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Item No. 15.1.4
Halifax Regional Council
June 24, 2025

TO: Mayor Fillmore and Members of Halifax Regional Council
FROM: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: April 28, 2025
SUBJECT: **Changes to the Affordable Housing Grants Administrative Order**

ORIGIN

On [June 6, 2023](#), Item 15.1.4, Regional Council passed the following motion:

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to submit a Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan that includes the initiatives as generally outlined in Attachment A of the staff report dated June 3, 2023, along with all additional required documentation to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as the Municipality's application under the Housing Accelerator Fund program; and
2. Authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to enter into any contribution agreements or amending agreements that may be required should the Municipality be approved for funding under the program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff are recommending key changes to the Affordable Housing Grant Program (AHGP) in preparation for the 2025/26 intake. These program changes foster a more rapid delivery of affordable housing investment, reflect priorities of the municipality, partners and housing providers, and respond to Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) targets. Changes provide strategic updates and flexibility to improve program effectiveness. A new project stream is added to pilot support for Non-Residential to Residential Conversions for Affordable Housing led by non-profits. This pilot program achieves a HAF initiative. The extent of changes requires a repeal and replacement of the existing Affordable Housing Grants Administrative Order.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council repeal *Administrative Order Number 2020-008-ADM* and adopt *Administrative Order Number 2025-003-ADM*, as set out in Attachment B of this report.

BACKGROUND

HRM has administered the Affordable Housing Grant Program (AHGP) for 4 years, since 2021. Over this time, the program has allocated \$14.05M in funding to non-profit housing providers. Funds have supported construction, acquisition, or repair for 610 units of housing and 123 rooms in affordable shared housing.

Halifax Regional Council created the AHGP in the fall of 2020 to disburse funds collected through the incentive or bonus zoning program. Incentive or bonus zoning is a tool that allows HRM to collect a public benefit in the form of money-in-lieu from developments in the Regional Centre that exceed 2,000 square metres in floor area. For most eligible developments, at least 60 percent of the public benefit must be in the form of money-in-lieu of affordable housing. These funds are added to the Bonus Zoning Reserve.

On March 21, 2023, Halifax Regional Council approved amendments to the Regional Plan and applicable land use by-laws to create an [Interim Incentive or Bonus Zoning Program](#) that applies to certain new residential developments that are outside the Regional Centre but within the Urban Service Boundary (the Suburban Area). Similar to the program in the Regional Centre, the Interim Incentive or Bonus Zoning Program requires eligible projects to pay money-in-lieu of affordable housing, which can be used to support affordable housing outside the Regional Centre. To support projects throughout the municipality, the AHGP has continued to be funded with supplemental funding approved from the operating budget and more recently, the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF).

Affordable Housing Grants Administrative Order

The Affordable Housing Grants Administrative Order is Regional Council's direction to staff on administering the AHGP. The current Affordable Housing Grants AO is [Administrative Order Number 2020-008-ADM Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing](#). While this Report recommends repealing the current Affordable Housing Grants AO and replacing it with *Administrative Order Number 2025-003-ADM Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing* (proposed Affordable Housing Grants AO), the overall purpose and objective of the program is broadly unchanged.

Through the AHGP, funds may be disbursed to non-profit housing providers for a variety of project types. Project types include New Construction, Repair, Acquisition, and Pre-development. (This Report recommends addition of a Conversions stream). Criteria for staff to consider when prioritizing projects include access to additional funding, providing deeply affordable housing, enhancing accessibility, improving energy efficiency, and the experience and capacity of applicants. In evaluating applications, staff obtain feedback from members of the Housing and Homelessness Partnership and representatives of other funding bodies. Other funding includes grant and loan programs administered by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Nova Scotia Growth and Development (previously Municipal Affairs and Housing), and the Community Housing Transformation Centre. Funding provided by HRM leverages and complements these incentives by other orders of government.

On November 14, 2023, Halifax Regional Council directed staff to undertake a review of the AHGP, ahead of the 2024/25 application window. Amendments to the Affordable Housing Grants AO were approved by Halifax Regional Council on [August 20, 2024](#). The current report's recommendations build on these amendments, based on additional engagement conducted in fall 2024. Engagement participants included non-profit housing providers, consultants who work with non-profit housing providers, and community groups interested in providing affordable housing. Staff also met with other funding partners for feedback and to identify ways to strengthen how the program aligns with and leverages other funders. Through engagement, staff identified a number of challenges with the AHGP, elements of the AHGP that work well, and opportunities for improving and expanding the AHGP. A summary of the engagement can be found in the What We Heard Report (Attachment A). The engagement also sought feedback on the Surplus Land

for Affordable Housing program (being developed through HAF) and regulatory barriers to affordable housing development.

Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

HAF is a housing program administered by the CMHC that provides funding directly to municipalities to incentivize and support initiatives that accelerate the supply of housing. On October 12, 2023, HRM signed a HAF Contribution Agreement with the CMHC, which included an Action Plan with 11 initiatives and targets for incentivizing net new building permits for residential units, including affordable units.

On [May 21, 2024](#), Regional Council approved the allocation of \$6,329,005.31 of HAF funding for the 2023/24 AHGP, and on [March 25, 2025](#), Regional Council approved the allocation of \$623,400 of HAF funding for the 2024/25 AHGP, specifically to support applications outside the Regional Centre.

Initiative 3 of HRM's HAF Action Plan is to create a pilot program for non-residential to residential conversions to assess the viability of a financial incentive program. The amendments recommended in this report provide the framework under this initiative for a program that would be open to non-profits.

Initiative 8 is to expand the Affordable Housing Grant program in alignment with analysis and engagement.

Housing Strategy and ongoing AHGP monitoring

Staff will continue to monitor the performance of the AHGP to ensure consistency with other major funding programs, that current best practices are being considered, and that the administration of the AHGP is efficient and transparent. Under the HAF Contribution Agreement, HRM must develop an Affordable Housing Strategy no later than October 2026. The Housing Strategy offers the opportunity to further engage communities, partners and housing providers on the use of various tools, including the AHGP, to achieve affordable housing objectives.

DISCUSSION

Administrative Order Changes

Through the engagement process, there was broad support for the objectives originally outlined for the AHGP in 2020, namely for it to be a flexible program, applying to a range of project types, and that it complements or leverages investment by other orders of government. Several key changes and improvements were discussed in order to improve the effectiveness of the program. The extent of changes requires a repeal of the current Affordable Housing Grants AO and a replacement of the AO, as contained in Attachment B.

