



WEST END MALL FUTURE GROWTH NODE PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

September 6, 2023

HALIFAX

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PLANNING PROCESS

Halifax Regional Council initiated the West End Mall master planning process on December 14, 2021.

The lands are designated “Future Growth Node (FGN)” under the Regional Centre Secondary Planning Strategy (Centre Plan) which requires a comprehensive master planning process to be completed before development can take place. The planning process will address what is needed for a new complete community through a neighbourhood plan for the entire FGN.

The planning process includes public engagement, background studies (land suitability, transportation and servicing) and detailed review by HRM staff and other agencies. The purpose of the planning process is to create “complete communities” – neighbourhoods with housing, employment and recreation for current and future residents within walking distance.

The planning process is initiated by a development application but considers all properties within the FGN comprehensively. At the time of Phase 1 public engagement, one application was received from Cushman and Wakefield, on behalf of OPB Reality, for the lands at the West End Mall.

THIS DOCUMENT

This document provides a summary of engagement activities and feedback received during Phase 1 of the West End Mall Future Growth Node (FGN) public engagement process.

The **SUMMARIZED FEEDBACK** section provides a summary of all feedback and ideas received from the primary forms of public engagement – the online survey, public meetings, and stakeholder sessions. Feedback is summarized into key themes which emerged through the engagement process. Throughout this section, the [blue text boxes](#) highlight resident quotes extracted from submissions to the online survey.

The **NEXT STEPS** section briefly highlights the next steps of the planning process and future public engagement opportunities.



The site today. Google Maps, accessed July 5, 2023.

HOW WE ENGAGED

This report summarizes a seven month engagement process which employed the engagement methods indicated on this page. The statistics on this page are accurate to June 8, 2023.



Project Website

11,743 Visits
1,486 Document Downloads
908 FAQ Page Visits
1,347 Video Views



Public Meetings

200 Participants - April 12 Meeting*
150 Participants - May 25 meetings (cumulative)



Signage Posted on Site

Posted on May 16



Mailouts

2,076 Notices Mailed



Online Survey

1,137 Surveys submitted by residents



Phone Calls and Emails

5 phone calls received (unique phone numbers)
37 emails received (unique email addresses)



Stakeholder Meetings

5 Stakeholder Sessions



Social Media

Posts on municipal accounts
Advertising on Facebook

**Staff estimate based on resident registrations. Meeting was canceled early and could not be completed.*

HOW WE HEARD YOU

1. The **online survey** received 1,137 responses, forming the single largest source of feedback. Staff analyzed the feedback and organized it into themes which organically emerged. Feedback from the public meetings and stakeholder sessions was also categorized into these themes.

2. A total of 5 **stakeholder sessions** were held with community groups and landowners. Two community groups requested meetings with HRM staff; one virtual and one in-person. Both of these groups are comprised of HRM residents which have a general interest in the project.

Three stakeholder sessions were held with landowners within the FGN. All landowners in the FGN were invited to an information session in which staff provided general information on the planning process. Two landowners subsequently requested additional meetings with staff to receive further clarification on the process.

3. In total, four **public meetings** were held in Phase 1. The first was held on April 12, 2023. This meeting was intended to be a drop-in format where the public could arrive at a time convenient for them and engage with staff one-on-one or in small group conversations. A significant number of residents arrived in a very short timespan, overwhelming the format. Regrettably, the desired goals of the meeting were not achieved and the meeting had to be cancelled before it could be completed due to interruptions.

A second series of three meetings were held on May 25. These meetings received about 150 participants. The format included a staff presentation, followed by group discussions of 8-10 residents and 1-2 planning staff per table. This meeting generated a significant amount of feedback and residents were generally pleased with the format.



4. Staff received phone and email **correspondence** throughout phase 1. Any feedback received has also been incorporated into the summary in this document. Much of the feedback came from the same two community groups which requested stakeholder meetings.

FEEDBACK CATEGORIES

Throughout the engagement process, feedback was sought on topics which planning policy can address. These categories are shown below.

