



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 10.1.2
Halifax and West Community Council
February 22, 2022
January 18, 2022

TO: Chair and Members of Halifax and West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 3, 2021

SUBJECT: **Case 20226: Land Use By-law amendment to reduce parking requirements for community centres in Timberlea, Lakeside, Beechville**

ORIGIN

- Regional Council initiated a review of the Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville MPS, for the community of Beechville, on November 28, 2017¹. Regional Council directed staff to continue the Beechville Planning Strategy Review process and undertake a Beechville Community Benefit Action Plan on September 29, 2020²
- Planning and design for a new HRM community centre in the Beechville / Lakeside area

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter), Part VIII, Planning & Development.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax and West Community Council:

1. Give First Reading to consider approval of the proposed amendment to the Land Use By-law for Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville, to reduce the parking requirements for recreation facilities and community centres as set out in Attachment A of this report, and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Adopt the amendment to the Land Use By-law for Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville, as set out in Attachment A of this report.

¹ HRM Regional Council. November 28, 2017. [Case 20226: Initiation report.](#)

² HRM Regional Council. September 29, 2020. [Case 20226: Update report.](#)

BACKGROUND

The Municipality is working to design a new recreation centre in the Beechville / Lakeside community, which will be built on the site of the existing Lakeside Community Centre. Through Case 20226, Planning staff met with the staff team working on the recreation centre. The design team has found that existing parking requirements are a burden and would require a large parking lot well beyond the needs of a recreation centre. Staff is recommending that Council reduce the parking requirements as an early deliverable of Case 20226.

Staff continues to work on Case 20226, which includes the Beechville Planning Strategy Review process and the Beechville Community Benefit Action Plan, as initiated by Regional Council. Public engagement with Beechville's African Nova Scotian community is ongoing.

Subject Site	1492 St. Margarets Bay Road (PID 40050585)
Location	Beechville / Lakeside community
Regional Plan Designation	Urban Settlement
Community Plan Designation (Map 1)	P-2 (Community Facility) Zone
Size of Site	3 acres (1.2 ha)
Current Land Use(s)	HRM Lakeside Community Centre

Enabling Policy and LUB Context

Parking requirements are found under the General Provisions of the Land Use By-law (the LUB). The Municipal Planning Strategy (the MPS) has limited policy on parking though generally it states that the LUB shall control parking, so it is of an "adequate size and design to provide for the needs of users of the facility, as well as to address potential impacts on adjacent development".

The subject site is zoned P-2 (Community Facility) Zone. Policy UR-15 of the MPS establishes this zone and directs that it allows a variety of institutional, and community uses.

DISCUSSION

Staff is proposing amendments to the Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville LUB to reduce the parking requirements for community centres and recreation facilities. This amendment is consistent with the intent of the MPS.

Parking

In 2008, HRM adopted a Regional Parking Strategy. The Parking Strategy found HRM parking standards for many uses were the highest of 12 municipal jurisdictions studied. Parking standards were particularly high in the former County of Halifax. Therefore, one recommendation of the Parking Strategy is to reduce minimum parking standards. Similarly, the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) directs that LUBs be amended to reduce parking requirements. Neither the Parking Strategy nor the Integrated Mobility Plan provide specific recommendations on how much to reduce parking requirements for many uses, including recreation facilities.

LUB Amendment

Attachment A contains the proposed LUB amendment to greatly reduce parking requirements for community centres and recreation facilities. The amendment creates new parking requirements specifically for recreation facilities and community centres, which would require 1 space per 500 square feet (46.5 m²) of gross floor area. This is an 80% reduction over the existing standard for general institutional uses. Under existing parking standards, the proposed recreation centre would need 307 spaces. The proposed parking standards would require 62 parking spaces.

Staff recommend a large reduction in parking requirements for the following reasons:

1. As proposed, the reduction would apply only to community centres and recreation facilities, which are generally public or community facilities.
2. Reduced parking requirements allow for flexibility to right-size parking based on location, site conditions, and transportation options; and
3. Reducing parking requirements encourages good urban design and supports alternatives to private vehicles.

