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Item No. 15.1.7
Halifax Regional Council
December 13, 2022

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Caroline Blair-Smith, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: December 5, 2022

SUBJECT: **Case 24469: Master Planning Initiation for the M District Future Growth Node, Dartmouth**

ORIGIN

- Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy Policy F-3:

“The Municipality may establish a master neighbourhood planning program to prepare Site-Specific CDD Development Agreement Requirements for each Future Growth Node, that have not already been completed and are part of this Plan. When considering initiating these master neighbourhood planning exercises, Council may consider the following;

- a) opportunities to coordinate master neighbourhood planning with transportation network investments;*
 - b) the need to enable additional development opportunities in the local area containing the specific Future Growth Node, and in the Regional Centre generally; and*
 - c) the readiness of private land owners to proceed with development.”*
- Request by WM Fares Architects on behalf of Rank Inc.
 - October 26, 2021, Regional Council Motion (Item No. 12.2)

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Austin

THAT Halifax Regional Council: ... 8. Direct the CAO to prepare amendments to the Regional Centre Land Use By-law for consideration by Community Council following the effective date of the Regional Centre Secondary Municipality Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to increase the maximum tower dimensions established for the Mic Mac Mall Lands (ML) Special Area.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter), Part VIII, Planning & Development

....RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 2

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

1. Initiate a process to consider amendments to the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to enable comprehensive development of the M District Future Growth Node located between Micmac Boulevard and Horizon Court;
2. Consider, as part of the M District Future Growth Node planning process, the October 26, 2021 direction of Regional Council to prepare amendments to the Regional Centre Land Use By-law to increase the maximum tower dimensions established for the Mic Mac Mall Lands (ML) Special Area; and
3. Follow the public participation program as set out in Attachment A.

BACKGROUND

A request has been received from WM Fares Architects, on behalf of Rank Inc., to initiate a process to undertake master neighbourhood planning for the M District Future Growth Node (FGN) located between Micmac Boulevard and Horizon Court in Dartmouth, as identified in the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (RCSMPS). The FGN designation directs that a comprehensive planning process be undertaken to effectively guide the development of each of these sites as mixed-use communities with supporting public infrastructure. This process will include consideration of amendments to the RCSMPS and the Regional Centre Land Use By-law (RCLUB) and an associated development agreement.

While the RCSMPS identifies the subject lands as the Mic Mac Mall Lands FGN, this planning process will refer to the site as the M District FGN to support the landowner’s request for the project name to reflect the branding and marketing of the new development. This project name is consistent with the findings of the Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Municipality’s efforts to consider the potential renaming of Micmac Boulevard and other similar named municipal assets.

Site Context

The subject FGN is comprised of six separate properties, as identified on Map 1, that are currently developed with a large commercial complex. The subject lands are described in greater detail below:

Subject Site	PIDs 40173692, 40173684, 00100446, 40173676, 00616946, 40174294
Location	Properties bordered by Micmac Boulevard, Horizon Court and Highway 111, Dartmouth
Regional Plan Designation	Urban Settlement
Community Plan Designation (Map 1)	Future Growth Node (FGN)
Zoning (Map 2)	Comprehensive Development District 2 (CDD-2)
Size of Site	Approximately 24 hectares (59.3 acres)
Street Frontage	Total: approximately 2,050 metres (6,725 feet) Micmac Boulevard: approximately 950 metres (3,117 feet) Horizon Court: approximately 650 metres (2,132 feet) Highway 111: approximately 450 metres (1,476 feet)
Current Land Use(s)	Two commercial buildings (Mic Mac Mall and Chapters), an office building (Irving Shipbuilding) and surface parking.

Surrounding Use(s)	Low, medium, and high-density residential development, municipal parks (Maybank Park, Horizon Court Playground, Lakeshore Park), Crichton Park School, Lake Micmac
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Site Access

Access to the subject FGN is currently largely designed for vehicles, with some pedestrian connections available to and through the site. Traffic accesses the site parking lots using five driveways off Micmac Boulevard, including Horizon Court. There is no direct access to the site from Highway 111. A transit terminal is located on the western edge of the site on Micmac Boulevard, which currently serves as a connection to six bus routes.

Property Owner Submission

A development plan has been submitted by WM Fares Architects on behalf of one of the landowners, Rank Inc., for five of the six subject properties. The concept is a phased proposal to develop the lands currently used for on-site parking and to redevelop one of the existing commercial buildings on the western portion of the site. The proposal includes:

- Seven, 30 to 36 storey residential towers on two podiums (approximately 1,660 units);
- Five, nine storey residential buildings with retail at grade (approximately 240 units);
- A twelve storey retirement facility (approximately 400 units); and
- A six to fourteen storey addition to the west face of the existing mall building that includes parking, office space and entertainment space.

The property owner's complete proposal is included as Attachment B.

J.D. Irving Limited are the owners of the additional parcel of land located in the FGN, which contains an office building and parking area. They have been made aware of the request to initiate the master neighbourhood planning process and have not submitted a proposal for their lands at this time. Staff will continue to work with these landowners to gather information about their property and their vision for possible future development.

Regional Plan Context

The area is designated Urban Settlement under the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS). This designation is applied to lands where serviced development exists or is proposed. Section 3.1 of the RMPS outlines the following objectives for communities within the Urban Settlement designation:

“Design communities that:

- a) are attractive, healthy places to live and have access to the goods, services and facilities needed by residents and support complete neighbourhoods as described in 6.2.2A (v) (RC-Sep 18/19;E-Nov 30/19) of this Plan;*
- b) are accessible to all mobility needs and are well connected with other communities;*
- c) promote energy efficiency and sustainable design;*
- d) protect neighbourhood stability and support neighbourhood revitalization;*
- e) preserve significant environmental and cultural features;*
- f) promote community food security;*
- g) provide housing opportunities for a range of social and economic needs and promote aging in place”*

These objectives have been carried forward in the RCSMPs and the policy direction that it provides for FGNs.

Secondary Plan and Land Use By-law Context

The RCSMPS is the secondary plan for the Regional Centre, which generally includes the Halifax Peninsula and Dartmouth inside the Circumferential Highway (Highway 111). The subject lands are designated Future Growth Node (FGN) by the RCSMPS. This designation is applied to large sites in the Regional Centre that are located near transit priority corridors and terminals and can accommodate significant population growth and employment opportunities. FGN sites are typically vacant or under-utilized lands that will benefit from a comprehensive approach to new development. Master neighbourhood planning enables the Municipality to coordinate land uses, mobility links, public parkland, infrastructure, and urban design.

The lands are zoned “Comprehensive Development District (CDD-2)” under the RCLUB. Prior to completion of the master neighbourhood planning process, this zone limits development to one additional main building on the site without a development agreement to avoid impacting the future comprehensive development of the site.

Specific to the Mic Mac Mall Lands Special Area (identified on Schedule 3F of the RCLUB), the additional building that may be constructed on the site prior to master neighbourhood planning may not exceed 25,000 square metres and a maximum building height of 26 metres. This is larger than the regulations set out for other FGNS. This policy was adopted by Council at the request of the property owner to enable the construction of an office building on the site prior to the master planning process. The property owner has since decided to revise this proposal beyond the scope of the current RCSMPS policies and have included the building in their proposal for consideration as part of this planning process.

The RCSMPS envisions each FGN developing in a coordinated manner based on a master neighbourhood plan that considers its environmental, social, cultural, and economic context. This process would result in the development of Comprehensive Development District (CDD) development agreement criteria that are then adopted into the RCSMPS through a plan amendment. Once Council has adopted the CDD criteria for an FGN, development is intended to proceed by development agreement, which would be evaluated for its consistency with the established CDD criteria.

The objectives of the FGN designation are listed in section 2.9 of the RCSMPS and include:

1. *Provide for diverse and inclusive opportunities for public engagement during the master neighbourhood planning process;*
2. *Identify and preserve significant environmental and cultural features;*
3. *Support the development of mixed-use neighbourhoods with a range of housing opportunities, places of employment, and services where daily needs of residents can be met;*
4. *Support a transportation network that prioritizes transit, pedestrians and cyclists, and is connected to surrounding communities;*
5. *Provide public parks, open spaces, and community facilities that meet the recreational needs of residents;*
6. *Integrate new developments with surrounding uses and neighbourhoods;*
7. *Support the creation of healthy and pedestrian-oriented places that consider human-scale design, food security, urban agriculture, and the conservation of energy;*
8. *Mitigate overland and coastal flooding, and manage stormwater on-site; and*
9. *Consider risks, impacts and opportunities associated with nearby railways, highways, and high-traffic arterial roadways.*

RCSMPS Policy F-3 guides the initiation of FGN master neighbourhood planning processes. It requires the Municipality to consider opportunities to coordinate with transportation network investments, the need for development within the surrounding area and the Regional Centre, and the readiness of landowners to proceed with development.

Policy F-4 sets out specific considerations for Council when adopting development agreement criteria. This policy guides assessments of the site including its suitability for development, infrastructure requirements,

permitted land uses, building design and the transportation network.

DISCUSSION

The RCSMPS is a strategic policy document that sets out the goals and objectives for long term growth and development in the Regional Centre. It specifically requires master planning and an SMPS amendment to permit redevelopment in the subject FGN. Therefore, an SMPS amendment to allow comprehensive development of the subject FGN is consistent with RCSMPS policies. The following sections outline the proposed planning process and key items for review.

Master Neighbourhood Planning Process

The RCSMPS does not set out the order in which master neighbourhood planning should be completed for FGNs. Regional Council is not obligated to initiate a plan amendment to create development agreement criteria at this time. Given the strategic location of the site, staff recommend moving forward with the initiation of the master neighbourhood planning for the subject FGN to support new housing development and enable development of lands that have been identified for growth by the Municipality.

Should Council choose to initiate the master planning process, CDD development agreement criteria will be developed for the site, consistent with the objectives of the FGN Designation and SMPS Policy F-4. The process to create development agreement criteria includes:

- Completing the required infrastructure, environmental, culture and heritage, and site context assessments identified by policy F-4;
- Following a public consultation program, as set out in Attachment A;
- Developing a high-level site-development concept plan, similar to those included in the RCSMPS for other FGNs;
- Analyzing applicable RCSMPS policies, including the Regional Centre Design Manual;
- Completing any other studies or analysis necessary to support the development of the site; and
- Presenting the proposed policies for Council's consideration.

To streamline the planning process, staff are also recommending that a development agreement to enable development be prepared concurrently.

Staff Review of Proposal

Staff have reviewed the applicant's submission and the following items have been identified for more detailed review should master neighbourhood planning be initiated.