LAND USE



DENSITY



TRANSPORTATION



PARKS AND LANDSCAPING



BUILDING DESIGN



HERITAGE AND CULTURE

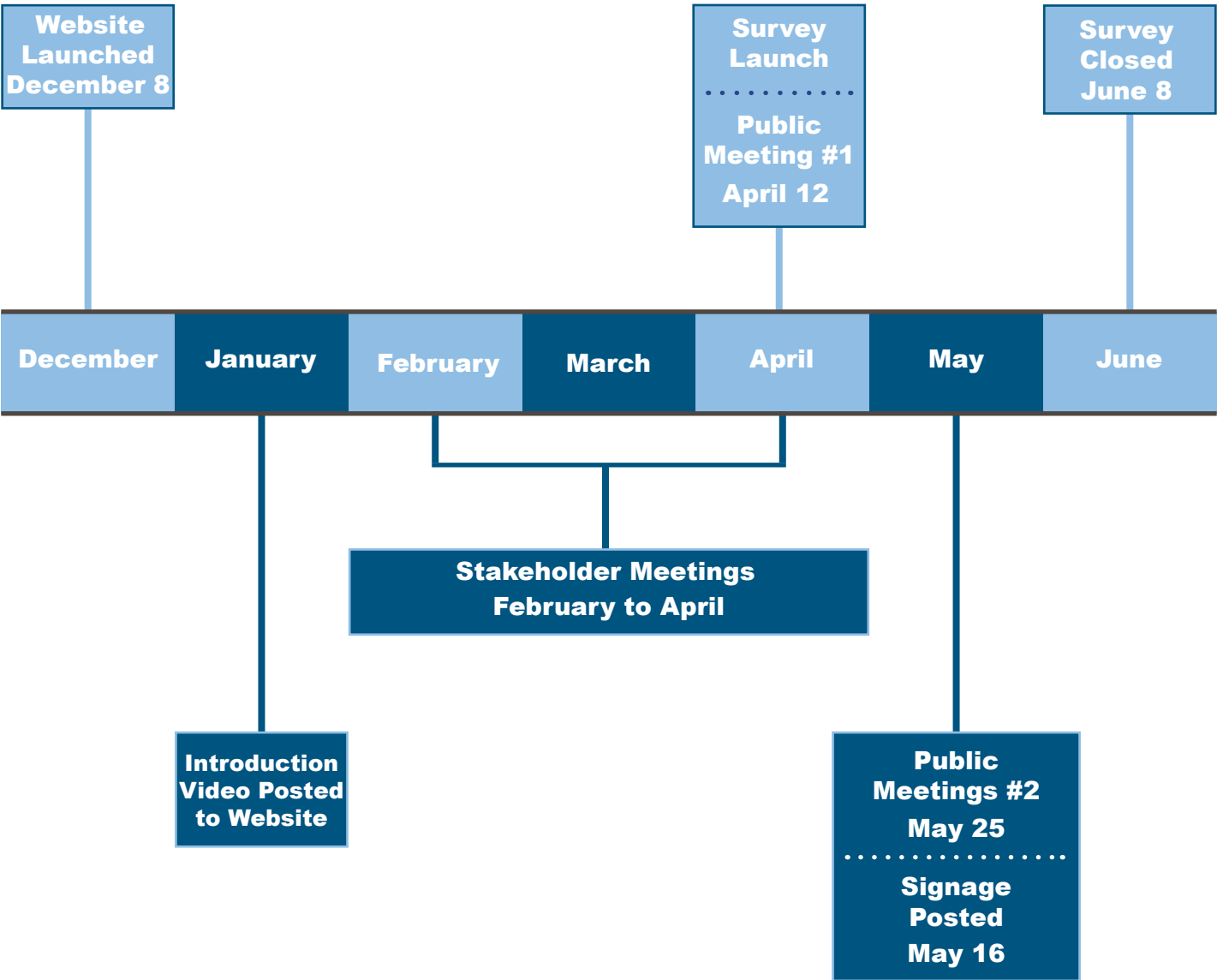


COMMUNITY FACILITIES



PHASE 1 TIMELINE

Below is a timeline of Phase 1 engagement. This phase took place between December 2022, and June 2023.



URBAN DESIGN CHARETTE

Each year the Canadian Institute of Planners hosts a national conference for planners across Canada. The 2023 conference was held in Halifax in June. One of the conference sessions was a design charrette hosted by the Council for Canadian Urbanism, a non-profit organization comprised of urban design professionals.

