

Public Information Meeting

Feb 12, 2026

File No. DA 2026-001

Development Agreement Proposal



APPLICANT	Fathom Studio has applied on behalf of Student Housing Nova Scotia
PROPOSAL	To allow for the construction of a new 3-storey building with 12 dwelling units
LOCATION	Hillside Avenue - PID 55456875 and a portion of PID 55273908
LOT SIZE	Total: 1, 396 meters squared (612 sq m + 784 sq m from adjacent PID)
DESIGNATION	Neighbourhood Residential Designation
ZONE	High Density Residential – R-4 zone
SURROUNDING USES	High density residential and medium density residential
ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES	The property is not within the design guidelines area
NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION	Newspaper ads and notices mailed to surrounding property owners within 100 metres; Sign placed on property.

Proposal

Fathom Studio has applied on behalf of Student Housing Nova Scotia for a Development Agreement to permit a multi-unit dwelling on Hillside Ave. The proposed 12-unit building would be located on PID 55456875 and a portion of PID 55273908, near the top of Hillside Ave and in an area that has been zoned for high density development. The proposed building is three floors with two barrier free units.



Figure 1 - Hillside Ave development site

Background

Student Housing Nova Scotia is a non-market housing provider focused on affordable housing for post-secondary students. They have been an active non-profit organization in the province of Nova Scotia for over 50 years and have collaborated and advocated for policy change to address housing affordability.

This group has recently purchased an existing building and vacant land within Wolfville and are looking to increase the supply of affordable housing units by adding a new building on their vacant land. This land is located on Hillside Ave, near Pleasant Street where High Density Residential (R-4) zoning has applied to the existing multi-unit buildings in this area for many years. The surrounding buildings range from a large 48-unit building immediately adjacent, medium sized multi-unit buildings (11 unit, 12 unit, 14 units) nearby and low density one and two unit dwellings within the neighbourhood.



Figure 2 - surrounding buildings and their number of units



Figure 3 - Zoning Map surrounding context

Process

This Public Information Meeting (PIM) is the first stage of the application process. The purpose of the PIM is to receive preliminary feedback from the public on the proposal and to help answer any initial questions.

Staff have not completed their review and no recommendation is provided at this time.

The process for a Development Agreement is as follows:

- PIM – February 12, 2026
- Planning Advisory Committee – report and recommendation from staff
- Council – report and recommendation from PAC / consider initial consideration/first reading
- Council Public Hearing – advertised and notices mailed
- Council – final decision made by Council
- Appeal period – 14-days
- Development Agreement registered at Land Registry office
- Permit application + construction

Proposed building

The proposed 12-unit building would be located on Hillside Avenue between two existing buildings. The main floor would include two barrier free (accessible) units, along with a lobby, laundry room and interior bicycle storage. The barrier free units and the upper floor units are a mixture of 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom units.

The building would be located primarily on PID 55456875 and after a boundary adjustment would also include a portion (~784 square meters) of land from the adjacent PID 55273908 (same owner).

The proposed building exceeds the density requirements for as-of-right or Site Plan Approval in the R-4 zone, which led to this Development Agreement application. The development agreement is also needed to address hard surface area, and shared vehicle access with the adjacent property at #59 Hillside (same owner).



Figure 4 - Proposed 12-unit building (Hillside Ave)

