



May 8, 2025

Thea Langille, MCIP, LPP  
Manager, Planning Applications  
Development Services/Planning & Development

Dear Thea:

**Re: MVRRC (Musquodoboit Valley Rifle and Revolver Club) Application for Development Agreement to allow an expansion of the existing rifle range onto the adjacent 54 acre property (PID 00539791) on Glenmore Road, Middle Musquodoboit.**

As a follow up to our phone conversation on February 18, 2025, please consider this letter an application for a development agreement for the above noted property which is designated and zoned MU (Mixed Use) in the Middle Musquodoboit/Dutch Valley MPS/LUB (Municipal Planning Strategy/Land Use By-law).

The MVRRC has been located at 1000 Glenmore Road in Middle Musquodoboit since the early 1980's. The organization is a non-profit registered under the Society's Act of Nova Scotia and is run by volunteers. The MVRRC is the largest sport archery and firearm club east of Quebec and serves 1700 members from across Canada. It is open to members 365 days of the year and employs approximately 20 private contractors and businesses.

The MVRRC is very important to the law enforcement field by providing space for the training of: the Armed Forces (Canadian Armed Forces and Reserve Forces); several law enforcement groups including Municipal Police Departments, the RCMP and Canada Border Security Agency (CBSA); Parks Canada Enforcement Officers; the Federal Department of Justice (DOJ Canada); Provincial law enforcement agencies such as the Sheriff's Division of the Department of Justice (NSDOJ); the HRM Regional Police Force (HRP); and many individuals, families and youth.

The MVRRC would like to purchase the adjacent property to enable an expansion to their existing operation so that they can provide additional ranges and training areas. The HRP has been working with the MVRRC in seeking new training ranges and is committed to investing in their design and construction on the new property.

This development agreement application applies to the new property only (PID 00539791), and **not** to the existing 40 acre property at 1000 Glenmore Road (PID 41239245) which is currently operating under the Federal and Provincial approvals issued in 2023. The existing property consists of 15 archery and firearm ranges, has a (20' x 24') clubhouse, national park style washrooms, and a parking lot.

The proposed expansion on the new property will likely have 8 to 15 new archery and firearm ranges which will be constructed in two phases over several years. Phase 1 consists of "Future Specialty/Law Enforcement Ranges" (as shown on the enclosed plans) which would begin right away and be completed in approximately 1-3 years.

The HRP has been taking the lead on the design of these new specialty/law enforcement ranges for the new property. The HRP will need a small parking area that would accommodate 40 vehicles for these ranges. The HRP would also like the ability to place a minimum of four storage containers nearby. The MVRRC would like to construct one small building on the new property that is proposed to serve as a learning center as well as national park style washroom facilities. The nearby Musquodoboit high school has also expressed an interest in having additional archery ranges for their use.

The HRP are working with MVRRC to build the first designated sniper range in Nova Scotia dedicated to the exclusive use of the HRP and RCMP sniper teams. Currently, the sniper teams have to go to New Brunswick to use a sniper range. The sniper range will initially be placed on the existing MVRRC property and be re-located to the new property after a development agreement is approved. The new specialty/law enforcement ranges on the subject property will be available to the RCMP, Nova Scotia local police forces, CBSA, military divisions, the Sheriff's division of NSDOJ and others, all of whom are currently using the existing ranges. Funding has been provided to the MVRRC to construct these new specialty/law enforcement ranges from DOJ Canada, NSDOJ and HRP.

### **MPS Policy**

HRM Planning has indicated that the proposal would be considered a new commercial recreation use which is enabled through Policy MU-5, reviewed below:

### **Policy MU-5**

*Notwithstanding Policy MU-2, within the Mixed Use Designation, Council may consider permitting commercial recreation uses according to the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act. In considering such an agreement, Council shall have regard to the following:*

- (a) The potential impact of the proposed development on natural environment and, in particular, potential effects on watercourses;*

The proposal will have very little impact on the natural environment. The construction of the new shooting ranges involves berms and wooden structures. There are no watercourses on the property. There will be a walking path from the existing property to the new property.

- (b) That the proposal will not adversely affect nearby residential or community facility development by virtue of noise, visual intrusion, traffic generation and/or littering;*



There are no nearby residential or community facilities. Therefore, there will not be any adverse affects in terms of noise, visual intrusion, traffic generation or littering on these types of land uses.

