

CENTRE PLAN

DRAFT THEME AREA POLICY DIRECTION + GLOSSARY

October 2016



CENTRE PLAN

2 GENERAL POLICY DIRECTIONS

The Regional Centre wide policy direction presented in this section have been organized into the Plan's seven themes: land use and design, mobility, public spaces and places, culture and heritage, housing, sustainability, and jobs and economic development.

These statements reflect a synthesis of what we've learned through consultation, carry forwards from current Municipal Planning Strategies, and some new ideas being used throughout North America to support great planning.

The eventual policies will guide growth and development across the Regional Centre over the life of this Plan. Through feedback from internal departments, the public, stakeholders, analysis, and best practices, they will continue to be edited to ensure the best Centre Plan possible.

Please note when reviewing prior to the release of the Urban Structure there may be terms that will lack clarity until such time that the Urban Structure is released (e.g. "Centres", "Corridors").

2.1 LAND USE & DESIGN

As more people and businesses move to the Regional Centre there is an opportunity to provide greater housing choice; cultivate clustered employment areas; and expand the number of communities where people can easily walk to shopping, services, and parks and open space. While many areas within the Regional Centre already strongly display these characteristics, thoughtful land use planning and design can build upon, develop, and expand these assets. New development must be carefully planned and integrated to add to the unique character of existing places and communities within the Regional Centre.

The Centre Plan identifies distinct types of growth areas within the Regional Centre, this section includes general policy direction that will contribute to the vitality of the entire Regional Centre.

OBJECTIVES

- » To create communities where residents within the Regional Centre can easily access a range of services, resources, and amenities.
- » To ensure new development responds to the surrounding context through appropriate transitions, uses, limited off-site impacts, and a positive relationship to the sidewalk.
- » To implement a consistent human-scale approach to street design and frontages.
- » To promote all-season design for new developments that creates pleasant microclimates for users throughout the year and in different weather conditions.
- » To encourage a variety of housing choice in diverse forms, tenures and densities throughout the Regional Centre.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.1.1 LAND USE

Land use policies play an important role in developing complete communities that have a variety of housing types, transportation options, places of work, and recreation opportunities. A role of the Centre Plan is to provide the necessary policy framework to guide public and private development activities so that they contribute to the vision for the Regional Centre; providing benefits to neighbourhoods and the Regional Centre as a whole.

Urban Structure

- a) Ensure that land use and zoning regulations follow the Urban Structure Map.

Compact Development

- b) Focus compact development in areas that are well-served by transit and active transportation networks and in close proximity to employment concentrations.

Land Use Adjacencies

- c) Ensure non-residential land uses abutting residential areas have minimal off-site impacts such as noise, illumination, or waste (e.g. restaurants, drinking establishments, and entertainment establishments) and must demonstrate how potential impacts are mitigated through building design, servicing solutions and site design.

Residential Adaptation in Mixed-Use Areas

- d) Through a building permit review process, support residential development incorporating protective measures from existing ambient noise levels that could prove annoying or disruptive to residents.

Measures could include:

- » Site design to shield development from the greatest noise sources
- » Construction of noise barriers
- » Sound proofing and other sound mitigation measures to adapt the building design to its location and the mix of uses permitted in its vicinity

Complete Communities Funding

- e) Investigate funding opportunities to support community projects that contribute to complete communities.

Municipal-owned Land in Established Areas

- f) Consider adjacent and neighbourhood land uses and zoning prior to the sale of surplus municipal property, in addition to a community needs assessment.

Drive-through Facilities

- g) To support pedestrian-oriented environments, only permit new drive-through facilities in Employment Intensive Areas.

2.1.2 URBAN DESIGN

The Regional Centre is growing as demonstrated by the number of recently completed and proposed mixed use housing, and commercial projects. It is important that this growth positively contributes to the Regional Centre's built form. The character of the Regional Centre is largely determined by the built form within it, including the buildings, streets, structures, and other infrastructure. Built form and public amenities, like benches and street trees, can create attractive and enjoyable urban places. Urban design uses land use planning, architecture, transportation planning, development economics, engineering and landscape architecture to create great places. The places and spaces, like streets, parks, and plazas can be distinct, comfortable, and respectful of the communities existing character depending on the urban design vision.

