

September 9, 2025

HALIFAX

Municipal Planning Strategy Amendment 2024-00975

Public Hearing of Development Agreement
Policy for Robie/Almon

Origin

March 25, 2025 Regional Council motion to:

- a) Initiate a process to consider amendments to the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to enable a development agreement for a 12-storey building in a tall mid-rise built form on lands at 2764 – 2778 Robie Street (PID 00005181) in Halifax as outlined in the staff report dated February 24, 2025; and
- b) Follow Administrative Order 2023-002-ADM Respecting Public Participation for Planning Documents, Certain Planning Applications, and Engagement with Abutting Municipalities for the required public participation program and as outlined in the staff report dated February 24, 2025.

Aug. 5, 2025: First Reading

1

Proposed Development



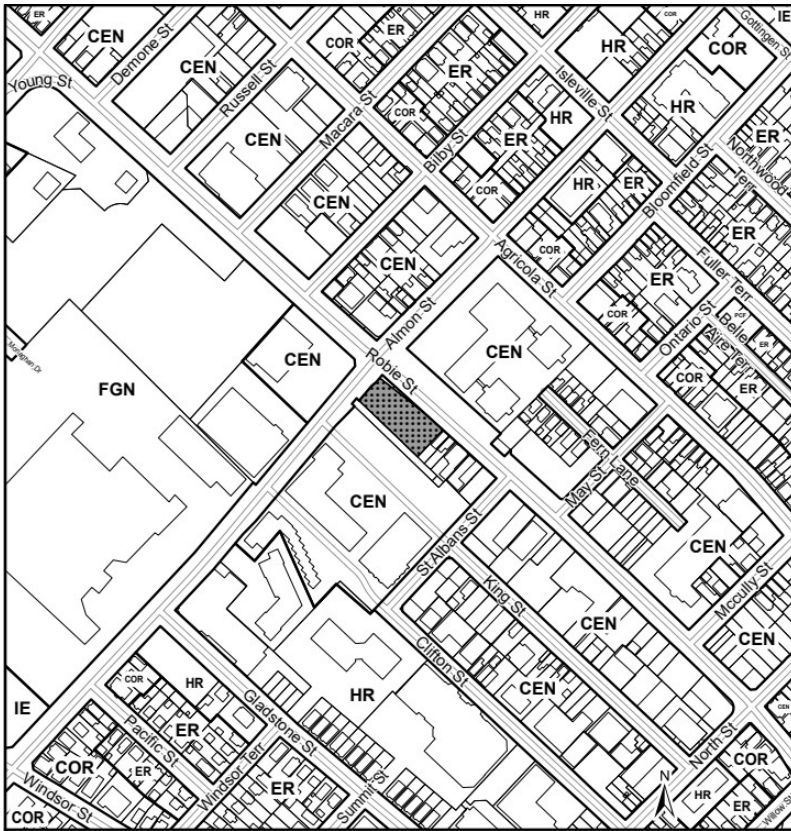
Applicant: FBM, on behalf of Westwood

Location: 2764 – 2778 Robie St.

Proposal: 12 storey, 150 unit mixed use building

Type of Application: Municipal Planning Strategy Amendment and Development Agreement

