

November 30, 2023

**Application for substantial amendments to the Development Agreement on property PID#40203648 in Lucasville to enable the addition of a campground.**

**MS. THEA LANGILLE**  
**Manager - Planning Applications**  
Development Services  
Planning and Development

Halifax Regional Municipality  
P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

Dear Ms. Langille,

On behalf of our client Santa's Village Inc., I am applying to the Halifax Regional Municipality for substantial amendments to the Development Agreement registered against the above identified property located at 1200 Lucasville Road in Lucasville, NS. The property currently operates a theme park known as 'Atlantic Splash Adventure' on the property.

The main purpose of this planning application is to add a campground as an additional land use to the property. Development or expansion of such commercial recreation uses is enabled through Policy P-27 of the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Municipal Planning Strategy.

The following documents in support of this application are attached to this letter:

- + Basic facts about the property and its context
- + Detailed information about the proposed development
- + Analysis of the proposal's alignment with municipal planning policy
- + An attachment including:
  - Appendix A: Site and Landscape Plan
  - Appendix B: Traffic Impact Statement
  - Appendix C: Servicing Schematic

We are excited to work with staff, Council and the community on this proposal.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely,



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Paul Dec, MCIP, LPP

**1 BACKGROUND**

**1.1 LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

The subject of this planning application is property PID#40203648 registered to Santa's Village Inc. The 10.12<sup>1</sup> hectare property is situated on Lucasville Road in Hammonds Plains at the civic number 1200 on that road.



Figure 1: Site map

The property currently contains the amusement park known as Atlantic Splash Adventure. The site contains several small buildings used for administrative offices and attractions, two sets of water slides, a go-kart track, one rollercoaster and various small rides.

According to LiDAR data, the entire majority of the site is situated at about 110 metres above sea level. The northern part of the property slopes down by about seven metres to the northeastern corner of the property. In this area, a watercourse cuts through the site, following the downward contours of the terrain.

<sup>1</sup> Based on property records from the Land Registration Office

1.2 CONTEXT AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located opposite to the three-way intersection of Lucasville and Cranley Roads. This point of Lucasville Road is located at about 1.35 kilometres north of Hammonds Plains Road, and about 5 kilometres south of the Highway 101 overpass.

The neighbouring properties along Lucasville Road feature a mix of commercial and residential land uses. Immediately neighbouring properties on the same side of the road include a landscaping business, a Nova Scotia Power laydown yard and a contracting business. Across the street, two residential properties and an engineering firm are present. To the east, a large vacant wood lot flanks the property's rear lot line.



Figure 2: Context map

**2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

**2.1 DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY**

The owners of the property plan to add a campground to the northern, currently vacant end of the property. The campground would consist of 44 A-frame ‘glamping’ cabins, similar to the one depicted in Figure 3. These cabins are proposed to be the only type of accommodation on the campground. Tenting or RV sites are not a part of the proposal.



Figure 3: Typical cabin design (photo credit: Biome Canada)

The campground is proposed to include two washroom and amenity buildings, serviced by municipal water supply and on-site septic disposal fields. In alignment with current Land Use By-law requirements, a 20-metre riparian buffer to the watercourse is being preserved to minimize disturbance in that sensitive area.

**2.2 PARKING AND CIRCULATION**

Of the 44 total camp sites, 35 are foreseen to be located on the internal driveways and feature one parking spot directly at the cabin. For the 9 walk-in camp sites, there will be dedicated parking spaces along one of the driveway loops. A small parking lot with 14 further parking spaces is proposed to be added to the campground for visitors and maintenance staff.

The campground is proposed to be accessed through a new driveway to Lucasville Road, located at about 145 metres from the Cranley Road intersection and aligned with the driveway from the property across the road. A pedestrian trail system will allow for circulation between the camping sites and provide direct access to the Atlantic Splash Adventure amusement park through a secondary park entrance.