Key changes include:

- **Piloting Conversions:** Include Conversions as a new project type, with evaluation to support projects that are financially viable, provide a strong affordability standard, and convert an oversupplied land use to affordable housing.
- **Intake timing discretion:** Whereas the current AO sets dates for intakes, the proposed AO allows staff discretion to hold intakes, which allows the program to be flexible and respond to available funding. In lieu of set intake dates, the proposed AO requires that intakes must be advertised at least 30 days in advance and run for a minimum of 30 days.
- **Revised eligible costs:**
 - **Acquisitions:** Whereas the current AO includes the purchase price of acquisitions as an eligible cost, the proposed AO reduces eligible costs for Acquisitions to the amount of the Deed Transfer Tax. This change reflects that the AHGP administrative timelines rarely align with transactions, while other government financial incentives tailored to acquisitions are

more responsive. Grant applications for retroactive reimbursement of Deed Transfer Tax amounts for up to 24 months after purchase are permitted, with the evaluation criteria including consideration of the impact that the grant would have on affordability and financial viability for a recently acquired property. Applicants may concurrently apply for an Acquisition grant and a Repairs grant to support safety, accessibility and sustainability improvements.

- **Repairs category:** Accommodation and moving costs have been added as an eligible expense for Repairs projects, since tenant displacement is associated with housing insecurity.
- **Refined prioritization criteria:** Criteria are clarified and revised to include a reflection of Housing First principles, prioritization of repairs that target safety and habitability, and to seek a clearer demonstration of the impact a proposed award would have on affordability and project viability.
- **Clarity:** Changes to improve that clarity of the AO's organization, terminology used, criteria, content required for an application, and eligible properties and expenses.
- **Self-serve applications:** The Permitting, Planning, Licensing, & Compliance System (which is also used to administer permit applications) will be used for AHGP applications to improve customer service and file management. Assistance with using the new portal will be provided.

Attachment C includes further details on the content and rationale for changes from the current to the proposed Affordable Housing Grants AO. For the convenience of Regional Council, a mark-up version of the existing AO is provided as Attachment D to indicate where changes have been proposed as a line by line comparison. Based on the extent of changes, the recommended revisions are drafted as a repeal and replacement of the AO, contained as Attachment B.

Timing

For the 2025/26 grant, staff are proposing a late summer intake. Staff intend to confirm the level of funding for this intake through a forthcoming report to the Audit and Finance Committee and Regional Council. The intent for the slightly earlier intake (late summer as opposed to September 1 to December 1 as was previously the case) has been communicated to housing providers. With this timeline, and a positive recommendation for funding by Regional Council, staff anticipate that evaluation of the applications may be conducted and confirmation provided to applicants before the end of 2025.

Housing providers have expressed that one annual intake is challenging in contrast to complementary funding streams that permit a rolling intake and applications to be timed upon project readiness. Providers expressed that the AHGP intake timing meant that they were often forced to apply out of sync with project readiness.

Two-to-three intakes per year was identified as preferable by many housing providers, and the new discretion for intake timing enables more than one intake per year. However, staff also identified that multiple intakes may be challenging to administer where the level of funding to the program remains highly variable. Multiple intakes also could add additional demands on staff time, which need to be carefully managed to not overstretch staff capacity. The potential enhanced flexibility allows the program to be responsive to available funding and to staff/review team capacity.

Funding allocation

In previous grant years, staff have recommended an allocation of funding to a grant year after completing an evaluation. This year, staff propose that Council proactively allocate funds to the program. This responds to feedback and staff experience that it is helpful for applicants to know the total funding envelope ahead of time. Through a separate, forthcoming Report to Audit and Finance Standing Committee, staff will recommend the allocation of funds to the program ahead of the next intake.

Engagement themes informing future work

Feedback received through this engagement continued to inform further analysis on the AHGP, its impact, and complementary tools.

Dedicated funding to Halifax Water Regional Development Charges (RDCs)

While most municipal construction-related permit fees can be waived for non-profit-led affordable housing development, legislation prevents Halifax Water from waiving RDCs. RDCs remain an eligible cost under the AHGP and other funding programs as part of a project's overall construction cost.

Engagement participants proposed that a dedicated fund or stream for the AHGP to reimburse for the cost RDCs with the same qualification criteria as fee waivers would broadly improve project financial viability for non-profit developments. The proposal would be for a less competitive program compared to the existing AHGP so that the reimbursement would be more reliable. Based on recent fee waiver history, if a program to waive RDCs for every permit that received fee waivers was established, this would represent approximately \$370,000 annually. This figure may vary significantly from year to year and would increase if the rate of non-profit development or charge for RDC were to increase. The current RDC for a multi-unit building with water and wastewater service is \$5,405.81 per unit.

While staff recognize that a reliable fund to reimburse RDCs could be broadly helpful, staff are not recommending such a program as part of the AHGP updates at this time. RDCs are already an eligible cost under the AHGP as part of construction costs for a New Construction or Conversion project. A separate, funding stream for RDCs would be difficult to sustain given the variable nature of the funding the AHGP receives. Such a commitment may limit the program's ability to focus on strategic opportunities, such as investing in projects that provide deeper standards of affordability or to focus on projects based on their support by other levels of government. Through the Housing Strategy, staff will reassess such opportunities to support affordable housing projects.

Capacity building

Prioritization criteria emphasize supporting projects led by housing providers that are highly experienced and with other funding in place. Some affordable housing providers and community groups indicated concern that this prioritization can create challenges for newer non-profits, especially those that are volunteer-led. In rural communities and for projects containing less than five units, opportunities for complementary funding are particularly limited.

Funding programs from other levels of government, such as the [Community Housing Transformation Centre's Community Housing Growth Fund](#), have dedicated funding for capacity building initiatives. A portion of this fund is dedicated to subsidizing the growth and development of Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving organizations. Through the Housing Strategy, staff intend to continue to collaborate with other funders, Council and community groups, to maximize alignment of the programs, including for pre-development work.

HAF Targets and Funding

On October 12, 2023, HRM entered into a Contribution Agreement with CMHC, which included an Action Plan with 11 initiatives and targets. Under the terms of the agreement, the Municipality will receive \$79.3 million to support programs and investments in housing. HAF funds are released to the Municipality in four equal payments of \$19.8 million, with the first payment provided shortly after the Contribution Agreement was signed in October 2023, and the second payment provided shortly after the first anniversary. The final installments in fall 2025 and fall 2026 are contingent on achieving milestones and targets.

The HAF Contribution Agreement includes a three-year Housing Supply Growth Target of 15,467 units achieving building permits between October 2023 and October 2026. Of this total target, 2.15 percent (333 units) are required to be affordable units. A permit volume report upon the first anniversary of the program is contained in the [progress update, dated January 3, 2025](#). Between October 2023 and October 2024, staff identified 66 units permitted as affordable units, which have affordable rents tracked through government programs. Staff are aware of an additional 254 affordable units so far supported under the AHGP, and which intend to move forward and complete permits by October 2026. Investment programs by other orders of government, including supports for public housing and private-sector led development inclusive of affordable units, are anticipated to further contribute to meeting this target. The 2025/26 AHGP may also contribute to meeting this target for permitted affordable units.