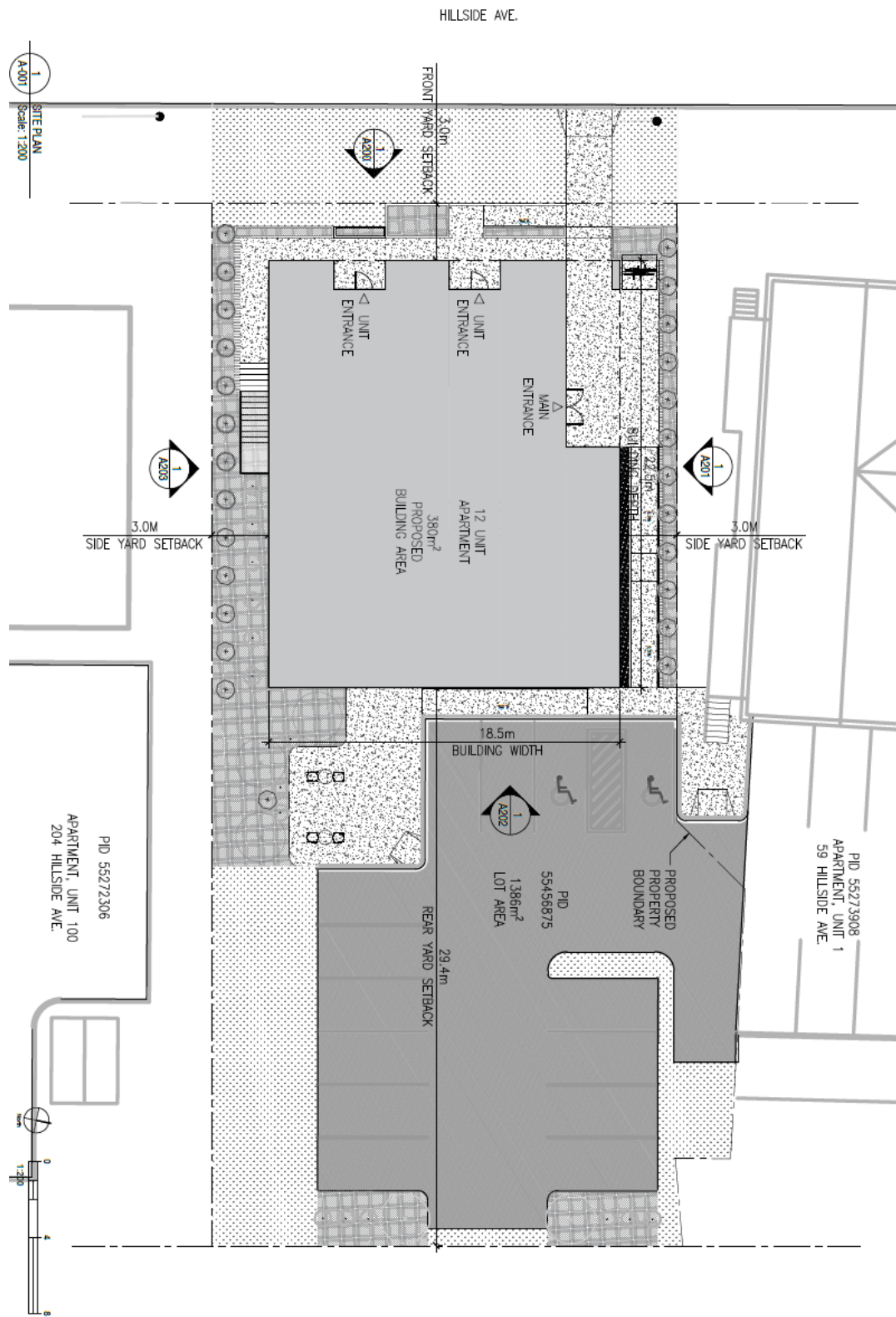


Figure 5 - Proposed site plan with shared vehicle access from adjacent PID

Preliminary Policy Overview

Staff will review the proposed building against the criteria outlined in the MPS and use references from High Density zoning in the LUB to prepare a Development Agreement. This review will occur after the Public Information Meeting, to allow staff to incorporate public feedback gathered and draft a staff recommendation that will be shared with Wolfville's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). Below are the applicable criteria for a development agreement of this type.

Table 8.1 of Wolfville's Land Use Bylaw (below) highlights land uses that are permitted in the R-4 zone. This list includes multi-unit dwellings up to a certain density per acre. The proposed building is slightly higher than what can be permitted as-of-right, or with a Site Plan Approval application, which leads the process to a Development Agreement for *Innovative Housing*. The proposed building uses a unique and innovative financial model, to provide truly affordable housing for students, through a non-profit operator.