City Pattern

- a) Encourage the comprehensive development of large sites so that they are carefully designed to integrate with the surrounding area and with the broader municipality.
- b) Allow the redevelopment of nonconforming sites through development agreement. Any increase in unit count could be negotiated in the agreement and must involve public engagement with the surrounding community.
- c) Define the desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of streets, blocks, open spaces, and buildings through the Regional Centre Design Manual to guide redevelopment.
- d) Ensure that streets, parks, and open spaces are designed to emphasize their importance within the public realm, and to support complete communities.

City Image

- e) Improve the ease of orientation and navigation within the Regional Centre by developing a comprehensive wayfinding strategy, including signage, landmark recognition, and route character.
- f) Increase the visibility of major destination areas and other points of interest.

General Built Form Character

- g) Encourage development that responds to and enhances the positive qualities of site and context — the neighbourhood, the block, the public realm, and natural features.
- h) New development should contribute to the architectural character of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- i) New development should include amenities that create a pedestrian-oriented environment and provide opportunities for people to sit, spend time, and gather.
- j) Promote building design that frames and supports adjacent streets, parks and open spaces to improve the safety, pedestrian interest and casual views to these spaces.
- k) Advocate for the careful remodeling of older buildings, in order to enhance rather than weaken the original character of such buildings.
- l) Explore opportunities to create visual interest with light, while being mindful of off-site impacts, especially in areas adjacent to established residential areas.
- m) New building construction should consider the privacy and impacts from shadowing on adjacent properties.
- n) Encourage development to provide adequate room within the development for parking and servicing needs.
- o) Encourage new development that integrates natural and green infrastructure such as trees, green spaces, green roofs, gardens, green walls, and vegetated stormwater management systems.

Streetwall Character

- p) Promote commercial streets that are defined by a series of fine grain shopfronts to create interest and rhythm along commercial streetscapes.

- q) Promote residential streets that are defined by a series of fine grain individually accessed residential units that front onto the street.
- r) Recognize that residential developments should clearly demark public/private spaces.
- s) Promote predominantly transparent shopfronts along commercial streets.
- t) Encourage active uses along commercial streets such as café space, operable windows, sidewalk display space, and barrier free building entries.
- u) Encourage landscaping, street trees, and other design approaches to buffer residential buildings from the street to provide an appropriate level of privacy.
- v) Encourage commercial buildings to provide weather protection such as canopies, and awnings.
- w) Encourage new development to frame and respect the scale of the adjacent streets, parks and open spaces.
- x) Encourage new development on corner sites to frame both adjacent street frontages and give prominence to the corner, in Centres, Corridors and High Order Residential Areas.
- y) In Centres and Corridors, setback buildings from the property line between 1.5 and 3 metres on commercial facades to allow for private amenity space adjacent to the Right of Way.

Built Form Tall Buildings (7 Or More Stories)

- z) Require that tall buildings be located in areas where high density development is appropriate, feature high quality materials, and contribute to architectural excellence in the municipality.
- aa) Ensure that tall buildings respect the height of the surrounding context by stepping down towards the adjacent existing or future built form.
- ab) Promote the design and construction of tall buildings that provide façade articulation through recessions and projections, material changes and other design interventions.
- ac) Recognize that incongruent buildings, in terms of height, massing, density or design, do not determine or change the overall context of an area.

- ad) Encourage tall buildings to incorporate design strategies to block wind, particularly prevailing winds and downdrafts.
- ae) Require that tall building developments submit a shadow impact assessment for the proposed building, highlighting shadows between March 21 and September 21 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- af) Require tall buildings to set back above a two to four storey podium to promote human scale design.
- ag) Development should provide for public access to sunlight by managing and shaping the height and mass of buildings.
- ah) Consider a minimum tower separation distance of 25 meters to provide for sky views and privacy between towers.

Health, Safety and Security

- ai) Encourage building, site, and public infrastructure design approaches that help prevent crime.
- aj) Minimize the adverse impacts of highways, auto-oriented uses, vehicle areas, signage, and exterior display and storage areas on adjacent residential uses.
- ak) Encourage building and landscape design that limit and/or mitigate negative air quality impacts to building users and residents, particularly in areas near freeways, regional truckways, high traffic streets, and other sources of air pollution.
- al) Mitigate the visual impact of telecommunications and broadcast facilities near residentially-zoned areas through physical design solutions.

