



This artist conception completed by Fathom shows the layout of proposed Debert Housing project, which will eventually contain 598 housing units. Commercial space is anticipated to be included in lower floor of apartment buildings. Construction is not expected to start prior to Summer 2023. (Contributed)

Debert Housing Could Include 598 Units

Update prepared by Michelle Boudreau

(Colchester's initiative to create more housing on available suitable lands in Debert is so important to the local economy we decided to print the project update as it was presented to council by Public Works Director, Michelle Boudreau at its meeting on June 23).

Existing businesses are having problems finding housing for employees while new prospective businesses place availability of housing high on the priority list when considering expanding to another community. Business interest in located to Debert is on the upswing following two years of slow growth during the pandemic.

Using non-commercial lands which would be suitable for housing development was the brainchild of former (now deceased) councillor Bill Masters. One advantage of the utilizing these lands is they are not in areas which require archeological digs.

Here is the project update prepared by Michelle Boudreau

The purpose of this item is to inform Council of a proposed housing development in Debert.

- In their Fall 2021 Strategic Priorities session, Council identified the need to create additional housing options in Debert. Staff were directed to issue a request for proposals by February of 2022, which would serve to identify options and direction for the development.
- In December of 2021, staff and the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee (DBPAC) worked together to retain the services of Fathom, a consulting company specializing in conceptual land use planning and development.
- Fathom was tasked to layout a potential housing development on a vacant lot on Hudson Street in Debert. The land measures 41.5 acres and is owned by the County.

The land does not require archaeological clearance.

- Fathom's process for developing a concept plan for the site included a design workshop for local stakeholders, a public meeting to present results, and regular feedback from staff and the DBPAC.
- The final site plan proposed by Fathom is attached, along with a proposed phasing plan.
- The proposed development includes: 5 apartment buildings - 368 total units; 17 townhome buildings - 94 total units; 66 single detached dwelling units. Total number of potential housing units is 528.
- The concept plan also considers site amenities such as parks and storm water retention ponds, as well as walking trails and commercial spaces within the apartment buildings.
- The development would include 1.8 km of roads, and the anticipated cost to install roads, water and sewer is \$4M.
- Staff are currently working with Fathom to complete a traffic study and to develop design standards for the styles of homes to be built.
- Decisions have yet to be made on how the land will be offered up to the development community, however recent changes to the MGA allow municipalities to provide direct assistance to businesses "for

the purpose of increasing affordable housing in the municipality." This would allow disposal of land below market price, which will likely be factored into the approach.

- Developers will be held to specific design standards and development requirements, to ensure alignment with the municipality's goals of increasing attainable housing and providing necessary amenities to support population growth in Debert. The estimated value of the vacant land is approximately \$20,000 per acre, or \$830,000.

Anticipated annual tax revenue from the proposed development is (\$0.885/\$100 assessment): 368 apartment units @ \$58,000 each = \$21.3 M assessed value = \$188,505; 94 townhome units @ \$150,000 each = \$14.1 M assessed value = \$124,785; 66 detached units @ \$200,000 each = \$13.2 M assessed value = \$116,820. TOTAL ANNUAL TAX REVENUE \$430,110

Along with new services on the site itself, staff have also been reviewing necessary upgrades to the overall water and sewer systems in Debert. Work will be required to support the additional 528 units.

In April of 2022, Council supported 2 funding applications related to the proposed housing development: The first was a submission to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to support the expansion of the main sewage treatment plant. If successful, the program will provide \$4M of the \$5.5M project costs. A decision on the funding application is not expected until Fall 2022.

The second submission was to the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP) for funding to support the cost of installing a new sewer line on Hudson/Vickers Street, at a cost of \$400,000.

The program may provide 50% of costs. A decision on the funding application is expected in Summer 2022.

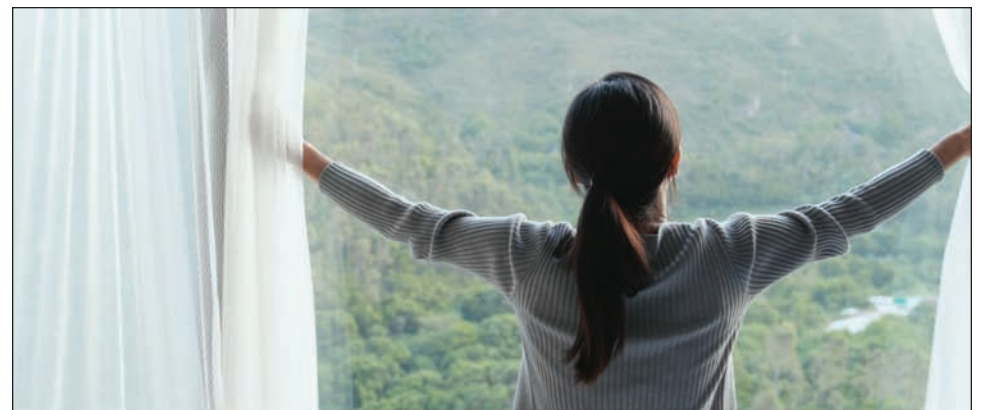
Staff have not yet completed the exercise for evaluating any water system upgrades, however work to identify a new supply well for the utility is ongoing. More information is expected by Fall 2022.

Also, staff are proceeding with a tender for the abandonment of the old sewage treatment plan at the Debert Airport, which includes major sewer upgrades between the airport and the bunker. In anticipation of the proposed housing development on Hudson Street, this project will also see the installation of a large pumping station at Tracker and Vickers, near the Debert Aviation Centre.

Staff will update Council as more information becomes available on the housing project. Construction work on housing units is not anticipated before Summer 2023.



The proposed Debert Housing project located on 41.5 acres of county lands will be completed in four phases. More detailed information is contained in the above story.



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