

Re: Item No. 15.1.2

**HALIFAX**

# **PLPROJ-2024-01075**

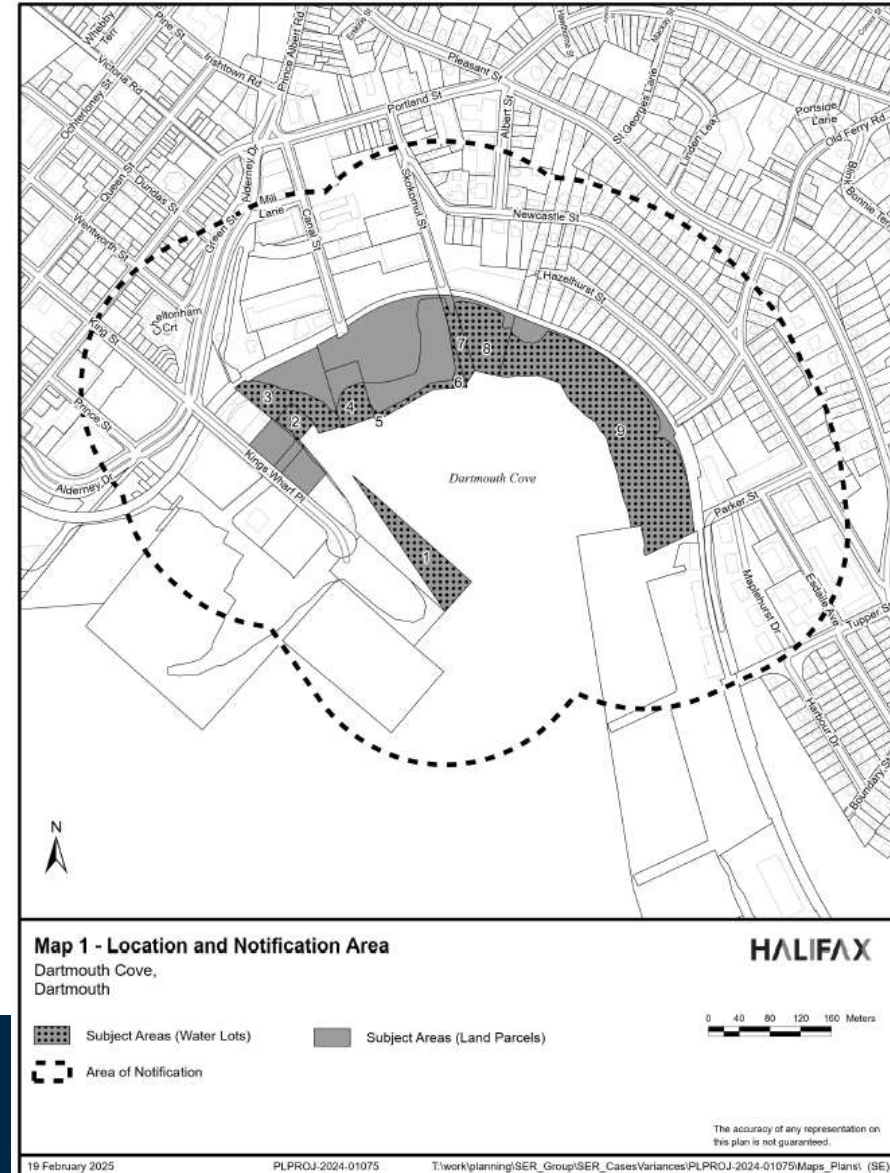
Dartmouth Cove Water Lots

**First Reading - Regional Council**

September 9, 2025

# Dartmouth Cove Water Lots

- 9 water lots in total, 4.52 hectares in area
- Regulated by the Regional Centre Plan and Land Use By-law
- For the most part, water lots are undesignated and unzoned
- Abutting lands designated PCF (Park and Community Facility), FGN (Future Growth Node), and D (Downtown)
- Abutting lands zoned PCF (Park and Community Facility), CDD-2 (Comprehensive Development District 2), and DD (Downtown Dartmouth)



PLPROJ-2024-01075

# Origin - Summary of Council Motions

- **Nov 14, 2023** - Council directed staff to engage the federal government and explore planning amendments to restrict infilling in Dartmouth Cove.
- **June 18, 2024** - Council directed the Mayor to express objection to Transport Canada's infill approval, request a pause on permits, and directed staff to prepare by-law amendments similar to those for the Northwest Arm.
- **Aug 6, 2024** - Council initiated formal planning amendments to restrict water lot development and infilling, following HRM's public engagement process.

# Planning Process Considerations

- Reviewed site and land use context, assessed feasibility of adopting Northwest Arm-style (two-layer) regulations, and conducted a shoreline reference line survey
- Engaged with Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and Municipal Affairs to clarify federal and provincial positions
- Consulted with landowners and residents to share information and gather feedback
- Considered related municipal projects in Dartmouth Cove, including the Downtown Dartmouth Waterfront Revitalization (DDWR) Project

3

# Federal & Provincial Responses

## Federal Government:

- Letters from former Mayor Savage to DFO and Transport Canada, and a response from DFO – June and Aug 2024
- HRM did not receive any written communication from either the Minister of Transport or Justice Canada indicating support to move forward with restrictions on the infilling of water lots in Dartmouth Cove

## Provincial Government Response:

- Letters from the CAO to the Minister and the Province's response – May 2024
- The Province did not indicate whether the Provincial Director or Minister would support potential amendments to restrict infilling

