

To: **Inverness County Planning Advisory Committee
Inverness County Council**

From: **Planning Staff (EDPC)**

Date: **February 25, 2026**

Reference: **Application to enter into a concurrent rezoning and Development Agreement for the adaptive reuse and mixed-use residential development on Lot 47, Upper Railway Street, Inverness.**

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend that the Inverness County Planning Advisory Committee forward the following recommendations:

1. That Municipal Council enter into a rezoning;
2. and concurrently a Development Agreement for the adaptive reuse and mixed-use residential development on Lot 47, Upper Railway Street, Inverness.

Background Information:

On **October 24, 2025**, the Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC) received a complete application for a Development Agreement to permit the conversion of the existing building on site to an 8-unit residential building as well as subdivide the remaining lot into 8 individual parcels featuring development of semi-detached dwelling and mixed-use buildings.

Planning staff determined that a Development Agreement on its own would not adequately address policy requirements, and as a result, a concurrent rezoning was recommended.

Existing Site Conditions and Neighbourhood:

Planning staff conducted a site visit on November 12, 2025, to assess the current condition of the subject property, its existing uses, and its surrounding context. The property is

Description	
Designation:	Urban Residential
Current Zoning:	Institutional Zone (I-1)
Wellhead Protection:	No
Heritage Property:	No
Request:	Development Agreement
Identification #:	PID 50124676
Total Lot Area:	2.51 acres
Site Visit:	12 November 2025

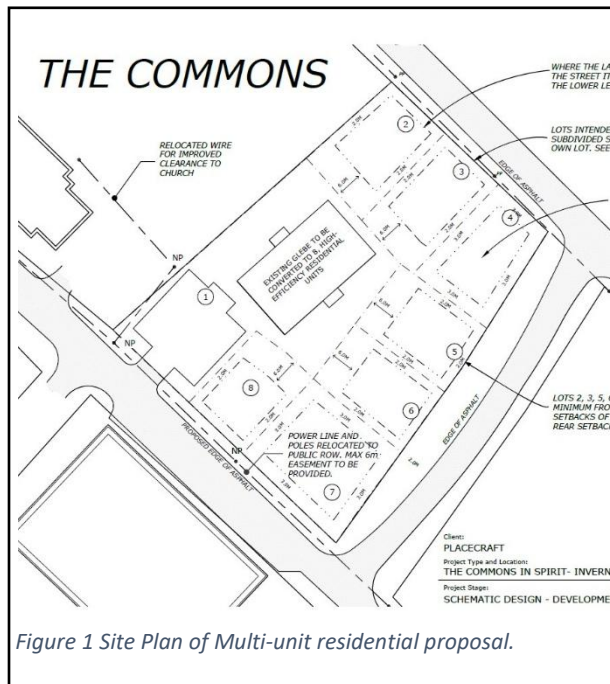


Figure 1 Site Plan of Multi-unit residential proposal.

Staff Report

located within a residential neighbourhood in Inverness. The centrally located 2.51-acre lot is within walking distance of downtown Inverness and is surrounded by a vibrant residential area. The site has access to municipal services and is bounded by public roads on three sides.

The property is currently zoned Institutional (I-1) and contains an existing two-storey mixed-use building situated near the centre of the lot. Surrounding properties are generally developed with two- to three-storey residential buildings, with the Stella Maris Church situated to the northwest.

The site is relatively flat, with gradual slopes near its edges (*refer figure 2*). An internal road network with a mixed use 2 storey building and a single-storey auxiliary building currently exist on the property. The single-storey auxiliary building is proposed to be removed to allow for more efficient site development. The lot is located in close proximity to the Inverness Raceway, Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital, and Inverness Beach, making it a strategically positioned site for this type of residential redevelopment.



