



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

Item No. 15.8.2

Request for Council's Consideration		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included on Agenda (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Thursday)	<input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Monday)	<input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor
Date of Meeting: August 22, 2023		
Subject: Demolition regulations and empty lot tax		
Motion for Regional Council to Consider:		
<p>That Halifax Regional Council request the CAO prepare a report regarding disallowed demolition under normal circumstances until a building permit has been issued, and the establishment of an empty lot tax.</p>		
Reason:		
<p>Halifax and Nova Scotia is in a housing crisis. Vacancy is at an all time low. Currently, lots are being cleared and left empty, which will eventually lead to needed missing middle density on corridors in the Regional Centre and in other places throughout HRM,</p>		
<p>This has caused a great deal of concern as the demolition of existing housing units, many of which are in good repair, reduces housing stock and leaves gaps where no housing will replace this loss, potentially for years.</p>		
<p>Requiring developers to have a building permit issued prior to being allowed to apply for a demolition permit may help close the gap between demolition and construction and reduce the time the land sits idle.</p>		
<p>An additional incentive to move quickly to develop empty lots, or to hold them open, would be to ask the province for permission to establish an empty lot tax in the serviced area of HRM. A significant empty lot tax, designed to allow HRM to collect similar tax to what it will receive when the property is developed, would discourage lots in the urban service boundary being left empty.</p>		
<p>This would not apply to new subdivisions and greenfield development. An empty lot tax should be set quite high, and the additional revenue could be used to fund additional affordable housing programming.</p>		
Outcome Sought:		
<p>A report with that outlines potential options to create disincentives to keeping lots empty in the urban service area.</p>		
<i>Councillor Waye Mason</i>		<i>District 7</i>