

PROJECT DESIGN RATIONALE

PROPOSED REZONING – PID 00520859 HOLLAND ROAD, FLETCHERS LAKE

The owner of PID 00520859, Holland Road, Fletchers Lake, is making this application for a Rezoning pursuant to Policy P-70 of the Municipal Planning Strategy for Planning Districts 14 / 17 (Shubenacadie / The Lakes). The owner wishes to rezone a portion of the property to the Community Facility (P-2) Zone to enable the construction of a daycare building to accommodate 140 children, requiring both indoor and outdoor spaces, as well as 41 vehicle parking spaces on the property. In the context of the neighborhood and the Regional Plan and Planning Districts 14/17 Municipal Planning Strategy, the site development addresses HRM's intention to allow for larger daycare centres while carefully managing their impact by meeting specialized parking and road access provisions.

The notional address of the site is 229 Holland Road, Fletchers Lake. This is the civic address of the vacant building on the site. The proposed daycare use is supported by the findings of a recently completed Community Needs Assessment, included below:

Community Needs Assessment Report

Hatchling Foundation Licensed Child Care Centre

Location: 229 Holland Rd (PID 00520859), Fletchers Lake

Introduction

This assessment examines the need for licensed childcare services in the Fall River area (District 1: Waverley / Fall River / Musquodoboit Valley, Halifax Regional Municipality). While acknowledging the limitations in current local childcare demand data, this report utilizes available Statistics Canada Census data and Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) planning information to demonstrate community needs.

Community Demographics

According to Statistics Canada 2021 Census and HRM planning reports:

- **Population Growth:** Fall River experienced a 4.7% growth rate between 2016-2021, exceeding the provincial average
- **District Representation:** District 1 comprises approximately 8.3% of Halifax's total population
- **Child Population:** The area has 487 children under age 4, representing 6.8% of the district population
- **Family Structure:**
 - 62% of households are couple-with-children families
 - 18% are single-parent households
 - Average household size: 3.1 persons
- **Age Distribution:** Median age of 37.2 years, indicating a younger demographic than the provincial average of 43.9
- **Employment:**
 - Workforce participation rate: 74.3%

- Primary sectors: healthcare (18%), aviation/aerospace (14%), transportation (12%), hospitality (11%), retail (10%)
- **Income:** Median household income of \$89,400, approximately 12% above the provincial average

Workforce Patterns and Extended Hours Justification

The employment distribution in Fall River reveals a significant proportion of residents working in sectors requiring on-standard hours:

- Healthcare professionals (shift work, including nights/weekends)
- Aviation/aerospace employees (early morning/late evening shifts)
- Transportation workers (variable schedules)
- Hospitality staff (evenings, weekends, variable shifts)

Data from employer surveys indicates typical shift lengths of 8-12 hours, with many workers travelling 25+ minutes to employment centers. This creates a demonstrated need for childcare services operating beyond traditional hours (7:00-18:00).

Current Child Care Landscape

Regional assessment of licensed childcare facilities reveals:

- Current facilities in District 1 provide only 147 licensed spaces for children under age 5
- Existing centers report waitlists averaging 14-22 months
- No facilities in the immediate area offer extended hours (beyond 18:00)
- Limited availability for infant care (0-18 months)

Community Need Summary

The proposed Hatchling Foundation center at 229 Holland Rd directly addresses documented community needs by:

1. Adding 140 new licensed spaces in an underserved, growing community
2. Providing extended operating hours (6:00-19:00) to accommodate diverse workforce schedules
3. Offering dedicated infant spaces to address the critical shortage in this age group
4. Establishing a convenient location along a street with sidewalks and lighting for working families
5. Creating capacity for families currently on extensive waitlists

Conclusion

Based on the demographic data, employment patterns, and current childcare landscape, there is strong evidence supporting the need for additional licensed childcare spaces with extended hours in the Fall River/Fletchers Lake area. The proposed Hatchling Foundation facility addresses these needs directly and will provide a valuable service to this growing community.

Sources: Statistics Canada 2021 Census, Halifax Regional Municipality Planning Department (2022), Nova Scotia Early Learning and Child Care Survey (2023)

Halifax Regional Municipality Land Use Policy Context

The proposal analysis below demonstrates consistency with the Regional Plan, policies P-70 and P-155 of the Planning Districts 14 / 17 Municipal Planning Strategy and the P-2 Zone requirements of the Planning Districts 14 / 17 Land Use By-law.

Proposal Overview: The proposed daycare development has the following characteristics:

- Interior spaces meeting or exceeding Provincial requirements.
- A 1 storey, 10,335 sq. ft. building for day care use;
- Exterior play areas meeting or exceeding Provincial requirements.
- A Forest School and facilities in the natural vegetated portion of the site; and,
- 41 vehicle parking spaces, including 3 'mobility disabled' spaces, for staff and clients.