Figure 2 Images of existing site conditions

Development Proposal:

The proposed development aligns well with key objectives typically outlined in municipal planning strategies, particularly those focused on increasing the local housing supply, encouraging infill development, promoting adaptive reuse of existing structures, and supporting a more walkable community. By reinvesting in a centrally located site, the project contributes to more efficient land use patterns and strengthens the vibrancy of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Inverness continues to experience pressure in its year-round housing market, creating challenges for local employers who rely on stable accommodation options to attract and retain staff. The addition of multiple residential units—offering a variety of sizes and tenure types—helps address this ongoing housing gap. Its proximity to the downtown core provides residents with convenient access to daily services while reducing reliance on personal vehicles.

Parking and Site Development

All parking spaces are proposed to meet the required dimensions of 2.6 m by 5.5 m. The development will provide one parking space per semi-detached dwelling, for a total of 10 spaces; four spaces per mixed-use lot, for a total of 8 spaces; and 12 spaces, including two accessible spaces, for the 8-unit residential building (*refer figure 9*). Landscaping and outdoor amenity provisions include a minimum of one tree per lot, along with at least 75 m² of shared outdoor amenity space, situated generally as shown on the plan in *figure 9* and oriented to take advantage of water views for the benefit of residents.



Figure 3 3D view of the proposed development

The project is composed of 4 parts:

a) *Conversion of existing mixed-use building into eight residential units – Lot 1*

The existing 2-storey structure on the site is a mixed-use building that is proposed to be refurbished and converted into eight residential units. The redevelopment will retain the overall built form while incorporating improved fenestration, an upgraded building envelope, and modern mechanical systems,

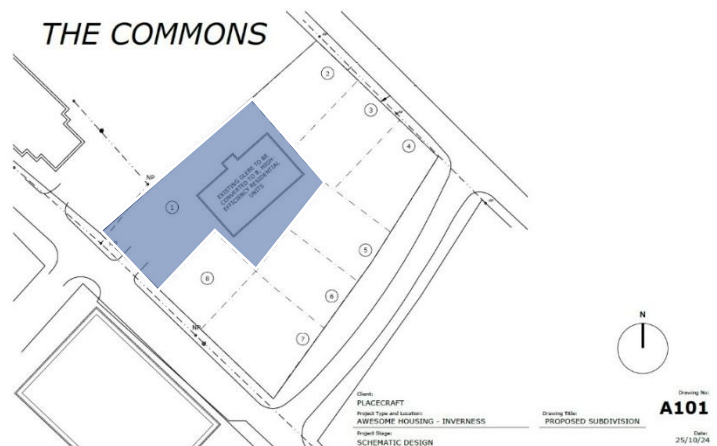


Figure 4 Site Plan showing lot with existing mixed-use building

Staff Report

including heat pumps and ERVs for each unit. The property also contains an established internal road network, which will be utilized to provide efficient driveway access to the proposed parking areas. The existing single-storey auxiliary building is proposed to be demolished to facilitate a more efficient and functional site layout. This adaptive reuse approach minimizes demolition waste, supports sustainable building practices, and helps maintain coherence with the surrounding neighbourhood context.



Figure 5 Image of existing buildings on the site

b) Semi-detached dwellings – Lots 2,3,5,6 and 8

The proposed semi-detached dwellings are two-storey structures designed to reflect modest-scale, ground-oriented housing intended to complement the existing residential fabric of the surrounding neighbourhood (refer figure 7). Minimum setbacks for the semi-detached dwellings are proposed at 2 m for the front and side yards and 6 m for the rear yard; however, in practice, NSP easements may require greater front or flanking yard setbacks (refer figure 1). Although the rear and side yard dimensions are smaller than what is typically found in the area. The backyards of these lots face internal to the development and

