

Maitland Heritage Conservation District Review

Planning Advisory Committee

Planning and Development Department
January 20, 2026



EAST HANTS

Background

- In 1995 Maitland was declared Nova Scotia's first Heritage Conservation District (HCD).
- After a comprehensive review, amendments to the Heritage Conservation Plan and Bylaw were approved by Council in 2018.
- A cycle of regularly reviewing bylaws enables these documents to reflect current legislation and the current community needs. It's been over 7 years since the Heritage Conservation District Plan and Bylaw was amended and planning staff recommend that now is an appropriate time to undertake a review of the Plan, Bylaw and Design Guidelines.



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Proposed Amendments

Full details of the amendments are included in the staff report. The amendments include:

- *Removal of Brick as a material that the design guidelines currently encourage for new buildings in the Heritage District.*
- *Additional guidelines regarding signage. The additional guidelines would include expanding the materials which are permitted. Currently only wood signage is permitted*
- *Providing images to identify the fences types which are already permitted (to provide clarity).*
- *Requiring a certificate of appropriateness for accessibility ramps into buildings and adding design guidelines for the ramps. The certificate of appropriateness will enable the Heritage Officer to discuss options for the work with the property owner. The priority should be the accessibility of the building for people with disabilities but having the discussion with the heritage officer is important to ensure that the heritage value is also considered, where possible.*



Review Requirements

The Nova Scotia Heritage Conservation District Regulations set out the requirements for adoption of amendments to a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Bylaw. These requirements include:

1. Adoption of a public participation program; and
2. Undertake background studies - The Minister will review the studies submitted and confirm if additional are needed.



Review Requirements

1. Public Participation Program

Section 6 of the Regulations requires that a Council shall adopt, by resolution, a public participation program. The content of a public participation program shall be at the discretion of the council.

Staff propose the following - further details in staff report:

- Letters to be sent to each owner of property within the Maitland Heritage Conservation District asking for comments and any requested changes.
- Letters to be sent to owners of property in Maitland which are not included in the district.
- Use of the municipal website and social media to seek input from the wider community.

Review Requirements

1. Public Participation Program

In addition to the public participation program there is a requirement under the Heritage Conservation District Regulations to hold a Public Hearing before the adoption of the amendments.



Review Requirements

1. Required Studies (further information provided in the staff report)

A requirement of the Regulations, is that when preparing a conservation plan and bylaw (including amendments), is to undertake studies relating to the following:

- a) the rationale or justification for heritage conservation measures in the district;
- b) the rationale for the boundaries of the district;
- c) the relationship of a conservation plan and conservation by-law with any municipal planning strategy, land use by-law or provincial land-use policy or regulation in effect for the district; and
- d) an analysis of the social and economic implications of the establishment of the district, as these relate to clause (a).

Much of the information needed for the background studies is already included in the existing Heritage Conservation District Plan and Bylaw. Staff also recommend that a copy of this staff report be provided with the Plan and Bylaw as it will provide further context to the required background studies.

Conclusion

Staff have suggested a modest public participation program due to the minor nature of the proposed amendments. Public notification requirements for the Public Hearing are set out in the Heritage Conservation District Regulations.

Following acceptance of the Background Studies and Information by Council two copies of the studies will be provided to the Minister. If further studies are required planning staff will report back to Planning Advisory Committee.

Following the public participation program, staff will provide a second report with full details of the proposed amendments to the Heritage Conservation District Plan and Bylaw.

Recommendation

That Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council adopt the staff report as the public participation program and approve sending the background information to the provincial government.



Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council that Council:

- Adopt the public participation program, as outlined in the staff report regarding the Maitland Heritage Conservation District Review and dated January 7, 2026; and
- Approve sending the background information to the Minister for Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