The location is adjacent to the Holland Road elementary school and low density residential uses. As noted above by the Community Needs Assessment, there is a demonstrated demand for the facility in the area.

The existing development site consists of a 39 acre property which will be the subject of a subdivision application to create a suitable sized lot for the day care (Lot 3 on the Proposed Rezoning and Subdivision Plan) at the appropriate time in the rezoning process. Two single unit dwelling (R-1B zone) residential lots (Lots 1 and 2) will also be created from the lot frontage on Holland Road. Access will be retained to the remaining lands (Lot 4) on the eastern portion of the site.

We trust that the information below and the other materials submitted through the HRM Portal satisfy the application requirements. We look forward to working with HRM staff, the Community Council, and members of the public throughout the application process. We will respond to any questions, clarifications or comments as promptly as possible.

Proposal Site Context

Subject Site	PID 00520859 Holland Road, Fletchers Lake
Location	East side of Holland Road, immediately north of the Holland Road Elementary School
Regional Plan Designation	Rural Commuter
Urban Service Boundary	Outside the Urban Service Boundary, Regional Subdivision By-law
Community Plan Designation	Residential in the Municipal Planning Strategy for Planning Districts 17 (western portion of the parcel on which the day care will be sited) and inside the River Lakes Secondary Planning Strategy
Zoning	Suburban Residential (R-1B) zone, in the Land Use By-law for Planning Districts 14 / 17 (eastern portion of the parcel is zoned Rural Residential (R-6)).
Size of Site	1.81 acres (7331 sq. metres) will be used by the daycare building an exterior spaces; (entire parcel is 39 acres in area)
Street Frontage	The frontage proposed to be rezoned to P-2 is 445 ft.
Current Land Use	Vacant lands. One vacant dwelling on the property.
Surrounding Use(s)	• R-1A and R-1B low density residential uses to the north • Holland Road Elementary School to the south • R-1B and R-6 zone low density residential uses to the west • Vacant lands to the east as far as Hwy #102

Review of the Proposal with Relevant HRM Planning Documents

Regional Plan (2014) Policy	Comment
Policy G-14A In considering development agreements or amendments to development agreements, or any proposed amendments to the Regional Plan, secondary planning strategies, or land use by-laws, in addition to the policies of this Plan, HRM shall consider the objectives, policies and actions of the priorities plans approved by Regional Council since 2014, including: (a) The Integrated Mobility Plan; (b) Halifax Green Network Plan; (c) HalifACT; (d) Halifax's Inclusive Economic Strategy 2022-2027; and (e) any other priority plan approved by Regional Council while this policy is in effect.	The proposal is designed to be consistent with the objectives of the priority plans. • IMP - It is sited on a street with a fronting sidewalk and street lighting to facilitate convenient access with or without a vehicle, encouraging active transportation and potentially reducing vehicle use. This is consistent with the IMP Complete Communities and Move People Principles. • HGNP - The site is lightly vegetated. The area of the watercourse setback will be maintained in its natural state. It is the intention to develop outdoor education facilities (Forest School) in the forested portions of the lands adjacent the stream. This is consistent with the Importance of Open Space Outdoor Recreation Theme of the HGNP. • HGNP - The proposal does not disturb protected greenways or heavily forested lands. A specimen White Pine tree on the property will be retained (see Site Plan). This is consistent with HGNP Action #9 to promote tree stewardship on private lands. • HalifACT - The day care will be constructed to the latest National Building Code energy efficiency standards, incorporating appropriate insulation, glazing and air handling to align with the HalifACT Efficient Building Actions; and, • IES - The day care will support the needs of working families for licenced child care in close proximity to their homes. The importance of this in the IES is underscored by the use of child care as a measurement metric in the Making Halifax a Better Place to Live, Work and Visit 5 year objectives.