A charrette is a creative design process which identifies a problem or challenge - in this case the design of the West End Mall site - and asks participants to develop a shared vision and set of principles to guide the design. The vision and principles are then applied to develop a master plan for the site.

Although not formally part of the public engagement process, HRM staff had a unique opportunity to engage with planning and urban design professionals from across Canada via this session. Many of the session participants have decades of planning and design experience, and perspectives from both the private and public sector.

Three site plans were produced by charrette participants and are shown below. HRM staff may use the ideas from these concepts to inform the West End Mall master planning process, so long as they are supported by the results of the technical studies, HRM policy and public feedback.



One of the concepts produced at the urban design charrette.



The other concepts produced at the urban design charrette.



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SUMMARIZED FEEDBACK

HALIFAX

CURRENT STATE

A significant number of residents expressed dissatisfaction with the current state of the West End Mall site, describing it as uninviting, poorly designed, or underutilized. They viewed the site as a commercial or suburban blight and expressed a desire for redevelopment.

Several individuals expressed enthusiasm for the redevelopment of the site, seeing it as an opportunity for positive change. Several residents commented on the surplus of parking at the site, suggesting that the area currently devoted to parking could be put to better use.

In contrast, a small number of residents want the site to remain unchanged.

“This site has so much potential. Imagine if we build a neighbourhood that residents love living in.”

“there are many existing services - grocery and bus terminal as well as many retail outlets that make this location a perfect opportunity to create a true 15 minute neighbourhood”

Key Points

- » Residents view the site as uninviting, poorly designed, or underutilized
- » Residents recognize a surplus of parking at the site
- » Some residents see redevelopment of the site as a positive opportunity for change



Some existing site conditions

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Some residents mention the historical use of the site as a transportation hub. A few residents specifically mentioned the former Simpson's and Sears stores on the site, as well as the Armdale railway station and past streetcar line which terminated at the Simpson's store. Some expressed a desire for the redevelopment to acknowledge and respect this history.

In contrast, some residents mentioned that the site does not hold significant historical or cultural value for them.

"I grew up in Westmount. I remember Simpsons-Sears and The Bay"

Key Points

- » Some residents value the history of the site, including the Simpsons and Sears stores
- » Other residents do not value the site or think it holds any cultural significance



Simpsons entrance, 1970s. Halifax Municipal Archives.



Halifax streetcar at the site in the 1950s. Halifax Municipal Archives.



The site in 1963. Halifax Municipal Archives.

A TRANSPORTATION HUB

The West End Mall site's role as a transit hub was frequently mentioned as a crucial feature. The Mumford Terminal and its connectivity to multiple bus routes were seen as valuable, especially for residents who rely on public transportation. Some residents noted that the site has played this role for many years, having previously been the terminus of a streetcar route, and having previously hosted the Via Rail Armdale train stop.

A significant number of comments were directed towards the Mumford Terminal. Many residents mentioned the potential for expanding transit infrastructure, such as incorporating a commuter rail station or future light rail transit (LRT). Some residents indicated that they would like to see dedicated bus lanes on Mumford Road expanded to improve transit service, and some mentioned Chebucto Road should have bus lanes as well. A small number of residents indicated that they desired transit infrastructure to be "future-proofed", in anticipation of potential future transit needs, such as the aforementioned LRT.

Safety is a common concern at the existing Mumford Terminal, with some residents saying they avoid it due to safety concerns, and noted physical altercations taking place at the terminal, especially during nighttime. Some residents indicated that terminal is not a safe space for women. Residents desire improved security at the terminal with some suggesting security staff are needed.

There is a desire to see the Mumford Terminal become a multi-modal facility with access to higher-order transit service well connected to the region. Residents suggest many amenities should be added to the Mumford Terminal including bicycle parking, car parking, indoor waiting areas, advanced ticketing services, upgraded wayfinding, better lighting, food options, green spaces, washrooms, and seating. Some residents indicated that they would like to see bike or car share options at the terminal as well. Some residents thought that a new terminal should also have unique civic architecture to add character to the neighbourhood. In general, comments indicate there is recognition that the terminal needs replacement and modernizing.