4

# Community Engagement

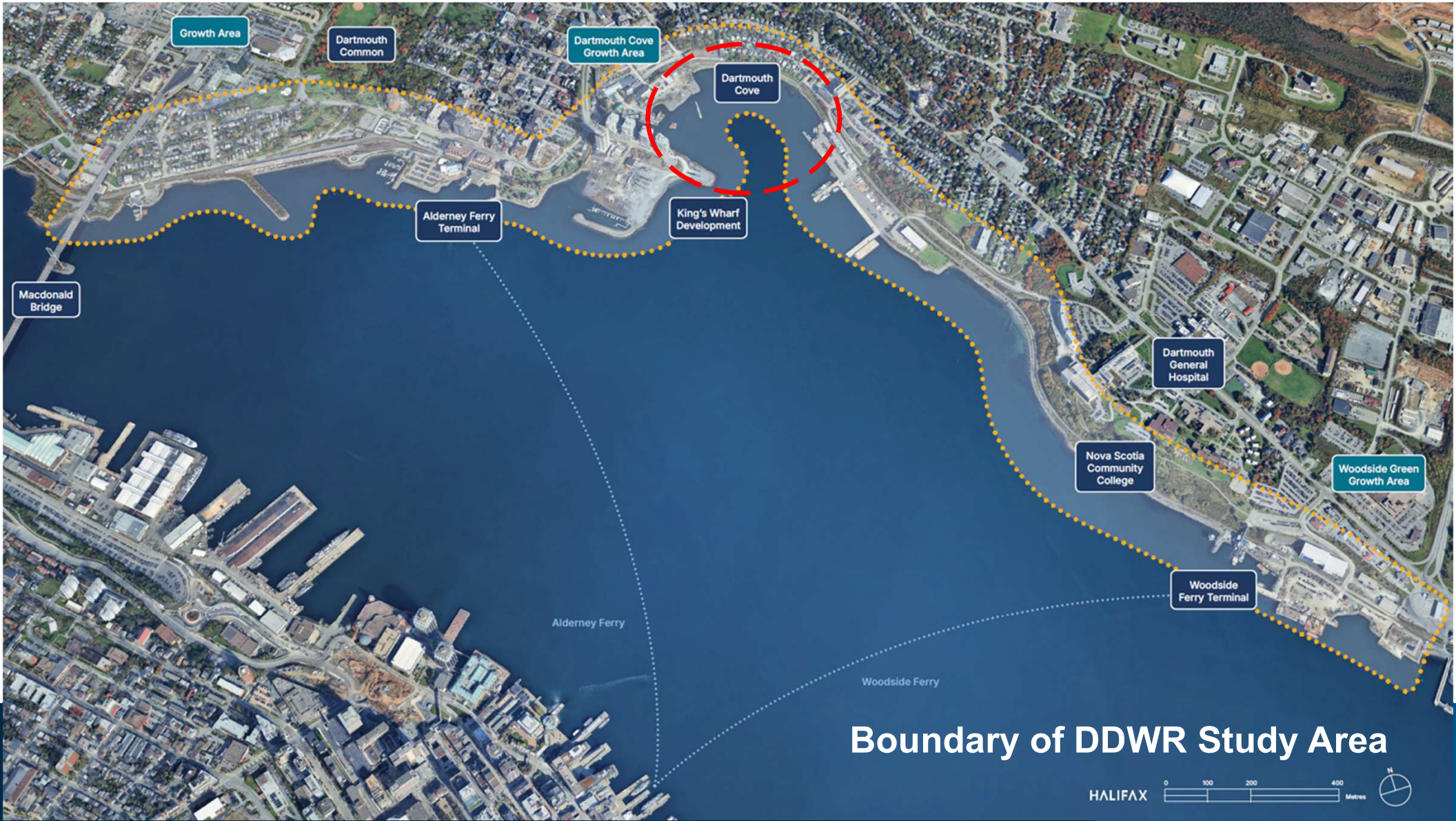
- The engagement level was consultation, Information sharing, HRM website, and letters mailed to 1,700 landowners and residents.
- 362 residents responded. 338 expressed support restricting water lot development and infilling, and 17 were opposed.
- 3 landowners (representing 6 out of 9 lots) submitted letters opposing restrictions. Remaining 3 lot owners did not provide comments.
- Supporters raised concerns about environmental issues, access, culture, and climate impacts; opponents emphasized economic growth, housing, property rights, improved mobility, and well-planned development benefits.



# DDWR Project

## Downtown Dartmouth Waterfront Revitalization Project

- Endorsed by Regional Council in March 2025 with a goal to comprehensively improve access, connectivity, cultural activity, and development potential along the Dartmouth Waterfront
- Project may recommend future infilling to accommodate a multi-functional access route and to meet other goals of the project
- This project is underway and expected to be completed by the end of 2026. Phase 1 engagement is complete.
- Defer any amendments to regulate water lots development until the DDWR Project identifies improvement opportunities.



# Partners and Interests

Dartmouth  
Cove/King's  
Wharf

Halifax  
Port  
Authority

Alderney  
Landing

Ferry  
Terminal

Ferry  
Terminal  
Park

Emergency  
Access



# Moving Forward:

## Intergovernmental Relationships and Future Collaboration

- Proactive, transparent communication will further strengthen intergovernmental relationships.
- Federal Level: Strengthen and continue dialogue with Transport Canada, and advocate for expanding conditional approval authority under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* to Dartmouth Cove and other areas of Halifax Harbour.
- Provincial Level: Engage with the Provincial Director of Planning early in the development of municipal planning amendments to reduce the risk of conflicts that may delay or prevent amendments from taking effect. 9

# Recommendation

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council defer consideration of any amendments to the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Regional Centre Land Use By-law concerning the Dartmouth Cove water lots until such time that the Downtown Dartmouth Waterfront Revitalization (DDWR) Project has returned to Regional Council for consideration.