



Figure 1: Proposed street corner perspective

## Design Rationale

Proposed Mixed-Use, Commercial & Multi-Unit Residential

143-153 Sackville Drive

Sackville, NS



Figure 2: Rear view perspective

## Table of Contents

- Summary
- Current Conditions
- Design Rationale

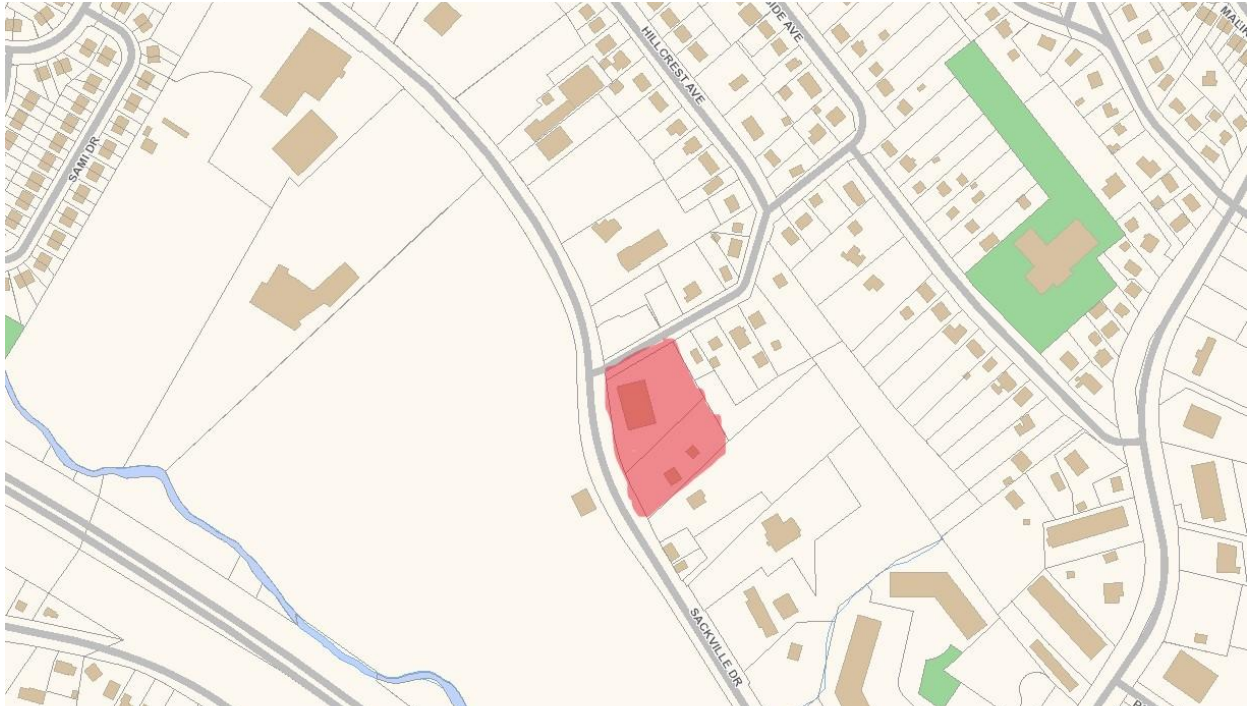


Figure 3: Vicinity map from <https://www.arcgis.com/>

## Summary

Sackville Street is an integral avenue for Lower Sackville with an evolving streetscape. The four lane thoroughfare connects Lower Sackville with surrounding communities including Bedford to the south, and Middle Sackville, Upper Sackville and Mount Uniacke to the north. The previous design planning for these streets resulted in a car-centric suburban sprawl layout. Slowly the planning strategy has become more pedestrian friendly with welcoming attractions and destinations, while still maintaining the thoroughfare. This site, located at the corner of Sackville Drive and Hillcrest Drive, provides an excellent opportunity to integrate increased density in an established neighborhood. Our intent as a design team is to provide a high quality design with durable materials that respects and contributes to the neighborhood context. The opportunity is there to inspire with this development, and become a catalyst for other sites nearby to further upgrade and densify the area. Thereby reducing the demand for a car-centric thoroughfare.



## Current Site Conditions

Residing at 153 Sackville Drive is a single-storey commercial building setback from the street corner. The building is clad with masonry and vinyl siding and is topped with an open gabled roof. Parking for the commercial units are located on the rear side of the building. A single family house with vinyl siding resides at 143 Sackville Drive. This house is generously setback from Sackville Drive with a driveway that's been overgrown with grass and weeds. The site is centrally located on one of Lower Sackville's main commercial streets which is fully serviced with municipal infrastructure. The site has a gentle slope down to the southwest along Hillcrest Drive, and a more aggressive slope to the southeast along Sackville Drive. A transit stop serving routes 8 and 87 is located steps from the property, providing ample access to the majority of Halifax Regional Municipality. Immediately adjacent to this site along Hillcrest is the commencement of a neighborhood featuring one and two storey single-family houses. A mix of residential and commercial buildings occupy the sites to the southeast along Sackville Drive. Across Sackville Drive is the Gate of Heaven cemetery, and a series of car dealerships occupy the northeast corner of Sackville Drive and Hillcrest Drive. Buildings in the area are generally low rise in height. However, there are a few instances of higher density buildings and proposals, including the five storey Kingfisher residential building, and a possible eight storey building at 323 Sackville Drive (Case 24017). Overall this site is evolving, but it's already close to several amenities and attractions of an urban centre, including schools, businesses, parks and more.