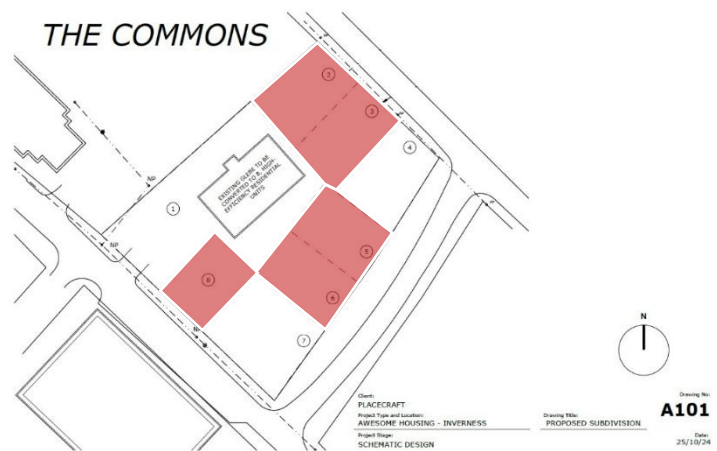


Figure 6 Site plan showing lots with proposed semi-detached dwellings

therefore do not create any adverse impacts on adjacent properties. Landscaping and site lighting will be planned to promote both privacy and safety for future residents. Parking for each semi-detached unit will be accommodated on-site and accessed through the existing street network, ensuring an efficient and unobtrusive circulation pattern (refer figure 9). These 5 lots will accommodate a total of 10 semi-detached dwelling units, with the potential for an additional 4 secondary basement suites on Lots 2 and 3.

THE COMMONS



Figure 7 3D view of proposed semi-detached dwellings

c) *Mixed use buildings – lots 4 and 7 (corner lots)*

The proposal includes two corner lots designed to accommodate either two- or three-unit dwellings with integrated ground-floor commercial space suitable for local entrepreneurs. The mixed-use buildings on these corner sites are shown with a minimum setback of approximately 3 metres on all sides, providing an appropriate interface with the surrounding

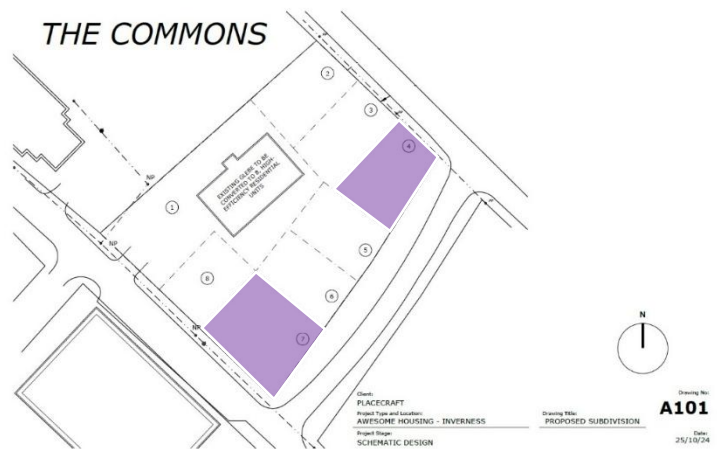


Figure 8 Site plan showing corner lots with proposed mixed-use buildings

Staff Report

streetscape (refer figure 1). These mixed-use buildings provide opportunities for small offices, neighbourhood-scale commercial uses, and other community-oriented activities, supporting local economic development. The upper storeys would contain two or three residential units, creating a cohesive mixed-use built form that contributes to a vibrant and walkable neighbourhood (refer 3D views figure 9).