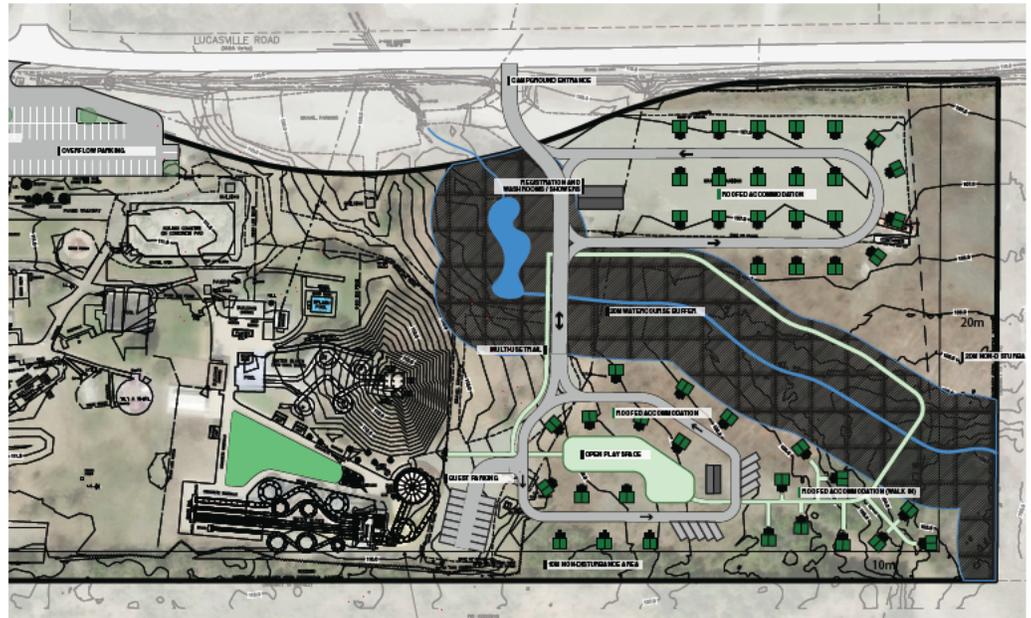


Figure 3: Camground Overview Plan

On the remainder of the site, the main amusement park entrance is proposed to be moved to the southern side lot line of the property. Plans for the new entrance include a landscaped plaza and an enlarged and formalized parking lot including 210 parking spaces. The parking space around the current main entrance in the centre of the property is also planned to be formalized. It will be used for staff and overflow parking and include 56 parking spaces.

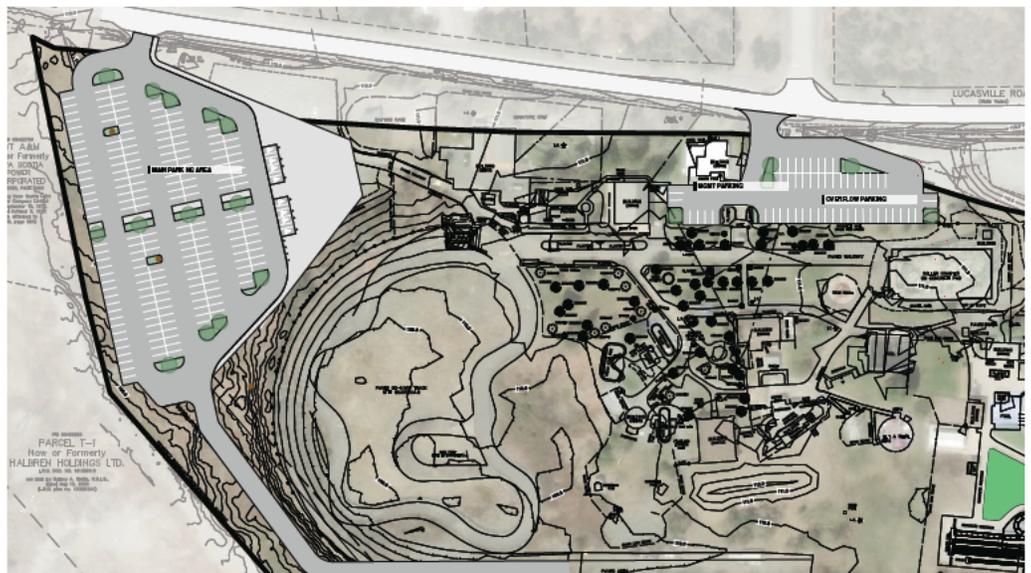


Figure 4: Revised Park Entrance Plan

**3 PLANNING APPLICATION**

**3.1 FRAMEWORK**

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) for Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville subject the property to the policies and regulations of the following designations and zones:

Document	Designation / Zone
Municipal Planning Strategy	Mixed-Use B
Land Use By-law	MU-1

Further to the general requirements of the Land Use By-law, the site is also regulated by a Development Agreement registered against the property. The Development Agreement between the Halifax Regional Municipality and the previous land owners was initially approved by Council on June 15, 2015, then approved again with corrections on November 24, 2015, and finally registered against the property on May 24, 2016.

