

## HAF Agreement and Action Plan Summary District of Chester, Nova Scotia

### Summary of Agreement Targets and Funding

*Status as of March 28, 2025*

<b>Overall Permitted Unit Targets (3 years)</b>	<b>220</b>
Units expected without HAF (baseline)	<b>150</b>
Units incented by HAF (HAF-incented)	<b>70</b>
Municipality's 10-year unit projection	<b>302</b>

<b>Permitted Unit Targets with Breakdown</b>	<b>Total Target</b>	<b>Year 1 Forecast</b>	<b>Year 1 Progress</b>
Housing Supply Growth Target	<b>220</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>127</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-Unit housing units in close proximity to rapid transit</li> </ul>	0	<i>Note: there are no annual forecasts for different unit types.</i>	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing middle housing units</li> </ul>	44		35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other multi-unit housing units</li> </ul>	0		0
Affordable Housing Units	22		0

#### **HAF Funding Schedule and Explanatory Notes:**

The total funding envelope for HAF recipients is based on the number of HAF-incented units, as described in Section 10 of the Pre-Application Reference Material. Advances are disbursed annually, subject to compliance with the terms and conditions of the HAF agreement.

Total funding eligibility	\$1,986,000
Annual advance amount	\$496,500

CMHC has reviewed the District of Chester's first annual report. Several initiatives are behind schedule, while the Year 1 forecast for permits was exceeded. Through discussions with the municipality, we are satisfied that mitigating actions are being taken to fully implement initiatives. As such, we are satisfied that the District of Chester will meet its commitments under the HAF agreement, and the second advance will be made in full.

## Summary of Initiatives and Milestones

### Initiative 1: By-Laws and Municipal Specifications Review

Enable increased density through a comprehensive By-laws review.

- Changes and refinements of existing planning regulations including permitting four (4) units and allow up to four (4) stories on residential lots throughout the municipality where wastewater infrastructure is sufficient, and outside of architectural control areas.
- Remove identified barriers to development in the Municipality, such as requirements related to height, housing type, setbacks, building floor area and parking.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
<b>By-Laws and Municipal Specifications Review</b>	<b>2025-06-30</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
Milestones	Due Date	Status
Procurement of Consultant Services	2024-08-30	Delayed*
Project Kick-Off	2024-09-06	Delayed*
Consultation on Current Regulatory Framework	2024-10-04	Delayed*
Consultant Recommendations	2024-12-06	Delayed*
Report to Municipal Council	2025-01-31	Delayed*
Other Changes To Existing Planning Regulations	2025-06-30	Delayed*
Project completion	2025-06-30	Delayed*
Remove Identified Barriers To Housing Development	2025-06-30	Delayed*

\*The initiative was delayed because there were no responses to the initial procurement process for consultation work. The municipality adjusted the scope of work and has successfully engaged a consultant.

### Initiative 2: Higher Density Development Strategy

To enable increased density in a key growth area on the community by promoting higher-density and “missing middle” housing. Building on recent policy work, the Village Periphery Area Strategy will engage the development community and inform municipal asset management and infrastructure planning to support growth.

- A consultant will develop a strategy that promotes higher density on undeveloped land outside the village core.
- Areas will be prioritized based on active transportation assessments, climate risk and municipal infrastructure capacity and potential.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Higher Density Development Strategy</b>	<b>2025-02-28</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Promotion of Strategy	2024-02-09	Delayed*
Procurement of Consultant Services	2024-05-06	Completed
Project Kick-Off	2024-05-13	Completed
Development of Draft Strategy	2025-02-07	Completed
Final Draft of Strategy	2025-02-28	Completed

\*The timeline was delayed because the promotion of the strategy was meant to follow its completion. Promotions are currently being prepared.

**Initiative 3: Plan for Municipality-Owned Land**

Create a plan and process for the disposal of municipally-owned land for the development of affordable housing.

- Develop a land inventory and servicing assessment with priorities.
- Explore policies and incentives to enable affordable housing stock
- Create a process for the disposal of city-owned land

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Plan for Municipality-Owned Land</b>	<b>2024-06-28</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Procurement of Consultant Services	2024-03-18	Completed
Project Kick-Off	2024-03-29	Completed
Review of Municipality-Owned Land Registry	2024-04-12	Completed
Consultant Recommendations	2024-05-10	Completed
Report to Municipal Council	2024-06-14	Delayed*
Project completion	2024-06-28	Delayed*

\*The initiative was delayed due to capacity challenges, requiring consulting services to complete the work. To maximize efficiency, the work is being completed in conjunction with Initiatives 2 and 5.

**Initiative 4: Online Permitting System**

Implementing a new e-permitting system to streamline development, increase efficiencies and improve customer experience.