TABLE 8.1 Neighbourhood Land Use Table

Residential Uses	R-1	R-2	R-LD4	R-3	R-LR	R-4	R-MDU	R-MU	CDD	C-2
Additions	P	PC	P	PC	P	PC	P	SP	P	PC
Accessory Dwelling Unit – Detached		PC	PC	PC	PC	PC				PC
Dwelling, Single	P	P	P	P						P
Dwelling, Two Unit		P	P	P	P	P				P
Dwelling, Townhouse (max 3 units)			P	P	P	P				P
Dwelling, Multi-Unit- Low (max 4 units)			P		P					
Dwelling, Multi-Unit- Small (3- 8 units)				SP		SP				SP
Dwelling, Multi-unit - Large (max of 16 units per acre)				DA		SP				DA
Dwelling, Multi-unit (max of 18 units per acre)						SP				
Dwelling, Multi-unit (19 to 24 units per acre)						DA				
Dwelling, Multi-Unit (max 50 units)					SP		SP	DA		
Dwelling, Multi-Unit (max 120 units)							SP	DA		
Additional Density (+5 units per acre) see section 8.3			DA		DA		DA	DA		
Cluster Housing		DA	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP			SP
Existing Uses	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Home Based Business (Arts and Crafts Workshop, Catering Establishments, Daycares up to 7 children/ persons, Online/Digital Sales, Offices, Personal Service Shop, Studios, Short Term Rentals max of 3 rental rooms) < 80 sqm		PC	PC	PC	PC	PC	PC	PC		PC
Home Occupation – Restricted (<50 sqm)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P
Innovative Housing		DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA		DA
Parks and Playgrounds, Public Washrooms, Community Gardens, & Historic Sites	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Land Use Bylaw (LUB):

Development Agreements are a listed option for properties within the R-4 Zone, as described in the zone intent (LUB section 14.1)

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS):

MPS sections 8.4 High Density Residential enables a Development Agreement for unique situations like this proposal from an innovative housing provider.

IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF COUNCIL:

1. To establish High Density Residential (R-4) zoning in the Land Use Bylaw that permits a range of high density residential uses, including but not limited to row housing, multi-unit dwellings of a certain density and parks and playgrounds.
2. To establish High Density Residential - Multi Dwelling Unit (R-MDU) zoning in the Land Use Bylaw that permits a range of high density residential uses, including but not limited to multi-unit dwellings up to 120 units and 6-storeys in height, the potential for limited groundfloor commercial uses, the requirement for underground parking, and provisions for parks and playgrounds.
3. To use Site Plan Approval in the High Density Residential zones of the Neighbourhood Designation for the consideration of certain uses that require additional regulatory consideration.
4. To use Development Agreements in the High Density Residential zones of the Neighbourhood Designation for the consideration of certain uses that require unique and site-specific considerations.
5. To include in the Land Use Bylaw special regulation for high density residential uses related to parking areas, landscaping, massing, amenity space, and other matters to ensure neighbourhood compatibility.
6. To enable the rezoning of properties within the Neighbourhood Designation, including areas under Development Agreement with similar high density development rights, to the High Density Residential zones (R-4, R-MDU), save and except the R-1 zone. The criteria of Section 11 – Implementation is used to evaluate rezoning proposals.

MPS section 11.4 Implementation outlines the criteria to be used when evaluating LUB amendments or Development Agreements.

11.4.2 and 11.4.3 outline requirements for Development Agreements:

11.4.2 DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Development agreements are primarily intended to be used for developments proposed beyond the limits of the applicable Land Use Bylaw requirements, particularly in instances where Council believes land use conflicts are more likely to occur. For example, these may be developments of large scales, alternative design, a comprehensive nature, or uses of a particularly sensitive or potentially high-impact nature.

Development agreements are also useful in providing Council with the ability to negotiate terms and conditions of a project, while retaining the approval authority. This is important in ensuring large scale and sensitive developments are carried out in a manner that keeps the overall benefit of the community and the Town in mind.

IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF COUNCIL:

1. To indicate uses considered by development agreement in the Land Use Bylaw.
2. To enter into a development agreement pursuant to the Municipal Government Act on the terms and conditions set forth in this Municipal Planning Strategy and a development agreement shall:
 - a. specify the development, expansion, alteration, or change permitted; and
 - b. specify the conditions under which the development may occur; and
 - c. set forth the terms by which Town Council may terminate the agreement.
3. To have the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw prevail after discharge of any development agreement.
4. To enable the ability to bring certain as-of-right and site plan applications forward to Council for consideration by Development Agreement where the application meets the intent of this planning strategy but is unable to meet specific, prescriptive requirement(s) of the Land Use Bylaw.

