

# Municipal Benchmarking Study

# HALIFAX



## OVERALL RANKING

Halifax has achieved eighth place in the study. Halifax saw improvement in approval timelines from 25 months (2020 study) to 21 months (2022 study).

	Rank	Planning Features (1=best)	Approvals Timelines (1=best)	Government Charges (1=lowest)	Score (Avg. Rank)
1	Edmonton	1	6	6	4.5
2	Charlottetown	19	1	1	6.4
3	Calgary	6	5	10	6.8
4	London	3	8	9	6.8
5	Regina	13	3	7	7.2
6	Winnipeg	15	4	5	7.6
7	Saskatoon	12	2	11	7.7
8	Halifax	5	16	4	9.1
9	St. John's	20	7	3	9.7
10	Ottawa	10	9	12	10.2
11	Moncton	21	10	2	10.9
12	Vancouver	8	10	17	11.5
13	Surrey	9	11	15	11.6
14	Oakville	4	13	18	11.8
15	Hamilton	7	18	13	13.2
16	Brampton	11	12	19	13.8
17	Burnaby	16	17	8	14.0
18	Toronto	2	20	21	14.9
19	Pickering	17	14	16	15.5
20	BWG	18	15	14	15.6
21	Markham	14	19	20	17.8

The study assessed municipalities on features, approvals and government charges, drawing out best practices. All cities can learn from each others' experiences, continually improving policies and operations to increase housing supply and affordability.



**Population**  
change in the last decade



**House Prices**  
change from 2006-2021

**+149%**



**National Average**

**+90%**



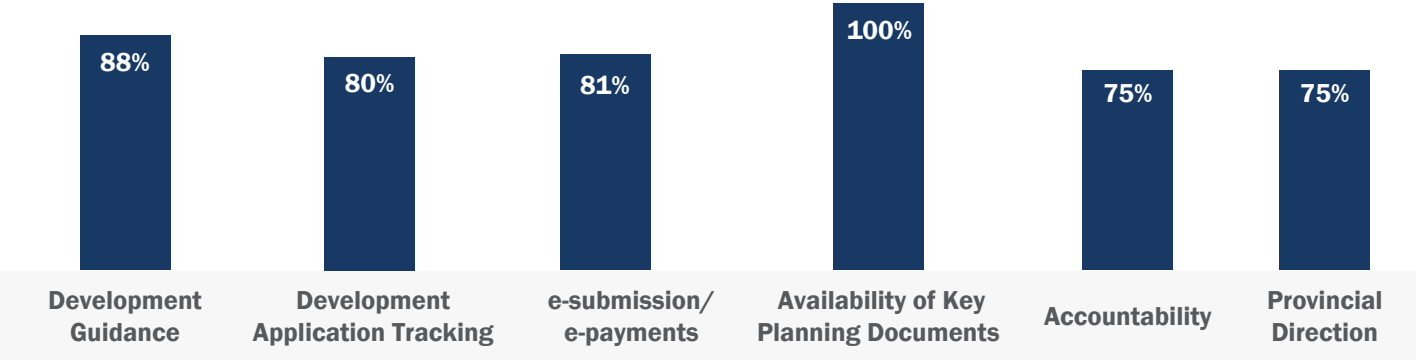
**Halifax**

# RANKINGS

Each participating municipality has been assigned a score that combines their performance on planning features, approvals timelines and government charges. This ranking provides a snapshot to show which municipal governments are leading in which of the three areas at the moment, as well as an overall ranking. This ranking does not assess anything beyond what was analyzed and is not reflective necessarily of the engagement and cooperation between industry and local governments. Whether at the top or the bottom of the list, each city can learn from best practices of others and continue to improve.

## Planning Features

Each municipality is scored on whether they have features that can support an efficient planning approvals system, and increase transparency for developers, the public, or other interested parties. They were scored based on six overall themes.