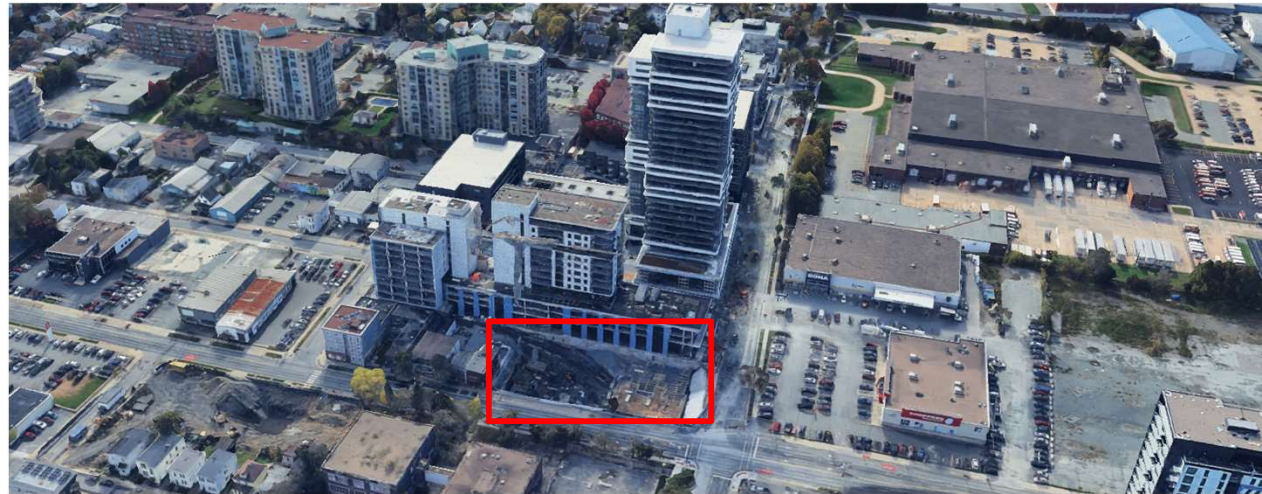
Site Context



Site Context

Subject Site	2764 – 2778 Robie Street, Halifax (PID 00005181)
Location	Located at the southern corner of the Robie Street and Almon Street.
Regional Plan Designation	Urban Settlement (US)
Regional Centre SMPS Designation	Centre in the Regional Centre SMPS
Regional Centre LUB Zoning	CEN-2 (Centre-2) in the Regional Centre LUB, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A maximum building height of 40 storeys; and • A maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 7.0.
Size of Site	1,997.1 square metres (21,496 square feet)
Current Land Uses	Under Construction. Building permit issued for a 10-storey mixed use building with 120 units (ZURB BPCOM-2023-16401).
Surrounding Uses	Richmond Yards to the south, vacant parcels and low-rise around Robie Street

Site Context



Site Boundaries **in Red**

MPSA 2024-00975

HALIFAX

Site Photos



Date: July 25, 2025

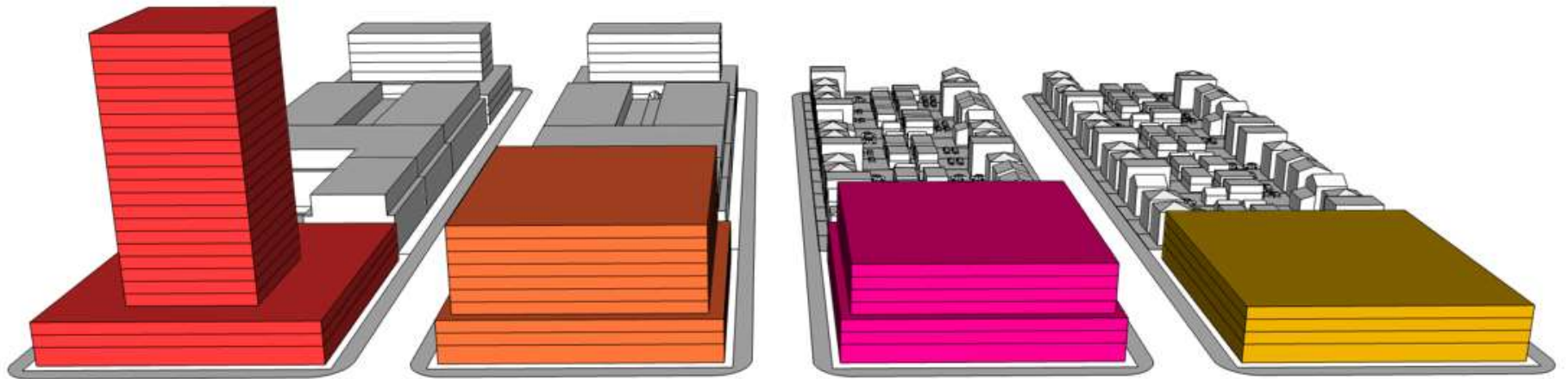
Proposal Details

- Application to increase the *tall mid-rise* built form from 10 storeys to 12 storeys
- 150 units
- Ground floor commercial facing Robie Street
- Underground parking
- On-site affordable units proposed through CMHC financing
- Mid-block pedestrian connection proposed for increased connectivity