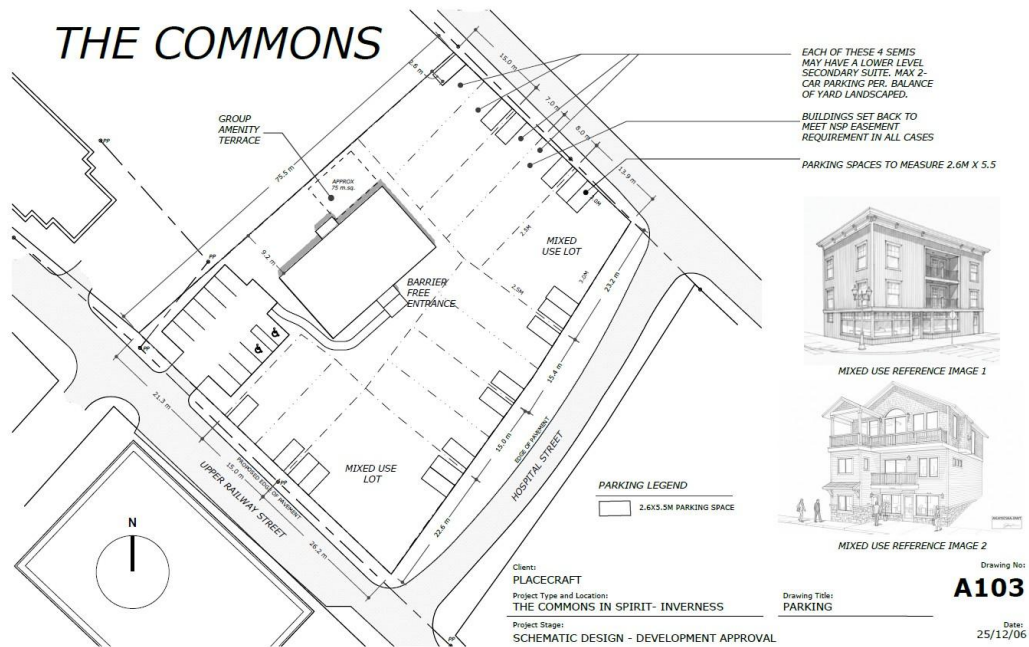


Figure 9 concept views and plan for mixed use lots

- d) *Subdivision of the property to 8 lots, including 5 semi detached dwelling lots which can be further subdivided.*

The proposal includes the subdivision of the subject property into eight individual lots that together support a mix of residential and small-scale commercial development. Each lot dimensions and lot sizes are provided in figure 10. The subdivision has been structured to ensure that each lot has sufficient area, frontage, and access to accommodate its intended form of development while maintaining compliance with servicing and utility requirements. The design responds to the surrounding street network—Upper Railway Street, Hospital Street, and the adjacent institutional property—ensuring appropriate setbacks, sightlines, and spacing between buildings.

Lot 1 – multi-unit residential building – 1378.7 sq.m.

Lots 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 - semi-detached dwellings, providing a total of ten ground-oriented residential units. These lots may be **further subdivided** in the future to place each semi-detached unit on its own freehold parcel, ensuring accurate demising lines after construction.

Lot 2 – 198.8 sq.m. + 180.8 sq.m.

- Lot 3 – 172.7 sq.m. + 210.3 sq.m.
- Lot 5 – 173.5 sq.m. + 169.7 sq.m.
- Lot 6 – 171.1 sq.m. + 163.0 sq.m.
- Lot 8 – 152.7 sq.m. + 156.6 sq.m.
- Lots 4 and 7 – mixed-use buildings –lot 7 - 531 sq. m.