Halifax Transit Bus, Mumford Road, 1969. Halifax Municipal Archives.

The importance of pedestrian-friendly access and better cycling infrastructure integrated with transit infrastructure was mentioned often. Many residents indicated that connections to the terminal from the surrounding neighbourhood are poor and expressed a desire to see better pedestrian and cycling access to the terminal. Some residents suggested a pedestrian bridge over the CN rail cut with direct access to the terminal would improve access. Many residents noted issues of physical accessibility at the transit terminal itself such as unsafe crossings, uneven surfaces and a general lack of accessibility features.

The underground terminal proposal received mixed responses. Some residents said they like the idea of an underground terminal for transit efficiency and the potential for connections to existing businesses, such as via underground access to the Halifax Shopping Centre. Others expressed concerns over safety and transit service to an underground facility and questioned the viability of such a terminal.

Key Points

- » Residents value the transit options available at the Mumford Terminal
- » There is a desire to see the Mumford Terminal modernized for improved transit service and with upgraded passenger amenities
- » There is a desire to enable any new transit facility to accommodate future potential transit services
- » Residents want better access to the terminal from surrounding areas and mobility networks
- » The terminal is viewed as unsafe
- » The underground terminal proposal received mixed feedback



Mumford Terminal today

“The transit terminal should be the Center of the development with more grassed areas and seating for transit riders and enhance security at the terminal. With pathways and bike paths that connect from all directions.””

“The Metro Transit site is a bit of a disgrace as it is right now. It is a definite tear down and do over. It needs to be integrated into the site.”

“I use the transit terminal regularly. It used to have better connection to the Halifax Shopping Centre but fences that prioritize car traffic have reduced the walkability of the site.”



Via Rail Armdale Station, 1990. Bill Linley, Nova Scotia Railway Heritage Society

A SERVICE CENTRE

Many residents mentioned the importance of the existing services at the site, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, health services, banking and other shops. They value the convenience and accessibility of these services. Some mentioned specific stores like Sobeys, Shoppers Drug Mart, and Walmart as crucial amenities. Many residents expressed a desire to maintain or improve services and expressed concern at the potential of losing services as the site is redeveloped.

Several residents mention the importance of mixed-use developments, combining residential with ground floor commercial spaces. Residents mentioned the inclusion of grocery stores, cafes, restaurants, cinemas and other amenities to create vibrant and walkable neighborhoods and recognized that new development can also provide new services.

“I like the current services and how close they are to where I live”

“The services and the businesses that are in the commercial site now are serving the city well. Eliminating these businesses and services will be disastrous. Thousands of people walk and bus there today for groceries and goods.”

Key Points

- » Residents deeply value the existing services on site
- » Residents are concerned that services will be lost as a result of redevelopment
- » Several residents noted that new development should be mixed-use to promote vibrancy and walkability



The site hosts many services

PUBLIC SPACES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Many residents emphasize the importance of creating large green spaces and public gathering areas within the site. They emphasized the importance of creating public spaces and amenities that enhance the overall quality of life in the area. Many residents noted the lack of green space and parks on the site presently, and expressed a general desire to see more trees, landscaping and park space.

Some ideas for public space mentioned include green spaces, naturalized areas, skating rink, parks, sports fields, outdoor events spaces, community art, fitness equipment, playgrounds, pools, walking paths, splash pads and community gardens. Some residents mentioned the need for community buildings to create a sense of community and provide indoor gathering spaces, such as community centers or libraries, with libraries being mentioned many times.

Generally, the responses indicate a lack of recreation amenities in the area presently, and a desire to ensure any new development has enough green space and amenities for the expected population. There were mixed ideas on whether green space should be concentrated in one large “central park” or distributed amongst two or more spaces. Some residents noted that the area is rather noisy now and expressed a desire to have public spaces be a mixture of vibrant gathering areas, and quiet secluded spots.

There is a desire to connect green spaces and public amenities to existing and new spaces with multi-use pathways and bike infrastructure.

Key Points

- » Residents want the site to have more green space and public gathering spaces, and perceive the neighbourhood around the site as lacking open spaces
- » Residents suggested a library multiple times; community centres were also mentioned frequently
- » Residents would like a mix of vibrant public spaces, and secluded quiet spots

“Should be green space and playgrounds.”