Figure 4: Current commercial businesses along Sackville Drive (Google)



Figure 5: Existing single-family bungalow (Google)

## Design Rationale



Figure 6: Aerial view of proposed development

As a design team, we have an opportunity to present a dramatic building to a prominent street in Sackville. We are proposing two towers of fourteen and thirteen stories, connected by a single storey podium and underground parking. With the introduction of height and density, this project has the potential to be a catalyst development for the immediate area. The building

would contribute to the demand for walkable communities and increased housing options by introducing more high quality living along Sackville Drive. For this building to be successful, the overall visual appeal is of utmost importance. One method for accomplishing this is to visually break up the mass so the structure is two point-block towers instead of one long building, and articulate the towers using a variety of methods. The three storey streetwall is meant to compliment the low-rise surroundings and provide a pedestrian scale at ground level. This streetface is highlighted by the use of storefront glass and masonry on all building faces. The upper stories are stepped back starting on level 4. These high-rises offer a different mix of materials to provide a visually appealing and lighter structure. One of our main goals is to attract a large variety of user demographics, including tenants with physical disabilities. The entire building is designed to provide a barrier free path of travel to all residential and commercial suites, including the outdoor amenity spaces.

The street level facade along Sackville Drive and Hillcrest Drive will be lined with prime commercial or retail space. The street level entrances are generously setback to create an opportunity for commercial spill-out. For example, a cafe or restaurant may want to provide outside seating, or a grocery store may want to display fruits and vegetables to draw potential customers inside. With the curvature and topography of Sackville Drive, an opportunity arises to create a thoughtfully designed landscaped garden to enhance the visual appeal. All residential suites will reside on the elevated levels to create a sense of privacy from the pedestrian and vehicular traffic. To respect the adjacent neighborhood, the building mass dramatically steps down as you travel down Hillcrest Drive from the street corner. We located the point-block tower at the street corner, and stepped the building mass down to residential scale along Hillcrest Drive. The suites facing Hillcrest Drive provide a pleasant street frontage and act as an introduction to the neighbourhood. The streetwall does not end at the property line. Instead we proposed a generous 45' minimum setback from the property line abutting a single family residential home. A 10' wide landscaped buffer with the possibility of a minimum 4' high opaque fence runs immediately adjacent to the residential property. A driveway and walkway would occupy the remaining 35'. These paths would lead to the rear of the building where customer parking and loading would be provided to service the commercial tenants, residential lobbies, community space and level 1 interior parking spaces. Locating the exterior parking features behind the building further separates the proposal from the residential neighbourhood, and keeps the parking out of view from the streetscape. Due to the dramatic slope towards the south, we're able to extend an existing curb cut for the underground parking garage entrance off the lowest portion of Sackville Drive. This entrance would provide ample side access to the upper parking level, with an interior ramp to a second level of parking. In total, this proposal includes approximately 322 parking spaces, 276 indoors on three levels. Our main design objective is to create an energy efficient, accessible and affordable development, with an appropriate pedestrian scale and use, while maintaining and enhancing the architectural integrity of the streets.

Citizens are wanting to migrate back into the cities. This means redevelopment and integrated design techniques for established communities, with larger structures and increased density to meet this demand. The commercial space is highly visible with amicable height, and flexible square footage, depending on the establishment's needs. Occupied commercial units

will attract the local population, and out-of-town patrons to the area and help the local economy. The proposed 290+ residential units are designed to be marketable, with an open-concept design, generous areas of glazing for natural daylight penetration, and a balcony for every suite.

Being located on a busy street, a strong, but friendly, street wall presence is of utmost importance to the success of the development. The three-storey street-wall is articulated using a variety of methods, including depressions, overhangs and the use of high quality architectural materials and details to create visual interest. Stone or clay masonry, aluminum storefront and metal panels are the primary building skin for the street wall. These materials are proven to be strong, durable, with minimal maintenance, and generous cradle-to-grave (or cradle-to-cradle) life spans and are meant to complement existing commercial structures within the area.

The high-rise portion of the building is appropriately stepped back from the streetwall. The “point-block” design technique provides efficient circulation to the suites within the building, while also minimizing the effects of shadows onto adjacent properties. A porcelain panel is the main material above the street-wall, with a non-combustible siding material within the balconies. Porcelain is a high quality material that has proven to be exceptional in the maritime climate in terms of longevity and minimal maintenance.

Opportunities for unique amenities arise with this building mass, as the rooftop provides ample areas for tenant use. If properly maintained, these roof areas can provide outdoor areas of parkland in the city, a relaxation spot, gathering options, and simply bonding with fellow neighbors.

It’s no secret that buildings stand on their own in a static position. It’s the users inside and outside the structure that make a building feel alive. From the commercial spill-out, large windows, balconies, and roof-top outdoor amenity, the proposed building is designed to be active. In the evening, the building will provide ambient lighting on the upper levels of the structure, with appropriately illuminated commercial signage and safety lighting at the street level.

Overall this building will help the demand for a wide range of housing needs, without overdeveloping the site with an overwhelming mass. The increase in density will boost the area economically and socially, and will be a mainstay for future generations to relish, with the opportunity to create fond memories for a wide mix of building users.