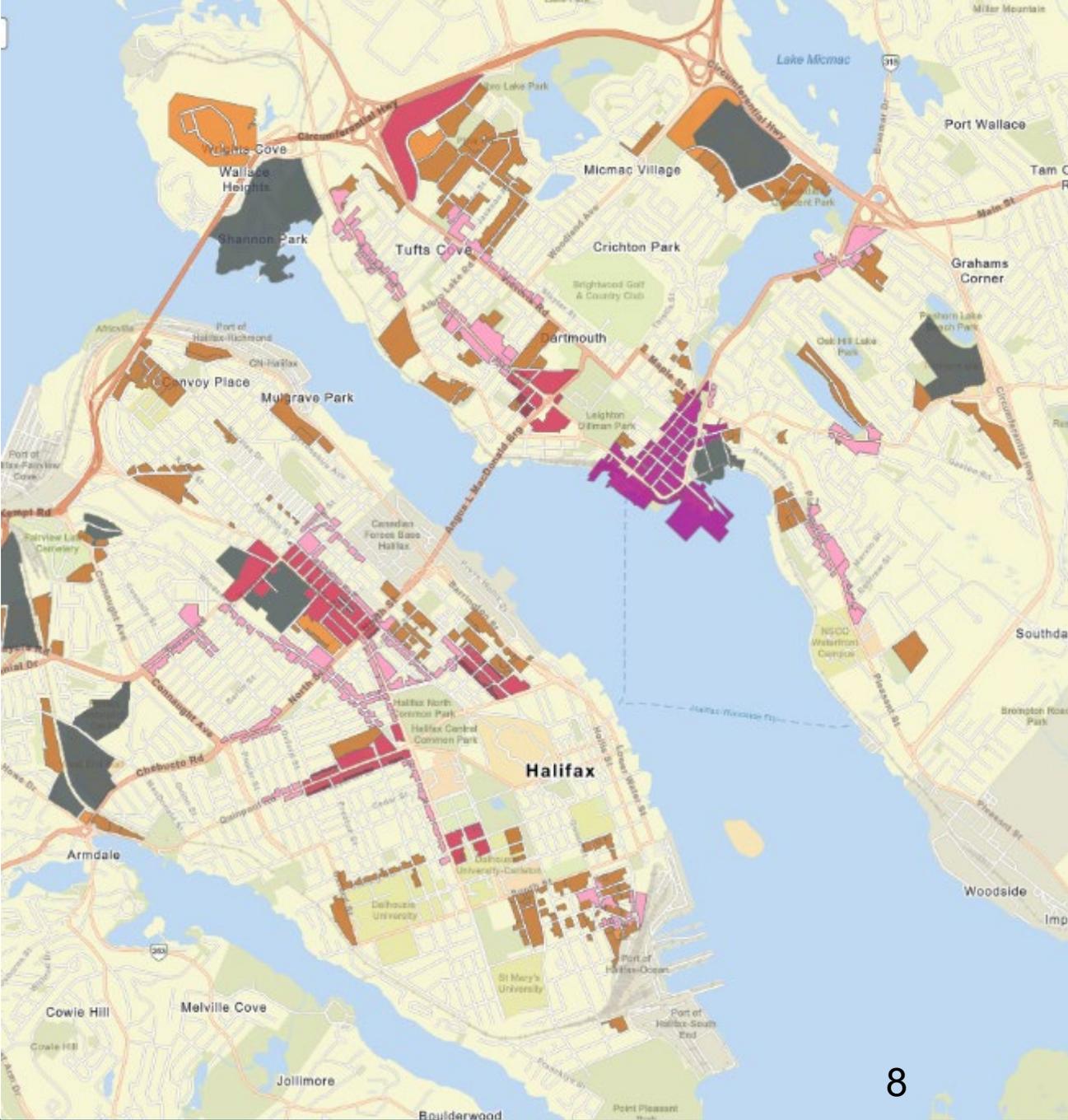
# PACKAGE A OVERVIEW





# Package A Designations

-  **Downtown (Dartmouth)**
-  **Centre**
-  **Corridor**
-  **Higher Order Residential**
-  **Future Growth Node**