Office Tower

In October 2021, Regional Council directed the CAO to prepare amendments to RCLUB to increase the maximum tower dimensions established for the Mic Mac Mall Lands (ML) Special Area. However, as the applicant has since revised this proposal beyond the scope of the current RCSMPS policies, this proposed office building will instead be considered as part of the FGN planning process.

Land Use

The RCSMPS envisions FGNs developing as walkable, mixed-use communities. While the intensity of uses may vary from node-to-node, the inclusion of a variety of land uses, particularly commercial and institutional uses, can support the development of complete communities. A mixing of land uses provides opportunities for employment, supports walkability and can reduce trips by car, by making services available to local and nearby residents. This can also support vibrant communities by creating places for community members to gather and socialize.

The proposal submitted by the owner of five of the six properties includes a significant amount of high density residential development and maintains the majority of the existing commercial uses on the site by

retaining the mall building. The master neighbourhood planning process will consider the appropriate mix of land uses, transitions and built forms. The proposal will be further reviewed against infrastructure capacity in the area and the needs for the site and surrounding area to establish a complete community.

Connectivity

The subject site currently features several private driveway connections for vehicles to access surface parking. These connections are also informally used by vehicles to travel through the site. The identification and formalization of public mobility connections through the site will be determined through the master neighbourhood planning process. This will include consideration of new public streets and walkways, the proposed pedestrian bridge across Highway 111, potential improvements to the surrounding transportation network, the role of private plazas and walkways, and other items that may be identified through the required transportation study.

A Halifax Transit terminal is also currently located on the site. It is anticipated that the increased number of residents living in the area as a result of the proposed development could significantly increase demand for public transit to and from the site. A review of service requirements and the transit terminal design will be undertaken in coordination with Halifax Transit as part of the master neighbourhood planning process.

Parkland and Open Space

The subject site is currently largely hardscaped with buildings and surface parking. The proposal submitted includes indoor community gathering space and limited public open space. The proposed development would introduce a significant number of new residents to the area. This will increase the demand for nearby public open space, particularly given that these new residential units are primarily proposed within large buildings without private yards. The capacity of existing parks in the surrounding area relative to the proposed development will be reviewed through the master neighbourhood planning process to determine the park and open space requirements for the site. This review will consider municipal costs associated with future park development, maintenance, and operations.

Conclusion

FGNs have been identified in the RCSMPS as locations suitable for additional density within the Regional Centre that will allow for more efficient use of land, services and infrastructure. Initiating the master neighbourhood planning process for the subject FGN will support new housing and public amenities to be built for current and future residents. This process will identify and address opportunities and constraints for the development of the site. A parallel development agreement process will enable the process to proceed in an efficient manner. Therefore, staff recommend that Council initiate the RCSMPS and RCLUB amendment process to enable the comprehensive development of the M District Future Growth Node.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with undertaking the master neighbourhood planning process can be accommodated within the approved 2022-23 operating budget. The landowners will be responsible for the costs associated with providing required background studies and information. The need for any supporting municipal investments, local Improvement Charges or Capital Cost Contributions will be considered as part of the planning process.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations contained within this report. Secondary plan amendments are at the discretion of Regional Council and are not subject to appeal to the N.S. Utility and Review Board.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Should Regional Council choose to initiate the SMPS amendment and development agreement process, the *HRM Charter* requires that Regional Council approve a public participation program. In February of 1997, Regional Council approved a public participation resolution for proposed local MPS amendments. This requires a public meeting to be held, at a minimum, and any other measures deemed necessary to obtain public opinion.

The proposed Public Participation Program is set out in Attachment A. Staff are proposing a two-phased approach that includes a range of engagement tools. The proposed program includes direct mail-outs, online tools, stakeholder outreach, and a project website. Key stakeholders include local residents, community organizations, utilities, other regulators, and property owners.

In addition to this public participation, the *HRM Charter* requires a public hearing to be held before Regional Council can consider approval of any plan amendments.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The complete communities envisioned by the Regional Centre SMPS for Future Growth Nodes encourage transit supportive services, pedestrian oriented streets, recreation opportunities, and mixed-use development. This type of development generally encourages the use of active transportation and shared mobility instead of cars and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, the subject Future Growth Node is largely already developed with buildings and parking. Therefore, the proposed development of the site would not result in a significant increase in impermeable surfaces in the area.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose not to initiate a master neighbourhood planning to enable to the comprehensive development of the M District Future Growth Node located between Micmac Boulevard and Horizon Court at this time. A decision of Council not to initiate a process to consider amending the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy is not appealable to the NS Utility and Review Board, as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.
2. Regional Council may choose to initiate the consideration of potential policy that would differ from those outlined in this report. This may require a supplementary staff report.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Generalized Future Land Use

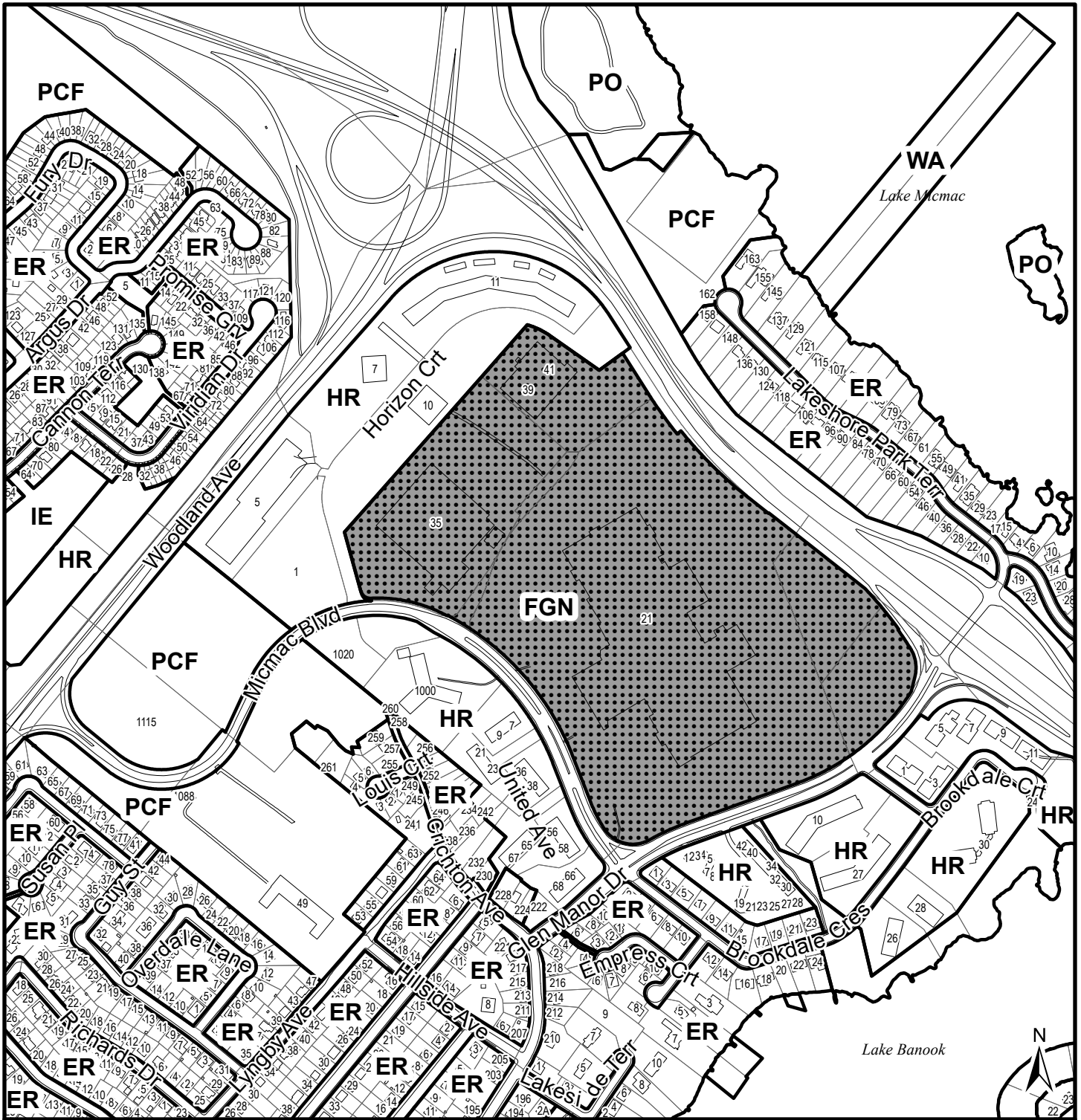
Map 2: Zoning

Attachment A: Public Participation Program

Attachment B: Property Owner Submission

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Kathleen Fralic, Planner III, 902.233.2501



Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use

Mic Mac Mall Lands,
Dartmouth

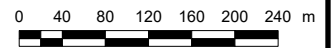
 Subject Property

Designation

DART	PO	Designation
RC	ER	Established Residential
	FGN	Future Growth Node
	HR	Higher-Order Residential
	IE	Institutional Employment
	PCF	Park and Community Facility