“a ‘tot-lot’ for younger children”

“there should be some naturalized green space whose purpose is improving wildlife corridor connectivity and giving a peaceful place for people to interact with nature in this super dense site.”

“An art district or integrate an art/cultural hub building centered in the plaza or it’s own public space.”



PERSONAL MOBILITY

Walkability and access to active transportation options were highly valued by residents. Residents appreciated the ability to walk to various amenities, including shops, groceries, and employment opportunities.

Pedestrian safety was a noted concern. The intersection at Mumford Road and the entrance to the Halifax Shopping Centre (“East Perimeter Road”) was often noted as being dangerous for pedestrians. The expansive parking lots around the site are also cited as dangerous with little pedestrian infrastructure to support movement between them.

Accessibility issues are a common concern mentioned by residents. Much of the site is challenging to navigate with mobility devices and for persons with mobility challenges. There are gaps in accessible infrastructure which force people into car traffic.

The presence of informal pathways and the potential for enhancing pedestrian activity are mentioned as well. Some identified the informal pathway across the CN rail cut as an important connection and noted that

the fence along the rail cut has repeatedly been cut over the years to allow pedestrian access from Olivet Street to the mall area. The rail cut was identified as both a barrier, and a potential opportunity - many residents asked for pedestrian bridges across the rail cut to improve safety and connectivity. Many residents suggested a path by the rail cut would be beneficial. Overall, residents emphasized the importance of creating better pedestrian linkages between the site and the existing neighbourhoods in the West End.

Many residents commented on a need to improve cycling infrastructure as well. Suggestions included using Romans Avenue as a local street bikeway, adding bike lanes on Chebucto Road, and connecting Mumford Road to the Chain of Lakes Trail.

Concerns were raised about the existing traffic conditions and infrastructure limitations. Many residents were concerned that adding a significant amount of population to the area will create traffic congestion, noting that there is already traffic congestion in the area.



*Photo: River Heim, Maritime River Photography
Bike lanes promote cycling connectivity and safety.*

Many residents commented that they think the site is an opportunity to minimize car use. They suggest that the movement of people over cars should be prioritized and that measures should be taken to discourage car use such as charging for parking, reducing the amount of parking spaces in new development and promoting active transportation options.

In contrast, a smaller number of residents suggested that the project is an opportunity to improve car-centric infrastructure and reduce traffic congestion. They think that changes to infrastructure should primarily focus on the efficient movement of private automobiles. These residents tend to be apprehensive about the development because they think the proposed density will increase traffic congestion, and they think automobile traffic in the area is already congested.

“We need better walking paths. Currently need to cross parking lots to get to bus stop or stores on foot”

“Improving walking and cycling infrastructure in the area would go a long way to improving safety and connectivity in the neighbourhood”

Key Points

- » Residents value being able to walk to the services on site today
- » The site is considered unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists
- » There are informal paths and access points around the site, in particular across the CN rail cut to Olivet Street
- » Residents want better cycling and walking connections to and around the site
- » Many residents are concerned about current and future car traffic congestion



DENSITY AND URBAN DESIGN

Many residents express support for a high-density form of urban design, but opinions varied on what consisted an appropriate height framework for the site. The potential to create a dense, mixed-use community was recognized by residents. They expressed a desire to integrate residential and retail spaces, community centers, libraries, and green areas into the development to support a diverse and vibrant community. There is a desire to create well-designed urban spaces at the site.

Some residents emphasized the opportunity for taller buildings on the site. Overall, the feelings of this group are that site is suitable for some form of high-density development, but opinions varied on what heights are appropriate for the site. Many residents commented that buildings 6-10 storeys would be appropriate while some suggested up to 20 storeys are acceptable. Many residents suggested that 30 storeys are too high. In general, these residents often sought a transitional height framework with a mixture of building heights and types and emphasized a desire to keep tall buildings away from existing

neighbourhoods. The recent “West22” development was frequently cited as too large and too close to existing residential areas.