The HAF Contribution Agreement stipulates that HAF funds conveyed to the Municipality must be spent by October 12, 2027. For the 2025/26 awards, where HAF funds are applied to AHGP awards, the spending deadline will be reflected in how awards are administered and may in some cases be a limit to the kinds of projects that can be supported.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is limited financial risk associated with the recommendations in this report. Administration of the AHGP as proposed can be carried out within existing resources and budget. The estimated potential revenues resulting from the incentive or bonus zoning program are difficult to project. Accordingly, the proposed changes to the program permit a greater degree of flexibility and responsiveness in cases where priorities, opportunities, and funding vary.

Through a separate report to Audit and Finance Standing Committee, staff will recommend the allocation of funds to the program ahead of the intake. The report will include analysis on the funding sustainability and other financial implications of the 2025/26 grant program intake.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The proposed Affordable Housing Grants AO fulfills HRM's commitments under the HAF Agreement with CMHC, along with assisting in achieving affordable housing unit targets under HAF.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The level of public participation for this work was Consult. Participants were interviewed both individually and in groups regarding the following:

- How the AHGP eligibility criteria impact their organization;
- How the AHGP could best support different levels of affordability;
- Whether the AHGP's prioritization criteria and evaluation methods create challenges for their organization; and
- How communication and coordination of the AHGP could be improved.

Information from these interviews informed changes represented in the proposed Affordable Housing Grants AO and process improvements discussed in this report.

On an ongoing basis, staff will continue to request and consider feedback from housing providers, community groups, and partners, as well as the Housing and Homelessness Partnership members as part of ongoing and iterative reviews of the AHGP.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Affordable Housing AO prioritizes projects that demonstrate a stronger performance in matters of environmental sustainability, accessibility, and social equity.

ALTERNATIVES

Halifax Regional Council may:

1. Modify the proposed *Administrative Order Number 2025-003-ADM Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing*. If this alternative is chosen, specific direction regarding the requested modifications is required. Any amendments requiring significant analysis or drafting may require a supplementary staff report, which may delay the next AHGP application intake.
2. Maintain the current Administrative Order Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing. If this alternative is chosen, staff would continue to administer the AHGP without alteration.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter):

- 59 *(3) In addition to matters specified in this Act or another Act of the Legislature, the Council may adopt policies on any matter that the Council considers conducive to the effective management of the Municipality.*
- 71 *(2) Notwithstanding subsection (2), the Municipality may provide direct financial assistance to a business for the purpose of increasing the availability of affordable housing in the Municipality.*
- 120 *(1) The Municipality shall maintain a capital reserve fund.*
(6) The Municipality may maintain other reserve funds for such purposes as the Council may determine.
- 245A *(4) Where the land-use by-law provides for incentive or bonus zoning agreements within the Centre Plan Area, the land-use by-law must require the inclusion of affordable housing in a development, in addition to any other requirements adopted by the Council, as the contribution for any incentive or bonus zoning applicable to the development.*

(5) Notwithstanding subsection (4), the land-use by-law may provide that the Council may accept money in lieu of a contribution under this Section.

(6) The Municipality shall use any money accepted in lieu of a contribution under this Section for the purpose for which the money was accepted.

Administrative Order 2014-015-ADM Respecting Reserve Funding Strategies

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: What We Heard Report – Affordable Housing Grant Program and Surplus Lands Program
- Attachment B: Proposed *Administrative Order Number 2025-003-ADM Respecting Grants for Affordable Housing*
- Attachment C: Comparison of current Affordable Housing Grants AO and proposed Affordable Housing Grants AO
- Attachment D: Changes to the current Affordable Housing Grants AO

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WHAT WE HEARD

**Engagement on the Affordable Housing Programs:
Affordable Housing Grant Program,
Surplus Lands for Affordable Housing Program and Regulatory
Barriers for Affordable Housing**

Fall 2024

Prepared by:

Planning and Development – Housing Accelerator Program
February 2025

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OVERVIEW

As part of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)'s commitments under the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) program, staff engaged with housing providers in Fall 2024 to inform initiatives to expand the impact of the Affordable Housing Grant Program (AHGP) and to launch the Surplus Land for Affordable Housing initiative. Staff also discussed with housing providers what regulatory barriers they encountered in developing affordable housing.

WHAT WE DID

Stage 1: Individual Interviews

The first step of the engagement process was connecting with housing providers, consultants and affordable housing organizations through individual meetings. Initially, interviews were held with non-profit housing providers, consultants who work with housing providers, as well as community groups who are interested in getting involved in affordable housing. Lastly, interviews were held with partner organizations (i.e. other funders). In some cases, follow up discussions on Regulatory Barriers were held with Community Planning staff. The following questions guided the conversations in each of the interviews:

Affordable Housing Grant Program (AHGP)

1. Do the eligibility criteria of the Affordable Housing Grant Program pose a barrier or challenge for your organization? If so, please describe the barriers and challenges.
2. How can the Affordable Housing Grant program best support different levels of affordability, ranging from deeply affordable to below average market rents?
3. Has the prioritization or evaluation of projects caused any challenges for your organization?
4. Are there ways that communication and coordination could be improved?

Surplus Lands for Affordable Housing

1. Does your organization have experience developing affordable housing on government-owned land? Would your organization be interested in doing so in the future?
2. What do you see as the key barriers and opportunities for using municipal land for affordable housing development?
3. What kinds of development sites would your organization be most interested in accessing? (Think about the development's level of complexity; site size/number of units

in a project; permitted housing forms; mix of uses; locations, inc. serviced versus un-serviced)

4. What are the important considerations for a fair and effective process of disposing of surplus lands?

Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing

- Have you experienced any challenges related to zoning with respect to your properties? If so, please describe the challenge? Examples may include zoning that did not permit the intended use or density, or other rules that increased costs or made project goals unviable.
1. Have you recently applied for a building permit? If so, how did you find the permit application process, booking of inspections, or any other tasks involved in the building permit process? Do you have any feedback on how the process can be improved?

Stage 2: Group Workshop: Program Goals and Options

Following individual interviews, staff engaged with affordable housing providers through an in-person group workshop to discuss the Affordable Housing Grant Program and Surplus Lands for Affordable Housing. The goal of the workshop was to discuss emerging options for the programs and directions from initial engagement interviews. If an organization was unable to attend due to scheduling constraints and still wished to be involved, a follow-up meeting was completed with the organization to ask the same questions.