Design Quality

- am) Promote quality architecture, landscaping, urban design, and construction by creating high quality municipal buildings, streetscapes, and parks.
- an) Encourage the use of design competitions for public works to seek design excellence and promote public interest.
- ao) Establish biannual urban design awards to reward creativity and excellence in design.

2.2 MOBILITY

While many areas of the Regional Centre are well connected and easy for people to move through, the convenience, safety, and connectivity of the transportation network can be improved. The number of people living and working in the Regional Centre makes it both a viable and important area to expand the use of transit and active transportation modes such as walking and cycling. Designing complete streets; where streets are safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities, and using all types of travel, will ensure that movement by foot, bike, transit, car and other modes is convenient throughout the day and supportive of surrounding residential, commercial, institutional, and open space uses.

Integrating land use and transportation planning will help to make alternatives to driving an easy choice. Mobility policies must also consider the unique context of the Regional Centre, including the need to provide connections for multiple modes of travel across the harbour.

OBJECTIVES

- » To ensure design considers pedestrians first followed by cycling, public transit, car sharing, utility and private vehicles.
- » To implement an integrated mobility approach throughout the Regional Centre that incorporates the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, drivers, and persons with mobility challenges in all street designs and re-designs.
- » To support greater public transit and active transportation use through public infrastructure, land use, and the built form.
- » To enhance and expand pedestrian corridors and pathways to provide safe and convenient connectivity within, to, and from the Regional Centre.
- » To manage and optimize parking requirements.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.2.1 GENERAL

How the streets, sidewalks, paths, bridges, and other components of a transportation system are designed and function has a significant impact on the urban form of the Regional Centre. A well functioning transportation system that is integrated, connected to places where people want to go, and is accessible for people of all ages and abilities contributes to greater personal mobility and quality of life. The Centre Plan utilizes a sustainable approach to mobility that prioritizes pedestrians.

Level of Service Assessments

- a) Investigate requiring level of service assessments for large-scale developments. Level of service assessments, provided by the proponent, will reflect the hierarchy of travel modes set out in the Plan, prioritizing pedestrians first then cyclists, public transit, car sharing, and lastly, private cars.

2.2.2 COMPLETE STREETS

Complete streets, an approach to planning, design, operations and maintenance of roadways, that enables safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless if they are on foot, on a bike, using transit, or in a private vehicle has been supported in our Regional Plan.

Complete Streets

- a) Design and construct, or reconstruct streets to reflect a complete streets approach to mobility that balances the needs and priorities of the various users within the right-of-way.

2.2.3 PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit is an integral part of the Regional Centre's transportation system. Halifax Transit busses move people to, through, and within the Regional Centre; and since 1816, ferries have provided an important link across the Halifax Harbour between Dartmouth and Downtown Halifax. Land use planning can support public transit by directing growth to where transit already exists, or advising on redirecting transit to underserved areas. The more convenient and accessible public transit becomes, the more people choose to use it, which in turn funds more frequency and service improvements.

Hours of Travel

- a) Support the needs of commuters within the Regional Centre throughout the early morning, day, and late evening.

Priority Areas

- b) Prioritize transit service in areas of growth (the Centres, Corridors, Downtowns, and Future Growth Nodes) and provide regular review of the service in these areas.

Harbour Connectivity

- c) Consider opportunities to improve mobility across the harbour.

Development Integration

- d) Consider integrating future transit facilities and terminals with on-site commercial and residential development.

Accessibility

- e) Build or rehabilitate transit stops to be physically accessible and connected to the sidewalk network.

2.2.4 PEDESTRIAN COMFORT AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

People of all ages and abilities who want to walk, or use other forms of active transportation such as cycling, skateboarding or jogging, need to feel safe and comfortable to do so. Infrastructure such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails need to be in place to support active transportation. Active transportation routes that are connected to destinations for recreation, school, work and shopping, makes getting around without a vehicle easier. Not only can this enable people to live healthier lives, but is also more environmentally and economically sustainable.