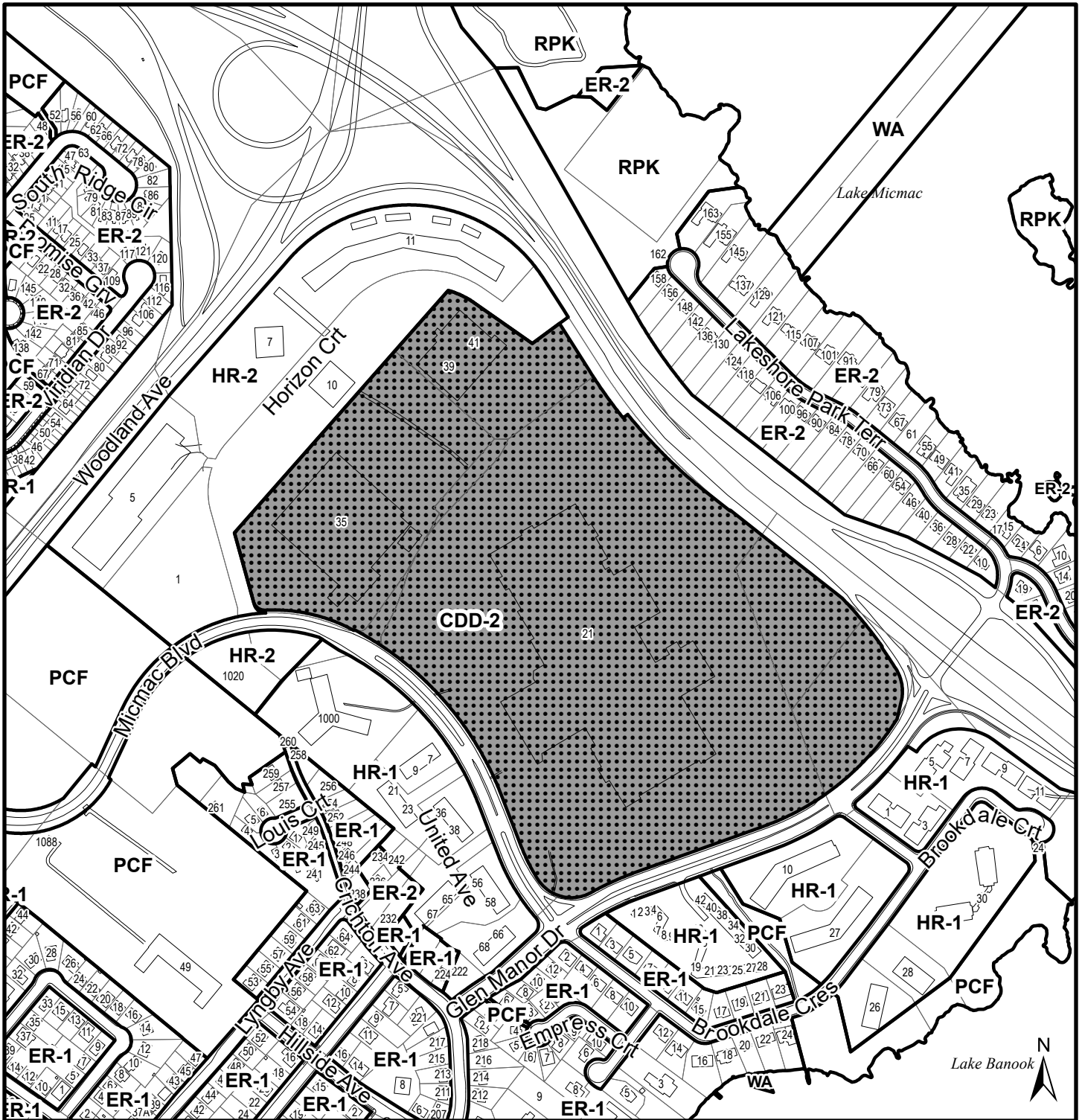
Dartmouth By-Law Area,
Regional Centre By-Law Area

HALIFAX




This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Generalized Future Land Use Map for the plan area indicated.

The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.



Map 2 - Zoning

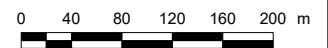
Mic Mac Mall Lands,
Dartmouth

 Subject Property

Dartmouth By-Law Area,
Regional Centre By-Law Area

Zone	
DART	RPK Regional Park
RC	CDD-2 Comprehensive Development District 2
	ER-1 Established Residential 1
	ER-2 Established Residential 2
	HR-1 Higher-Order Residential 1
	HR-2 Higher-Order Residential 2
	PCF Parks and Community Facilities

HALIFAX



This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Zoning Map for the plan area indicated.

The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.

Attachment A

Case 24469 – Public Participation Program

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Goals

- Create awareness of the master neighbourhood planning process for the Future Growth Node located between Micmac Boulevard and Horizon Court.
- Invite all residents and stakeholders to participate in the master neighbourhood planning process.
- Create a welcoming, accessible engagement process.
- Involve and collaborate with residents and key stakeholders in the development of policy for the Future Growth Node located between Micmac Boulevard and Horizon Court.
- Solicit feedback on the proposed policy and key development agreement controls once drafts are prepared.

Public Engagement Activities

Phase 1 – Visioning

- Send direct mailouts to the residents in the surrounding community inviting them to participate in the process.
- Maintain a project website/Shape Your City site with information regarding the project and tools to allow community members to provide initial feedback.
- Host a public meeting to share the purpose of the process, enabling planning policies, and seek input.
- Directly engage property owners, residents, community groups and other stakeholders.

Phase 2 – Draft Policy Review

- Update the project website/Shape Your City site with information regarding draft master neighbourhood plans and development agreement controls, and tools to allow community members to provide feedback.
- Directly engage property owners, residents, community groups and other stakeholders.

M DISTRICT FUTURE GROWTH NODE

(FORMERLY MIC MAC MALL LANDS)

DARTMOUTH, NOVA SCOTIA

PLANNING RATIONALE AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN



PREPARED AUGUST 2022 BY



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August 12, 2022

ATTN: Ben Sivak

Planning & Development, Halifax Regional Municipality
5251 Duke Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1P3

RE: Application to initiate Development Agreement and Municipal Planning Strategy Amendment for the *M District* (Formerly Mic Mac Mall Lands) in Dartmouth, NS.

Dear Mr. Sivak,

On behalf of our client, *Rank Inc.* we are pleased for the opportunity to initiate the process of a Development Agreement (DA) and Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) amendment application for a mixed – use development located on Mic Mac Blvd, and Highway 111 in Dartmouth NS.

While the RCSMPS identifies the subject lands as the Mic Mac Mall Lands, the landowners have requested that this planning process refer to the site as the *M District* to reflect the branding and marketing of the new development.

In support of this submission, the following material is contained within this document, or as a separate attachment:

- Completed Planning Application Form
- Planning Rationale
- Conceptual Architectural Site Plans

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION & CONTEXT

The subject site is located within the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy Area and has been designated as a *Future Growth Node* under the newly adopted Regional Centre Plan. The site has direct frontage along Mic Mac Boulevard, indirect frontage along Highway 111 (Circumferential), and is in close proximity to Woodland Avenue. The subject site consists of five (5) properties, with the intention of treating the site with a holistic, cohesive approach. The current PIDS's include:

- 00100446: EXISTING MALL
- 40173676: CHAPTERS BOOK STORE
- 40173684: OVERFLOW PARKING
- 40173692: OVERFLOW PARKING
- 00616946: INTERSTITIAL PARCEL (MALL // IRVING LANDS)

The combined site will have a total lot area of approximately 198,000m² (19.80ha. / 48.93ac.). Currently the site is primarily occupied by the Mic Mac Mall shopping complex which includes several large-scale commercial tenants such as Old Navy, Decathlon, and Hudson's Bay, all with exterior and interior frontage. The mall in its current state also includes dozens of smaller tenants, accessible from the interior common circulation space. The smaller parcel at the north end of the site currently houses a Chapters bookstore, a vacant (attached) commercial space, exterior surface parking, and an access road to the Horizon Court residential development.



FIG. 01 – SITE CONTEXT

2.0 SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Please refer to the attached figures for detailed visual breakdown of project phasing, in support of written descriptions below. The proposed high-density development consists of seven (7) residential towers divided between two (2) interconnecting podiums at the north and east perimeters of the site. Acting as a transition between the lower height of the mall and these towers, will be five (5) mid rise residential buildings within the interstitial space of the two scales of development. These buildings are proposed to be nine (9) storeys total in height, with streetwall setbacks occurring at the 3rd or 4th level and retail at grade to create a better pedestrian experience. Attached to the west face of the mall adjacent to one of the current entrances, is a proposed structure that consists of at grade retail space, above ground tiered parking, commercial office space, and family entertainment space that connects to the upper level of the existing mall common space. Finally, the south corner of the site has been earmarked for a tall midrise development catering exclusively to senior citizens and retirement living. In addition to the residential and commercial developments, the current metro transit terminal will be redeveloped in its existing location, while working with city staff to improve public transit circulation with the development. The construction of the proposal is slated to be divided into 10 phases, spanning several years. There will be considerable overlap in each phase, with the intention of minimizing disturbance to existing mall tenants and surface parking under their current lease agreements.

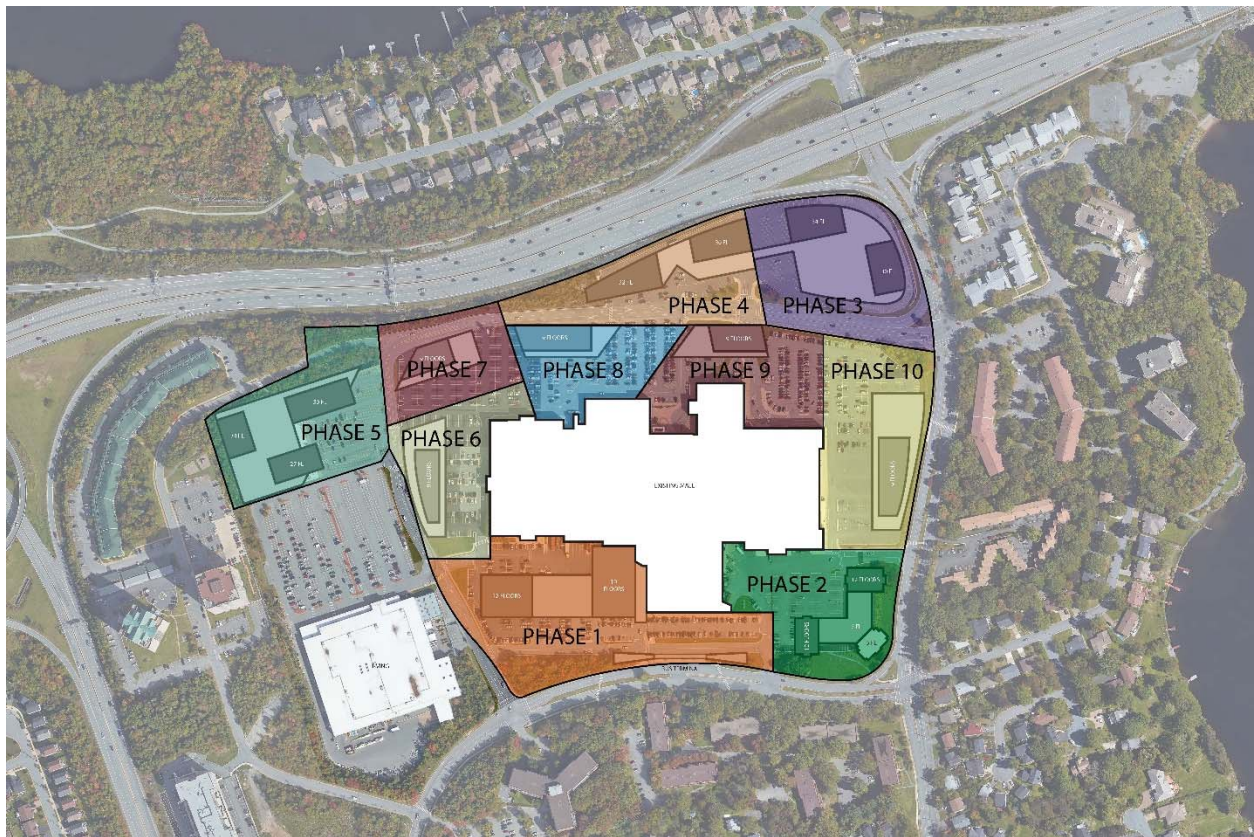


FIG. 02 – CONSTRUCTION PHASING

A summary of each phase listed below:

Phase 1: Proposed as an attachment to the west face of the existing mall, this structure contains multiple programmatic elements that will play a vital role in supporting and augmenting the retail aspects of the mall, while minimizing disturbances to surface parking and existing tenants. At grade, approximately 22,000 SQ FT of flexible retail space will be created with both exterior frontage and access to an interior common area of the mall. The 2nd to 5th floors will be comprised of open-air parking, creating a net gain of roughly 900 spaces. Level 6 is a double height floor plate that will align and attach with the upper level of the mall. This creates a family entertainment and recreation space that is accessible without leaving the comforts of the current mall common spaces. Above this level, two separate extensions continue at either end of the structure to cap the office spaces at 10 and 12 storeys respectively. Office structure 1 (south) will be 4 storeys above the parking levels, and create approximately 90,000 SQ FT of rentable space, while office structure 2 (north) is 6 storeys on a smaller floor plate, also accounting for an additional 90,000 SQ FT of office space. This phase is intended to be the first completed, using large precast structural elements to minimize disturbance time to the existing surface parking. The footprint of the building screens the existing loading area from public view, while creating a new extended entrance that reaches proud of the building face to promote better and safer pedestrian connectivity with the bus terminal.