WHO WAS INVOLVED

Participants

Housing Providers, Consultants, and Community Groups

- Affirmative Ventures
- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS)
- Archipelago, Office for Architecture (AOA)
- Balanced Living
- Bryony House
- Dartmouth Housing (Rooted Community Development Partners)
- Everbloom Homes
- Front Porch Communities/Dora Construction
- Habitat for Humanity Nova Scotia
- Housing Innovation Cooperative
- New Roots Community Land Trust
- Old School Community Gathering Place
- Phoenix Youth Programs
- YWCA Halifax

Partner Organizations

- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS)
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
- Community Housing Transformation Centre (CHTC)
- Government of Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH)

WHAT WE HEARD

Affordable Housing Grant Program

Eligibility Criteria

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Eligible organizations</i>	Some participants expressed an interest in the eligibility of currently ineligible applicants, including Community Interest Companies (CICs), and non-profit housing providers that specialize in affordable home ownership.
<i>Eligibility for rent-to-own models</i>	Consider including eligibility for non-profits that have rent-to-own models. Organizations have highlighted they are beginning to explore rent-to-own models.
<i>Importance of all current streams</i>	Organizations expressed an interest in all the current streams of eligibility, including new development, renovation and rehabilitation, acquisition of land and existing affordable housing, and pre-development studies. Some participants noted that HRM fills a gap in other funding programs when it comes to both purchase of land and existing affordable housing, and pre-development work.
<i>Renaming of streams (pre-development and new construction)</i>	It was suggested that the categories of eligibility be reorganized to be comprised of feasibility, design, and construction. It was noted that this is a more typical way to categorize different types of funding streams.
<i>Local perspective</i>	Some organizations communicated an appreciation for the local perspective and discretion that HRM brings to the decision-making process for the AHGP.
<i>Operational support</i>	There was a desire from some organizations for the AHGP to provide support for operational costs. Specific costs included staffing for supportive housing and costs required by applicants to get to the point in a project of having a completed proforma.
<i>Capacity Building</i>	Prioritizing building the capacity of organizations to build portfolios and equity.
<i>Minimum Experience</i>	Ensure organizations have been established for a minimum of 1-year for risk mitigation.

Regional Development Charges

Theme Details

<i>Halifax Water fees are a challenge for organizations</i>	Participants expressed that Halifax Water fees are a challenge for them, a desire for them to be waived. Some believe that Halifax Water fees should not fall on non-profit housing providers. There is also a desire for the capacity of a site to be disclosed earlier in the process by Halifax Water to avoid the unpredictability of related fees.
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Application Process

Theme Details

<i>Format of the application form</i>	It would be valuable to organizations to be able to collaborate on and save the application form while completing it.
<i>Coordination of document requirements</i>	Participants expressed a desire for coordination of required documents with Federal and Provincial programs, so that the application is not burdensome for the non-profit housing provider.
<i>Integration of pre-development funding</i>	There was a suggestion that pre-development funding could be integrated with and distributed by the Community Housing Transformation Centre (CHTC). The CHTC program is a much shorter process, and organizations would otherwise be applying for both programs. Representatives from CHTC and the Province were supportive of this approach pending further discussion on how this could be implemented.
<i>Application flexibility</i>	Organizations can provide updates on a project to grant team after the application is submitted if there have been any changes that need to be addressed. For example, if an acquisition site has changed this can be updated before a set date after the application is due.

Intake Period

Theme Details

<i>Annual intake period is a challenge</i>	Many participants expressed a dissatisfaction with having only one annual intake for the AHGP. Organizations communicated that the
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	annual intake was a barrier particularly for new construction and purchase of land or existing affordable housing. The solution that was suggested by many participants was a rolling intake, or multiple intakes per year. Most other affordable housing funding programs have a rolling intake, and it was suggested that changing the intake period of the AHGP would better align it with Federal and Provincial programs.
<i>Two to three intake periods a year</i>	Have two to three intake periods a year so organizations do not feel rushed to make the annual deadline and can have a more developed project feasibility. Questions surrounding how available funds will be distributed over the year.
<i>Satisfaction with current intake period</i>	Some noted that the annual intake period was not a significant barrier for them.

Levels of Affordability

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Alignment with other levels of government</i>	Participants suggested that it would be helpful for the definitions of affordability and deep affordability to be aligned with that of the funding programs of Provincial (Average Market Rent) and Federal governments (Median Market Rent).
<i>Importance of support for a range of affordability</i>	Organizations expressed the importance of a variety of levels of affordability being supported by the AHGP.
<i>Affordability based on income</i>	Have affordability be set by income deciles determined by the population data. Income is more equitable and standardized across the whole municipality.

Prioritization

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Prioritize new construction</i>	Have a prioritization for new constructions stream as they will ensure new units are being built.
<i>Prioritize pre-development</i>	Have a prioritization for pre-development stream as there is a gap in funding for this stream. Programs can make or break without

	funding for pre-development. Pre-development is riskier but a necessary step in all projects.
<i>Prioritize as-of-right developments</i>	Prioritize as-of-right projects as there will be no delays or risk with rezoning or acquiring a development agreement.
<i>Prioritize projects from young organizations</i>	Prioritize projects from young organizations who could benefit most from supporting increasing their capacity to promote growth in the community housing sector.

Funding for Rural Projects

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Funding for rural projects</i>	Participants, particularly those operating in the rural areas of HRM, expressed frustration that the program has predominantly supported projects in the urban area by experienced providers with funding by other levels of government. Rural projects in some cases may need a stronger focus on capacity building investment, since there is less organizational experience in providing affordable housing in rural communities. As well, smaller projects with less than 5 units have fewer options for funding from upper levels of government. Rural investment in affordable housing contributes to goals for providing a diversity of housing options in communities, including for accessible housing and housing with supports.

Evaluation

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Timeline is too lengthy</i>	Organizations expressed dissatisfaction with the length of the decision-making process after intake deadline, and the amount of time it takes to receive the award. Some participants suggested that 60-90 days would be an ideal length of time from application deadline to notification of an award decision.

Reliability

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Funding is lacking reliability</i>	Most noted that the program was not a reliable source of funding due to not knowing how much funding will be received, and when

	the funding will be received. Many suggested that there should be an approximate amount of funding that will be received per unit for new construction if a grant is awarded.
<i>Satisfaction with current discretionary funding</i>	Some organizations highlighted the discretionary nature of the funding is a strength and allows for more flexibility in the applications.
<i>Guidelines for funding reliability</i>	Creating guidelines on determining the amount of funding per unit or project depending on the stream can create more reliability in the application and reduce flexibility.

Communication and Coordination

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Coordination with other levels of government</i>	Participants emphasized the importance of coordinating the AHGP with programs run by other levels of government.
<i>Increased frequency of process updates</i>	Organizations expressed a need for more frequent updates from HRM throughout the process. This could include notifying organizations when staff have decided on their funding recommendation and it is being brought to the CAO and Council, as well as a specific date that they can expect to receive a final decision.
<i>Collaboration with the team at HRM</i>	Participants suggested that having a point of contact at HRM who could guide them through their application would be helpful.
<i>Lack of awareness</i>	Some expressed concern with the level of awareness of the AHGP and suggested that increased effort be put into creating more awareness in eligible organizations.

Surplus Lands for Affordable Housing

Eligibility

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Interest and experience in the community housing sector</i>	There is interest in the non-profit housing sector in developing affordable housing on surplus HRM land. Some organizations have

	experience with the provincial surplus land for affordable housing program.
<i>Focus on non-profits</i>	Many expressed the opinion that surplus land should only be disposed of to non-profit housing providers and not to the private market.