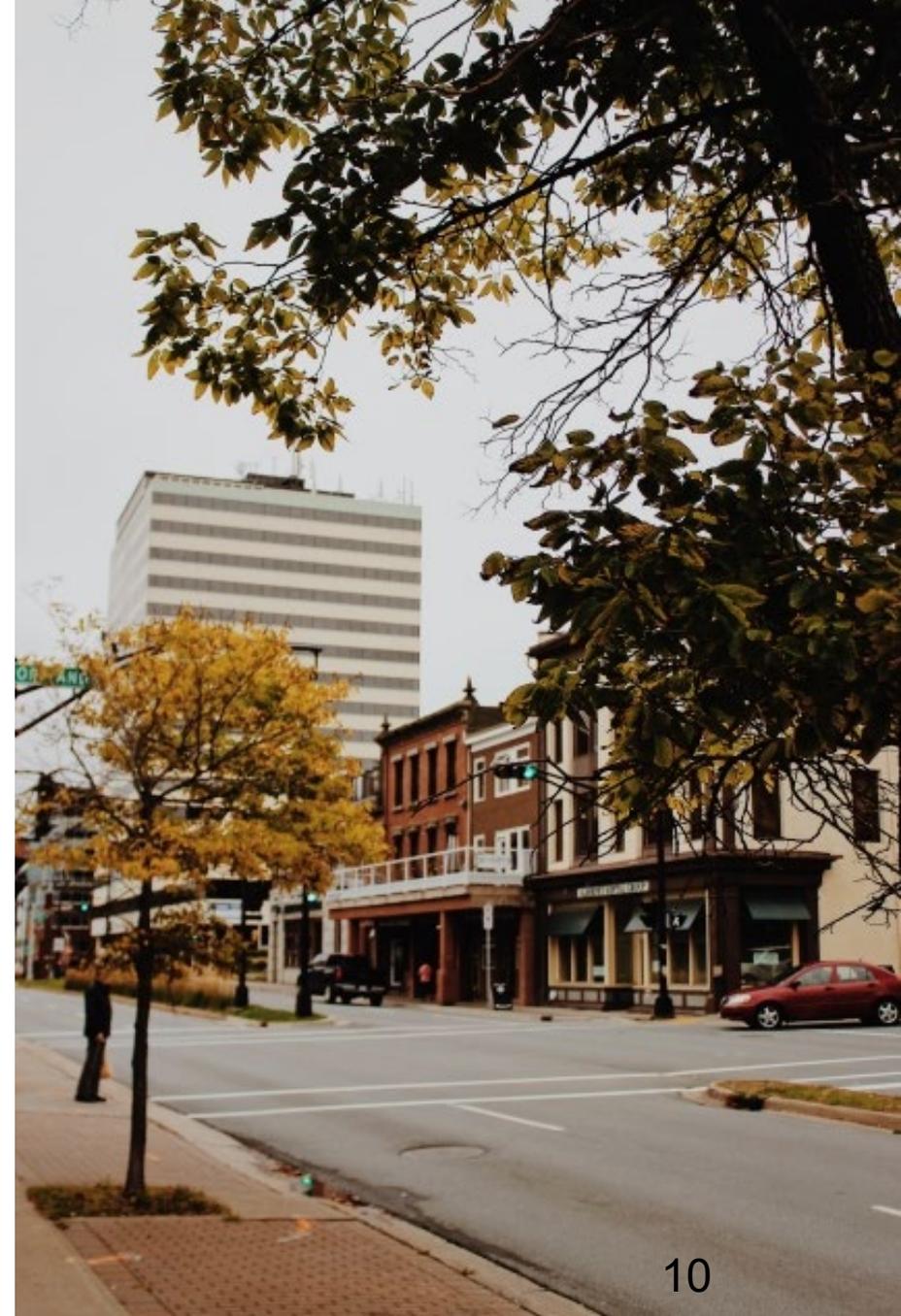
# Package A – Policy Areas

- Urban Design
- Culture & Heritage
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Mobility
- Environment
- Implementation



# Package A – Key Updates

- Streamlined use of site plan approval tool
- Minor changes to built form and building design requirements
- Additional Package A Zone Lands
- Robie Street Transportation Reserve
- Front & Flankage setbacks
- Saint Patrick's Alexandra Site Development Agreement Policy
- Implementation policy updates