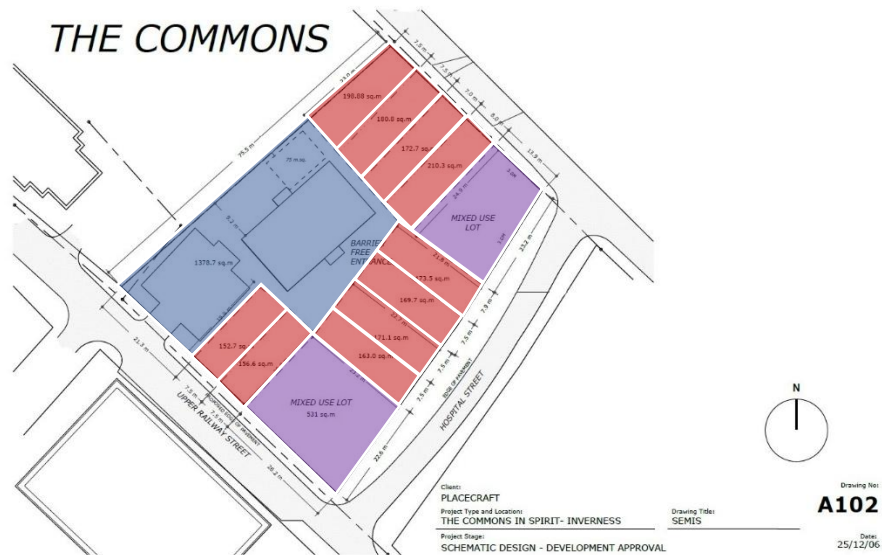


Figure 10 Site plan showing proposed subdivision of the entire lot

Rezoning from Institutional (I-1) Zone to Multi-unit residential (R-2) Zone:

The subject property is currently zoned Institutional (I-1) under the Inverness Land Use By-law (LUB). The I-1 Zone does not permit multi-unit residential development as-of-right, limiting the site’s ability to support the proposed housing mix and density. Given that the existing mixed-use building is to be converted into multiple residential units, and that the overall development concept includes a combination of semi-detached dwellings, small mixed use buildings, and potential secondary suites, the current zoning is insufficient to accommodate the intended land use.

To enable the proposed redevelopment, the applicant is seeking a rezoning to the Multi-Unit Residential (R-2) Zone. The R-2 Zone contemplates a broader range of residential forms and is the appropriate designation for developments containing multiple units on a single parcel. Importantly, Part 9(2) of the Inverness LUB identifies that Multiple-Unit Dwellings containing five (5) or more units may be considered through a Development Agreement in the R-2 Zone. This mechanism provides Council with the ability to assess site-specific design elements, servicing considerations, and neighbourhood compatibility through a tailored and regulated approval process.

Staff Report

Analysis:

Policy 2.20 (*for policy refer appendix A table 1*) therefore provides the enabling framework for rezoning the subject property from the Institutional (I-1) Zone to the R-2 Zone. By rezoning the property to R-2, the Municipality can consider the development through a Development Agreement in accordance with LUB provisions for multi-unit dwellings.

Policy 2.4 (*for policy refer appendix A table 1*) of the Inverness Municipal Planning Strategy directly supports the applicant's proposal to adaptively reuse and rehabilitate the existing structure on the subject property by converting it into an eight-unit residential building. The proposed conversion preserves the existing building form, reduces demolition waste, and contributes to neighbourhood continuity by retaining a longstanding-built asset within the community. By reinvesting in an existing structure rather than replacing it with new construction, the development aligns with Policy 2.4's intent to maintain community character while expanding local housing options.

Policy 2.7 (*for policy refer appendix A table 1*) of the Inverness Municipal Planning Strategy encourages the County to work with the development industry and community members to introduce innovative housing types and designs that meet a range of social, environmental, and community objectives. The proposal to develop semi-detached dwellings, including the potential for secondary suites on Lots 2 and 3, aligns directly with this policy.

The semi-detached units provide a gentle-density, ground-oriented housing form that is compatible with surrounding residential uses and supports the creation of a more complete community by adding varied housing options within walking distance of services. The potential secondary suites introduce flexible and attainable housing, supporting affordability and opportunities for live/work arrangements.

Policy 2.5 (*for policy refer appendix A table 1*) enables the proposed mixed-use buildings on the two corner lots, each of which is designed to accommodate three small units, including a flex-unit that may function as either a commercial space or a residential unit depending on market needs.

These flex-units provide low-barrier opportunities for local entrepreneurs, artisans, seasonal vendors, and home-based businesses, aligning with the policy's intent to promote live/work environments within serviced and walkable areas of the community.