Barriers and Opportunities

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Due diligence should be completed by HRM</i>	Most organizations suggested that a certain amount of due diligence should be completed by HRM before disposing of surplus land to a non-profit housing provider. This included ensuring that development is feasible on that site, as well as some pre-development studies including comprehensive reports on title, environmental site assessments, surveys, and wetland delineations. Participants felt strongly that the risk should not be placed on non-profits in terms of determining if a site is feasible for development.
<i>Importance of ownership</i>	Participants noted the importance of ownership of surplus land by non-profits and suggested that leasing land could be a barrier for this process.
<i>Zoning</i>	Sites should be zoned appropriately for residential uses prior to land disposal.

Types of Sites

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Desire for larger sites</i>	In looking at the current sites declared surplus for affordable housing, concern was expressed about the small size of many of the sites. There was a preference from many organizations for larger sites that can accommodate more units of affordable housing (i.e. greater than 8 units on a lot).
<i>Desire for large sites to be subdivided</i>	While some groups prefer large sites, others would prefer the largest sites to be subdivided. Subdividing the site can encourage more diversity in built form, demographics, and reduce risk for non-

	profits. Organizations highlighted the importance of mixed income communities.
<i>Interest in the service boundary</i>	Many organizations expressed the importance of sites which are located within the service boundary. Important services noted include water, sewer, transit, and proximity to other amenities such as schools and grocery stores.
<i>Importance of rural affordable housing</i>	Although many organizations were mostly interested in sites within the service boundary, many also expressed the importance of affordable housing in rural areas, particularly in or near rural growth centres. Parcels with access to services such as active and public transportation routes should be prioritized in rural areas.
<i>Considering areas of need</i>	When selecting the sites, consider where there is a high proportion of people living in core housing need regardless of the services provided in the area.

Prioritization

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Timeline</i>	Participants emphasized that non-profits should be allowed enough time to get funding in order after being awarded any surplus municipal land. There should not be an expectation for organizations to have site plans and designs ready before owning the land. A well-detailed project schedule is a stronger indication of readiness at early stages than is a design.
<i>Density</i>	Proposals should have a reasonable amount of density to maximize the use of the land.
<i>Livability</i>	The livability of the design is important to ensure the human nature and to be mixed in with the existing community.

Logistical Considerations for HRM

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Program Guidebook</i>	Plain language guidebook explaining the program process. The details to include deadlines, the steps needed, considerations and requirements for each site.

<i>First right of refusal</i>	Organizations agreed that having the first right of refusal is a good idea in all surplus land projects to ensure affordable housing is realized and can be used by other non-profits.
<i>Future Growth Nodes</i>	Consider surplus lands for affordable housing in all future growth nodes and future serviced communities to ensure there is affordable housing in all parts of HRM and to create complete communities.
<i>Developing underutilized land</i>	Some participants expressed interest in HRM using underutilized lands, such as Municipal parking lots, for the Surplus Land for Affordable Housing program.
<i>Alternative sale models</i>	Some organizations highlighted exploring the opportunity to have alternative sale models such as staged payment plans or vendor takeback.
<i>Reduce the cost of land</i>	Provide land to non-profits at a reduced or nominal cost to support non-profits providing deep affordability.

Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing

In addition to the AHGP and Surplus Lands for affordable housing, participants were asked to provide some feedback on regulatory barriers specifically to affordable housing. Questions surrounded zoning and permitting, and the comments received are detailed below. Additional feedback was received through HRM Planning & Development, Land Development & Subdivision. The comments received through Land Development & Subdivision were informal and during permit application submission or application revisions.

Land Use By-law, Zoning, and Design Requirements

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Zone requirements</i>	Participants felt that there should be exceptions to some zoning requirements for non-profit housing providers, especially where housing is designed to meet the needs of specific populations. Urban design and landscaping requirements can be costly, compromise affordability, and do not always align with design needs for certain housing models, such as trauma-informed design. Consider having alternative options for non-profits. Examples might include allowing mobility device parking or storage of strollers as an alternative to required bicycle parking. As well certain design, unit

	<p>mix, and ground-oriented premises requirements may conflict with operational needs of some types of housing.</p>
<i>Development agreement & rezoning processes</i>	<p>Participants suggested that lengthy government processes such as development agreements and rezoning applications impeded them being able to meet urgent demand in some cases. Non-profit housing providers expressed desire to see these types of processes completed before land parcels were in their hands. Completing either process early would allow meaningful development to be realized with less barriers to development.</p>
<i>Ground floor requirements</i>	<p>Grade related dwelling units require a minimum of one entrance per unit. Non-profit housing providers explained that multiple entrances create challenges for security and can reduce the feeling of safety for people living within a unit on the ground floor.</p>
<i>Amenity space & bicycle parking</i>	<p>Amenity space and bicycle parking requirements in the Regional Centre land use by-law are calculated by the number of units within a residential building. Non-profit housing providers expressed that small unit sizes, which allows more overall units in a building, causes high requirements for amenity space and bicycle parking. The requirements reduce the space within a building that can be used as livable area. Non-profit housing providers hoped to identify alternative options as housing is the highest priority.</p>
<i>Regional Centre Plan Area</i>	<p>Informally, comments from non-profit housing providers have been recorded through the permit application process by HRM Planning and Development, Land Development and Subdivision. Comments were received during permit application submission, application revisions and conversations on land use by-law interpretation. The feedback provided was for specific Regional Centre land use by-law regulations, shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle parking • Amenity space • Ground floor requirements • One main building per lot • Landscaping buffer and screening requirements • Design requirements <p>The regulations above impact livable area within a building, cost of design, site security, number of units that can be realized on a property and overall project feasibility. It was explained that regulations listed above increased costs and directed funds to</p>

specific building materials, consultants, and design revisions. Complex parts of projects may be outsourced if a non-profit housing provider does not have internal capacity with their existing staff.

Permitting

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>Positive feedback</i>	Overall, participants expressed satisfaction with the level of HRM staff support offered throughout the permitting process at HRM.
<i>Application submission & review</i>	Several non-profit housing providers outlined that they do not expect a permit to be approved on the first application submission attempt because of the complexity of the Regional Centre Land Use By-law. When applications are not approved with the first submission, revisions to the design drawings and application package are required. Housing providers expressed the increased cost to a project and the impact to project feasibility when multiple rounds of revisions are needed.

**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 th day of , 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 [insert date].