# PACKAGE B OVERVIEW



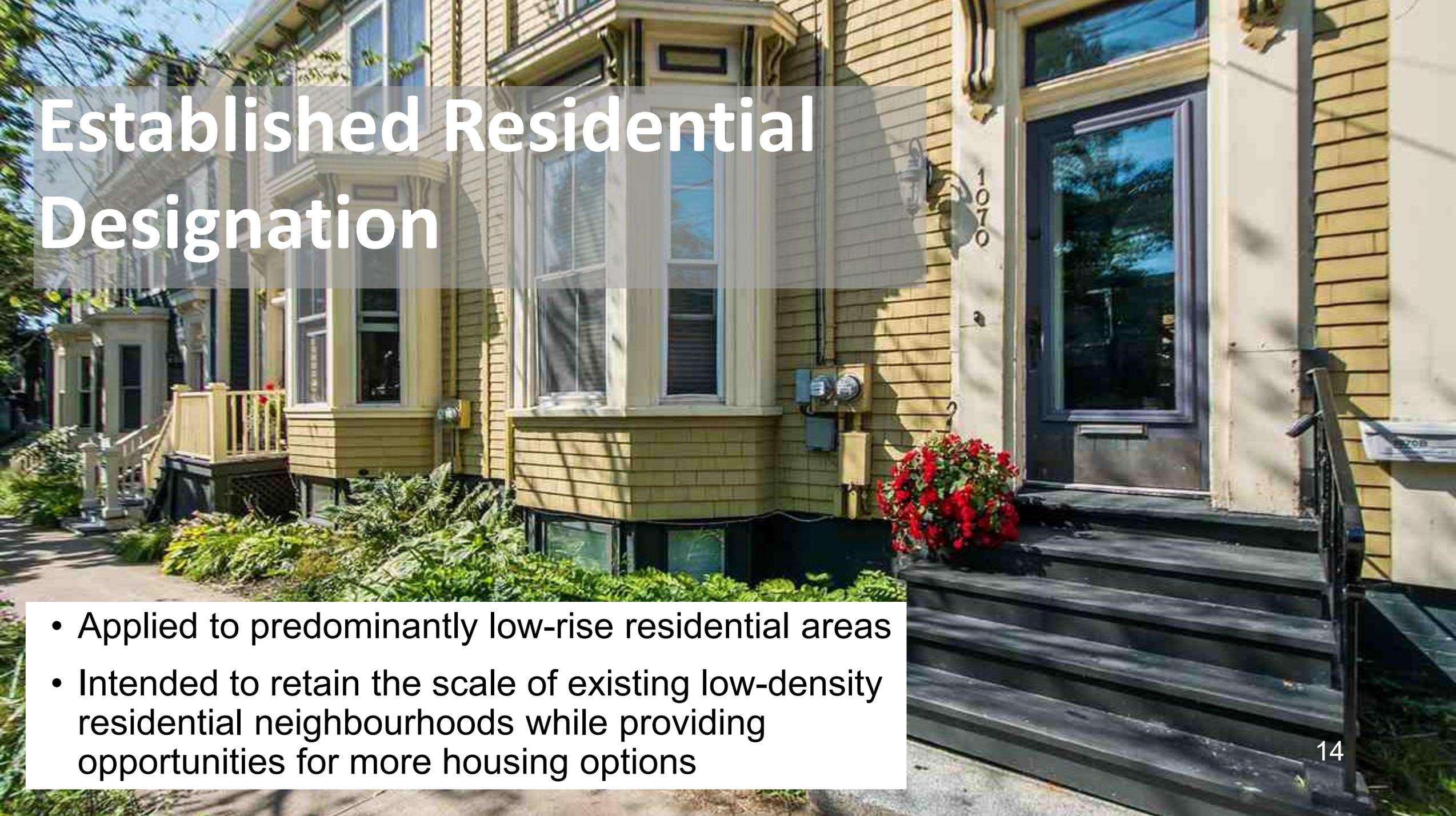
# Park and Community Facility Designation

- Parks, open spaces, public schools, community facilities and club recreation facilities.
- Intended to protect and support a connected public park and open space network.

# Downtown Designation

A vibrant street scene in a downtown area. The image shows a mix of historic and modern architecture. On the left, there are multi-story brick buildings with colorful facades (red, yellow, blue). A prominent yellow building has red shutters and a sign that says "Cafe BAR". Below it, there's a sign for "ANTONIO AZTECA" and another for "GENUINE SHOE SHOP". A blue sign for "DIAMOND" is visible. People are walking on the sidewalk, and there are outdoor seating areas with tables and chairs. The sky is blue with some clouds. On the right, there's a modern glass building and a large green tree.