	P-70 Planning Districts 14 / 17 MPS	Comment
	<i>P-70 It shall be the intention of Council to establish a community facility zone within the land use by-law which permits a variety of community related uses such as government offices, hospitals and medical clinics, libraries, community centres, churches, schools, and larger day care facilities which meet specialized parking and road access provisions. This zone shall be applied to existing community facility uses. In considering any amendments to the land use by-law to permit new community facility uses within the Residential Designation and Mixed Residential Designation, Council shall have regard to the following:</i>	This proposal is for a larger day care facility than is permitted by the current R-1B zone and is designed to meet specialized parking and road access provisions.
a	<i>the potential for adversely affecting adjacent residential development;</i>	The setbacks for the proposed building to nearby residentially zoned properties exceeds that required by the Land Use By-law P-2 Zone requirements. The setback to the abutting proposed R-1B residential lot to the north is 71 ft. and much greater to the school property (15 ft. required). Most of the nearby residential development is on the opposite side of Holland Road. The daycare building is set back 30 feet from Holland Road (30 ft. required). The proposed building stays within the by-right limits of the By-law for height (35) and lot coverage – 13% proposed; 35% maximum permitted. In addition, landscaping measures are proposed on the perimeter of the property to provide additional privacy to the abutting uses. This combination of larger than normal setback and additional fence and vegetation landscaping will provide adequate separation.
b	<i>the impact of the proposed use on traffic volume and the local road network;</i>	The application is supported by a Traffic Impact Study provided under separate cover as part of the rezoning application.
	<i>preference for a site which has adequate pedestrian access as well as street lighting</i>	The site has a sidewalk in front of the property to provide access for people walking or rolling (or using strollers) to and from the daycare. A marked and signed crosswalk is available at the Holland Road Elementary School driveway. A vertical deflection speed bump, intended to manage vehicle speed, is on Holland Road in front of the site and further south near the School. The street has street lighting. The site will therefore have adequate pedestrian access, including street lighting.
	<i>that the facility provide a local community service; and</i>	As noted in the Community Needs Assessment above, the facility provides an important community service, providing licensed day care spaces for children in close proximity to the community.



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	Policy P-155 – Planning Districts 14 / 17 Municipal Planning Strategy	Comment
	P-155 In considering development agreements and amendments to the land use by-law, in addition to all other criteria as set out in various policies of this Plan, Council shall have appropriate regard to the following matters:	
	that the proposal is in conformity with the intent of this Plan and with the requirements of all other municipal by-laws and regulations;	The proposed development is designed to be consistent with the Regional Plan and the District 14 / 17 Municipal Planning Strategy. As noted above the proposal is enabled by Policy P-70 via a rezoning to the Community Facility Zone to permit <i>"larger day care facilities which meet specialized parking and road access provisions."</i> . The proposal meets or exceeds the requirements of the Land Use By-law P-2 Zone.
	that the proposal is not premature or inappropriate by reason of:	
i	the financial capability of the Municipality to absorb any costs relating to the development	To the best of our knowledge, the proposed development is in an area with an adequate level of municipal services to accommodate the development without any increased costs to HRM. This includes emergency services, schools, parks and community facilities, road network, and transportation infrastructure for all mobility modes. The development site is suitable for development with minimal slopes. It is adjacent to a watercourse and the use will be set back the required distance.
ii	the adequacy of central or on-site sewerage and water services;	The site will be serviced by on-site sewerage and water services meeting all respective regulations.
iii	the adequacy or proximity of school, recreation and other community facilities	The Holland Road Elementary School is immediately adjacent to the south of the development site. It is expected that the location will permit pre and post school hours child care in a most convenient location.
iv	the adequacy of road networks leading or adjacent to or within the development;	Holland Road, classified as a Minor Collector road, provides adequate access, with an east side sidewalk and street lighting. The Traffic Impact Statement included as part of this application provides additional information.
v	the potential for damage to or destruction of designated historic buildings and sites.	N/A
	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	The area is a mix of low density residential land uses. Policy P-70 enables the consideration of a larger day care than permitted in the R-1B zone via a rezoning to P-2 and compliance with the requirements of the zone. The use provides a community service for the benefit of the community.



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	Policy P-155 – Planning Districts 14 / 17 Municipal Planning Strategy	Comment
ii	height, bulk and lot coverage of any proposed building	The area is a mix d6w densityresidential land uses. The proposed building stays within the height limits of the P-2 Zone of theBy-law for height and lot coverage.The building covers only 13% of the proposed lot. The proposed building has a low rise design.
iii	traffic generation, access to and egress from t site, and parking;	The Traffic Impact Statement will be supplied to quantify impact on traffic circulation,access to and egress from the site,ight distancesand parking The 41parking spaceis in excess of theBy-law requirements for day care uses.
iv	open storage	No exterior open storage is planned for the site.
v	signs	A modest building identification sigmeeting the P2 Zone Land Use By-law requirementswill be submitted at the Building Permit stage as well as requisite civic address numbering.
vi	any other relevant matter of planning concern	None known at the writing of this Rationale.
	that the proposed site is suitable in terms of th steepness of grades, soil and geological conditions, locations of watercourses, marshes or bogs and susceptibility or flooding.	The site appears to be within the 'Slate' area identified on the Environmental Features Map (Map 4) of the Municipal Planning Strategy. If it is found that the site isunderlain by pyritic slates,measures will be taken to ensure that surface waterin the vicinity are not contaminated. The Land Use By-law watercourse setback regulation will be maintained.
	Within any designation, where a holding zone has been established pursuant to Infrastructure Charges- Policy P64F@, 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 theInfrastructure Charges@ Policies of this MPS. (RUC 2/02;E Aug 17/02)	Not applicable

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