In contrast, some residents expressed concerns about the height of buildings and density of the development overall. They generally emphasized the need for appropriate density levels and shorter buildings, but often weren’t specific about what they viewed as appropriate. Many residents expressed concern over the potential for wind impacts caused by tall buildings. In general, residents sharing concern over density objected primarily to the height of 30 storey buildings. Some of these residents are generally opposed to development or change on the site.

There is a desire to create a unique character to the area through any new development that may take place. Residents suggested this could be accomplished by including public art, unique and high quality architecture, unique public spaces and parks or streets named after local persons of interest.



Photo: Discover Halifax.

Local businesses and vibrant spaces can contribute to neighbourhood character.

Key Points

- » Residents recognize there is an opportunity to create a dense, walkable, mixed-use district through the FGN planning process
- » While many residents agree the site is appropriate for high-density development, there is not strong agreement on a level of density, or height framework. Residents tended to agree on a transitional height framework, with lower heights located near existing neighbourhoods
- » Some residents are concerned about the level of density, the height of buildings and the impacts these will have on traffic
- » Many residents think the site can be designed to encourage walkability over private automobile use
- » Residents expressed a desire for the site to have a unique character

“An emphasis on mixed use buildings (ground floor essential services commercial, e.g., grocery stores), density, and walkability is very important to me. Having pedestrianized streets or separate walking and biking corridors would be great.”

“I would love to see some work on developing and formalizing what we want the ‘Form and Character’ for this development to be. For example, the Hydrostone area is really distinct, let’s make this a distinct area as well. Lots of options here. It could be ultra-modern, or European with pedestrian friendly cafes at street level with piazzas, or maybe mountain chalet, or East Coast traditional... skies the limit.”



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Many residents expressed concern over the current housing crisis in Nova Scotia and HRM and expressed a belief that there is an urgent need for more housing. Some residents indicated they want affordable housing options on site, ensuring that the development caters to people with varying income levels, and noted that the neighbourhood immediately around the FGN needs more affordable housing. Residents indicated that having affordable housing on the site is an equity issue, and some residents specifically mentioned non-market housing as needed for low-income or vulnerable residents.

Residents mentioned the potential for high-density, transit-accessible housing and the benefits it would bring to address the housing crisis, drawing connections between affordable transportation and an affordable cost of living.

Many residents suggested a general need for housing in HRM. They believe that adding new housing to the site will have benefits for housing choice and affordability. A small number of residents suggest that more housing should be built at the site than presently proposed via a development application, advocating for greater density.

A small number of residents think that new development here will exacerbate the housing crisis by providing units that are not affordable. They believe that new market-rate units are not only insufficient to reduce housing prices but will also actively make the housing crisis worse. Some residents suggested that housing should only be built if it will be affordable to workers and people in the neighbourhood.

Key Points

- » Residents are concerned about housing affordability and choice in the area, and suggested that non-market housing is needed on site
- » Some residents think that on-site easy access to public transit can reduce the cost of living by reducing transportation costs
- » Some residents think that building additional market housing on the site will be beneficial, while others think it will exacerbate the housing crisis or not offer housing affordable for residents

“Something needs to be done to help with the lack of housing available to lower income individuals and families.”

“Honestly anything affordable. Affordable meaning someone who works nearby could reasonably afford to own or rent it and still eat”



Icon by Chanut-is-Industries

HOUSING MIX AND ACCESSIBILITY

Many residents advocated for a mixture of housing types to provide options across the income spectrum, and for different demographics (ex: immigrants, single parent households). This includes apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and single detached houses.

Apartments are mentioned frequently as a housing type, with an emphasis on high-density apartment buildings and towers. Some residents believe that given the housing needs of the city and the size of the site, large apartment buildings are the most appropriate form of housing. Some residents made connections between high-rise development, and the efficient use of land, arguing that the site is suitable for high-rise development.

Townhomes were specifically mentioned as a desirable housing type, with some residents saying they provide a middle ground between apartments and single detached houses.

Although a small number of residents suggested the site is appropriate for single detached homes, many residents expressed a preference for excluding or minimizing them in the area, favoring higher density options instead.

Some residents highlight the importance of including larger units, such as three or four-bedroom apartments or townhomes, to accommodate families. Some residents noted that if more units suitable for families are included it may provide opportunities for families to live closer to the urban core than they usually might choose to and may contribute to reduced commute times by encouraging transit use.