Background

- Subject site adjacent to Richmond Yards
- Property was not included in original Richmond Yards Development Agreement
- Developer seeking exemption that would allow similar built form to Richmond Yards
- Proposal includes public benefits in the form of affordable units and a mid-block pedestrian connection
- Building permit currently issued for 10-storey building

Centre Plan Built Form



High-rise
(11+ storeys)

Streetwall Stepback: 4.5 – 6 m

Tall mid-rise
(up to 10 storeys)

Streetwall Stepback: 3 m

Mid-rise
(up to 7 storeys)

Streetwall Stepback: 2 m

Low-rise
(up to 4 storeys)

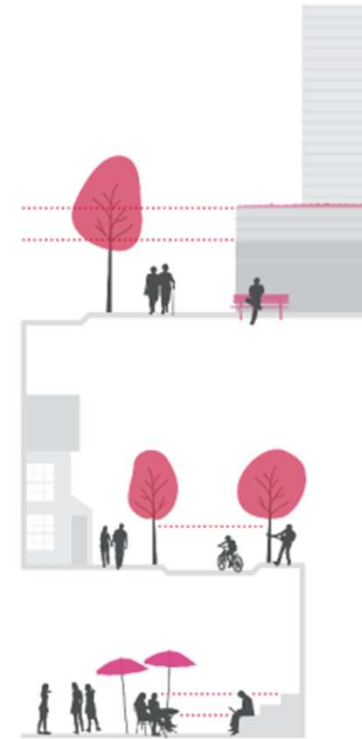
Streetwall Stepback: 0 m

Applicant Rationale

1. Site is not deep enough to accommodate the required setbacks and stepbacks of a high-rise building in Centre Plan.
2. The proposed design is compatible with the neighbouring Richmond Yards development and was always intended to be developed as part of Richmond Yards.
3. An increase in density is required to provide affordable units under the CMHC Apartment Construction Loan Program* (pending application approval).
 - **41 affordable units** with rents not exceeding 21% of the median income earner's income
 - Affordability period of **21 years**
 - Approximate monthly rent of **\$1,788 per month** for **1-bedroom** and **junior 1-bedroom** unit types.
4. An increase in density is required to provide a north/south mid-block pedestrian connection that would connect Robie Street to the neighbouring Richmond Yards development.

Centre Plan Policies

- Core Concepts of Human Scale Design and Pedestrian First Design.
- This policy intent is reflected in the Centre Plan's built form framework, including policies for streetwalls, stepbacks, tower dimensions etc.
- Taller buildings need more space (stepbacks, setbacks, tower dimensions) to mitigate negative impacts (wind, shadow, separation from other towers) and maintain positive relationship with the streetscape, open space, and surrounding context
- Any site-specific exemptions or development agreements require policy support.



Staff Review

- Amendments to the MPS are significant undertakings and should typically only be considered when circumstances or policy objectives have changed
- Primary concerns related to impact of proposed building on streetscape and public realm and not meeting Centre Plan built form
- Site is located next to and is integrated with the larger Richmond Yards development approved pre-Centre Plan
- Site is located on a proposed rapid transit route
- Proposal is proposing to add additional affordable housing units and pedestrian connection as per Council motion

Proposed Amendments

Enabling Policy IM-35.6:

This policy enables Council to consider an increase to the tall mid-rise built form at 2764-2778 Robie Street

Council must consider the following in rendering their decision on a Development Agreement:

- The provision of on-site affordable units & Bonus Zoning
- The completion of a mid-block pedestrian connection
- Other than the height, meet Centre Plan requirements