The agreement permits the development and operation of an amusement park on the property, regulating various aspects of the site design including site layout and landscaping.

**3.2 REQUEST**

This application is submitted to apply for an amendment to the existing Development Agreement on property PID#40203648, in order to allow for the introduction of a campground as an additional land use and to enable slight changes to the configuration of the site, including new parking arrangements.

**3.3 POLICY ANALYSIS**

This application for Development Agreement is based on Policy P-27 of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) for the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Plan Area. The latter Policy also references the generic Policy P-137 from the Implementation section of the MPS. The following analysis will demonstrate how the Development Proposal (further referred to as ‘the Proposal’) complies with the applicable Policies of the MPS.

**Policy P-27 - Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Municipal Planning Strategy**

*Within the Mixed Use A, B and C Designations, it shall be the intention of Council through the land use by-law to provide for the continued use of commercial recreation uses to the extent they presently exist (Policy P-9 and P-12). Further, Council may consider any proposed expansion of existing commercial recreation uses as well as the development of new commercial recreation uses by development agreement and according to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act. In considering any new or expanded commercial recreation use, Council shall have regard to the following:*

- a) *that the site exhibits characteristics which make the location particularly suitable for the proposed use;*

**Compliance:** The site does already contain one kind of a ‘commercial recreation’ land use and the owners propose to add another recreational land use to supplement the main use of the property.

- b) *the potential for adversely affecting adjacent residential and community facility development by virtue of noise, visual intrusion, traffic generation and littering;*

**Compliance:** Most of the immediate vicinity of the application site contain commercial land uses or vacant lots. Across the street, three residential properties exist but they are set back at large distances from the street or have created their own landscaped buffers from the amusement park. The introduction of the campground is therefore unlikely to create nuisances for these three residences. Landscaping of the campground will also improve the visual appearance of the northern end of the property, which is currently occupied by the gravel overflow parking lot.

- c) *the provision of landscaping or buffering from adjacent development and the public road to which it has access in order to reduce the impact of the proposed development;*

**Compliance:** The Proposal contains a landscaped buffer around the vast majority of the site. In most locations, this buffer measures between 10-20 metres. The only location where a reduced buffer width is proposed is along the southern property boundary. In this location, the neighbouring lot is encumbered by a NS Power easement of approximately 80 metres. This area of the neighbouring properties is therefore not developable, which allows for lesser landscaped buffer which still reasonably meet the intent of this Policy.

- d) *the availability of a site and site design which will entirely contain all aspects of the operation within the boundary of the proposed site;*

**Compliance:** With the exception of driveways leading to the parking lots and the campground, all newly proposed site features are fully contained within the property. There are existing buildings and structures of the theme park that appear to encroach on the public right-of-way. Based on historic aerial imagery, these structures have existed for at least 20 years.

- e) *the impact on traffic circulation and in particular sighting distances and entrances and exits to the site;*

**Compliance:** The Proposal proposes one additional driveway, located in alignment with another driveway on the opposing side of Lucasville Road. The attached Traffic Impact statement concludes that “new vehicle trips associated with the development can be accommodated on Lucasville Road with a negligible impact on traffic operations.”

- f) *the layout and design of the facility;*

- g) *general maintenance of the facility;*

- h) *where any sewage treatment plant is proposed, the location and level of treatment of the sewage treatment plant;*

**Compliance:** The applicant is looking forward to hearing from HRM staff how these Policy items can be satisfied. No sewage treatment plant is being proposed for the site.

- i) *that the appearance of all buildings and structures related to the use shall be compatible with the surrounding area in terms of scale, exterior finish and signage;*

**Compliance:** Other than camping cabins, no new buildings are being introduced as part of this Proposal.

- j) *an assessment of environmental concerns related to the proposed development and in particular, potential effects on watercourses;*

- k) *the requirement for any applicable provincial approvals;*

**Compliance:** The watercourse buffered currently required by the Land Use By-law is observed. The septic disposal fields will be subject to separate permits at the development stage.

- l) *hours of operation; and*

**Compliance:** A campground is an accommodation business and therefore operates 24h. However, rules on quiet times can be introduced.

- m) *the provisions of Policy P-137.*

**Compliance:** This Policy is a general collection of Policies applicable to any planning application in the plan area. No additional areas of concern were identified in P-137.