Iain McLean, Municipal Clerk

Attachment C

Comparison of current [Affordable Housing Grant AO](#) (Administrative Order 2020-008-ADM) and proposed Affordable Housing Grant AO (draft Administrative Order 2025-003-ADM)

Change	Current Affordable Housing AO	Proposed change and rationale
Adjustment to preamble	“WHEREAS” preamble notes that the AO relates to the provision to use funds under the HAF Contribution Agreement signed on October 12, 2023.	This is deleted for the longer-term simplicity of applying the AO, considering that HAF Contribution Agreement is time limited for using funds from 2023 to 2027. Note: Deletion of this preamble section does not impact Regional Council’s discretion to allocate HAF funding.
Clarify and define terms	Terms were previously described in various locations within the body of the AO	The following definitions are added to the interpretation section to simplify the text of the AO: Acquisition Project, Affordability Standard, Construction Costs, Conversion Project, Financial Viability, Housing First Principles, New Construction Project, Pre-Application Meeting, Pre-Development Project, Repair Project, Residential Building, and Staff.
Replace and clarify considerations of “deep affordability” and “affordability standard”	<p>2(f) “<i>deep affordability</i>” means dwelling units rented at a minimum of 40% below the average market rents for a dwelling unit of the same type and within the same Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Market Survey Zone</p> <p>Section 25 (Prioritization criteria), subsection (c) prioritizes deeply affordable projects.</p> <p>Section 25, subsection (k) prioritize projects with stronger affordability standards (depth of affordability, length of the affordability term, and the number of units that are affordable)</p>	<p>Depth of affordability and the affordability standard are consolidated into one term with the definition contained in Section 2(b). Section 17 prioritizes projects that have a stronger affordability standard. Other prioritization criteria include a commitment to Housing First Principles and projects that address the needs of priority groups of the National Housing Strategy.</p> <p>The affordability standard of a project includes the proportion of units in a development that are affordable housing, and the number of years that an applicant commits to keeping units affordable. The depth of affordability of a particular unit may either be considered in comparison to the average market rents in the area, or with a shelter-cost-geared-to-income model.</p> <p>The definition of deep affordability is removed as the previous definition tied rental affordability to average market rent, rather than what an individual or household can actually afford to pay for</p>

		shelter costs. The new definition allows for a more flexible consideration of a range of projects including a focus on those in greatest need of rent-geared-to-income housing.
Remove definition of “building condition assessment”	<i>2(ba) “building condition assessment”</i>	Removed as the contents of a building condition assessment are well understood and standardized within the real estate industry.
Clarify Purpose	Project Evaluation Sections 24 and 24A noted that monies collected in Regional Centre and outside the Regional Centre may only be used in the respective geographies.	Purpose Section 4 defers to <i>Administrative Order 2020-007-ADM Respecting Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits</i> reflecting that monies collected in Regional Centre and outside the Regional Centre may only be used in the respective geographies.
Clarify Roles and Responsibilities	Sections 4, 29, 30 and 31 contained details on roles and responsibilities.	Roles and delegated authority are consolidated in Sections 5 and 6. A definition of “staff” is included to reduce wordiness in the current AO (i.e. references to “the CAO or their designate”)
Clarify Eligibility and Eligible/Ineligible Costs	<i>Sections 5-8</i>	<p><i>Sections 7-9: Eligibility for Consideration for Affordable Housing Grant</i></p> <p><i>Section 10: Eligible Costs</i></p> <p><i>Section 11: Ineligible Costs</i></p> <p>Reference is added to clarify the considerations for various Project Types and requirement for land ownership. Ownership by the applicant is generally required, but there are exceptions when there is a partnership between a non-profit and private sector developer, or where the application is for Acquisition or Pre-Development.</p> <p>Eligible costs for Acquisitions are reduced to the amount of the Deed Transfer Tax, which may be retroactive up to 24 months after purchase.</p> <p>Eligible costs for Repairs are adjusted to include accommodation and moving costs for tenants.</p>
Changes to General Application Intake Requirements section	<p><i>Sections 10-17</i></p> <p>Intakes to take place Sep 1 to Dec 1 annually.</p>	<i>Sections 12-14</i>

		Enables flexibility of intakes with a minimum of one per year, established an advertising period for intakes, required applications be submitted through the Permitting, Planning, Licensing, & Compliance System, and removed minimum amount of financial assistance.
<u>Consolidation of the sections Required Information For All Applications, Additional Content for Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Applications, Additional Content for New Affordable Housing Construction Applications, and Discretionary Content for All Applications</u>	<i>Sections 18-22</i>	<p><i>Sections 15</i></p> <p>Simplifies list of required information and organized into tables to improve readability.</p> <p>New required information to include a statement of the impact of the proposed grant, and a summary of financial viability.</p>
Changes to prioritization criteria	<i>Section 25</i>	<p><i>Section 16</i></p> <p>Simplifies description of prioritization criteria, with table describing prioritization criteria applicable to each stream.</p> <p>New prioritization criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarity of demonstrating how the proposed funds would be used and the diligence with which scopes are prepared; - projects that serve populations experiencing homelessness with Housing First principles; - stronger performance in matters of social equity (which may, for example, consider amenities or trauma-informed design where it complements the housing goals of the project); - For repairs, a criterion is added for projects that keep existing affordable housing units habitable and by improving building safety and integrity; - For pre-development, criteria consider the needs of projects that are eligible for pre-development funding from other funding sources, and which demonstrate a need for

		<p>additional funding to reach financial viability for funding applications as a New Construction Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For Conversions, criteria include whether projects convert an oversupplied land use to a residential use. <p>Adjustments to prioritization criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The criterion “projects that target a population that is at higher risk of being in Core Housing Need,” is replaced with “projects that target members of the priority groups of the National Housing Strategy.” This change adds clarity to the intent to focus on serving priority populations and better aligns evaluation with that of other funders. - The criterion “projects that exceed accessibility requirements of the National Building Code” is replaced with a more general demonstration for strong performance in matters of accessibility. This adds flexibility to consider the accessibility needs of specific client groups and allows better consideration of repairs and acquisitions. - The criterion “projects that include energy efficient design and components that substantially exceed the requirements of the National Building Code” is replaced with a more general demonstration for strong performance in matters of environmental sustainability. This adds flexibility to consider many aspects of sustainable building design. <p>Pre-development studies requested by staff during a discretionary planning application process was previously a prioritization criteria and is moved to be an eligible expense.</p> <p>Deleted criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projects that have received an order to comply with the Standards for Residential Occupancies By-law (The AHGP is not seen as an effective method to address immediate safety concerns); and - balancing the allocation of money throughout the Urban Service Boundary (in practice, this cannot be effectively evaluated when assessing a project on its own merits).
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<p>Changes to Application Review Process section</p>	<p><i>Sections 26-34</i></p>	<p><i>Sections 17-30</i></p> <p>Reference to input being sought from members of the Housing and Homelessness Partnership are moved from “Application Prioritization for Affordable Housing Grants” to the “Application Review Process” section.</p> <p>Delegation of authority to CAO and staff is moved from “Application Review Process” to “Roles and Responsibilities”</p> <p>A grant recipient must not have any outstanding debts to the Municipality.</p> <p>Deletion of the requirement that a Contribution Agreement stipulate submission of a final report describing the impact of the funding. The inclusion of this requirement will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and in some cases may not be required.</p> <p>Clarification that the Administrative Order does not limit Council's general discretion to provide grants under the HRM Charter or Administrative Order 2020-007-ADM Respecting Incentive or Bonus Zoning Public Benefits.</p>
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Attachment D - Changes to the current Affordable Housing Grants AO