Phase 2: At the south corner of the property, the proposal calls for a tall midrise development exclusively for senior citizens and retirement living. The building shall be designed cohesively with the rest of the development, in partnership with a reputable senior care company, carrying an expertise in retirement living programme and requirements. The overall building is proposed to address the corner condition and lower rise residential developments across the road by implementing a stepped streetwall massing. With the implementation of stepbacks and roof terraces, the streetscape is softened, and additional outdoor amenity space is provided for residents. The stepbacks also pull the tall midrise forms further away from the lower scale residential developments which are in close proximity, respecting the context of the existing neighbourhood. The target overall square footage of this proposal is approximately 440,000 SQ FT, providing roughly 400 units to cater to the city's aging population.

Phase 3: With the Phase 1 parking structure complete, the disruption of current overflow parking will commence. Phase 3 marks the foray into the residential towers on the property, with two (2) out of four (4) tower forms being completed on a shared podium. The towers will contain double height retail space at grade, with flexible commercial or residential space within the streetwall masses. The tower portions will extend in height up to 30 - 36 floors, creating overall heights of 95 – 115m. The first two (2) tower masses alone will account for approximately 520 units. A double level of underground parking will also be provided, that will eventually become interconnected with the entire underground parking network present beneath the interstitial tall mid-rise buildings.

Phase 4: This phase is the extension of Phase 3, representing the second half of the shared podium and the remaining two (2) of four (4) towers. For all intents and purposes, these two phases can be viewed simultaneously, they have simply been broken up for ease of construction scheduling and coordination. Underground, at grade, streetwall, and tower massing will all be congruent with phase 3, yielding similar heights, unit counts, and commercial square footages. Overall, phase 3 + 4 will yield approximately 150,000 SQ FT of retail space at grade, 300,000 SQ FT of commercial space within the streetwall masses, and approximately 1060 new residential units, 540 being completed in Phase 4.

Phase 5: Situated at the north corner of the site, phase 5 is located on the plot that is currently occupied by the Chapters commercial space. This development is proposed to contain three (3) tower forms on a shared streetwall podium. Similar to phases 3 and 4, extended height retail space will be present at grade to augment the pedestrian experience within the site, providing approximately 85,000 SQ FT of retail or commercial space. Above, the streetwall mass will contain roughly 170,000 SQ FT of flexible space suitable for commercial occupancy or additional residential units. A single or double level of underground parking will plug in to the eventual below grade network. The three (3) tower forms will range in height from 30 – 36 storeys (inclusive of streetwall) creating a spectrum of overall heights between 95 – 115m. Combined, these three (3) forms will create approximately 600 residential units.

Phases 6 – 10: The final phases of the proposed development will contain the implementation of five (5) tall mid-rise buildings occupying the interstitial space and providing a transition in massing between the existing mall and the tower developments. These phases will be completed last, as they are immediately adjacent to the mall and any work done would have to account for the current tenancy and operation of the existing mall. Each module will consist of a primarily transparent retail level at grade, creating an inviting condition for pedestrians. The retail area provided will range between 35,000 – 50,000 SQ FT per module (phase). The streetwall massing will mirror that of the tower bases and existing mall height, creating curated pedestrian corridors that focus on drawing the patron through the site while limiting vehicular access. Above the streetwall, ample setbacks will be implemented before the buildings continue up to their 26m overall height. These stepped back upper levels will be comprised of residential units, averaging between 60 – 80 per building, while the streetwall masses have the potential to be comprised of additional residential units, commercial space, or a combination of both. Within the two (2) levels of streetwall mass, roughly 70,000 – 100,000 SQ FT of flexible space will be created per module. If the residential component is located solely above the streetwall, each building is proposed to yield approximately 60-80 residential units, totalling 350 units. Working in a clockwise manner around the site, each completed phase will add another connecting module to the underground parking network, while simultaneously completing the surface pedestrian pathways until the entire site has reached its holistic vision.

As indicated in the above description of each phase, the proposed development will aim to create between 2000 and 2200 residential units, non inclusive of the development catering to senior retirement living. This range is indicative of the flexibility within the streetwall, where either residential or commercial space could function. At grade, the proposal is targeting the addition of 482,000 SQ FT of

pedestrian accessible retail space. Across the site within the various streetwall masses, approximately 1,075,000 SQ FT of flexible commercial space is slated to be added between the second and third floors. Depending on the market dictated programme at the time of development, this number could be reduced to roughly 500,000 SQ FT if the third floor is developed as residential units. The multi level subterranean parking network coupled with the prefabricated above ground structure is proposing to add between 6250 – 6750 parking stalls for residents, employees, and visitors, with well placed entrances to deter vehicular traffic within the pedestrian corridors. 900 spaces will be located within the Phase 1 above ground structure, approximately 5500 will be located underground, and 350 will be on the surface in proximity to commercial entrances for visitors with limited mobility.

The current entrances to the mall located at the southeast, and southwest perimeters of the site are proposed to remain active, primarily as a service road that navigates the rough circumference of the site. This road will also provide access to drop off lanes at key entrance points of the existing mall and new retail spaces, with an emphasis on providing accessibility to visitors with mobility issues. The site will also be bolstered by the addition of a new public transit bus terminal, placed in its current location on Mic Mac Blvd near the southwest entrance of the mall. Developed in line with the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, this terminal will provide a much-needed upgrade to the existing metro transit experience within the identified *Transit Priority Corridor* along Mic Mac Blvd. The internal service road will have the ability to facilitate revised metro transit routes with new stops around the site, and provides an opportunity for a potential “hop on, hop off” shuttle service to be available to visitors who have difficulty walking longer distances when arriving via the public transit terminal.

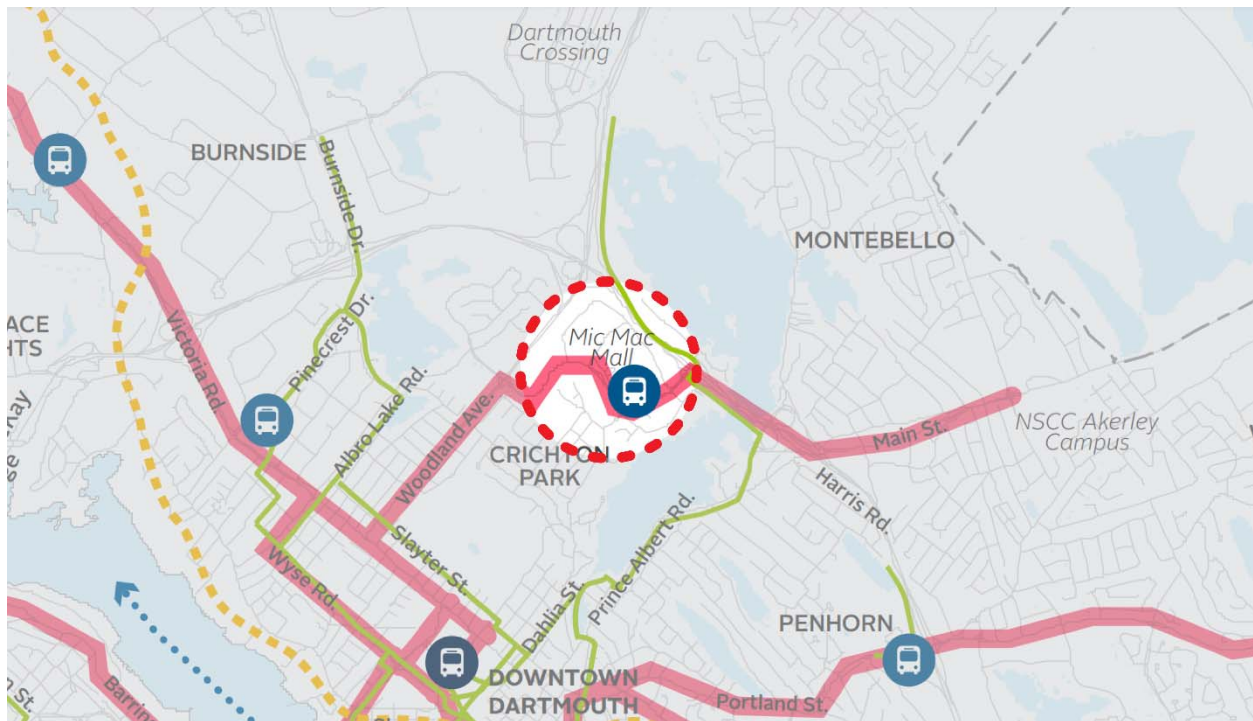


FIG. 03 – Transit Priority Corridors

The resulting mix of high-rise towers, medium density residential buildings, at-grade retail space, flexible commercial space, and targeted senior living of this proposal provide a complimentary and compatible schematic in response to the existing mall and immediate context. Thoughtfully laid out, the current proposal respects the fabric of the existing neighbourhood in terms of mass, scale, shadow, and traffic, and will continue to evolve as required once informed by studies carried out by qualified professionals in their respective fields. The cohesive design proposes a concept that is mutually beneficial in relation to the existing mall space, while responding to the changing demographic and market conditions within the city. The holistic vision considers all aspects of live, work, and play, while transforming a stagnant retail center into a landmark attraction and community hub.

3.0 Existing Planning Designation and Zoning

As noted in the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, the subject property is designated within the *M District Future Growth Node*. It's current zoning falls under the Comprehensive Development District 2 (CDD-2) which allows, without development agreement, for large nodes to contain all commercial uses under the CEN-2 zone, with some limitations on height, massing, and scale of new buildings.