Several residents mention the need for accessible housing options for seniors and people with reduced mobility. Residents expressed a desire to have development on the site provide age-in-place options for seniors, and some residents expressed a desire for housing for residents with special needs.

Key Points

- » Many residents suggested a mix of housing types such as apartments, townhomes, duplexes, single detached homes should be included
- » Many residents suggested the site is suitable for high-density development, and supported apartments as the primary form of housing on site
- » Units sized for larger households and families were suggested
- » Accessible and seniors housing is needed

"I'd like to see a diverse range of housing; I am a little hesitant about the idea that this area would be all the same type of high-rise tower, which can feel quite soulless and not particularly like a community. I don't mind high-rise towers, but I would be disappointed if there wasn't a really good mix of building types. I would also love to see duplexes, townhomes, row houses, etc. - buildings that are more varied, and ideally would have more character than endless glass towers. I'd be quite happy with mid-rise apartment buildings as well, and/or courtyard buildings. Middle housing!"



Icon by monkik

SCHOOLS AND HEALTHCARE

Some residents expressed concerns about the potential disruption to nearby schools, such as St. Agnes Junior High, during the construction phase. They called for measures to minimize disturbances and ensure the safety of students.

Many residents expressed concerns with school capacity and overcrowding in schools; some residents do not believe there is existing capacity in the nearby schools and suggested development on the site would be detrimental to current and future students. Others suggested that if development was to occur that school capacity will have to be upgraded or new schools will be needed.

Some residents raised concerns over healthcare capacity and quality. These residents expressed concern that creating a new development of this scale could exacerbate healthcare challenges in Nova Scotia. It is clear through the responses that healthcare is important to residents and they are concerned over the impacts that development will have on healthcare.

“Our school (Westmount Elementary) is already overcrowded with added modular classrooms. We need a larger school. The junior high is in bad shape. Citadel High is already at capacity. I have 4 children and live in the area.”

“New Schools need to be built in conjunction with residential housing and what a better place to do it than in the community.”

Key Points

- » Residents are concerned that school capacity is insufficient to accommodate the expected population
- » Residents are concerned about student safety during construction
- » There is concern that adding additional population to the area will put additional pressure on the healthcare system



ENERGY EFFICIENCY, CLIMATE, AND BIODIVERSITY

Some residents shared a desire for energy-efficient buildings (ex: LEED), green spaces, and nature-based climate solutions. Many residents suggested the widespread use of solar panels and wind turbines should be employed. Several residents mentioned a need for electric vehicle (EV) charging. Some residents pointed out a desire for development in the area to reduce the effects of the urban heat island effect. Some residents expressed concern over potential environmental impacts of development especially to waterways.

While there is a general desire for more trees and landscaping on the site, some also highlighted the importance of naturalized green spaces to improve wildlife connectivity and provide peaceful places for people to interact with nature.

Some residents made a connection between the potential for walkable, dense development with mixed uses to reduce car dependency and carbon emissions.

“Designate spaces for environmental education and interpretive centers to raise awareness about sustainability, local ecosystems, and natural features.”

“I would love more green spaces”

“Halifax has too many impervious surfaces”

Key Points

- » Residents value energy efficient buildings and renewable energy production
- » A need for EV charging was identified
- » Naturalized spaces are valued by residents
- » Some residents noted that dense walkable development can reduce carbon emissions



PHASING AND TIMELINE

Many residents expressed concern over construction mitigation, especially referencing the expected 50 year timeline for development. Residents feel that construction will create noise, dust, light pollution and disturb rats. Some residents point to the recent construction of the “West22” building on Mumford Road as a specific example of these nuisances.

Some residents expressed concern over the length of time the development is proposed to take and expressed a desire that the development be built more quickly. A small number of residents suggested that a timeline as long as 50 years is too long for the development to have a meaningful impact on the housing problems of the present.

Some residents suggested that phasing should consider ways to allow some redevelopment to take place while maintaining existing services, with the possibility that existing or new services could relocate within new commercial spaces.

