

## Planning Advisory Committee

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved on June 11, 2024



### 1. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) is to offer informed advice and recommendations to assist in the preparation and amendment of planning documents. The committee provides guidance on general planning matters, ensuring that planning aligns with community needs and regulatory frameworks.

### 2. Mandate and Responsibilities

The Committee provides recommendations on planning issues upon Council's request. However, to fulfill the PAC's legislative obligations, the following activities may be undertaken without a referral from Council:

1. Advising Council by providing recommendations on the preparation and amendment of planning documents, including the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use By-law, and Subdivision By-law.
2. Advising Council by providing recommendations on general planning matters as directed by Council.
3. Performing the functions of a Planning Advisory Committee as outlined under the Municipal Government Act.
4. Adhering to the Town's Public Participation Program.

The Department of Community Development may also request that the following items be added to a PAC meeting agenda for the Committee's consideration:

1. Advising Council by providing recommendations on approved projects within the Department of Community Development.
2. Advising Council by providing recommendations on strategic planning initiatives from the Department of Community Development that will require Council's consideration.

### 3. Membership

The PAC consists of seven voting members who serve without pay. Council will appoint the following seven voting members as follows:

- Four Town of Lunenburg residents
- Three members of Council

Citizen member appointments are for two-year or three-year terms.

Membership appointments, when possible, will be staggered to achieve organizational continuity and memory. This ensures that not all members' terms expire at the same time, avoiding a situation where numerous appointments end simultaneously.

Council appointments are reviewed annually.

Members serve at the pleasure of Council and may be removed by Council. Members may be removed by Council if they miss three consecutive meetings without prior approval from the Chair, fail to fulfill their duties, engage in misconduct, or cannot participate effectively in PAC activities.

Council appoints one of the three members of Council as Chair.

#### **4. Staff Resources**

The Director of Community Development, or their designated delegate, will serve as the lead staff resource on the PAC. The primary function of this role is to provide advice and information to the PAC, facilitating informed decision-making. This individual does not have decision-making power within the PAC but will instead concentrate on providing guidance and information to its members. Additionally, they will act as the liaison between the PAC, Council and other Town of Lunenburg staff members.

#### **5. Meeting Administration**

Meetings will be held in person, with virtual participation available only if needed by a member. If a committee member plans to attend virtually, they must notify the Chair and the lead staff 24 hours before a meeting to allow for necessary technical setup.

Meetings are open to the public and advertised on the Town's website, livestreamed and recorded.

#### **6. Agenda Setting and Item Consideration**

The agendas for PAC meetings are set by the lead staff. Agendas are prepared based on items referred to the PAC by Council or activities that may be undertaken without a referral from Council, as outlined in the Mandates and Responsibilities Section.

Through a motion at a meeting, committee members may also request that agenda items, as outlined in the Mandates and Responsibilities Section, be added to a future agenda. These requests will be assessed by the lead staff based on staff capacity and relevance to the PAC's objectives.

If a request is deemed out of scope or requires significant staff resources, the lead staff or their delegate will provide a brief report at a PAC meeting explaining the decision. If the PAC disagrees, they may submit a written request to the Council, outlining the benefits of the requested agenda item and information. This request will be included in a Council meeting agenda.

To ensure timely consideration, any item referred to the PAC must be evaluated, and when required by policy, a recommendation must be made to Council within the next two PAC meetings from the date of referral.

## **7. Committee recommendations**

Following a meeting, any recommendations from the PAC will be compiled into a report by the lead staff member. This report will be included in a future Council agenda package.

The PAC provides advice and recommendations on planning matters. However, the final decision-making authority rests with Council.

## **8. Meeting frequency**

The committee will meet bimonthly or as otherwise required to fulfill the duties as outlined.

A PAC meeting may be scheduled at the call of the Chair in consultation with the lead staff.

The Chair, in consultation with the lead staff, reserves the right to cancel any scheduled meetings should there be no agenda items for consideration.

## **9. Public participation at meetings**

PAC meetings are open to the public. However, public comment and input will be accommodated only when expressly noted on the agenda, such as during designated public participation meetings.

## **10. Pecuniary interest**

Members must promptly disclose any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration by the Committee. This disclosure must occur as soon as possible at the commencement of the meeting where the matter is discussed.

If a member has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, they must recuse themselves from the discussion and decision-making process for that particular matter. They must also avoid attempting to influence any recommendation on the matter, both during and outside the meeting.

Every disclosure of interest and its general nature must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

### **11. Conduct at meetings**

Members must conduct themselves with respect towards the Chair, other members, staff, and public attendees during all meetings.

### **12. Other meeting procedures**

All other meeting procedures will follow the Town of Lunenburg's established policies governing Council and Committee meetings and procedures.

### **13. Communication of Committee decisions and committee representation**

All PAC members must recognize and respect the responsibility of the Chair and the lead staff to accurately communicate the decisions and recommendations of the Committee, even if individual members disagree with those decisions.

The Chair serves as the official spokesperson for the committee, and individual members are not authorized to speak on behalf of the committee. Should a committee member receive any external requests for comments or information regarding committee activities or decisions, such requests must be directed to the lead staff. The lead staff will coordinate with the Chair and other relevant Town staff to ensure that the request is accommodated appropriately and that responses are consistent with the positions and decisions of the committee.

### **14. Confidentiality**

No member of the PAC shall disclose or release any confidential information acquired by their position to any member of the public, whether in oral or written form, except as required by law or when authorized by the Town. Members are also prohibited from using confidential information for personal or private gain or for the benefit of relatives or any person or corporation. Breaches of this confidentiality clause are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary actions, including removal from the committee.

### **14. Resignation of members**

Resignation of a member during the term must be made in writing to the Municipal Clerk.

### **15. Dissolution**

The Town of Lunenburg Council will periodically review the effectiveness and relevance of the PAC in its ongoing activities and objectives. If, during a review, Council determines that the PAC is no longer necessary or that its functions should be restructured, a decision to dissolve the committee may be made.

## **16. Amendments and review of the Terms of Reference**

PAC members may propose amendments to the Terms of Reference during committee meetings. However, all proposed amendments must be approved by Council.

The lead staff will review the Terms of Reference every four years from the date they were adopted by Council, unless there is a legislative requirement for an earlier review.