## Approvals Timelines



We estimate typical approval timelines for development applications – from complete application to planning approval. The nature of the ‘planning approval’ can take many forms.

Delays in approvals impact housing affordability. Months of delays add tens of thousands of dollars to the cost of a home.

## Municipal Charges

The report provides a high-level overview of government charges levied by municipal governments and attempts to quantify the costs these charges and fees generate for developers, home builders, and ultimately, home buyers. To model and estimate the charges and fees imposed by the municipalities two development scenarios were analyzed.



LOW-RISE  
\$9,629 / UNIT

HIGH-RISE  
\$10,744 / UNIT

# SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

To achieve an eighth-place ranking, Halifax has several elements working well, and a few others requiring improvement.

## WORKING WELL



### Planning Features

Halifax placed fifth in our ranking of planning features with a score of 85%, and scored over 70% in all six theme areas, one of just two municipalities to do so (London being the other).



### Improvement to Approval Timelines

Halifax saw significant improvement in approval timelines from 25 months in the 2020 Study to 21 months in the 2022 Study, with their ranking in this area improving from 20th to 16th.



### Distributed Sources of Population Growth

Halifax was one of only a few jurisdictions studied (others being Edmonton, Ottawa, Moncton) that saw positive population growth from all four international and domestic sources of net in-migration – international immigration, non-permanent residents, Intraprovincial migration (movement within Nova Scotia) and interprovincial migration (movement within Canada).

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## NEEDS IMPROVEMENT



### Long Average Approval Times

Halifax has the longest average approval timelines in Atlantic Canada. The average approval period in Halifax was 21 months. Halifax ranked 16th out of 20 municipalities for approval timelines.



### High Density Bonusing Fees

In Halifax, the second most significant charge on high-rise development was the density bonusing fee. This results in the City's charges on high-rise development (per square foot) being 3.1-times that of the charges imposed on low-rise development.

About the

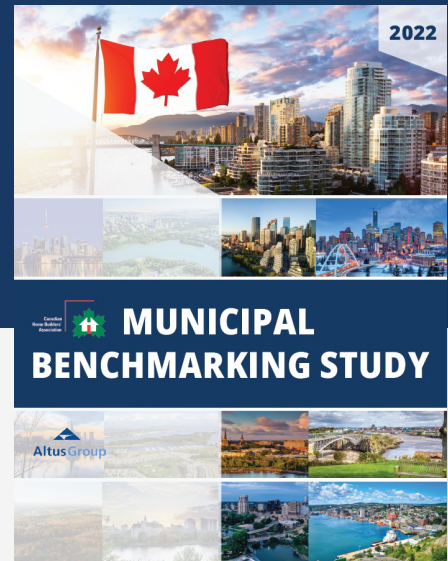
## CHBA Municipal Benchmarking Study

[www.chba.ca/municipal-benchmarking](http://www.chba.ca/municipal-benchmarking)

The Municipal Benchmarking Study was commissioned by the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) and delivered by Altus Group. The study compares 23 Canadian municipalities, examining how their processes, approvals timelines, and charges and fees contribute to housing affordability and supply issues in major housing markets across Canada. The report reads as a report card to show which municipal governments are leading in which of the three pillars of the study—planning system features, approval timelines and government charges.

*“This report is intended to support the important conversation with all orders of government on major challenges to housing affordability and the efficient delivery of much needed new housing supply. We’ve undertaken this work to showcase where municipal governments have the policies and systems in place to support supply and affordability, and provide a path forward for improvements where things aren’t working as well.”*

— Kevin Lee, CEO, CHBA



### Notes

The research for the study was completed prior to March 16, and therefore prior to the COVID related public health measures.

The rankings only reflect what was studied, and the results are based on readily available or public information. Planning systems vary between provinces, and implementation of provincial planning systems can vary between municipalities. The results examine things that are comparable across the country but may not reflect the full processes, approvals, or charges in this community.

The results are independent of the quality of the relationship between the municipal government and the residential construction industry.