Pedestrian Comfort

- a) When building or rehabilitating infrastructure, ensure that it contributes towards pedestrian comfort and safety.

Active Transportation

- b) Strive to improve the comfort and convenience of active transportation options, such as on-street bicycle facilities, within the Regional Centre.

Pedestrian Network

- c) Support the development of a complete sidewalk network in the Regional Centre. Sidewalks wider than three metres are encouraged along each Centre's main street, when possible, and should be considered in areas of increased density and activity throughout the Regional Centre.

Active Transportation Connections

- d) Consider the addition of new physically accessible pedestrian and cycling bridge crossings at major roads, railways, and waterways when at grade crossings are not feasible or safe for pedestrians.

Street Improvements

- e) Provide well designed and coordinated tree planting and landscaping, lighting, and quality street furnishings and decorative paving as part of street improvements in accordance with the Municipal Design Guidelines (Redbook).

Sharing Services

- f) Support car and bike sharing opportunities.

Local Bikeways

- g) Support cycling for commuting and recreation purposes by ensuring that all new traffic calming projects enhance safety and improve access for cyclists.

Bicycle Parking

- h) Facilitate multimodal trips by providing secure bicycle racks and locker facilities at transit terminals.

2.2.5 CONNECTIVITY

A connected mobility system links people and neighbourhoods with each other; and with important goods, services, and employment opportunities.

Regional Connectivity

- a) Strive to integrate and connect sidewalks and pathways to ensure pedestrian access to regional open spaces, major Regional Centre destinations, and the surrounding municipality.

Rail Corridors

- b) Through partnership with rail companies, landowners, and other levels of government, explore options for the use of rail corridors.

New Public Streets

- c) Require that new streets be publicly accessible streets, and contribute to an interconnected grid system.

New Connections through Larger Blocks

- d) Ensure that larger sites are divided into smaller walkable blocks by new publicly accessible streets and pathways.

2.2.6 PARKING

The goal of parking management is to optimize the number of available parking spaces; not having too many or too few spaces available at any one time. This approach considers the supply and cost of parking, as well as how parking lots and structures can be best integrated within the Regional Centre through urban design and location.

Parking Location

- a) Encourage all parking to be located on-street, underground, integrated into structures, or in the rear and side yards of properties.

On-Street Parking

- b) Explore innovative strategies and approaches, such as pay-by-plate technology, to create additional parking availability on streets with high parking demand.

Short Stay Supply

- c) Explore increasing the number and distribution of parking metres to ensure an adequate supply of short-stay parking throughout the Regional Centre, particularly in the Centres and Downtowns.

Parking Structures

- d) Require parking structures above grade level to be screened from public streets with active uses and/or architectural treatments that make the parking levels indistinguishable from the rest of the building facade.
- e) Where parking structures have exhaust vents, such vents shall be directed away from any public street frontage and adjacent residential uses.

- f) Parking structures shall:
 - » Minimize the impact of access points on the pedestrian streetscape by keeping access widths to a minimum (consolidating with adjacent access points where possible) and using architectural or landscape treatments to minimize the visual impact of building openings and ramps, especially when viewed from public spaces.
 - » Integrate services and utilities entirely within the building.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

- g) Permit electric charging stations in all land use zones.

Organization of Servicing and Parking Access

- h) Promote the location and organization of vehicle parking, vehicular access, service areas and utilities to minimize their impact on the public realm.

Surface Parking Lots

- i) Discourage the development of new surface parking lots.

Surface Parking Lot Landscaping

- j) Ensure that surface parking lots, where they are permitted along streets, parks and open spaces, have landscaped edges that define the street edge and visually screen the parking lot.

Pedestrian Routes in Parking Lots

- k) Ensure that safe pedestrian routes and tree plantings are provided within surface parking lots.

2.3 PUBLIC SPACES & PLACES

Public spaces and places provide people with opportunities to gather, learn, relax, and take part in recreation or leisure activities which promote active, healthy lifestyles. They enrich the urban environment and are essential for the quality of life of residents. Because urban areas contain less private open space than more suburban areas, it's important to provide sufficient public spaces and places for people to enjoy nature and outdoor recreation, community gatherings, and cultural offerings.