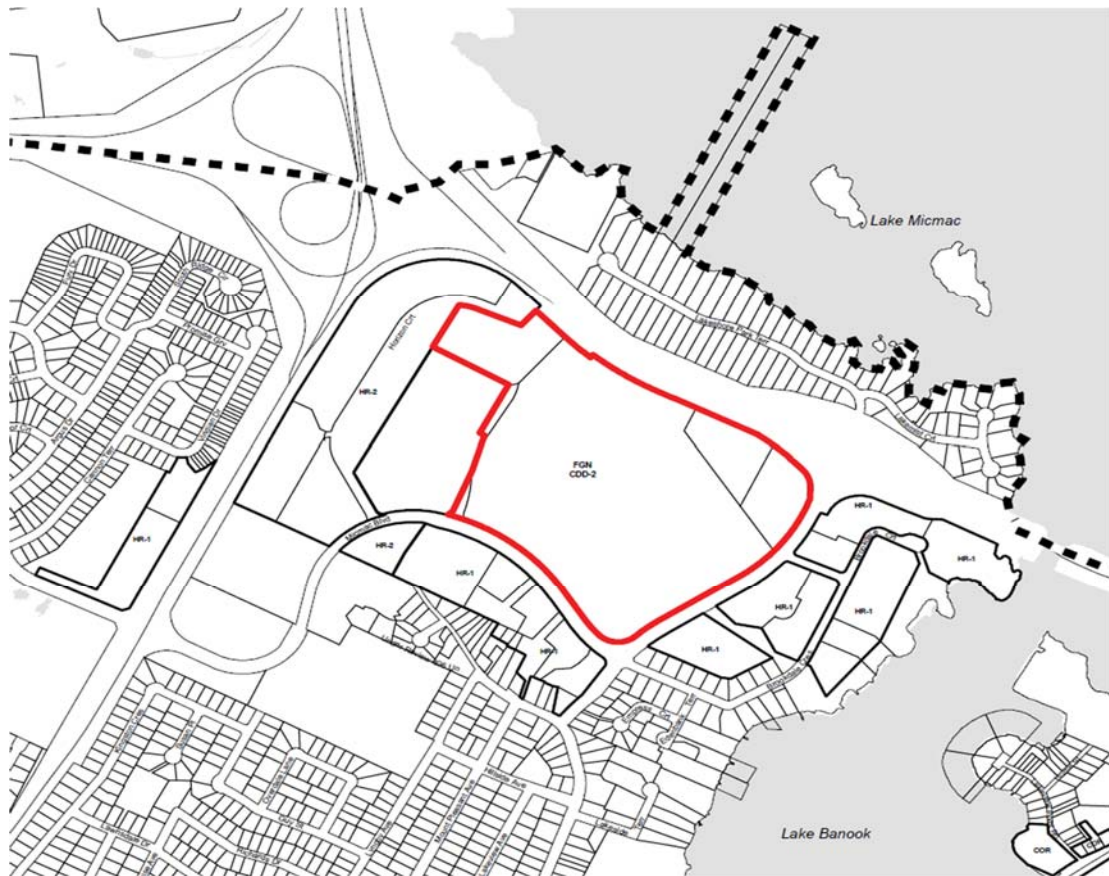


FIG. 04 – Urban Structure Zoning

4.0 Addressing Policy

The proposed amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy is site specific in nature and would enable the development of a stagnant retail center into a diversified destination that falls in line with HRM's cohesive vision as outlined in the Regional Centre Plan, Regional Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, and Integrated Mobility Plan. This proposal keeps within the guidelines of the aforementioned documents, while proposing minimal amendments and exemptions in terms of height, scale, and mass that are still well aligned with the provisions of high-density zoning within the Regional Centre Plan.

4.1 – Regional Centre Urban Design Manual

At its core, this concept was derived under the influence of the *Regional Centre Urban Design Manual* (RCUDM). The document calls for site specific contextual analysis, paying close attention to overall planning, open space design, and eventually building design. At this stage of the design process, the sections that were primarily referenced were *Section 2.1 : Planning and Design*, and *Section 2.3: Open Space Design*, while the building design has been looked into at a massing stage only. As explored below, numerous criteria within both sections were used to guide the early conceptual design for the entire site to ensure the development of a comprehensive neighbourhood.

Planning and Design:

Criteria 1: The proposed development organizes building massing, open spaces, and uses to create and emphasize active streetwalls and prominent sites.

Criteria 2: The proposed development retains and introduces connections that support a pedestrian-friendly mobility network.

Criteria 3: The proposed development retains and introduces open spaces that support the existing network of open spaces.

Criteria 4: The proposed development locates buildings and open spaces to optimize pedestrian comfort related to weather on, abutting, and adjacent to the development.

Criteria 5: The proposed development locates and scales utilities, services, parking, and waste collection areas to mitigate negative impacts on the public realm and neighbouring properties.

Open Space Design:

Criteria 1: Open spaces are designed to reflect existing neighbourhood aesthetic themes and enhance the public realm.

Criteria 2: Open spaces used as amenity space are designed to be accessible to all.

Criteria 3: Open spaces used as amenity space are designed to optimize pedestrian comfort and interaction.

Criteria 4: Open spaces are designed to incorporate sustainable landscape practices.

Criteria 5: Open spaces are designed with durable, high-quality materials.

While conceptualizing the site, all sections were considered harmoniously to ensure cohesiveness between the built environment and open spaces. The larger, tower-form residential developments have been proposed to encompass the north and east fringes, placing them away from the lower scaled residential neighbourhoods to the south and west of the site. This also creates a favourable shadow condition, causing the most extensive afternoon and evening shadows to fall on the highway below and not back into the site itself. Prevailing wind direction in the area is primarily from the west, alleviating some of the wind tunnel effect by placing the buildings at the far end of the site from where the wind enters.

Between the multi-storey mall and the high-rise buildings, numerous [tall] mid-rise structures are being proposed as transitional massing. These buildings will help to define the interstitial space, mirroring the streetwall massing of the other buildings to create a dual streetwall streetscape and pedestrian friendly scale within the open spaces. The location and footprint of these buildings were derived by carving out landscaped pedestrian corridors through the site, with a focus on framing certain views and providing interactive and or sculptural nodes at each intersection point. These nodes will act as wayfinding points throughout the site, drawing the pedestrian through the curated spaces. The landscaped corridors will use a high-end combination of hard and soft scaped materials, on flat or low sloping planes to ensure accessibility throughout the site.

Keeping the pedestrian experience at the forefront of the concept, the services and utilities have been proposed to fall along an existing road that travels the perimeter of the site. Between this road and the underground parking network, most of the services and utilities will be relegated away from the primary activity hubs of the site. This deters vehicular traffic from entering the pedestrian corridors, with the exception of maintaining discreet drop off points at existing mall entrances to assist people who have difficulty with mobility.

These design principles ensure that the core of the concept aligns itself with HRM's vision for comprehensive neighbourhoods, providing both residents and visitors an augmented public realm. Animated streetscapes, pedestrian friendly scales, and integrated open spaces create spaces that people are drawn to and feel comfortable within. These principles continue to inform design decisions as they evolved to address the remaining policies explored below.

4.2 – Regional Municipal Planning Strategy

The Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS) has classified the subject site as one of the *Regional District Growth Centres*, along with the West End Mall. Pursuant to section 3.3, Table 3.1, this classification calls for:

- A mix of high density residential, commercial, institutional and recreation uses
- Adjacent to established residential neighbourhoods, low to medium density residential uses
- Existing retail plazas and shopping centres
- Encourage infill or redevelopment of large parking lots into traditional blocks with streetwalls and stepbacks
- Pedestrian oriented facades

With a diverse programmatic proposal, the site is slated to have a mix of high and medium density residential developments, supplemented by the addition of over one million square feet of retail and commercial space. Aside from the flexible retail spaces, dedicated interior and exterior spaces will have recreation focused uses accessible from outside or the interior common spaces of the existing mall. The location of the various scaled buildings within the site responds well to existing neighbourhoods, orienting the lower and mid-rise structures toward Crichton Park and Adriana Court, while the proposed tower forms will be located in closer proximity to the existing higher rising Horizon Court development. The existing mall will remain intact, while the current parking areas will be infilled with stepped back tall-mid rise structures in favour of creating pedestrian friendly corridors with streetwalls and transparent retail at grade.

The RMPS also stresses that these growth centres should be transit and pedestrian oriented to create:

- Connecting point for transit routes to other centres
- Pedestrian oriented terminals with limited park and ride
- Frequent local transit
- Enhanced pedestrian linkages
- Street, shared, rear or structured parking wherever possible
- Access to AT routes
- Short, interconnected blocks for ease of walkability

Although listed as a Metro Transit Terminal, the current lack of facility and infrastructure would suggest that the site is a terminal in name only. The augmentation of the bus stop area in its current location will allow the site to facilitate increased transit load, while providing more comforts and conveniences for riders and visitors. The current area on the southwest perimeter of the site is in close proximity to an extended mall entrance, as well as the phase 1 parking structure that can provide spaces for park and ride options. With the circumferential service road navigating the perimeter, existing and new public transit routes will have the option to redirect through the site to provide convenient stops, with the developer also having the option to explore a “hop on-hop off” shuttle service for visitors with mobility issues and those without Metro Transit passes.

From an open space standpoint, the RMPS draws upon the following guidelines:

- Private and public realm streetscaping featuring landscaped pocket parks and tree-lined streets
- Interconnected private and public open space linked with greenbelt corridors

- Landscaped and treed parking facilities
- Improved quality and quantity of parks, trails, and AT corridors
- Private and public realm urban forest canopy cover to be maintained and improved
- Provisions for food security

The interstitial tall-mid rise buildings create a dual streetwall condition paired with the existing mall and new tower forms, providing well defined pedestrian corridors that are curated using landscaping features, rest areas, urban magnets, and framed vantage points. The walkable surface of these corridors will have a variety of hard and soft landscaping features, with vegetation, garden, and water features. The intersection of each corridor will act as a beacon, containing a larger interactive, or sculptural element that draws interest and helps guide visitors through the site. With no existing tree canopy on the site to replace, the proposal seeks to plug these pedestrian corridors into the popular walking / cycling Shubie trail network with a pedestrian bridge that spans the highway, offering residents convenient access to well maintained existing green space.

Finally, the RMPS demands an examination of cultural heritage, by means of integration, preservation, and improvement.