11.4.3 CRITERIA FOR LUB AMENDMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF COUNCIL:

1. That, where warranted, the developer shall be responsible for providing further study of specific issues identified in the development review process, and/or implementing mitigation measures to address anticipated issues such as flooding and erosion threats.
2. That designation and/or zone specific development agreement and rezoning requirements shall be included in the Land Use Bylaw.
3. That when considering any proposed development agreement or amendment to the Land Use Bylaw, it shall

be a policy of Council to have regard for the following matters:

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- a. The financial ability of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the proposal; and
- b. The proposal's conformance with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy and to all other applicable Town Bylaws and regulations.

- c. The proposal's conformance with relevant portions of the Town's 'Sustainability Checklist', where applicable.

COMPATIBILITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- d. Compatibility of the proposed land use with adjacent land uses; and
- e. Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of height, scale, lot coverage, density, bulk, and architectural style; and
- f. Compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of lighting, signage, outdoor display, outdoor storage, traffic impacts, and noise; and
- g. Integration of the development into the surrounding area by means of appropriate landscaping, with screening provided by existing and new vegetation and fencing as required; and
- h. The proposal protects and preserves matters of public interest such as, but not limited to:
 - i. historically significant buildings;
 - j. public access to shorelines, parks, and public and community facilities; and
 - k. important and significant cultural features, natural land features and vegetation.

SERVICING CONSIDERATIONS

- l. The adequacy of sanitary services, water services, and storm water management services; and
- m. Contribution of the proposal towards an orderly and compact development pattern that makes efficient use of existing and new municipal infrastructure and services.

MOBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- n. The adequacy of the road network in, and adjacent to, or leading to the development, regarding connectivity, congestion and traffic hazards; and
- o. The adequacy of site access as determined by the Traffic Authority; and

- p. The ability of emergency services to respond to an emergency at the location of the proposed development; and
- q. The adequacy of active transportation infrastructure to support walking and cycling to and from the proposed development; and
- r. The provision of off-street vehicle and bicycle parking to prevent significant congestion, nuisance and inconvenience in the area.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- s. Consideration of any previous uses of the site which may have caused soil or groundwater contamination; and
- t. Suitability of the site in terms of slope and flood and erosion risk in accordance with Schedule E of the Land Use Bylaw; and
- u. Consideration of any anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the development, such as air and water pollution, soil contamination, and potential for the contamination or sedimentation of watercourses. Where Council determines, on the advice of a qualified person, that there is a significant risk of environmental damage from any proposed development, an environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the developer for the purpose of determining the nature and extent of any impact and no agreement shall be approved until Council is satisfied that the proposed development will not create or result in undue environmental damage; and
- v. The application of sustainable design principles and energy efficient technology, including but not limited to renewable energy infrastructure; and
- w. Environmentally friendly paving alternatives, provision of alternative transportation parking, integration of landscaping into the design of parking lots, green roofs, etc.

How can the public get involved in this application?

The public can, and **are encouraged to**, provide comment on the application at any time during the process, but the earlier in the process the better so that any concerns can be addressed. Not all concerns or issues can be dealt with through the Development Agreement process, but if the issue is relevant to the planning process, we will address it in the staff report.

Ways that the public can be involved are:

- Direct contact with Staff. The ideal time to do this is before Staff have prepared the staff report and potentially the draft Land Use Bylaw Amendment; however, you can contact Staff at any time.
- Letters or emails to Council.
- Submissions to Council at the public hearing.
- Requests to make a presentation to the Planning Advisory Committee.
- Email updates regarding this application – provide your email to Planning Staff and we will put you on the list.
- If you have questions regarding the application or the process for deciding on this application, please contact:
 - **Mark Fredericks**
 - mfredericks@wolfville.ca
 - **902-599-7252**

Attachments

Presentation slides from Fathom Studios.