Elements of Development Agreement

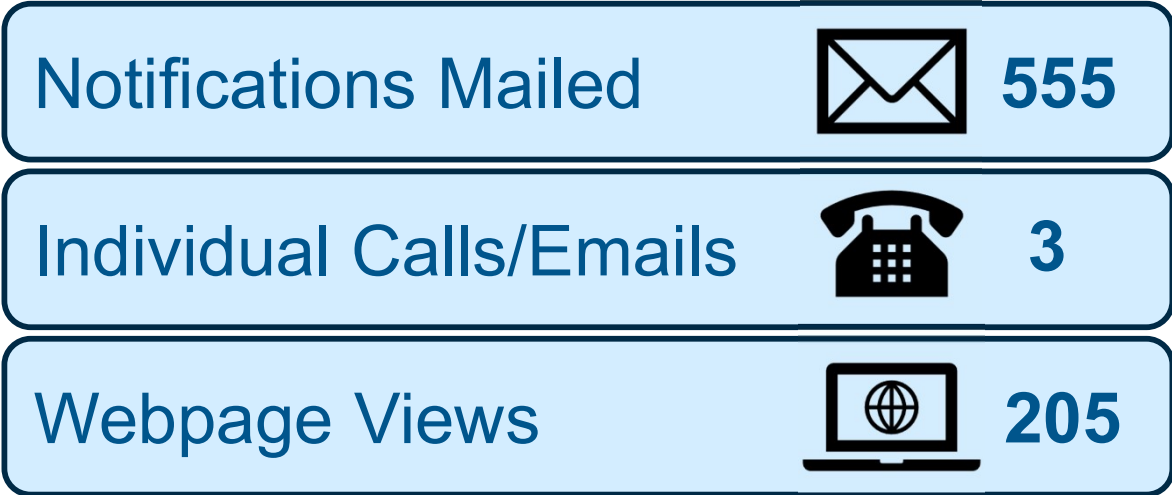
- Allows uses permitted within the CEN-2 Zone
- Confirmation of affordable units and Bonus Zoning required prior to occupancy
- Developer to build and maintain mid-block pedestrian connection (Robie Street to Richmond Yards)
- Design flexibility to increase the tall mid-rise built form to 12 storeys

Non-Substantive Amendments

A 'Non-Substantive Amendment' is a change to the agreement which can be made without a formal Public Hearing. The Development Officer or Community Council could authorize this change by resolution. These include:

- Extension to commencement and completion dates of construction
- Changes to the Schedules of the Agreement that do not conflict with the written text and conform with the Centre Plan

Public Engagement Feedback



Level of engagement completed was consultation achieved through a mail out notification and a sign on the property

Public Engagement Feedback

Feedback included concerns related to:

- The depth of affordability being proposed, and how it would be enforced
- Increased wind on the sidewalk due to increased height
- Loss of harbour views
- Ongoing construction related impacts



MPS Amendment with DA



Recommendation

It is recommended that Regional Council:

- 1) Give First Reading to consider the proposed amendments to the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Regional Centre Land Use By-law, as set out in Attachments A and B of this report, to enable a 12-storey building in a tall mid-rise form at 2764-2778 Robie Street, Halifax (PID 00005181) and schedule a public hearing; and
- 2) Adopt the proposed amendments to the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Regional Centre Land Use By-law, as set out in Attachments A and B of this report.

It is further recommended that the Halifax and West Community Council:

- 3) Give Notice of Motion to consider the proposed development agreement, as set out in Attachment C of this report, to permit a 12-storey building in a tall mid-rise form subject to meeting certain conditions. The public hearing for the development agreement shall be held concurrently with that indicated in Recommendation 1.
- 4) Provisionally approve the proposed development agreement for 2764-2778 Robie Street, Halifax, which shall be substantially of the same form as contained in Attachment C of this report; and
- 5) Require the agreement be signed by the property owner within 120 days, or any extension thereof granted by Council on request of the property owner, from the date of final approval by Council and any other bodies as necessary, including applicable appeal periods, whichever is later, otherwise this approval will be void and obligations arising hereunder shall be at an end.