- Applied to Downtown Dartmouth, and through Package (B), also applied to Downtown Halifax
- Intended to support development in the core where the largest scale and most intense mix of uses are encouraged.



# Established Residential Designation

- Applied to predominantly low-rise residential areas
- Intended to retain the scale of existing low-density residential neighbourhoods while providing opportunities for more housing options

# Institutional Employment Designation

- Large and small scale institutions
- Intended to support the use and expansion of the many thriving institutions located in the Regional Centre

# Industrial Employment Designation

- Applied to existing industrial and mixed industrial and commercial areas
- Supports industrial, limited commercial, and harbour-related industrial uses

# Water Access Designation

- Applied to pre-confederation water lots
- Intended to protect the unique character and environment of waterfront areas

# Repeal and Amendments to Existing Planning Documents

- Repeal of the *Regional Centre Plan and LUB for Package A*
- Repeal of the *SMPS and LUB for Downtown Dartmouth*
- Repeal of the *Halifax Peninsula LUB*
- Amendments to the *Halifax SMPS*
- Amendments to the *Dartmouth SMPS and LUB*
- Amendments to the *Downtown Halifax SMPS and LUB*

# Governance

- Continuation of Community Council roles (HEMDCC, HWCC & RCCC)
- Updates to Design Advisory Committee (DAC) terms of reference
- Continuation of Design Review Committee (DRC) for remaining portion of Downtown Halifax Plan
- Updates to AO 2020-007-ADM, Respecting Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefit and AO 2020-008-ADM, Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing



# Committee and Community Council Recommendations

- Nearly all recommendations result in recommended revisions to the Plan and LUB
- Key items include:
  - a number of site-specific changes to zoning, height and density controls;
  - revisions to the Young Avenue Special Area and Sub-Special Area;
  - minor changes to the landmark building regulations;
  - a second Cluster Housing (CH) Zone specific to mobile home park uses;
  - additional internal conversion development option within the ER-3 Zone to encourage the preservation of existing large homes;
  - new policies to guide the consideration of future Plan updates concerning Heritage Development Agreements within Downtown Halifax, renewable energy, and affordable housing; and
  - direction to expedite the Southdale Future Growth Node master neighbourhood planning project work.

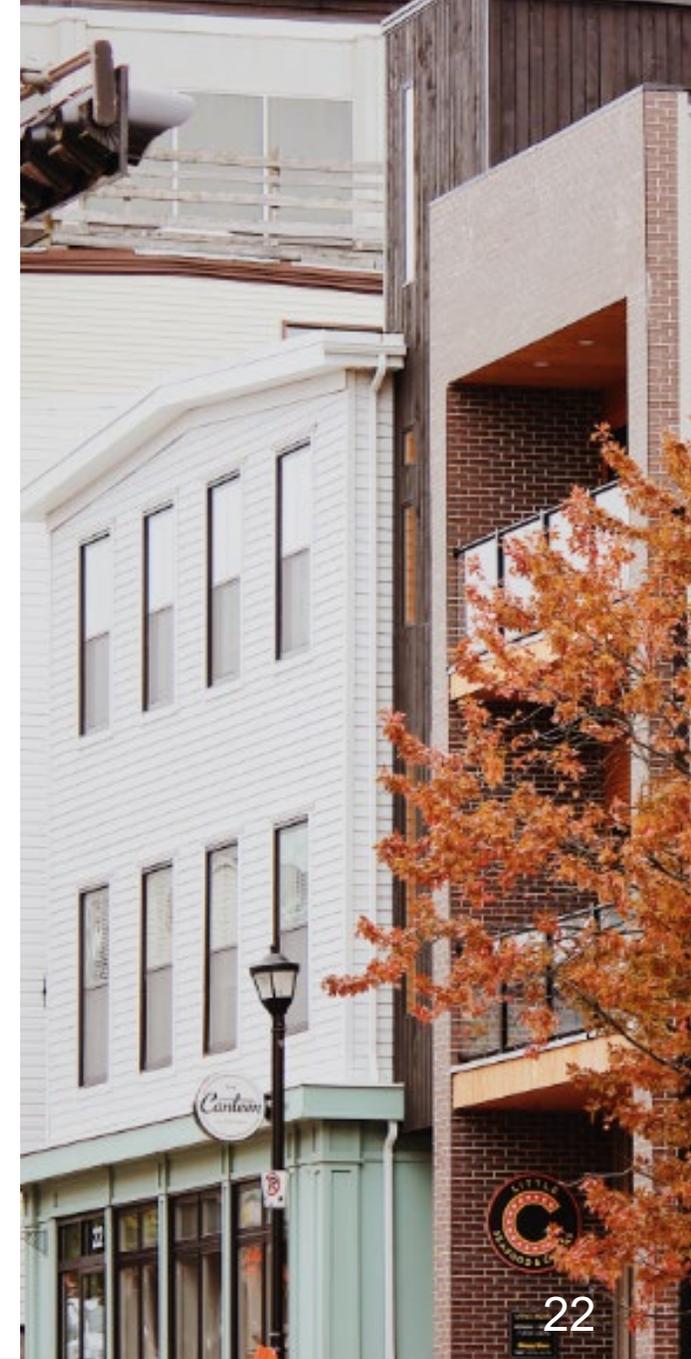
# Site Plan Approval Transition: Downtown Halifax Plan Area