Note: For the convenience of Regional Council, a mark-up version of the existing AO is provided below to indicate where changes have been proposed as a line-by-line comparison of the current Affordable Housing AO. Content moved or removed is indicated with a strike-through. Content added is highlighted. Due to the extent of the changes, revisions are provided as a replacement Administrative Order, 2025-003-ADM, as contained in Attachment B. Explanation of these changes is contained in Attachment C.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NUMBER ~~2020-008-ADM~~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 ~~;~~ and

WHEREAS ~~Section 5.1 of the Housing Accelerator Fund Contribution Agreement between Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Halifax Regional Municipality, as signed on October 12, 2023,~~ allows the Municipality to use Housing Accelerator Funding for investments in affordable housing;

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

Short Title

1. This 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 an existing primarily residential building for use as affordable housing or 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;

~~(a)~~(c) “affordable housing” means housing that meets the needs of a variety of households in the low to moderate income range;

~~(b)~~(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;

~~(ba) “building condition assessment” means an inspection, review, and report on the state of the structure and systems of a building, and may include the following:~~

~~(i) an inspection of the building’s structural components, such as walls, floors, roofs, windows, and doors,~~

- ~~(ii)~~ — an inspection of the building's systems, such as plumbing, HVAC, and electrical,
- ~~(iii)~~ — an inspection of the building's interior and exterior components, such as finishes and fixtures,
- ~~(iv)~~ — identification of any issues or deficiencies in building components, and
- ~~(v)~~ — a summary of expected costs to remedy any issues and deficiencies;

~~(e)~~(e) "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality;

(f) "construction costs" means the costs related to 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;

~~(d)~~(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;

~~(e)~~(i) "Council" means the Council of the Municipality;

~~(f)~~ — "deep affordability" means dwelling units rented at a minimum of 40% below the average market rents for a dwelling unit of the same type and within the same Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Market Survey Zone;

(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;

~~(g)~~(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;

(h)(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 primarily residential building that is currently under construction;

(h)(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) ~~registered Canadian~~ a charitable organization registered pursuant to the Income Tax Act (Canada);

~~(j) “registered Canadian charitable organization” means a charitable organization registered pursuant to the Income Tax Act (Canada) and the regulations made pursuant to that Act; and~~

(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;

(k)(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; and

(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 or rehabilitation of affordable housing; ~~building condition assessments, pre-development studies, or the acquisition of buildings, dwelling units, shared housing uses, or property.~~

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

~~4. The CAO or delegate shall expend the funds contained in the Bonus Zoning Reserve for affordable housing in accordance with the policies contained in this Administrative Order.~~

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 any or all of the authorities granted by Council 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

~~5. To be eligible for consideration for a grant for affordable housing under this Administrative Order, an applicant must:~~

- ~~(a) be a non-profit organization that has been incorporated for at least one year; and~~
- ~~(b) be applying for a grant to:~~
 - ~~(i) rehabilitate or repair existing affordable housing;~~
 - ~~(ii) construct new affordable housing;~~
 - ~~(iii) support building condition assessments and pre-development studies, reports, and analyses;~~
 - ~~(iv) acquire buildings, housing units, or properties for affordable housing; or~~
 - ~~(v) pay Water Regional Development Charges for affordable housing.~~

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; and

(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 building, the affordable housing, that are the subject of the grant 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

6. ~~The following rehabilitation and repair costs for affordable housing are eligible for a grant under this Administrative Order:~~

~~(a) construction costs; and~~

~~(b) design costs.~~

7. ~~The following costs for new affordable housing are eligible for a grant under this Administrative Order:~~

~~(a) construction costs; and~~

~~(b) design costs.~~

8. ~~Construction costs for partnerships between a non-profit organization and a person may only be considered for a grant under this Administrative Order if there is an agreement between the non-profit and the person under which:~~

~~(a) the person agrees to:~~

~~(i) transfer ownership of the affordable housing; or~~

~~(ii) lease, for the life of the building, the affordable housing, that are the subject of the grant to the non-profit organization prior to occupancy; or~~

~~(b) the affordable housing is owned by the non-profit organization.~~

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 tenants displaced 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

9. The following work and materials are ineligible for a grant under this Administrative Order:

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

(a) private sector construction of affordable housing, unless Section 8 applies;

(b) rehabilitation or repair of affordable housing that are not owned by a non-profit organization;
and

(e)(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

10. This Administrative Order operates on the Municipality's fiscal year.

11. There is one intake period per fiscal year.

12. Subject to section 13, applications under this Administrative Order will only be accepted between September 1st and December 1st in a given calendar year for the following fiscal year.

13. Where December 1st falls on a weekend or holiday, the intake period shall be extended until the end of the next business day.

14. All applications must be received by the Municipality by mail, in person, or by e-mail.

14A. (1) Prior to submitting their application, all applicants must meet with the CAO or their designates, and such meeting must occur during the period under Section 12.

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. (1) Prior to submitting their application, all applicants must attend a pre-application meeting.

~~(2) Unless the CAO, or their designate, staff decide otherwise, applications shall not be accepted by the Municipality if the meeting under subsection 14A (2) 14(1) has not occurred.~~

~~15. The address for submission of applications will be posted on www.halifax.ca prior to the intake period.~~

~~16. Subject to the amount in the Bonus Zoning Reserve and budget, there is no maximum annual amount of financial assistance per property.~~

~~17. The minimum annual amount of financial assistance per property is \$500.00.~~

Required Information For All Applications

~~18. All the items required under sections 19, 20, and 21 Section 16 must be received by the Municipality by the application deadline under end of the intake period under Section 12.~~

19. **15.** All applications under this Administrative Order must include the following items **information:**

~~(a) proof, satisfactory to the CAO or designate, that the applicant is:~~

~~(i) a non-profit organization, and~~

~~(ii) has been a non-profit organization for more than 1 year;~~

(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 Affordable Housing 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)~~(e) confirmation of ownership of the land containing the affordable housing; 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;

~~(d)~~(f) in the case of a partnership under section 8, 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;

~~(e)~~(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 size and 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, such as the targeted clients income levels, household composition, immigration status, or related health issues; 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,

~~(iii)~~(iv) the address and location of the proposed development,

~~(iv)~~(v) the ownership structure of the affordable housing and the development, and

~~(v)~~(vi) how the project will achieve long term stability financial viability;

~~(f)~~(h) a summary describing the non-profit organization, including who it serves and any examples of similar projects the organization lead or had participated in;

~~(h)~~ if capital or operating funding is being provided by

(i) the Province of Nova Scotia, or

-

(ii) the Government of Canada, including Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) or Infrastructure Canada, then a letter from them confirming approval or eligibility for such funding;

~~(ha)~~ if the project targets a population at a higher risk of being in Core Housing Need according to the definition of Core Housing Need as established by the Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation, information that satisfies the CAO, or their designate, that the population is experiencing that higher risk;

~~(i)~~(i) a valid email address for communication by the Municipality; and

~~(j)~~ any other information that may be required by the CAO, or delegate.

