

NS Studio Site Development Agreement Application

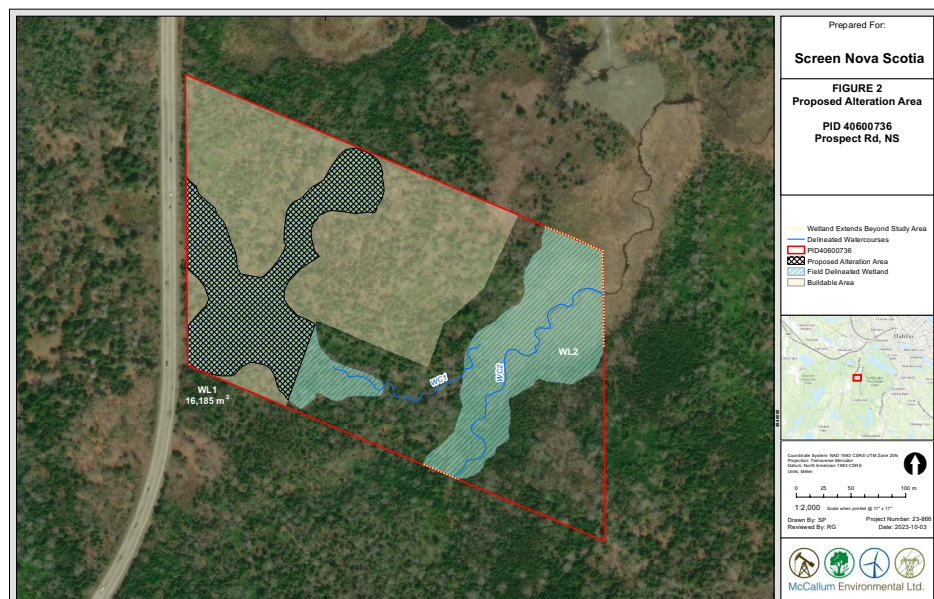
Dear Alyson,

Thanks for our chat a few weeks ago about the rezoning options and considerations for the subject property (PID 40600736). We appreciate your input and are excited to move forward with this important project which has been identified as a significant economic driver for both HRM and the province. The film, television, and digital content industry needs this critical piece of infrastructure to complete its value proposition and capture more than \$125 million in annual incremental production business. This creative and diverse business aligns with the goals of HRM's strategic plan and contributes by offering well paying jobs, enhancing tourism activities and attracting and retaining younger demographics to the city and province.. This letter outlines the proposed site plan, the rationale for the development agreement, and the specifics of the request.

Conceptual Site Plan and Rationale

In August 2023, Screen Nova Scotia announced their intent to acquire a property adjacent to Exhibition Park in order to establish the province's first purpose-built film and television soundstage. Following a 2022 land RFP process and an announcement by the provincial government to invest \$8 million towards a soundstage, the subject property along highway 333 was selected.

A wetland delineation was completed and is attached to this application. As noted, there are two wetlands (WL 1 - 18,929m², and WL 2 - 16,505m²) and two



watercourses. WL 2 (the more significant of the two) and the two watercourses along with a 30m buffer will be preserved. About 16,185m² (4 acres or 1.6 Ha) of WL1 will be removed as part of a wetland bank. The wetland consultants (McCallum Environmental) are currently going through the wetland alteration process with the province.

The conceptual site plan for the new facility features a main soundstage building and parking lot as well as a septic field to the rear of the structure. There is also a space in the south of the property that is reserved for future additions to the facility. The provincially-significant wetland and adjoining watercourse in the eastern section of the property are left untouched, preserved by a 30m buffer.

Enabling Policy and LUB Context

The site is currently zoned CR-2 (Commercial Recreation) under the District 4 Land Use By-Law (LUB) and would not be able to support a soundstage facility as a permitted use. Additionally, rezoning to a similar zone (such as C-2) would carry other concerns for the development potential including a maximum lot coverage of 10%. As a result, we agree with the conclusion by HRM planning staff that pursuing a development agreement is the most ideal route to enable the establishment of the soundstage facility and the ultimate redevelopment of this property.

