

## HAF Agreement and Action Plan Summary Halifax Regional Municipality, NS

### Summary of Agreement Targets and Funding

*Status as of January 2, 2025*

<b>Overall Permitted Unit Target (3 years)</b>	<b>15,467</b>
Units expected without HAF (baseline)	12,867
Units incented by HAF (HAF-incented)	2,600
Municipality's 10-year unit projection	8,866

<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>15,467</b>	<b>4,809</b>	<b>6,059</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-Unit housing units in close proximity to rapid transit</li> </ul>	8,792	<i>Note: there are no annual forecasts for different unit types.</i>	3,841
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing middle housing units</li> </ul>	1,396		1,018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other multi-unit housing units</li> </ul>	2,477		441
Affordable Housing Units	333		65

#### **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	\$79,309,000
Annual advance amount	\$19,827,250

Some of HRM's initiatives and milestones dates were extended due to the municipal election in 2024.

CMHC has reviewed Halifax Regional Municipality's first annual report and is satisfied that the city is meeting its commitments under the HAF agreement. The second advance will be made in full.

## Summary of Initiatives and Milestones

### Initiative 1: Streamlined Operational Processes and Customer Support Services for Permitting

Streamlining and speeding up the development approvals process through upgrades to the city’s e-permitting system and other operational changes.

- A new program team will be assembled to identify and deliver efficiency improvements and the initiatives in this action plan.
- Potential improvements include automatic issuance of low-complexity permits and enhancements to HRM’s online permitting portal.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
	2025-12-09	On Track
Milestone	Due Date	Status
Creation and resourcing of program group.	2024-05-01	Complete
Prioritization of permit workflow & approval process improvements	2024-09-28	Complete
Implementation of 2 key (low complexity) improvements to permitting review workflow	2025-12-09	On track

### Initiative 2: Reduce Upfront Cost for Permit Application

Making it easier for developers to finance the early stages of large residential projects by enabling them to defer a portion of their permitting fees.

- With this change, only 25% of building permit fees will be paid when an application is submitted and the balance due at the beginning of construction.
- E-permitting software will be upgraded on an accelerated timeline to facilitate partial payments (see also Initiative 1).

Initiative	Due Date	Status
	2024-01-31	Completed
Milestone	Due Date	Status
Council approval of fee structure by-law	2023-08-23	Completed
Update permit software and train staff	2023-10-31	Completed
Awareness Campaign	2024-01-31	Completed

**Initiative 3: Non-Residential to Residential Conversion**

Encouraging the conversion of underused non-residential buildings (such as commercial or office spaces) to increase the supply of housing.

- HRM will amend its planning documents and permitting processes to remove regulatory barriers to conversions to residential.
- HRM will identify underused properties well-suited for conversion and select a few projects for a pilot program that will help assess the viability of a long-term financial incentive program for conversion projects.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2025-12-01	On Track
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Remove land use by-law barriers	2024-05-01	Completed
Resourcing of program group	2024-05-01	Completed
Refine Opportunities and Barriers	2024-07-30	Completed
Awareness campaign	2025-07-30	On Track
Pilot on opportunity parcels	2025-07-30	On Track
Establish/implement funding program	2025-12-01	On Track

**Initiative 4: Encourage Development Along Bus Rapid Transit Corridors**

Encouraging higher density along key transit corridors in the urban core.

- HRM will work with property owners to identify and resolve potential barriers and consider non-financial incentives, such as expedited permit approvals, that will encourage the timely development of properties along bus rapid transit corridors.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2025-09-30	Completed
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Creation and resourcing of program group	2024-05-01	Completed
Engage with property owners along corridor	2024-06-29	Completed
Develop and implement incentive program	2025-09-30	Completed

**Initiative 5: Heritage Development Agreements**

Reducing the approval time for new developments integrated with, or built on, heritage building sites.

- HRM’s existing Heritage Development Agreement Policy (adopted in 2022) provides incentives for the preservation of heritage building sites and allows significant new development on these sites.