- Package B framework generally consistent with existing Downtown Halifax regulations
- Key changes that impact building designs include:
  - updates to the bonus zoning categories and values;
  - removing the ability to request variations to side lot line requirements; and
  - increasing front/flanking setback requirements from 0 to 1 metre.
- To support a smooth transition, staff recommend:
  - removing five identified project sites from the Package B planning documents;
  - incorporating the five sites into the Centre Plan framework through the Downtown Halifax HCD project work; and
  - maintaining the existing 0 metre front/flanking setback requirement.



# Site Plan Approval Transition: Package A Areas

- Package B framework is generally consistent or more flexible
- Several proposed changes are more stringent and may impact building designs
- To support a smooth transition, staff recommend the following revisions to proposed Package B:
  - allowing underground parking within the front/flanking setback of the Downtown Dartmouth (DD) and Downtown Halifax (DH) zones;
  - revising building separation requirements from 6m to 4m;
  - reducing loading space size, height and other requirements;
  - a site-specific exemption for the former St. Patrick's High School site to continue to enable two proposed tall-mid-rise buildings to be approximately 30 metres in height (one additional storey);
- Staff do not recommend revisions to all other more stringent regulations that address regulatory gaps or improve Package A regulations



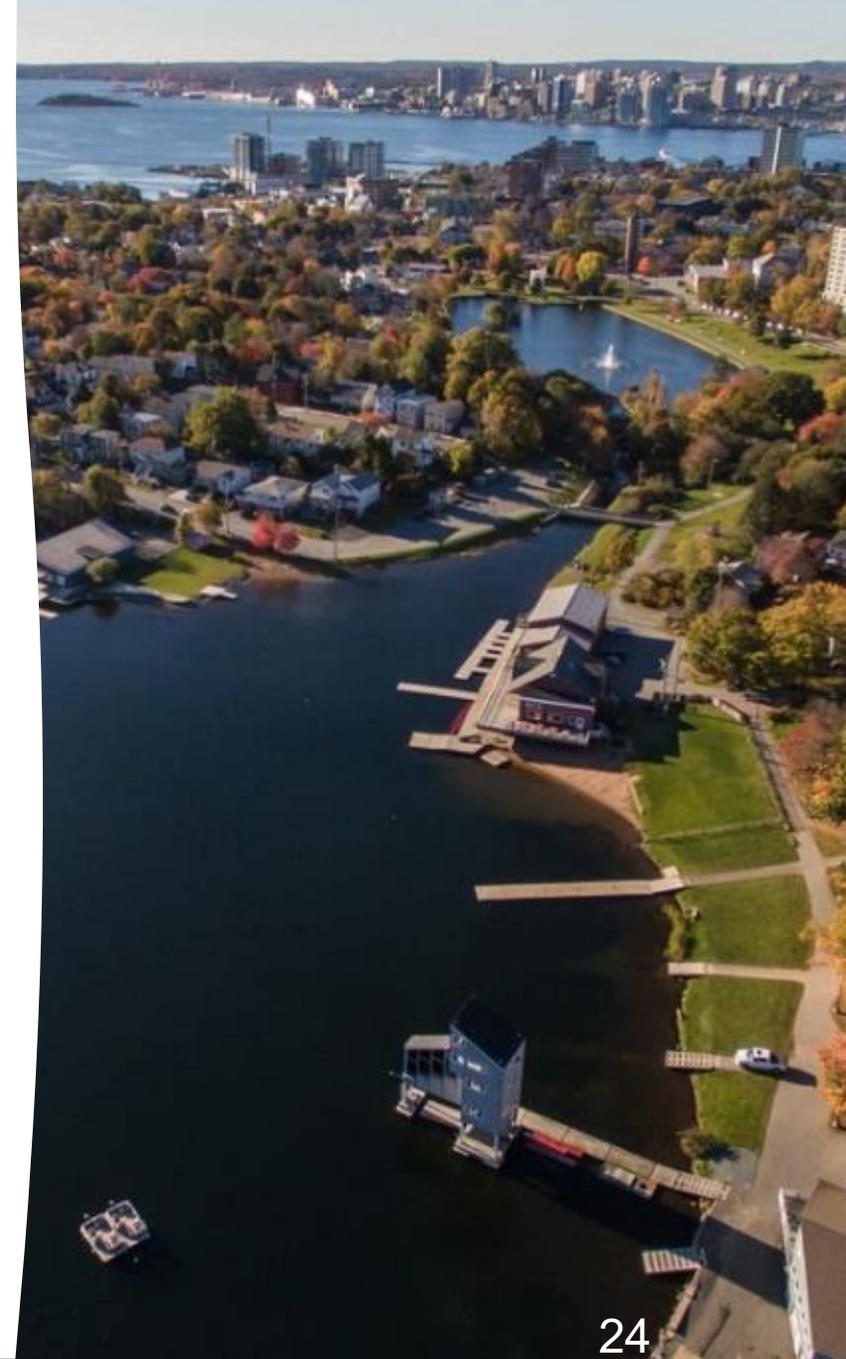
# Other Key Updates Recommended by Staff