- Built and natural heritage to be maintained and improved
- Heritage features integrated with new development
- Public art integrated with new development
- Scenic public views preserved
- Cultural heritage corridors

Although there are no heritage buildings currently on the site, the proposal seeks to use this opportunity to rebrand the existing *Mic Mac Mall* moniker into something more culturally appropriate. Still in early stages, numerous studies, polls, and surveys will be implemented to derive acceptable branding that champions a sense of place, and inclusivity. At present, and throughout the remainder of the approval process the development will be referred to as the *M District*. Art pieces both interactive and sculptural will be incorporated into the public areas of the site, including but not limited to the aforementioned wayfinding nodes at the intersection of pedestrian corridors. Using the site's naturally elevated terrain, the pedestrian corridors will extend in some locations to culminate as framed viewpoints overlooking multiple bodies of water and natural landscapes.

4.3 – Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy

The subject site is currently designated as a *Future Growth Node* under the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (RCSMPS). Areas under this designation are often vast and vacant, or contain underutilised singular programmes such as shopping centres. The city has recognized and identified these areas as ones with the potential to accommodate significant growth; capitalizing on their central location, and proximity to existing services and infrastructure. HRM's vision for these unique sites is to have each one individually assessed for the purpose of creating a master neighbourhood plan that ensures "*development into complete communities with supportive transit services, pedestrian-oriented streets, a mix of uses, services, parks, open spaces and community facilities, and a blend of high-rise, tall mid-rise, mid-rise, and low-rise building*". [Section 2.9 of RCSMPS]

The objectives as laid out in further detail within the RCSMPS are as follows:

1. Provide for diverse and inclusive opportunities for public engagement during the master neighbourhood planning process

- A continual and comprehensive public engagement process will be undertaken throughout the entirety of the planning process. The process is expanded upon further, later in this report.

2. Identify and preserve significant environmental and cultural features

- Although a full environmental impact study will be conducted, no areas of heightened environmental and cultural significance have been identified to date.

3. Support the development of mixed-use neighbourhoods with a range of housing opportunities, places of employment, and services where daily needs of residents can be met

- The proposal embodies the “live, work, play” model by providing a high density, mixed use development where thousands of new residential units will be supplemented with approximately one million square feet of flexible retail and commercial space that will cater to a diverse range of needs.

4. Support a transportation network that prioritizes transit, pedestrians and cyclists, and is connected to surrounding communities

- Located on an existing transit route, the current bus terminal will be redesigned to increase efficiency and offer augmented facilities for residents and visitors. Keeping in line with the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, Metro Transit will have the flexibility to bring additional transit routes into this hub, while the interior service road that circumnavigates the site will keep vehicular traffic away from the designated pedestrian corridors.

5. Provide public parks, open spaces, and community facilities that meet the recreational needs of residents

- For the exterior portion of the site, an abundance of open space will be developed in the form of hard a soft landscaping, as well as garden areas and water features. The developer will also work with the HRM parks department to identify potential park space or open areas that will be managed independently at the conclusion of the development. Aside from the retail and commercial space that will be completed throughout the later phases, the phase 1 facility proposes an entire storey of roughly 60,000 SQ FT of entertainment space that will cater to the recreational needs of residents and visitors.

6. Integrate new developments with surrounding uses and neighbourhoods

- In order to minimize impact and disruption to the existing neighbourhoods in close proximity, careful consideration has been taken to propose a variety of scales that transition in height in response to the existing context. Street wall massing with appropriate stepbacks will be employed throughout the site, on both the mid and high rise structures. With the lower structures being oriented toward the lower density neighbourhoods such as Crichton Park, the tower forms will occupy the areas of the site in proximity to the high rise Horizon Court development, and overlooking Highway 111.

7. Support the creation of healthy and pedestrian-oriented places that consider human-scale design, food security, urban agriculture, and the conservation of energy

- The interstitial tall – mid rise structures that will infill the existing parking lot will frame wide pedestrian corridors and create a double streetwall condition. The largely transparent retail space at grade coupled with the stepped back upper levels will create a comfortable human scale experience as people navigate around the site. These landscaped open spaces that culminate at intersecting wayfinding nodes will make the exterior areas as much of a destination as the retail tenants in which they connect. The developer has an excellent reputation for using high quality building materials and mechanical systems that will ensure energy efficiency is at the forefront of the design.

8. Mitigate overland and coastal flooding, and manage stormwater on-site

- Despite the proximity to large bodies of water, overland and coastal flooding are not of concern for the proposed site given its naturally elevated terrain. A qualified environmental and civil engineering consultant will be conducting a full review of existing infrastructure, while providing stormwater management techniques to help mitigate run off and soil erosion. The proposal is expected to be superior to the existing condition, given the drastic reduction of impermeable asphalt surfaces.

9. Consider risks, impacts and opportunities associated with nearby railways, highways, and high traffic arterial roadways.

- The subject site is bordered by Mic Mac Blvd to the south and west, supporting the current transit routes, and is immediately adjacent to Highway 111 to the east. While noise mitigation can be implemented along the highway to help buffer sound, the proximity also represents an opportunity for interconnectivity with other future growth nodes. Aptly referred to, the Circumferential Highway provides a radial high-speed expressway around the perimeter of Dartmouth, ultimately connecting the city to the west end of the Halifax peninsula. Along this stretch, an examination of other future growth nodes reveals that the subject site will join Southdale, Penhorn, Shannon Park, Joseph Howe Rail, Strawberry Hill, Halifax Shopping Centre, and West End Mall lands as being located within 500m of the main roadway, as it ultimately terminates at the intersection of Connaught Avenue and Bayers Road. This offers an opportunity for the subject site to capitalize on its proximity to the expressway, offering augmented connectivity to the areas that are scheduled to become HRM's most densely populated over the coming decades.

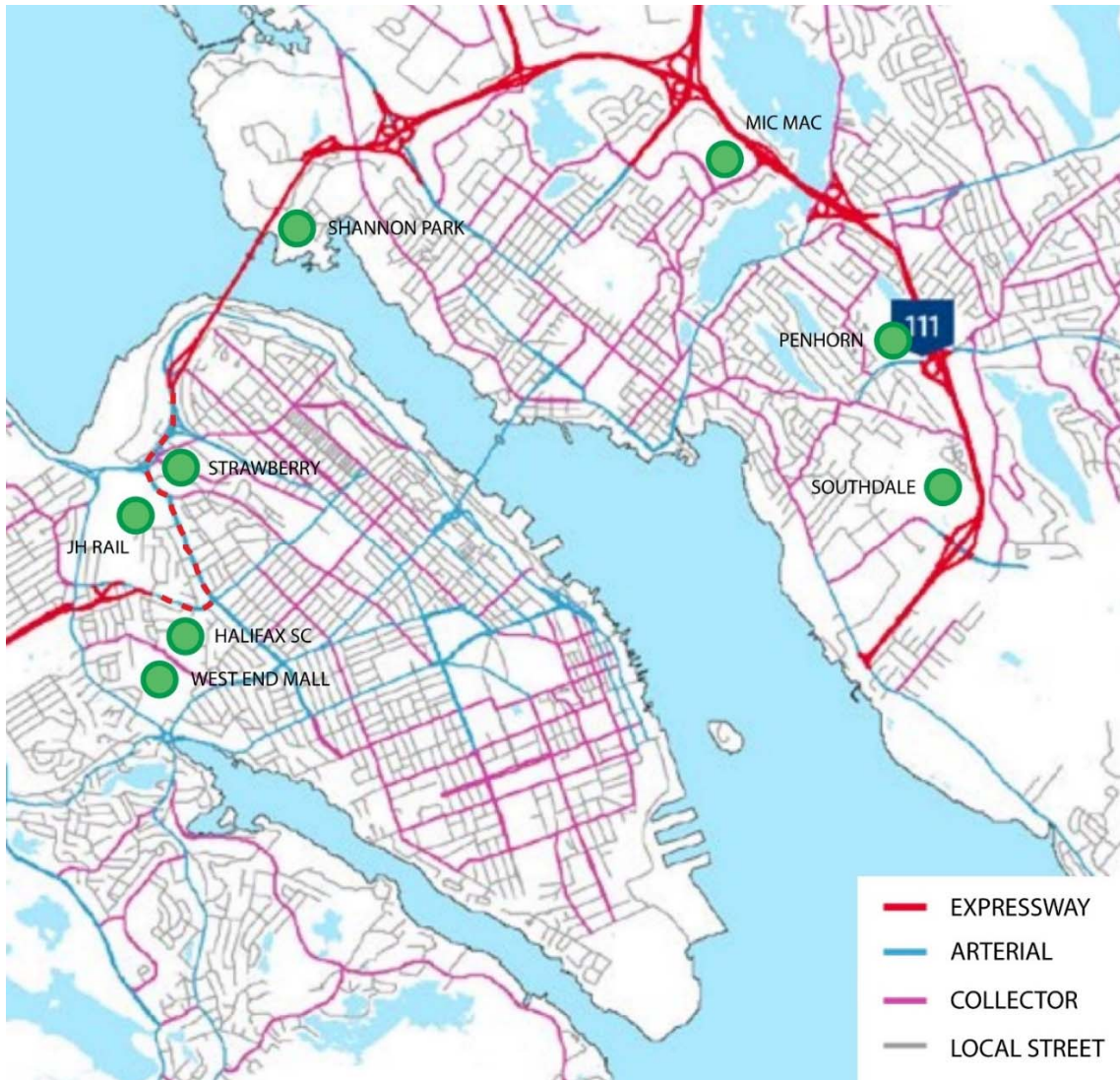


FIG. 05 – Future Growth Nodes along Highway 111

Further to the Future Growth Node designation, the subject site has also been more specifically classified as a Comprehensive Development District -2 (CDD-2). This classification is reserved for sites where there is potential to develop large-scale mixed-use communities, and while there are opportunities to develop “as of right” primarily using the CEN-2 by-laws, this proposal recognizes that this designation was created to dictate intermediate development within Future Growth Nodes that were not ready to re-develop the entirety of the site immediately. For that reason, the proposal seeks to pursue a development agreement with some exceptions to current zoning by-laws that would account for site specific features.

Currently within the RCSMPS, **Policy F-2** is the sole policy that is unique to the *M District Lands*, and is written as follows:

“The Land Use By-law shall establish the Mic Mac Mall Lands (ML) Special Area within the Mic Mac Mall Lands Future Growth Node to allow for building additions to exceed 1,000 square metres in floor area, subject to the to design controls as detailed in the Land Use By-law.”

Originally this policy was intended to govern the Phase 1 development outlined earlier in this report, given it is the only part of the overall site that will be considered an addition to the existing mall. This phase is proposing to add a mix of retail, parking, recreation, and commercial programmes, totaling roughly 52,000 SQ M. Of note, approximately half of this floor area will be comprised of open-air parking levels. It has been recognized that the proposal within Phase 1 has evolved since the F-2 policy was written, creating the need to include this phase in the overall development agreement for the site.