(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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Additional Content for Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Applications

20. In addition to section 19, applications for affordable housing rehabilitation costs must contain an overview of the rehabilitation project, including:

- (a) a description of the work to be completed, such as the extent of required repairs, and a description of the importance of that work in maintaining the availability of the affordable housing to people in the low to moderate range income range;
- (b) a description of how the project will improve the energy efficiency of the building;
- (c) estimates from two professional contractors for the proposed repairs or renewal work; and
- (d) a description of how the project will improve the accessibility of the building.

Additional Content for New Affordable Housing Construction Applications

21. In addition to section 19, for the construction of new affordable housing, applications must contain an overview of the proposed affordable housing development, including:

- (a) Repealed;
- (b) a description of how the project will meet or exceed the energy efficiency requirements of the National Building Code;
- (ba) a description of how the project will exceed the accessibility requirements of the National Building Code; and
- (c) a project proforma that
 - (i) identifies hard and soft costs associated with the development;
 - (ii) identifies all fees payable to the Municipality;
 - (iii) identifies all sources of financing, both confirmed and unconfirmed;
 - (iv) estimates the operational costs and rental income; and

~~(v) — the names and experience of the project management team for the project.~~
~~Additional Content for Purchase of Affordable Housing or Land for Affordable Housing~~

~~21A — In addition to section 19, for the acquisition of affordable housing or land for affordable housing, applications must contain an independent appraisal of the fair market value of the housing or land being considered for purchase.~~

Discretionary Information for All Applications

~~22. — Unless the information is required by the CAO, or delegate, under clause 19(j), the following information is recommended to help with project evaluation and prioritization:~~

- ~~(a) — detailed building plans;~~
- ~~(b) — supporting information from a qualified professional that the proposed development exceeds accessibility and environmental requirements outlined in the National Building Code;~~
- ~~(c) — supporting information outlining how the non-profit organization currently provides housing for those in need of deep affordability;~~
- ~~(d) — copies of all existing capital and operating funding agreements with the Province of Nova Scotia, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation or Infrastructure Canada for the project;~~
- ~~(e) — copies of an order to comply with Municipal minimum standards; and~~
- ~~(f) — any further supplemental material that, in the opinion of the applicant, demonstrates how the project meets the eligibility or priority criteria in this Administrative Order.~~

Project Evaluation and Prioritization for Affordable Housing Incentives Grant Application **Prioritization for Affordable Housing Grants**

~~23. — Submissions will be evaluated by HRM staff, who may seek input from members of the Housing and Homelessness Partnership.~~

~~24. — Monies that have been collected through incentive or bonusing zoning program for affordable housing from development projects located inside the Regional Centre Area shall only be used for projects within the Regional Centre Area.~~

~~24A. — Monies 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.~~

25.16. The following criteria will be used to prioritize applications: Applications will be prioritized based on the following criteria:

- ~~(a) — projects that have applied and are eligible for capital funding by~~
 - ~~(i) — the Province of Nova Scotia, or~~
 - ~~(ii) — the Government of Canada, including Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Infrastructure Canada, for the purposes of developing or restoring affordable housing;~~
- (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) — Repealed;~~

- ~~(ba) — projects that target a population that is at higher risk of being in Core Housing Need;~~
- ~~(c) — projects to construct, rehabilitate or repair deeply affordable housing;~~
- ~~(d) — projects that exceed accessibility requirements of the National Building Code;~~
- ~~(e) — projects that include energy efficient design and components that substantially exceed the requirements of the National Building Code;~~
- ~~(f) — projects that have received an order from the Municipality to rehabilitate or repair affordable housing to comply with By-law M-200, the Standards For Residential Occupancies By-law;~~
- ~~(g) — projects that demonstrate financial self-sustainability;~~
- ~~(h) — projects by applicants that demonstrate resources and capacity to complete the proposed project and support any additional housing units;~~
- ~~(i) — projects by applicants with experience in successfully managing existing affordable housing;~~
- ~~(j) — balancing the allocation of money collected through the incentive or bonus zoning program throughout the Urban Service Boundary;~~
- ~~(k) — project affordability when considering:

 - ~~(i) — the depth of affordability;~~
 - ~~(ii) — the length of the affordability term; and~~
 - ~~(iii) — the number of dwelling units or rooms in a shared housing use in the project that will be affordable;~~~~
- ~~(l) — projects to undertake rehabilitation or repairs with the primary objective of improving accessibility;~~
- ~~(m) — projects to acquire buildings or land for affordable housing where the purchase price is consistent with an independent property appraisal; and~~
- ~~(n) — pre-development studies, reports and analyses requested by staff of the Municipality during a discretionary planning application process.~~
- (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"> • proponents 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.

26:18. Applications will **may** be screened by staff of the Municipality for basic eligibility as they are received.

27-19. Applicants will be notified if their applications are ineligible.

28-(1) 20. Eligible applications will be evaluated and prioritized by staff of the Municipality.

(2) — A report and recommendations will be prepared by staff for consideration by the CAO or delegate.

29. — 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 section 35 on behalf of the Municipality, including amendments to such agreements.

30. — The CAO may further delegate any or all of the authorities granted by Council to one or more employees of the Municipality.

31- 21. Final approval of all applications for a grant, and the amount thereof, is a decision of the CAO or delegate in their sole discretion.

32- 22. Notification of the decision of the CAO will be e-mailed to applicants after it is made. Applicants will be notified of the CAO's decision by e-mail.

23. Submission of an eligible application does not guarantee a grant award.

33- 24. Due to limited funds, not all eligible applications may not receive funding.

34- 25. Staff of the Municipality will provide an information report annually to the Council on the grants approved by the CAO, or their delegate. Staff will inform Council on the grants approved by the CAO.

Conditions of Approval and Payments of Grants

35- 26. A successful applicant must sign a contribution agreement with the Municipality prior to any funds being issued-disbursed.

27. A successful applicant must not have any outstanding debts to the Municipality at the time of signing a contribution agreement.

36- 28. Financial assistance provided through this Administrative Order will be detailed in the contribution agreement including the following items:

37. — The Applicant must agree in the Contribution Agreements to the following items:

(a) the amount to be received under this Administrative Order;

(b) conditions for securing additional funds needed to complete the proposed project;

(b)(c) the work to be completed and the timeframe by which it must be completed, including award installments association with project milestones;

(c)(d) the process for reporting to the Municipality;

~~(d)~~(e) money received under this Administrative Order must be being used for the purposes outlined in the recipient's funding application;

~~(e)~~(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

~~(iii)~~(iv) any portion of the money received from the Municipality is used for any purpose other than the approved project;

~~(f) to complete a final report describing the impact of the funding received from the Municipality within the timeframe indicated in the Contribution Agreement;~~

(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.

~~(ga)~~(h) commitments relating to the affordability standard of the project; and

~~(h)~~(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

1. 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.

2. Administrative Order 2020-008-ADM, the *Grants for Affordable Housing Administrative Order*, is repealed.