- revisions to the non-conforming use development agreement policy to allow the same use in a different location where needed to support the Municipal acquisition of land for public purposes;
- removal of side setbacks for HR zones abutting DD, DH, CEN and COR zones;
- revisions to the threshold for locating waste management areas inside a building from 11 metres in height, to 2,000 square metres in area;
- a decrease to the minimum lot area for end units of townhouses from 245 square metres to 220 square metres;
- increased flexibility for existing accessory structures that do not meet flanking setback requirements to convert to a backyard suite use;
- including projecting signs requirements as part of the site plan variation provisions for institutional and park and community facility uses;

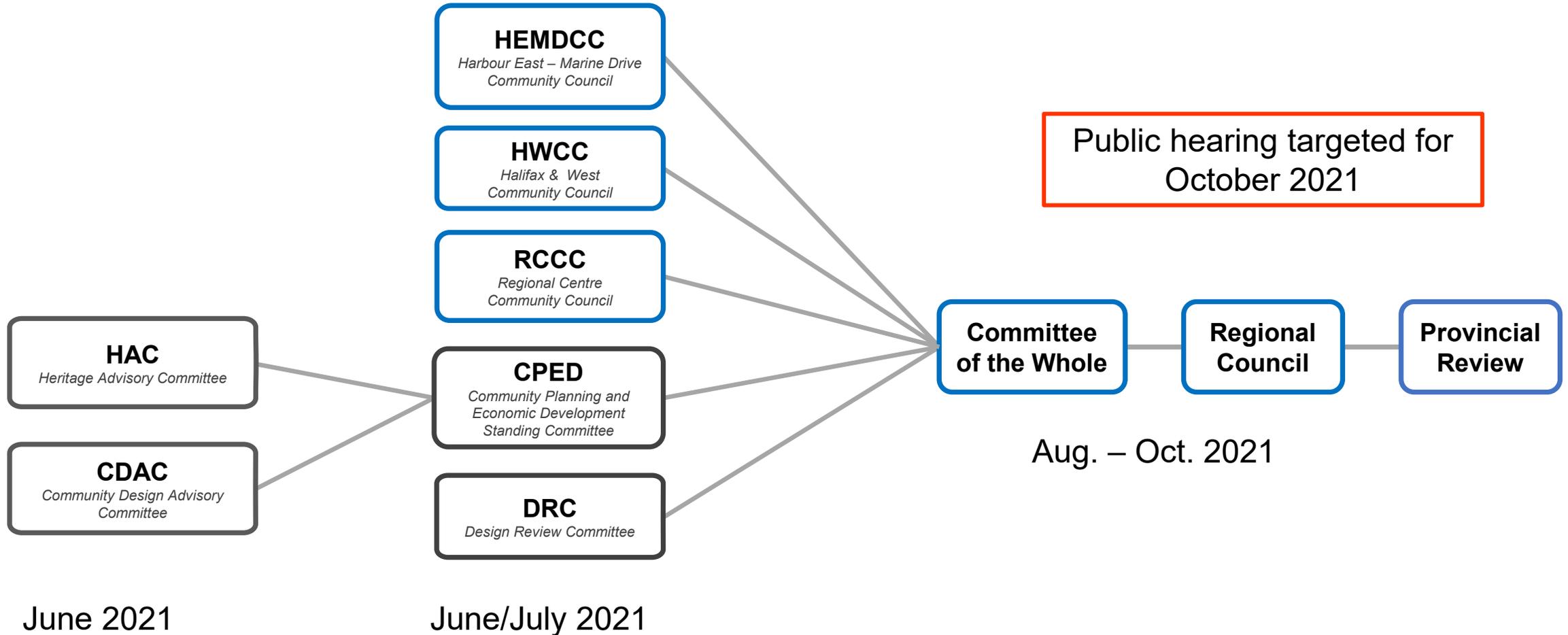


# Other Key Updates Recommended by Staff

- allowing accessory parking lots in the UC-1 Zone to be located near the streetline;
- allowing ground signs in the Halifax Waterfront (HW) Special Area;
- updates to Map 23 and LUB Schedule 6, Robie Street Transportation Reserve, with more detailed mapping information;
- site-specific zoning changes to reduce non-conformity with proposed regulations; and
- adjustments to the maximum height permitted on recently registered heritage properties in ER zones to comply with SMPS Policy.



# Package B Review & Adoption Path



# Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee of the Whole recommend that Regional Council:

1. Direct the CAO to amend the draft Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (Plan), the Regional Centre Land Use By-law (LUB), and amendments to existing planning documents, as set out in the staff report dated May 7, 2021, by implementing the changes recommended by staff in:
  - a) Attachment A: Staff Responses to Committee and Community Council Recommendations; and
  - b) Attachment B: Changes to the Draft Plan and LUB Identified and Recommended by Staff;

and return to Regional Council with the revised Plan and LUB for first reading and to schedule a public hearing.

# Recommendations

## 2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

- a) draft amendments to Administrative Order Number 48, the *Community Council Administrative Order*, to