- Additional staff and resources will be hired to speed up the approval process of projects selected for the initiative to six months, from one to two years currently.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
	2024-06-29	Completed
Milestone	Due Date	Status
Implementation of Policy CH-7A	2022-11-23	Completed
Creation and Resourcing of program group	2024-05-01	Completed
Refine planning approval process	2024-06-29	Completed

### Initiative 6: Encourage Small Scale Residential

Lowering the upfront costs required to develop small-scale housing (accessory dwelling units (ADUs), tiny homes, backyard suites, etc.) to promote affordable gentle density in existing neighbourhoods.

- HRM will work with stakeholders and other orders of government to develop and implement the funding program, including reductions to permit and other fees, and a grant/loan program for energy-efficient or affordable small-scale homes.

Initiative	Due Date	Status
	2025-03-31	On Track
Milestone	Due Date	Status
Amend fees by-law	2024-05-01	Completed
Creation and resourcing of program group	2024-05-01	Completed
Establish framework for the funding program	2025-01-31	On Track
Awareness Campaign	2025-03-31	On Track
Establish entity for funding program	2025-03-31	Completed

### Initiative 7: Pre-Approved Building Plans

Speeding up the approval process for small-scale homes using pre-approved building plans.

- Approval processes for small-scale and modular housing will be streamlined by developing and selecting pre-approved standardized plans.
- A Trusted Partner Program will be established with local businesses to generate pre-approved plans.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2025-03-31	Completed
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Creation and resourcing of program group.	2024-05-01	Completed
Establish partnership with local developers	2024-08-31	Completed
Establish review process	2024-09-28	Completed
Awareness campaign	2024-10-31	Completed
Update land use by-law provision	2024-12-31	Completed

**Initiative 8: Expand Affordable Housing Grant Program**

Refining and expanding HRM’s Affordable Housing Grant Program, including for private-led affordable housing development.

- HRM will research affordable housing best practices from other jurisdictions and engage provincial partners and relevant stakeholders, including non-profits and private developers.
- The Affordable Housing Grant Program will be refined, expanded to allow for more investment, and eligibility will expand to include new areas of the municipality and private developers whose projects create affordable housing.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2025-03-01	On Track
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Creation and resourcing of program group.	2024-05-01	Completed
Establish Best Practices	2024-07-30	Completed
Engage with Stakeholders	2024-09-28	Completed
Establish and Implement Framework of the Program	2024-11-30	Completed
Awareness Campaign	2025-03-01	On Track

**Initiative 9: Resource Surplus Land for Affordable Housing Program**

Adding new resources to unlock surplus municipal land to develop affordable housing.

- This initiative will allow HRM to fully implement its surplus land program for affordable housing and unlock new affordable housing developments through lower land costs.
- HRM will seek out local affordable housing projects and partnerships and provide support to assess surplus lands for redevelopment.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2025-06-01	On Track
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Creation and resourcing of program group.	2024-05-01	Completed
Establish Best Practices	2024-07-30	Completed
Awareness Campaign	2024-12-01	On Track
Engage with Stakeholders	2024-12-01	On Track
Establish and Implement Framework of the Program	2025-06-01	On Track

**Initiative 10: Regulatory Changes to Support Housing**

Updated planning rules will allow more housing to be built without the need for rezoning or lengthy discretionary planning approvals.

- Beginning in early 2024, a series of planning changes for the Regional Centre and suburban areas will be brought forward to increase allowable heights and densities, increase the number of units permitted on one lot to four, remove or reduce minimum parking requirements, and allow more density near post-secondary institutions.
- HRM will create an Affordable Housing Strategy with dedicated staffing to support the development of affordable housing.

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
	2026-10-11	On Track
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Changes to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	2024-03-31	Completed
Changes in the Centre Plan Area	2024-07-01	Completed
Changes in the Suburban Area	2025-02-02	Completed
Creation of Affordable Housing Strategy	2026-10-11	On Track