MPS Policy

The MPS lacks specific parking policy for institutional uses, community centres, and recreational facilities, but parking policies generally state that regulations should ensure *adequate* parking. Staff suggest that current regulations require *excessive* amounts of parking. Reducing parking requirements for community and recreation centres will bring those regulations in line with the intent of the MPS.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Regional Council unanimously approved the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) in December 2017. The IMP was developed with significant public consultation. It requires HRM to reduce parking requirements within its Land Use By-laws. The need for lower parking standards was also identified by the HRM team working to design the community centre.

Staff did not undertake specific public engagement for the proposed amendments. A public hearing must be held by Halifax and West Community Council before they can consider approval of the proposed LUB amendment. Should Community Council decide to proceed with a public hearing on this application, in addition to the published newspaper advertisements, property owners within the notification area shown on Map 2 will be notified of the hearing by mail. The HRM website will also be updated to give notice of the public hearing.

The proposal will potentially impact public agencies, community groups, and residents.

Conclusion

Staff recommend reducing parking standards for community centres and recreation facilities, specifically to support the development of an HRM community centre in Lakeside. Lower parking standards would improve site design in this centre and result in a smaller parking lot. Lower parking standards also support the direction of the IMP and are consistent with the intent of the MPS. Therefore, staff recommend that the Halifax and West Community Council approve the proposed LUB amendment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications. The HRM cost associated with processing this planning application can be accommodated with the approved 2021-2022 operating budget for C320 Regional Policy Program.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations contained within this report. The proposed amendment may be considered under existing MPS policies. Community Council has the discretion to make decisions that are consistent with the MPS, and such decisions may be appealed to the N.S. Utility and Review Board. Information concerning risks and other implications of adopting the proposed LUB amendment is contained within the Discussion section of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Halifax and West Community Council may choose to approve the proposed LUB amendment subject to modifications. Such modifications may require further staff analysis and may require a supplementary report or another public hearing. A decision of Council to approve this proposed LUB amendment is appealable to the N.S. Utility & Review Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.
2. Halifax and West Community Council may choose to refuse the proposed LUB amendment, and in doing so, must provide reasons why the proposed amendment does not reasonably carry out the intent of the MPS. A decision of Council to refuse the proposed LUB amendment is appealable to the N.S. Utility & Review Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.