The subject site is designated Residential B under the Planning District 4 MPS. Within this designation, the MPS recognizes that the area contains a mix of low density residential, commercial, industrial, resource, and community facility uses and acknowledges that a more suburban style of development has been occurring gradually over time. This designation also makes provisions for the continued development of commercial services in a controlled manner along highway 333 (Prospect Road).

The MPS goes on to explain that within the planning district, commercial activities have been especially concentrated in the community of Goodwood, namely in the Gerald Mills Industrial Park which represents one of the largest nearby area of non-residential development. Our subject property is located directly within this commercial concentration area to the northeast of this existing industrial area and to the southeast of the growing Ragged Lake Industrial Park.

The primary enabling policies from the Planning District 4 MPS are RB-10 and IM-11. Policy RB-10 enables uses permitted in the general business zone in excess of 10% of the lot area via a development agreement while policy IM-11 outlines the criteria involved in considering a development agreement within the planning district, including conformity with the MPS and controls placed on the development to reduce conflict with neighbouring uses.

Development Agreement Details

The DA application required the completion of a site plan, building elevations, a traffic impact letter and a servicing plan.

The new facilities will be located on the northern portion of the parcel allowing for a potential expansion of the facilities at some point in the future to the south. There is no anticipated timeline and no certainty for any expansion. It is reasonable to

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assume though that if the facility performs as intended, the use might grow in the future. While there is no future plan at this time, this could include additional studio space due to growing demand or complementary uses to be determined. There might also be an opportunity to subdivide and sell off the southern portion of the site in the future if the facility growth does not materialize. We have no intention to subdivide the property in the near future.

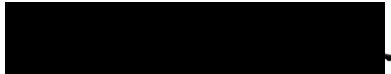
The site is 25 acres in size though half the site is consumed by wetlands and 30m watercourse setbacks. This necessitates a wetland alteration permit to create a cohesive development.

The lot has about 265m of road frontage and about 415m of depth. The future Exhibition Park growth node is located just to the north of this property. The site plan anticipates a 238 car parking lot in front of the facility and a 5,850m² building footprint for the initial phase. The general floor plan layout accompanies this application along with building elevations as requested. The servicing schematic and traffic letter are also provided. Both studies confirm that there are no major service or traffic limitations that might limit this development.

Summary

As we noted, this is a highly important provincial project and economic driver for both NS and HRM which will significantly increase the volume of film and television productions, attract business to our region and develop jobs in the industry. We hope you will work with our team to advance the DA application with other internal departments.

Sincerely,



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Policy Criteria	Comment
<p>RB-10: Notwithstanding Policy RB-2 or Policy RB-4, within the Residential B Designation, Council may consider permitting uses permitted in the general business zone, which are in excess of ten (10) percent of lot area, service stations, motels and entertainment uses in accordance with the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act. In considering such agreements, Council shall have regard to the following:</p>	<p>...</p>
<p>(a) that the architectural design (external appearance) and scale of any structures are compatible with nearby land uses;</p>	<p>The nearest structures to the site are large industrial and commercial buildings such as the Exhibition Park structure or the businesses in the nearby industrial parks. The proposed structure is of similar scale and design to these buildings.</p>
<p>(b) that adequate separation distances are maintained from low density residential developments;</p>	<p>The nearest low-density residential building is more than 1km away from the subject property.</p>
<p>(c) the provision of landscaping and screening from any adjacent residential development;</p>	<p>The nearest low-density residential development is more than 1km away from the subject property. In the event that residential development were to occur closer to the site, the proposed development is set back from prospect road and flanked by forests on 3 sides, providing a significant amount of screening from other properties.</p>
<p>(d) the impact of the proposed use on the existing road network in terms of traffic generation and vehicular and pedestrian safety;</p>	<p>A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) was submitted in support of this application. The TIS asserts that the general operations of the proposed development will have a minimum impact on traffic. Most of the traffic will be event-based, likely taking place outside of rush hour times on weekends and evenings. Additionally, the facility will only need a small amount of staff to run during regular hours, resulting in few trips created. The proposed development is located off of Highway 333 (Prospect Road) which does not feature any sidewalks. As a result, the likelihood of the impact affecting pedestrian safety is low.</p>
<p>(e) the means by which solid and liquid waste will be treated;</p>	<p>The proposed development will feature an on-site septic and well system that will more than meet the necessary servicing requirements.</p>