Key Points

- » Residents are concerned with the nuisances that construction will cause, especially with a long term build phase
- » Some residents want the development to be built faster due to the current housing crisis
- » Residents suggested phasing should allow existing services to remain while construction takes place

“The multi decade timelines for construction are far too long, serious thought needs to be given to how this can be built in ten years or less.”

“Having just lived through the West22 construction, I’m concerned about blasting noise, garbage that blows into our yard and dust”



PLANNING PROCESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Some residents commented on the planning process itself or had questions related to how municipal staff process the file, and concerns over transparency.

Many residents asked how the boundary of the FGN was determined and why some properties were included, and others were not, especially near the FGN. Some residents expressed frustration saying that they had not been consulted on the application of the FGN designation during the Centre Plan process or were not adequately informed what the FGN application meant for potential future development.

Some residents expressed concerns over transparency with the required studies, evaluation and review of the proposal and how engagement feedback is used or influences the process. They expressed doubt that studies, public engagement, or staff review would change the outcome of the development. Some residents questioned the impartiality of the companies producing the required technical studies and suggested that since developers are their clients, they are likely to produce materials favorable to the developer; they questioned whether municipal staff review was sufficient to avoid this conflict. A small number of residents expressed that they feel corruption plays a significant role in determining how development takes place.

A small number of residents expressed concern that Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian populations were not specifically and formally consulted for the project.

While there was frustration over the cancelled engagement event in April 2023, many residents shared positive feedback over the engagement sessions on May 25, 2023. Residents said that the format change enabled more open and detailed discussion, and some residents shared that they felt the sessions enabled them to understand the planning process in more detail.

Key Points

- » The boundary of the Future Growth Node caused confusion as to why some properties were included and others excluded
- » Some residents questioned how evaluation of the required studies would be independent
- » Some residents do not trust the planning process to act in the public interest
- » Some residents think the Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian populations should be specifically consulted for this project
- » Residents were frustrated with the cancelled engagement event in April, but feedback on the events in May was generally positive

“Residents feel like the meetings are simply a way to “check the box” on public consultation. We feel helpless to have our voices heard.”

“Thank you for listening finally to residents of the surrounding areas. All we heard was that this was a done deal and that 15 or more new buildings were in the plan.”



GENERAL OPPOSITION TO REDEVELOPMENT

A small number of residents expressed opposition to any additional housing or development in the area. These residents typically objected to the density of the proposal and the idea of high-rise buildings in general.

Many residents did not specify why they are opposed to densification. Those that did often cited traffic congestion, strain on infrastructure, wind effects, shadowing and the impact on the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

It is important to note that the number of residents in total opposition to development in the West End Mall FGN are a small minority of total participants.

“15 massive high rise structures is a terrible idea. The residents of this area, deserve peace and to have the beauty of their community maintained. Yes, we need more housing. But this is not reasonable”

Key Points

- » A relatively small number of residents are generally opposed to development on the site
- » Many of these residents did not specify why
- » Those that did tended to generally object to additional density and raised concerns about traffic, infrastructure, wind and shadowing





NEXT STEPS

HALIFAX

PLANNING PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

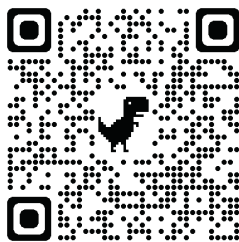
The **next steps** of the planning process include the following:

- » The required technical studies must be completed by the developer
- » HRM and other agencies will review the technical studies and may ask for adjustments or additional information
- » HRM will draft policies for the future growth node
- » Depending on the outcome of the review and policy drafting stages, and the developer's readiness, HRM may also draft development agreements or land use by-law regulations to enable development on the site or a portion of the site
- » Phase 2 of public engagement will invite the public to review and comment on the draft policies proposed for the site
- » Finally, staff will draft a report for Regional Council and make a recommendation

Phase 2 of public engagement will commence once draft policies are ready for public review. The public will be notified about engagement by mailouts to nearby residents, social media posts by the municipality, social media advertising and updates to the project website. The project website is updated regularly with documents, general updates, and public engagement information.

FOR ALL UP TO DATE INFORMATION VISIT:

SHAPEYOURCITYHALIFAX.CA/WEST-END-MALL



Scan QR code to visit project website