Policy 2.2(b) (*for policy refer appendix A table 1*) of the Inverness Municipal Planning Strategy directs the County to promote an adequate supply of both ownership and rental housing by providing opportunities for smaller-lot single and semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses. This policy supports the proposed development,

which introduces a diverse housing mix through the conversion of the existing structure into eight residential units and the subdivision of the property into eight lots, five of which will contain semi-detached dwellings.

Policy 16.0 (e) (for policy refer appendix A table 1) provides the key enabling framework for the proposed development to proceed through a Development Agreement. The Development Agreement process allows the Municipality to ensure that matters such as building form, density, parking, servicing, landscaping, and neighbourhood compatibility are appropriately managed.

As per **Policy 16.2(b)** (for policy refer appendix A table 2) approval of the Development Agreement is contingent upon the proposal meeting each of these criteria. Through the review process, staff will assess servicing capacity, road adequacy, fire protection access, and any potential municipal financial impacts. The Agreement may only be approved by Council once it has been demonstrated that the development can be accommodated within existing municipal resources and infrastructure without creating undue burden on the community.

Statements of Provincial Interest:

The purpose of the Statements of Provincial Interest (SPI) is to protect the common public interest and encourage sustainable development in municipalities. The SPI are policy statements adopted by the provincial government under the powers of the Municipal Government Act (MGA s.193). They are set out in Schedule “B” of the MGA and came into effect on April 1, 1999. Legislation requires that municipal planning documents are “reasonably consistent” with the SPI. As such, the following comments are offered with respect to consistency of the proposal with the SPI:

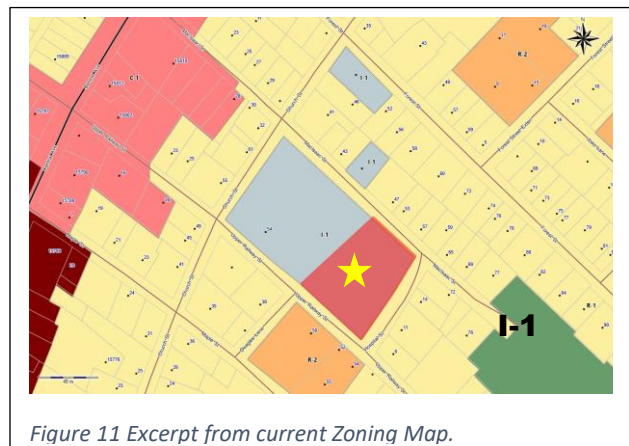


Figure 11 Excerpt from current Zoning Map.

1. Drinking Water: The proposed development does not impact the provision of drinking water. The property is not located within a well field or an area covered by a Source Water Protection Plan.
2. Flood Risk Areas: Not in an identified flood risk area.
3. Agricultural Land: Not considered agricultural land or impacting agricultural lands.
4. Infrastructure: Makes use of existing municipal water with no demand for new municipal infrastructure.
5. Housing: There are no residential units removed as a result of this proposal.

Staff Report

The proposed development is reasonably consistent with the SPI.

Conclusion:

Planning Staff conclude that the proposed rezoning from Institutional (I-1) to Multi-Unit Residential (R-2) and the associated Development Agreement to enable an adaptive reuse and mixed-density residential infill development at 47 Upper Railway Street is consistent with the intent of the Municipal Planning Strategy and meets the applicable criteria of MPS Policies 2.2(b), 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 2.20, and 16.0(e). The proposal aligns with municipal objectives to expand housing supply, support innovative and mixed-use housing forms, and encourage the rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Proposed Motions for the Planning Advisory Committee:

Based upon the staff recommendation, the proposed motions for PAC are:

1. *That the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Municipal Council enter into a concurrent Rezoning from Institutional (I-1) Zone to Multi-unit residential (R-2) Zone and Development Agreement for a consignment store on 47 Upper Railway Street, Inverness, Inverness County, PID 50124676; and*

That Municipal Council give First and Second Reading and schedule a Public Hearing.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Summary of Policies