Further to policy F-2, the remaining policies that council will consider while reviewing for a development agreement in a CDD-2 zone fall under **Policies F-3, F-4, F-5, F-6** and are as follows:

Policy F-3:

The Municipality may establish a master neighbourhood planning program to prepare Site-Specific CDD Development Agreement Requirements for each Future Growth Node, that have not already been completed and are part of this Plan. When considering initiating these master neighbourhood planning exercises, Council may consider the following:

- a) opportunities to coordinate master neighbourhood planning with transportation network investments;*
- b) the need to enable additional development opportunities in the local area containing the specific Future Growth Node, and in the Regional Centre generally; and*
- c) the readiness of private landowners to proceed with development.*

Policy F-4:

Council shall consider the following matters when adopting or amending Site-Specific CDD Development Agreement Requirements for each Future Growth Node through master neighbourhood planning exercises:

- a) the Future Growth Node objectives, as identified in Section 2.9 of this Plan*
- b) the Site Context, and Site Planning and Design sections of the Regional Centre Urban Design Manual, contained in Appendix 2 of this Plan*
- c) a land suitability assessment that identifies vulnerable landforms, sensitive ecological features and climate hazards, including but not limited to, any wetlands, watercourses, flood prone areas, steep slopes, forest cover, contaminated sites, and wildlife habitats and corridors*
- d) a culture and heritage assessment that identifies and evaluates culture and heritage resources located on or adjacent to the Node*
- e) a baseline infrastructure study that assesses existing transportation infrastructure assets and constraints (using a multi-modal level of service analysis) and existing wastewater and water services infrastructure capacity and constraints*
- f) the overall development densities and building massing*
- g) the classes of land uses permitted*
- h) phasing of development*
- i) the use and conservation of energy*
- j) the adequacy of public parks, open spaces and community recreation facilities that meet the objectives of this Plan and the Halifax Green Network Plan*

k) the proposed transportation network and the need for any on-site transit facilities

l) applicable direction contained in the Regional Plan and Council approved Priority Plans.

Policy F-5

Council may only consider development agreement applications for the development of a Future Growth Node when Site-Specific CDD policies have been adopted in this Plan.

Policy F-6

*(1) Subject to Policy F-5, in considering a development agreement for any lands zoned **CDD-2** and CDD-1, Council shall consider the following:*

a) the applicable Site-Specific CDD Requirements set out in Section 2.9.1 of this Plan

b) all applicable policies of the Regional Plan and of this Plan

c) the subdivision of land

d) the phasing of development

e) the proposed development's road and walkway network, and the location of transit facilities

f) the adequacy of public parks, open spaces and community facilities that meet the objectives of this Plan and the requirements of the Regional Subdivision By-law

g) the built form and land use requirements applied to the site through references to appropriate zones and sections of the Land Use By-law, including site plan approval provisions, with limited site-specific adjustments to meet the applicable Site-Specific CDD Requirements set out in Section 2.9.1 of this Plan

h) the identification of any Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street, Waterfront View Corridor, and View Terminus Site

i) provisions to comply with the Pedestrian Wind Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards, and the Shadow Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards of the Land Use By-law

j) provisions for incentive or bonus zoning, consistent with Part 9 of this Plan and the method for calculating bonus zoning values set out in the Land Use By-law

k) impacts to Municipal infrastructure and the need, if any, to concurrently approve by-laws to pay for growth related municipal infrastructure

l) the distribution of overall densities intended for the Node, and between different development blocks, phases, and landowners

m) provisions to enable discharging the agreement when all terms and obligations are fulfilled

n) the general development agreement criteria set out in Policy IM-7 in Part 9 of this Plan.

(2) A development agreement for any lands zoned CDD-2 and CDD-1 requires a provision that matters respecting the subdivision of land, including parkland dedication and the location of roads, are subject and subordinate to the Regional Subdivision By-law and the provisions of the HRM Charter.

Although early in the process, the Master Plan is proposing a concept that aligns itself with HRM's vision for Future Growth Nodes, as laid out in the above policies. Where required, professional consultants have been and will be engaged to assess the site for cultural, ecological, and infrastructure impacts.

Encompassed within Policy F-3, it is clear that city staff is prepared to work with private landowners and enable appropriate exemptions to ensure the site-specific development required of each unique Future Growth Node. The diverse mix of residential densities paired with flexible retail and commercial space combine to create a comprehensive new development that acts not only as a community, but a landmark destination. The urban design places pedestrian and transit-oriented concepts at the forefront, to ameliorate an under-utilized space that can benefit the entire province.

4.4 – Integrated Mobility Plan

Approved by council late in 2017, the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) was created to provide robust guidance on augmenting the regional transportation systems in coordination with the eventual adoption of the Regional Center Plan. With focus on vehicular traffic, transit, rail, cycling, and walking, the IMP examined all aspects of mobility within the city’s outer limits. Emphasis was placed on creating complete communities, moving people efficiently, and managing congestion by implementing integrated solutions. As indicated in *Figure 10* of the IMP, the subject site is located directly on a transit priority corridor and has been identified as a prime candidate for a *Transit Oriented Community*. These areas are defined as sites where “there are opportunities for compact, mixed-use, complete communities within a ten-minute walking distance of proposed or existing transit terminals”. Given the existing terminal on the west perimeter of the site that will undergo significant upgrades, the entire 49-acre site will be accessible as a pedestrian within ten minutes.

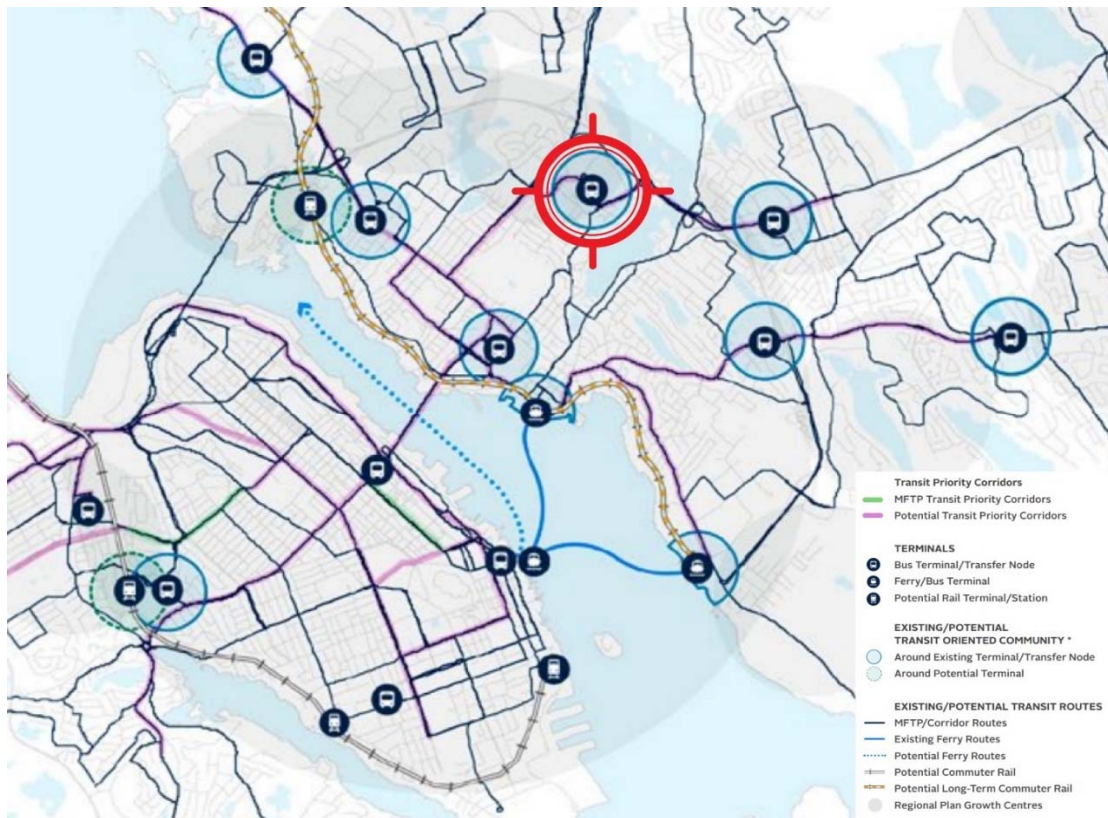


FIG. 06 – Potential Transit Oriented Communities as identified within the IMP

Section 2.2 of the IMP focuses on Land Use & Transportation, with the clearly defined objective to *“integrate the planning of the transportation network with community design to better facilitate active transportation and transit use through compact, mixed-use development”*.

This objective can be achieved by working within several targeted policies, and implementing recommended action items as laid out below found in the IMP Section 2.2.5:

- a) *Continue to aim to achieve the growth targets outlined in the Centre Plan, recognizing their influence on the municipality's ability to meet the objectives of the IMP.*

This high-density proposal aims to create between 2000 and 2500 residential units, in line with aiding HRM to achieve its growth targets in the coming decades.

- b) *Designate areas for high residential and employment density only where there is an existing or proposed high level of transit service to support the development of walkable, affordable transit-oriented communities.*

The site currently hosts a transit bus terminal, which will be upgraded to augment the facilities, and increase efficiency. The proposal leaves an open option to work with Metro Transit to bring additional routes through the site along the perimeter service road, offering additional pick up and drop off points in even closer proximity to the clusters of high density development.

- c) *Encourage all future development to take the form of Complete Communities with opportunities to work, study, shop, play and obtain personal services within an attractive walking distance of where people live.*

The proposal embodies and emphasizes the “live, work, play” model, providing more than one million square feet of retail and commercial space in addition to the existing shopping centre services. The comprehensively designed community will allow residents to access most services required of daily life within a ten-minute walk along one of the pedestrian oriented corridors.

- d) *Work with the province, hospitals, school boards and other institutions to ensure that new public facilities are located within existing or planned transit-oriented development and within a 5-min. walk (500 m) to frequent, accessible transit service.*

Clients are willing to work with and implement measures that may be brought up from any jurisdiction, government body, board, association, or stakeholder, to ensure a comprehensive, efficient, and functional development.

- e) *Require pedestrian-oriented site design and human scaled massing at street level for all new multi-unit housing, commercial and office buildings.*

Early massing studies and architectural concepts have included transparent at-grade facades, streetwall massing, and ample setbacks in order to frame the landscaped corridors and provide a comfortable pedestrian experience.

Further policies outlined in section 2.4.5 aim to help meet Transportation Demand Management objectives, mainly *“Reduce demand on the road network by supporting a range of convenient and reliable transportation modes and flexible work times and locations.”*

- a) *Promote and explain alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips, including active transportation, transit and ride-sharing.*

Although located adjacent to a major vehicular expressway, the proposal will aim to promote the reduction of single occupant vehicle trips by creating a new bus terminal, plugging in to the surrounding multipurpose trail networks, and limiting vehicular access within the site itself in favour of providing landscaped pedestrian corridors.