- Hire a consultant to review current technology and business practices.
- Undertake a process analysis and engage with developers to gather input on user requirements and expectations.
- Expand or replace existing software and conduct staff training.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Online Permitting System</b>	<b>2025-07-31</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Project Kick-Off	2023-04-05	Completed
Procurement of Consultant Services	2024-03-31	Completed
Review of the MOC's current technology and business practices	2024-06-07	Delayed*
Engagement with developers	2024-07-19	Delayed*
Analysis and recommendation	2024-08-31	Delayed*
Software Solution	2024-11-08	Delayed*
Software Implementation	2025-04-25	Delayed*
System Launch	2025-06-20	Delayed*
Community Training Session	2025-07-31	Delayed*
Project completion	2025-07-31	Delayed*

\*The initiative was delayed due to challenges finding a qualified proponent. A consultant is now successfully engaged and conducting the work.

**Initiative 5: Marketing and Sales for Residential Developments**

Promote development opportunities of various types of housing in the Municipality.

- Consult with developers and realtors working in similar communities to gain insight into investment decisions and developer needs.
- Determine marketing tools to attract residential development.
- Determine what municipal improvements could be implemented to encourage more residential development.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Marketing and Sales for Residential Developments</b>	<b>2025-01-24</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Procurement of Consultant Services	2024-07-19	Delayed*
Project Kick-Off	2024-07-26	Delayed*
Engagement with Developers and Realtors	2024-08-09	Delayed*
Jurisdictional Scan	2024-08-23	Delayed*
Consultant Report and Recommendations	2024-09-20	Delayed*
Development of Marketing Material	2024-10-25	Delayed*
Promotional Video Production	2024-11-22	Delayed*
Print & Social Media Campaign	2024-12-20	Delayed*
Direct Sales	2025-01-24	Delayed*

\*The initiative was delayed due to capacity challenges, requiring consulting services to complete the work. To maximize efficiency, the work is being completed in conjunction with Initiatives 2 and 5.

## Initiative 6: Housing Infrastructure Plan

Updating infrastructure planning to align with official community plans, growth targets, and the housing needs assessment.

- Create a comprehensive map of existing serviceable boundaries, potential new wastewater treatment sites, and currently undeveloped land that could readily be included in existing or expanded wastewater service areas.
- Create maps and models for watersheds and flood risk areas to further aid the planning and prioritization of climate resilient infrastructure and service delivery for housing.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
<b>Housing Infrastructure Plan</b>	<b>2024-04-30</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Milestones	Due Date	Status
Development of Work Plan	2024-02-16	Completed
Draft Housing Infrastructure Plan	2024-03-15	Completed
Review Draft Housing Infrastructure Plan	2024-04-12	Completed
Adoption of Housing Infrastructure Plan	2024-04-30	Completed

## Initiative 7: Building Inspection Capacity

Enhance building inspection and building permit review capacity through human resource management activities.

- Recruitment and training of a Junior Building Official to their graduation as Building Official Level 1, who starts approving permits.
- Provide a medium-term option to develop a Level 2 building official from within the Municipality.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
<b>Building Inspection Capacity</b>	<b>2026-08-28</b>	<b>On Track</b>
Milestones	Due Date	Status
Recruitment of Junior Building Official	2023-10-06	Completed
Junior Building Official Training	2025-10-10	On Track
Graduation to Building Official Level 1	2026-08-28	Not Started

## Initiative 8: Work with Partners to Pre-Approve Building Plans

Work with federal and provincial partners to determine the feasibility of developing pre-approved building plans for missing middle housing and accessory dwelling units.

- Review the work underway at the federal and/or provincial level with the intention to supporting pre-approve plans.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Work with partners to pre-approve building plans</b>	<b>2024-09-30</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Consultation with architects, urban planners and developers	2024-05-31	Delayed*
Report to council and communication	2024-09-30	Delayed*

\*The District of Chester has proposed timeline extensions to better align with the release of the CMHC Housing Design Catalogue.

**Initiative 9: Incentives To Encourage the Creation of Affordable Housing**

Work with developers and not-for-profits to explore incentives that would encourage the creation of affordable and attainable housing throughout the municipality.

- Support development of affordable housing by waiving development charges for non-profit and allow tax payments to be made in instalments.
- Explore expedited permit approvals and development agreement processes for affordable housing developments.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Incentives To Encourage The Creation Of Affordable Housing</b>	<b>2024-08-01</b>	<b>Delayed*</b>
<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Design a financial incentive program	2024-05-01	Delayed*
Council approval	2024-08-01	Delayed*

\* The District of Chester has proposed timeline extensions to align with the scope of work and outcomes from Initiatives 2 and 3.