  - i. grant the Regional Centre Community Council the powers to hear site plan and variance appeals, and to amend the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, within the Regional Centre Plan boundary, except for Lakeshore Park Terrace and Wallace Heights which fall outside the Centre Plan Area as defined by the *HRM Charter*, and
  - ii. that the areas of the Regional Centre Community Council be excluded from the jurisdiction of Halifax and West Community Council, and Harbour East and Marine Drive Community Council with respect to these powers; and
- b) return to Council for consideration of these amendments after provincial approval of the Regional Centre Plan Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law;

## 3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

- a) draft amendments to Administrative Order 2019-011-GOV, the *Design Advisory Committee Administrative Order*, to update the applicable area and references to the Land Use By-law concerning the types of site plan approval applications reviewed by the committee; and
- b) return to Council for consideration of these amendments after provincial approval of the Regional Centre Plan Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law;

# Recommendations

## 4. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

- a) draft amendments to Administrative Order 2020-007-ADM, the *Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits Administrative Order*, and Administrative Order 2020-008-ADM, *Grants for Affordable Housing Administrative Order*, to update the permitted use of money-in-lieu funds as outlined in the discussion section of this report; and
- b) return to Council for consideration of these amendments after provincial approval of the Regional Centre Plan Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and the Regional Centre Land Use By-law.

## 5. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

- a) prepare a report to initiate a process to amend the Regional Centre Secondary Planning Strategy to develop site specific Comprehensive Development District (CDD) policies and an associated development agreement to enable a neighbourhood scale affordable housing development on the Southdale Future Growth Node site; and
- b) return to Council for consideration of the initiation report after the notice is published in a newspaper informing the public that the municipal planning strategy and its implementing land-use by-law are in effect.



**Thank You**  
**[WWW.CENTREPLAN.CA](http://WWW.CENTREPLAN.CA)**