The objective of section 3.1, *Active Transportation* within the IMP seeks to *“Encourage walking and bicycling by building complete and connected networks that respond to the needs of urban, suburban and rural communities, for all ages and abilities.”* At this stage of planning, a handful of policies can be addressed and implemented in order to work toward achieving this objective:

- a) *Implement pedestrian infrastructure that is accessible to all ages and abilities.*

The core of the proposal revolves around creating comfortable pedestrian spaces, with landscaped and vegetation features, framing the corridors with buildings that promote transparent retail and streetwall massing. Accessibility will be at the forefront of the design, ensuring pedestrians and people of all ages and abilities have access to every amenity and feature offered on the site.

- e) *Connect communities by facilitating improved links for active transportation across geographical or structural barriers.*

With the site being surrounded by large scale vehicular roadways, the proposal has investigated creative solutions to connect with existing trail networks and circumnavigate the structural barriers present. The current proposal is exploring how to connect to both the “Shubie Canal Greenway Corridor” to the northeast, and the “Lake Banook Trail” to the south which makes up a small portion of the “Trans Canada Trail.” This offers beneficial active transportation access options for visitors, and also gives residents of the proposal immediate access to trails and green spaces.

Finally, section 3.2 focuses on Transit, with the objective to *“Enhance transit service by increasing the priority of transit and improving the integration of transit service with land use and settlement patterns.”* A number of policies outlined in section 3.2.5 can be actioned at this stage of planning to ensure the objectives can be met, including:

- a) *Plan new and existing Transit Priority Corridors and terminals as focal points for higher density, compact development with a mix of residential, commercial and employment uses within walking distance of transit service.*

The proposed site is located along a proposed Transit Priority Corridor, with an existing bus terminal, making it an ideal candidate for a high density, mixed use development.

c) *Continue to implement the Moving Forward Together Plan.*

Actionable items in this section of the IMP call for the improved waiting environments at bus stops and terminals for transit passengers. The proposed new terminal will help to accomplish this.

4.5 – Regional Centre Land Use By-Law

The subject property under the Regional Centre Land Use By-Law has been zoned “Comprehensive Development District 2” (CDD-2) which allows for a variety of programmatic occupancies including but not limited to *drinking establishments, financial institutions, fitness centres, grocery stores, hotels, micro-breweries, offices, personal services, restaurants, retail, service stations, and general commercial uses normally acceptable under the CEN-2 zone without a development agreement.*

In addition to the permitted uses, there are several prohibiting by-laws within this zone that limit the building heights, setbacks, and lot coverages that would limit this Future Growth Node from being developed into a truly comprehensive landmark site. For this reason, we are initiating the process herein to apply for an amendment to the Regional Centre Land Use By-Law, and Municipal Planning Strategy via a Development Agreement.

It is our professional opinion that for the proposed site to be developed to its full potential, certain amendments to the LUB will have to be made. It is our intention to generally conform to the by-laws required of the CEN-2 zone, with several provisions that will be worked out during the development agreement process in order to respond to the site-specific conditions present in this area, providing a landmark development that will benefit the entire municipality.

4.6 – Park Dedication Requirements

Pursuant to the *Regional Subdivision By-Law*, the proposal intends to seamlessly implement and dedicate the required amount of park space to benefit both residents and visitors. The amount of dedicated space and supporting facilities will aim to provide an area that falls between the requirements of a Community Park (CP) and a District Park (DP) as outlined in *Table A of Section 83* in the *Regional Subdivision By-Law*. It is the intention of the developer and designers to work cohesively with the HRM Parks Department to design a space that is beautiful, functional, and complimentary to the other pedestrian oriented features within the site.

5.0 – Community Engagement Strategy

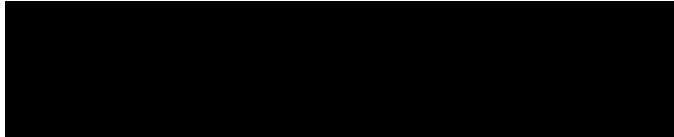
It will be vital throughout all stages of the design process to connect and engage with the community, general public, and project stakeholders. As the planning process moves forward, it will be ensured that the HRM Community Engagement Strategy is referenced and implemented, consulting the residents within the community and fostering active participation through various forums to field suggestions, concerns, and criticisms. All public and online process will be followed as city staff and council sees fit.

6.0 – Conclusion

The proposed mixed-use development as outlined above would create a vibrant destination and community hub for the entire municipality. The combination of high-density residential towers with diverse retail and commercial opportunities creates spaces where both residents and visitors can enjoy new services and amenities, while the increased density will in turn revitalize the interest in the current shopping centre. Outside of the buildings, the current non permeable asphalt parking surfaces will be largely transformed into landscaped pedestrian corridors, curating the circulation paths as people make their way through the site. Underground parking facilities and a limited circumferential service road will limit the amount of vehicular traffic on the surface of the site, placing the pedestrian experience at the forefront of the design concept. Located on a Transit Priority Corridor, the addition of the new transit terminal will ameliorate the user experience and promote the use of public transportation to and from the site. In terms of active transportation, the site will look to plug into the existing trail networks as a node between the Shubie Canal Greenway Corridor and Lake Banook Trail. This will offer bicycle and walking access points for visitors, and escapes to green spaces for residents along the Trans Canada Trail, aligning the proposal with as much of the Integrated Mobility Plan as possible.

In order for this proposal to succeed and reach its full potential as a comprehensive and transit-oriented community, reasonable amendments to existing by-laws will be required. These requested changes are enabled through due process as laid out in the existing Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, and Regional Centre Land Use By-Laws, and will allow the transformation of a stagnant shopping centre into a revitalized, diverse community hub. When the development reaches its holistic vision, it will create a sense of place and pride for residents all over the municipality, while promoting public and active transportation, environmental sustainability, and procuring economic prosperity. We are of the opinion that the proposal for this site embodies good planning principals, and therefore request that the amendment process be initiated through all appropriate channels within the municipality.

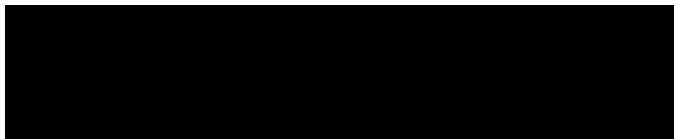
ORIGINAL SIGNED:



RIMON SOLIMAN, NSAA, B.Arch, CACB
Principal Architect

AUGUST 12, 2022

Date

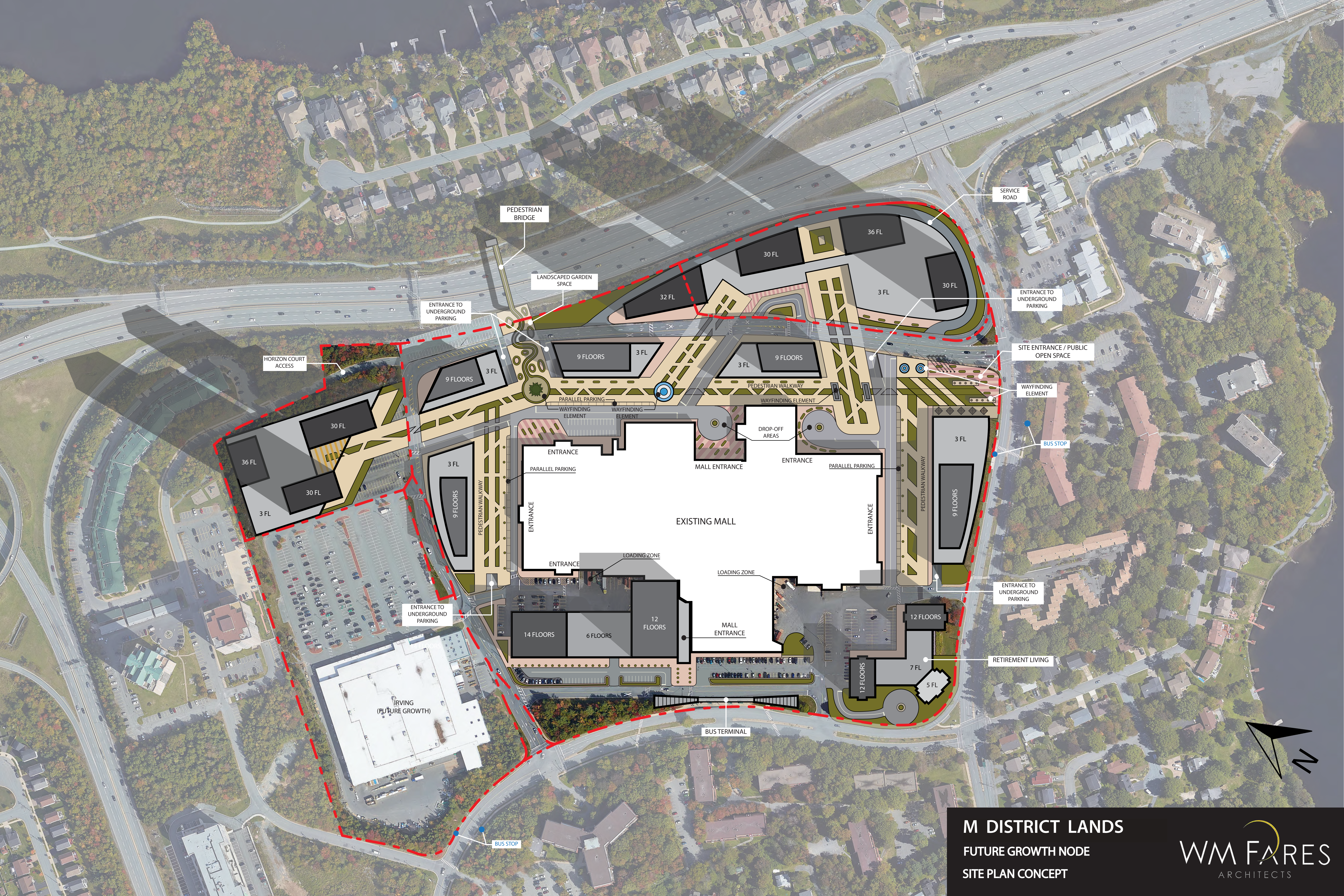


COLE MACISAAC, M.Arch, BEDS, BCD, LEED GA
Intern Architect

AUGUST 12, 2022

Date





M DISTRICT LANDS
FUTURE GROWTH NODE
SITE PLAN CONCEPT

WM FARES
ARCHITECTS