Staff Report

Appendix A: Summary of Policies

<p>Policy 2.2(b) The County will promote an adequate supply of both ownership and rental housing stock by providing opportunities for the development of smaller lot single and semi-detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses;</p>	
<p>Policy 2.4 The County will encourage and support the retention and rehabilitation of older housing or the reconstruction of existing housing to maintain the housing stock and the stability and community character, particularly in established residential neighbourhoods.</p>	
<p>Policy 2.5 The County will support mixed use developments, including live/work uses and home occupations in appropriate locations throughout the town.</p>	
<p>Policy 2.7 The County will work with the development industry and other community members to identify and encourage innovative housing types and designs in the Plan Area where such innovation would:</p>	
<p>a) be compatible with surrounding land uses;</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>b) support the development of complete communities;</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>c) provide live/work and home occupation opportunities;</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>d) incorporate energy conservation features and the use of alternative and/or renewable energy systems;</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>e) reduce municipal expenditures;</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>f) protect significant natural heritage features;</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>g) provide accessible and affordable housing to residents;</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>h) conserve and/or enhance cultural heritage resources;</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>i) celebrate the cultural diversity of the community; and,</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>j) reflect, add and/or enhance architectural interest and community character.</p>	<p>Complies See Staff Report</p>
<p>Policy 2.20 It shall be the policy of Council to establish a Multiple Residential Unit (R-2) zone, which shall be permitted in the Urban Residential designation, subject</p>	

to the regulations found in the Land Use By-law. In general, this zone will permit higher-density residential land uses and private home daycares.	
<p>Policy 16.0(e)</p> <p>The following uses shall be permitted subject to the entering into of a Development Agreement, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act: A Multiple-unit Dwelling development with five (5) or more units in the Residential Multiple-Unit (R-3) zone.</p>	

<p>Policy 16.2</p> <p>.....In considering Development Agreements, in addition to all other criteria as set out in various policies of this Strategy, Council shall have regard to the following matters: That the proposal, which is subject to the Development Agreement, is not premature or inappropriate by reason of:</p>	
a) That the proposed agreement is in conformance with the intent of this Secondary Plan and the requirements of all other Municipal By-laws and regulations.	Complies See Staff Report
b) That the proposal, which is subject to the Development Agreement, is not premature or inappropriate by reason of:	
i) The financial capability of the community to absorb any costs related to the development;	Refer Correspondence of Water Utility & Capital Projects Comptroller
ii) The adequacy of the physical site conditions for private on-site sewer and water systems;	Refer Correspondence of Director of Public Works, Mun. of the County of Inverness
iii) The adequacy of the street or road networks, adjacent to and leading to the development; and,	Refer Correspondence of Area Manager, NS DTIR
iv) The adequacy of municipal fire protection, service and equipment.	Refer Correspondence of Inverness volunteer Fire Department
c) That controls are placed on the proposed developments so as to reduce the conflict with any adjacent or nearby land uses by reason of:	Complies See Staff Report
i) The type of use;	Complies See Staff Report
ii) The height, bulk and lot coverage of any proposed building or structure;	Complies See Staff Report
iii) Traffic generation;	Not applicable

Staff Report

iv) Access and egress from the site and the distance of these from street intersections;	Complies See Staff Report
v) Parking;	Complies See Staff Report
vi) Landscaping;	Complies See Staff Report
vii) Open storage;	Not applicable
viii) Signs;	Not applicable
ix) The hours of operation;	Not applicable
x) Maintenance of any building(s) and property; and,	Not applicable
xi) Any other relevant matters of planning concern.	Complies See D.A.
d) The suitability of the proposed site in terms of steepness of grades, soil and for geological conditions, and the relative location of watercourses, marshes, swamps, or bogs;	Complies See Staff Report
e) The terms of the agreement provided, as appropriate, for: i) The discharge of the agreement or parts thereof upon the successful fulfillment of its terms.	Complies See D.A.

*D.A.: Development Agreement