There are approximately 5 residential dwellings in the larger surrounding area. The nearest residential property to the north is approximately 580 meters (1902 feet) away from the nearest range on the existing MVRRC property. The nearest residential property to the south is approximately 405 meters (1328 feet) away from a proposed range on the new property. (see plans). There is a blueberry field directly across from the subject property and a gravel pit in the area, both of which use large trucks. There will not be any additional truck traffic associated with the proposal and very little additional passenger vehicle traffic.

The proposed expansion of the MVRRC is not expected to increase the noise level from current levels. The noise at the MVRRC is much lower in decibel levels and occurrences than other rifle ranges because as a privately owned range it must comply with much stricter rules than Provincial and Federally owned ranges. The regulations prohibit privately owned rifle ranges from using most types of magnum caliber firearms including those that are used as wartime weapons. Most of the ranges at the MVRRC are used for regular rifles and revolvers. The hours of operation at the MVRRC is limited to sunrise to sunset as per the Provincial and Federal regulations for private ranges.

The Provincial Department of Natural sources has a rifle range that is located approximately two kilometers to the south of the MVRRC at 397 Sibley Road. Both the Provincial range and the MVRRC have been operating in the Musquodoiboit area for nearly 50 years, since the early 1980's. The Provincial rifle range is located much closer to the Musquodoiboit community and residential homes than the MVRRC range. The Provincial range makes more noise than the MVRRC range due to the fact that it is permitted to operate for all hours of the day and into the night and can utilize a wider range of magnum caliber military firearms than the MVRRC. The noise from magnum caliber military firearms are much louder and produce more consistent sounds than regular rifles and revolvers.

As a comparison, the Bedford rifle range (that many people are familiar with) is a Federally owned range. This range has no restrictions on the use magnum caliber military firearms or high power rifles, including those that are used in wartime scenarios. The Bedford range is allowed to be used during both daytime and nighttime hours. There are homes and highways much closer to the Bedford rifle range than there are to the MVRRC location. It is not uncommon for the nearby surrounding public to hear the shooting from the Bedford Rifle Range. The Bedford rifle range does not meet the Provincial regulations in terms of types of firearms, hours of operation or setback distances.

The MVRRC proposal is to add additional training space and is not expected to increase the traffic in any significant manner. The visual impact will be minimal and similar to the existing rifle range which consists of small wooden structures. The existing rifle range is well maintained

and the membership is very respectful of the operation. There is not a littering problem at the existing operation and it is expected that the proposed expansion will also be well maintained.

*(c) The impact of the proposed use on the existing road network in terms of traffic generation and vehicular and pedestrian safety;*

The proposal is to add two driveways from Glenmore Road to access the subject property. One driveway is for the specialty/law enforcement ranges as Phase 1 and the other is for regular MVRRC ranges as part of Phase 2. The subject property has approximately 531 meters (1742 feet) of road frontage on a straight and level stretch of Glenmore Road which provides significant sight distance in both directions from both proposed driveway locations. There may be a maintenance laneway or walking path that connects the existing MVRRC property to the new property. It is not anticipated that the proposal will generate any noticeable additional traffic or pose any vehicular or pedestrian safety issues.

*(d) That any rifle or gun ranges, amusement parks, vehicle or animal racing tracks shall not be located within one thousand three hundred and twenty (1320 feet) of the nearest residence;*

Both the existing MVRRC range and the subject property for the expansion exceed this setback requirement. The existing MVRRC range is 580 meters (1902 feet) from the nearest residence to the north. The nearest proposed range on the subject property is 405 meters (1328 feet) from the nearest residence to the south. (see plans).

*(e) The layout and design of the development;*

The proposed layout of the new ranges are shown on the attached site plans. The site plan has been designed with input from HRP.

*(f) The general maintenance of the development;*

Maintenance will be addressed in the development agreement. The existing operation is well maintained and will continue to be well maintained. In addition, the Province and Federal levels of government require routine maintenance for firearm ranges.