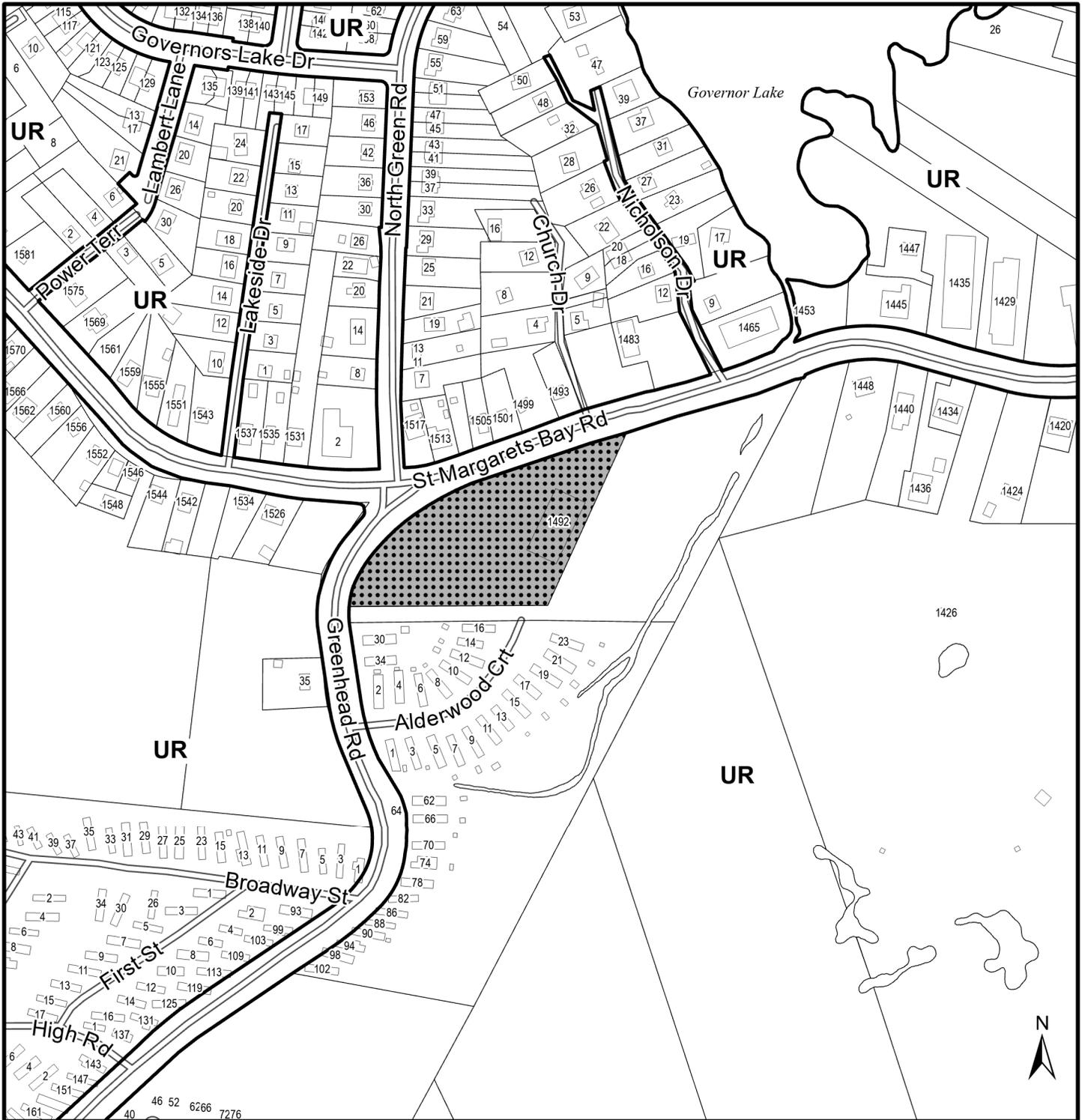
ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Generalized Future Land Use
Map 2: Zoning and Notification Area

Attachment A: Proposed LUB Amendment

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Sean Gillis, Planner II, 902.237.3424



Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use

1492 St. Margarets Bay Rd.
Lakeside

 Subject Property

Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville
Plan Area

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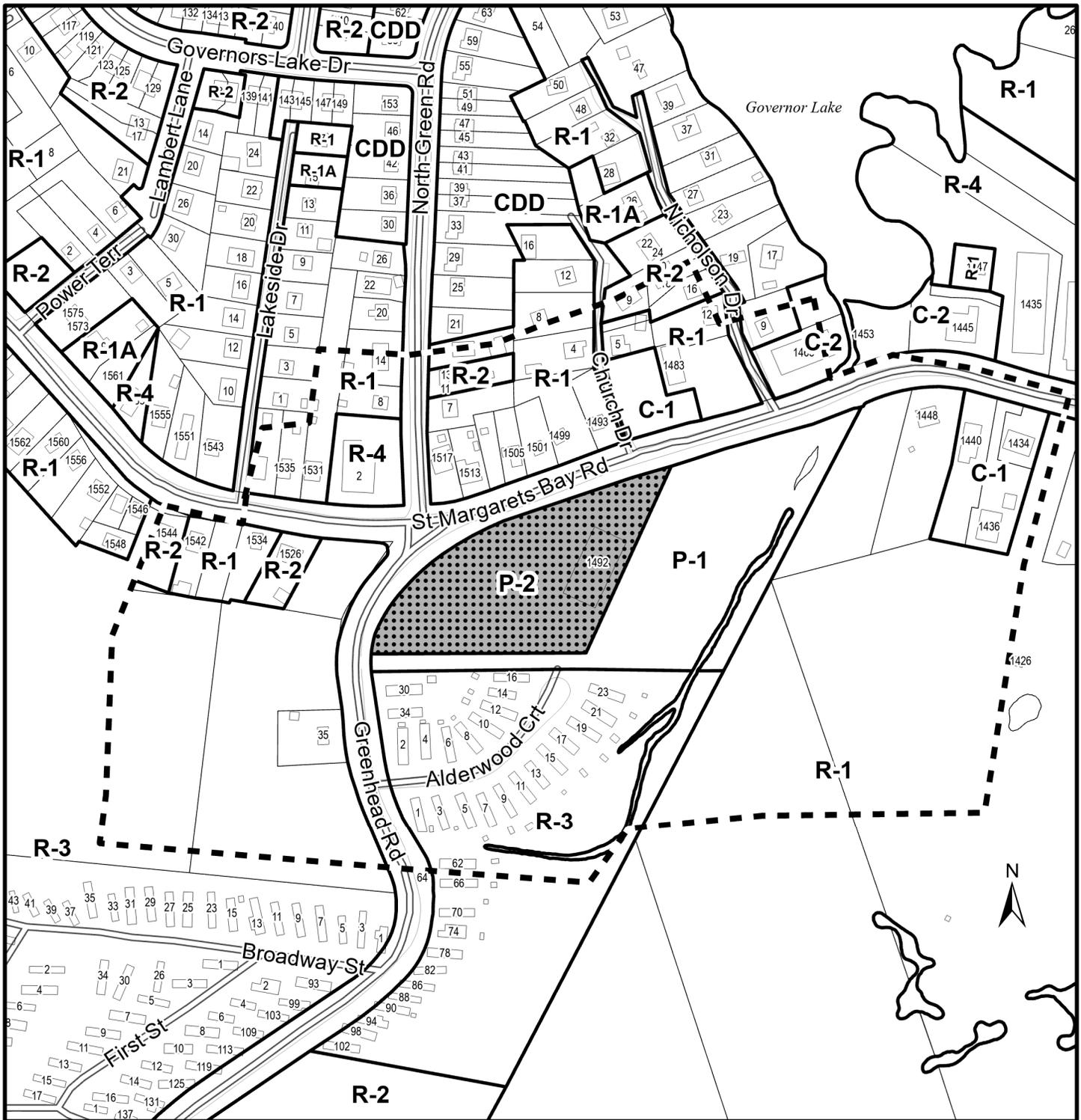


Designation

UR Urban Residential

This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Generalized Future Land Use Map for the plan area indicated.

The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.



Map 2 - Zoning and Notification Area

1492 St. Margarets Bay Rd.
Lakeside

-  Subject Property
-  Area of Notification

Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville
Plan Area

Zone

- R-1 Single Unit Dwelling
- R-1A Auxiliary Dwelling Unit
- R-2 Two Unit Dwelling
- R-3 Mobile Dwelling
- C-1 Local Business
- C-2 General Business
- P-1 Open Space
- P-2 Community Facility
- CDD Comprehensive Development District

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This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Zoning Map for the plan area indicated.

The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.

ATTACHMENT A

Proposed Amendment to the Land Use By-law for the Timberlea/Lakeside/Beechville

BE IT ENACTED by the Halifax and West Community Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Land Use By-law for Timberlea, Lakeside, Beechville is hereby amended as follows:

1. Adding the following words in bold to Section 4.27 (Parking Requirements):

USE

PARKING REQUIREMENT

Theatres

1 space per 5 seats

Recreation Facilities

**1 space per 500 square feet (46.5 m²)
of gross floor area**

Institutional uses except as
specified below

the greater of 1 space per 4
seats, where there are fixed seats and
1 space per 100 square feet (9.3 m²)
of gross floor area

where there are no fixed seats, or 1
space per 4 persons which can be
accommodated at any one time

Community Centres

**1 space per 500 square feet (46.5 m²)
of gross floor area**

Government offices

4.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet
(92.9 m²) of gross floor area

I, Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk for the Halifax Regional Municipality, hereby certify that the above-noted by-law was passed at a meeting of the Halifax and West Community Council held on [DATE], 202[#].

Iain MacLean
Municipal Clerk