The Regional Centre has many great public spaces including the Dartmouth Common, the Halifax Common, the Public Gardens, Point Pleasant Park, Halifax Central Library, Dartmouth Sportsplex, the harbourfront boardwalks, and the Citadel, among others. This plan builds upon the Centre's strong public amenities and encourages connecting parks and open spaces, community and cultural facilities, green landscapes, and the trail network.

In the Regional Centre, it is important to create a connected green (parks, plazas, natural areas) and blue (lakes, waterways and the harbour) network of parks, pathways, open spaces and complete streets to foster healthy active living, quality of life, and cultural identity. This plan offers guidance to ensure that the public parks and open spaces support evolving community needs.

OBJECTIVES

- » To protect and enhance the Regional Centre's public parks and open spaces for future generations.
- » To consult and work with residents, organizations, businesses and other stakeholders on parks programming and design.
- » To grow the open space network in the Regional Centre and integrate it within the broader municipality.
- » To improve the access to public amenities, including water bodies and community facilities for all residents.
- » To accommodate a wide range of activities within the Regional Centre's diverse public spaces.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.3.1 GENERAL POLICIES

All residents within the Regional Centre should be able to easily access parks, community, and recreational facilities that are safe and comfortable. As the Regional Centre grows, so should the number of public spaces and places within it, especially in areas that have been traditionally underserved.

Accessibility

- a) Improve socio-economic, cultural, and physical access to parks, community facilities, and recreational facilities.

Public Washrooms

- b) Increase the number of public washrooms in parks and community facilities.
- c) Increase access in new or renovated washrooms to gender neutral facilities.

Provision of Parks in Under-Resourced Areas

- d) Support park, community facilities, and recreational facilities investment in under-resourced and growing neighbourhoods.

Park Amenities in High Density Areas

- e) Support a higher quality of design with greater functionality for parks, community facilities, and recreational facilities in areas with higher residential density to compensate for the reduction in private amenity space.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

- f) Consider incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles in the design and redesign of park, community facilities, and recreational facilities to make them safer and more comfortable for residents and visitors.

Universal Accessibility

- g) Where feasible, improve universal and barrier free access to parks, community facilities, and recreational facilities.

Permitted Uses

- h) Permit parks in all land use zones.
- i) Include community facilities, recreational facilities, schools, pathways, and natural open space in all land use zones, with the exception of environmentally sensitive areas.

- j) Permit urban food production, food distribution, and farmers markets in all land use zones, with the exception of industrial and environmentally sensitive areas.

Voluntary Recreational Organizational Support

- k) Encourage the operation of voluntary recreational organizations to provide financial, administrative, or technical support.

2.3.2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are important gathering spaces that provide a place for a diversity of people to learn, socialize, and recreate in the Regional Centre. Expanding the use of community facilities, such as schools, to other users, helps to bring people from different backgrounds together and is a wise way to use resources.

Shared Use with Schools and Recreational Facilities

- a) Coordinate with educational and recreational authorities to support broader community use of these facilities.

Location

- b) Promote the optimum location of community services and facilities, including emergency social/protective services, recreational, and educational facilities to meet community needs and promote their integration within the larger parks, open space, and active transportation system.

Private and Non-profit Recreational Agencies

- c) Permit private recreational clubs and non-profit recreational agencies throughout the Regional Centre.

2.3.3 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Opportunities to connect with the outdoors are highly valued in urban spaces. A well connected and designed parks and open spaces network in the Regional Centre will allow people to immerse themselves in nature and enjoy recreational activities. These spaces can also provide stormwater management and act as important habitat for urban and migratory wildlife.

CONNECTION:

Connection to Regional Parks outside of the Regional Centre

- a) Support connecting residents of the Regional Centre to regional parks outside of the Regional Centre through transit and active transportation routes.

Connected Parks and Open Spaces System

- b) Connect Regional Centre parks through the use of sidewalks and pathways.

EXPANSION AND REDESIGN:

Parks Funding

- c) Support the acquisition and enhancement of new parks spaces in the Regional Centre where need is identified.

PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE PRIVATE OPEN SPACE:

Private Provision of Open Space

- d) Encourage private landowners to provide publicly accessible public space and important public pedestrian connections.

Publicly Accessible Private Open Space

- e) Ensure that publicly accessible private open spaces meet established parks standards, are accessible to the public, and are connected with the larger open space network through streetscaping, pedestrian routes, sidewalks, and pathways.

FUNCTION:

Multi-functional

- f) Ensure that parks spaces within the Regional Centre support a variety of functions and will consider the following, where appropriate, when designing and redesigning parks spaces:
- » Varied recreational opportunities
 - » Varied cultural and artistic opportunities
 - » Ecological and natural appreciation opportunities
 - » Educational opportunities
 - » Blend of soft and hard surfaces
 - » Opportunities for a variety of demographics including families and seniors

Events

- g) Permit and encourage community celebrations throughout the open space network and in parks, ensuring that a variety of event sizes and types can be accommodated throughout the Regional Centre while remaining respectful of adjacent uses.

Bicycle Facilities

- h) Provide bicycle facilities in parks such as bicycle parking structures, maintenance equipment, and cycling paths.

Pocket Parks

- i) Consider acquiring and enhancing pocket parks throughout the Regional Centre.

Streets as part of the Open Space Network

- j) Ensure that when active streets in the Downtown, Centre, and Corridor areas undergo a redesign process, they are viewed as part of the open space network by investigating and implementing design measures that create spaces to gather, play, and relax. Consider examining the following initiatives as part of this process:
- » Woonerfs or shared streets
 - » Enhanced corner treatments
 - » Temporary installations along the street in on-street parking spots
 - » Enhanced boulevard treatments
 - » Streets closed to vehicular traffic (permanently or intermittently)

Commercial Uses

- k) Consider permitting small-scale and pop-up commercial development within parks where determined to be appropriate.

Winter Hours

- l) When there is public demand, consider keeping parks open throughout the four seasons on a case-by-case basis.

PARKING:

Parking Offset

- m) Consider offsetting any permanent on-street parking loss needed to accommodate open space improvements on streets through off-street parking structures and facilities.

PARTNERSHIPS:

Community Stewardship

- n) Collaborate with community groups and organizations on the stewardship of existing and new parks, pathways, and open spaces within the Regional Centre.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Stakeholder Consultation

- o) Consult the public on future open space planning projects to ensure these spaces reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

Commemoration and Cultural Practice

- p) Work with First Nations communities and other cultural groups in the planning and commemoration of spaces relevant to their history and continued cultural practices within the municipality.

Programming Partnerships

- q) Work with community groups, local businesses, and other partners on programming opportunities within parks and open spaces.

INTERFACE WITH SURROUNDING BUILDINGS:

Interface with Surrounding Buildings

- r) Ensure, through the discretionary application process, the design of abutting buildings enhance and support parks and open spaces by requiring active frontages, glazing, patio spaces, and/or accesses.

PARKS PLANNING:

Adaptability of Parks Spaces Over Time

- s) Revisit and support the redesign of parks, recreation, and cultural facilities to reflect changing user needs and preferences.

Environmentally Sustainable Features

- t) Consider incorporating environmentally sustainable features such as rain gardens, bio-swales and other Low Impact Development innovations into parks and open spaces.

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2.4 CULTURE & HERITAGE

The celebration and preservation of cultural heritage makes a vital contribution to good city building connecting citizens with a diverse and shared past. The wealth of historic resources and the range of traditional cultural activities that have evolved over time define the Centre's distinctive maritime character. Cultural heritage includes tangible resources and intangible traditions, values and beliefs. The protection of these assets enhances the character of the Centre's urban districts and supports the valued diversity of its unique neighbourhoods. The preservation and celebration of the Centre's cultural heritage contributes to the HRM's goals for economic development and environmental sustainability and is integral to a planning approach that supports this value in all aspects of municipal planning in order to balance growth with the protection and enhancement of community character.

The Plan recognizes the important contribution its diverse and vibrant arts and cultural community makes to the vitality of the Regional Center and the character of the Municipality. Centre Plan policies will support a full range of cultural heritage preservation initiatives including protection of historic buildings and their adaptive re-use, support for community arts and cultural expressions and celebrations and the encouragement of the diversity of emerging artists that continue to shape the community's future legacy.