*(g) The provision of on-site services (water and sewage disposal system) for the proposed use;*

The proposal does not involve any well water or septic systems. The proposal is to provide washrooms similar to the existing washrooms on the MVRRC range which meet the applicable Provincial Park regulations. They are similar to washrooms that are provided in Federal and Provincial parks which use large concrete basins that are pumped out on a regular basis by a licensed sewer removal business. Hand washing stations will be provided via water trucks.



*(h) The requirement of any applicable federal or provincial approvals or requirements;*

The construction and operation of firearm ranges are regulated by the Federal Department of Justice and the RCMP. They are administered in part by the Provincial Department of Justice and the Chief Firearms Office. Firearm ranges may not be constructed or operated unless they meet and maintain all public safety concerns such as setbacks from adjacent and neighbouring properties, which both the existing MVRRC range and the proposed expansion meet. The governing legislation for privately owned ranges are: The Firearms Act, The Shooting Clubs and Shooting Ranges Regulations; and Part III of the Criminal Code. No one can operate a firearm range unless it is first approved by the Provincial and Federal governments. In addition, mandatory inspections by the Chief Firearms Office are undertaken on a regular basis to make sure they meet all Federal and Provincial public safety concerns.

*(i) The hours of operation; and*

The governing legislation and regulations do not allow privately owned ranges to operate outside of daylight hours.

*(j) The provisions of Policy IM-10.*

The matters in IM-10 are summarized as follows:

The proposal meets the intent of the MPS and will be in compliance with all other by-laws and regulations. There is no negative impact on HRM's financial capability or costs. In fact, the proposal will help fulfill the HRP objectives for having access to new training ranges. There are no water or septic systems proposed. There will be no demands from the proposal on school or community facilities or services. Glenmore Road is capable of handling the two proposed driveways from the property which has over half a kilometre of road frontage. A senior estimator from Dexter Construction has confirmed that there is more than enough sight distance in both directions.

There are no designated historic buildings or sites on the property. A development agreement may address matters such as land use, proposed buildings and structures, access and egress, parking, open storage, and signs. The proposed site is suitable with respect to steepness of grades, soil and geological conditions because the new ranges will be built to work with the existing environment with very little grade alteration. The land consists of shale with very little ground cover. There are no watercourses, marshes or bogs on the property and it is not susceptible to flooding.

**Partners:**

The MVRRC has an annual lease with HRP and are working towards a 10 year renewable lease and maintenance agreement with HRP for the new specialty/law enforcement ranges. They are currently in talks with the HRP Project Manager of Facility Design and Construction, Property

Fleet and Environment, Shauna Blundon. Ms. Blundon will oversee the construction of the specialty/law enforcement ranges once the development agreement is approved. Sergeant John McNeil, Manager of the HRP Training Section is taking the lead on the design and timing of the specialty/law enforcement ranges. The Executive Director of the NS Department of Justice's Public Safety and Security division is working with HRM and the RCMP on the design and funding for the sniper range.

Last fall, in 2024, the MVRRC was invited by HRM to attend a meeting in Middle Musquodoboit for "Regional Recreation Service Providers" for the Musquodoboit Valley. The meeting was hosted by HRM Parks and Recreation, who gave an overview of their Rural Recreation Strategy and encouraged rural organizations to provide commercial recreation activities in the area.

Organizations who attended the meeting were encouraged by HRM to work together and take advantage of HRM services and grants to continue and expand recreation activities. The contact person from this meeting is Mickie McDow, Community Recreation Coordinator, Recreation Programing, Parks & Recreation, HRM. She referred Sport NS to the MVRRC with regard to coaches and sporting activities in NS.

Many Provincial and Federal, Municipal elected representatives have visited the club the MVRRC and have expressed support for the club.

**Summary:**

As we discussed on our phone call, the proposal does not involve any water or septic systems, will have very minimal construction activity, and a negligible increase in traffic. Therefore, there is no need for the applicant to submit groundwater studies, a stormwater management plan, site servicing plans, or a Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) as part of this development agreement application.

There is some urgency to this application due to the many partners involved and the need for the new specialty/law enforcement ranges that HRP are actively overseeing at this location. The HRP use the range every week and have new cadets coming for training in the near future. The HRP would like to have their own training ranges for law enforcement groups that are separate and apart from the other ranges that are used primarily for members who are not actively involved in law enforcement.

I look forward to working with your planning team on this very important project.

Sincerely:



Jennifer Tsang, MCIP, LPP