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Policy Criteria	Comment
(f) the effects of the development on the natural environment and the means for handling stormwater runoff;	The site features a large on-site wetland and multiple adjacent wetlands than can absorb stormwater during a significant rainfall event. The lot coverage of the first phase is only expected to be ~6%, further increasing opportunities for infiltration instead of runoff.
(g) the general maintenance of the development;	The developer will be responsible for maintaining and keeping in good repair all portions of the development.
(h) the hours of operation; and	Given the significant distance between the proposed development and any existing residential developments, the hours of operation for the proposed site will not have any substantial impact on the quality of life for nearby residents.
(i) the provision of Policy IM-11.	See Table Below

Policy Criteria	Comment
IM-11: In considering development agreements or amendments to the land use bylaw, in addition to all other criteria as set out in various policies of this Planning Strategy, Council shall have appropriate regard to the following matters:	...
(a) that the proposal is in conformity with the intent of this Planning Strategy and with the requirements of all other municipal by-laws and regulations;	The proposal is consistent with policy RB-10 (see above table)
(b) that the proposal is not premature or inappropriate by reason of:	...

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Policy Criteria	Comment
(i) the financial capability of the Municipality to absorb any costs relating to the development;	The developer will be responsible for all costs associated with the development.
(ii) the adequacy of on-site sewerage and water services;	See section (e) of the above table.
(iii) the proximity of the proposed development to schools, recreation or other community facilities and the capability of these services to absorb any additional demands;	This proposal would not result in an increase to school age population nor is it anticipated to affect community recreation facilities.
(iv) the adequacy of road networks leading to or within the development; and	See section (d) of the above table.
(v) the potential for damage to or for destruction of designated historic buildings and sites.	There are no known historic sites on or adjacent to the site and there are no registered heritage properties within a 2.5km radius of the subject property.
(c) that controls are placed on the proposed development so as to reduce conflict with any adjacent or nearby land uses by reason of:	...
(i) type of use;	While not explicitly allowed under the current LUB, the Broadcasting and Production studio use already exists in other planning areas in HRM and is not anticipated to have any conflict with the adjacent uses.
(ii) height, bulk and lot coverage of an proposed building;	The nearest structure (Exhibition Park) has a considerably larger footprint than the proposed soundstage facility. The next nearest structures are large, bulky industrial buildings, therefore reducing the likelihood of conflict as a result of the proposed development's size.
(iii) traffic generation, access to and egress from the site, and parking;	Further to policy criteria RB-10(d) discussed above, the proposed development features 200 parking spaces and two vehicular access points.
(iv) open storage;	All refuse and recycling materials to be enclosed within a building or suitable container and screened from the street.
(v) signs; and	All signs erected as a part of the proposed development will meet the requirements of the existing CR-2 zone.

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Policy Criteria	Comment
(vi) any other relevant matter of planning	No other planning issues have been identified.
(d) that the proposed development is suitable in terms of the steepness of grades, soil and geological conditions, locations of watercourses, marshes or bogs and susceptibility to flooding.	There is a 30m buffer separating the provincially significant wetland and adjoining watercourse from the remainder of the proposed development
(e) Within any designation, where a holding zone has been established pursuant to "Infrastructure Charges - Policy IC-6", Subdivision Approval shall be subject to the provisions of the Subdivision By-law respecting the maximum number of lots created per year, except in accordance with the development agreement provisions of the MGA and the "Infrastructure Charges" Policies of this MPS. (RC-Jul 2/02;E-Aug 17/02)	No holding zone has been established and no additional lots are proposed in conjunction with this application.