Celebrating and preserving historic resources contributes to good city building by connecting people with the past, enhancing unique aspects of the urban character, and adding interest to the streetscape. At the same time, culture and historical legacies transcend physical buildings, and are sometimes best captured through public art, exhibitions and festivals, stories, and the beliefs and lived experience of the Regional Centre's diverse residents. The Centre Plan recognizes the vitality that culture and heritage contribute to the Regional Centre, and includes policies that support historical preservation, sensitive adaptive re-use, cultural expression, as well as the community of artists and craftspeople that are helping shape the community's future legacy.

OBJECTIVES

- » To provide innovative and holistic heritage and land use planning policies to ensure community identified heritage values are considered in decisions affecting land use.
- » To develop an evidence-based inventory of potential heritage properties in the Regional Centre to inform land use and development decisions affecting cultural heritage.
- » To enable the definition of potential heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes within the Regional Centre.
- » To establish a range of monetary and nonmonetary incentives and develop partnerships for the encouragement of public and private sector investments in cultural heritage conservation and arts and culture initiatives.
- » To encourage and support the on-going growth of a diverse range of publicly accessible arts and cultural venues, cultural events and seasonal celebrations.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.4.1 HERITAGE

The Regional Centre is a unique complex of military, commercial and residential precincts whose evolution spans over 250 years of settlement around Halifax Harbour, the historic Gateway to Canada. The citizens who built these districts brought their own distinct cultures and responded over time to a range of economic and social challenges that continue to be reflected today in the physical form and character of the Regional Centre's many diverse neighbourhoods. Heritage policies address the need to ensure growth and change is accommodated and is compatible with the protection and enhancement of built form and the enhancement of community character, vitality and sense of place.

Application of Regulatory and Policy Tools

- a) Ensure the consistent application of available regulatory and policy tools in order to balance the need for new development, adaptive re-use, and growth with heritage conservation values and the protection of community character.

Viewplane Protection

- b) Continue to protect existing viewplanes and corridors.

Potential Heritage Properties, Heritage Conservation Districts, and Cultural Landscapes

- c) Consider potential heritage properties, heritage conservation districts, and cultural landscapes recommended by the Heritage Advisory Committee for protection under the Nova Scotia Heritage Properties Act.

Cultural Heritage Conservation

- d) The Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan should, in accordance with Council's direction at the time of its adoption, be the guiding document for the implementation of an evolving cultural heritage conservation program strategy for the Regional Centre.

Registration of Heritage Conservation Districts

- e) Give priority consideration to registration of South Barrington (Old South District), Schmitville and Historic Properties NHS as Heritage Conservation Districts under the Heritage Properties Act.

GIS Survey

- f) In recognition of the high concentration of neighbourhoods developed prior to 1918 and ongoing growth pressures within the Regional Centre, undertake a GIS block survey of existing buildings, by age and historic use, to identify and prioritize potential heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes for their consideration by Regional Council. As a first priority the Municipality should conduct a survey by block of buildings in Downtown Dartmouth and in contiguous areas of Halifax North End as outlined in the Urban Structure.

Dartmouth

Albro Lake

Park District

Dartmouth Central Commons

Shubenacadie Canal

Downtown Dartmouth

Halifax Peninsula

Africville Park and Harbour Lands

The Hydrostone District

Bloomfield

Brunswick Street (portion)

Creighton Field to North Park Street

Young Avenue

The Citadel and Halifax Common

*Connaught Avenue
and Fairview Cemetery*

Westmount CMHC Subdivision

Identification and Registration of Potential Heritage Conservation Districts and Cultural Landscapes

- g) As a priority the Municipality should conduct block surveys within in the Regional Centre and prepare studies in accordance with the Heritage Properties Act for the future registration of Heritage Conservation Districts and Cultural Landscapes within areas identified to the left.

Partnerships with Educational Institutions

- h) Actively seek mutually beneficial partnerships with senior educational institutions to undertake GIS-based historic resource block surveys of growth areas within the Regional Centre to identify potential heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes.

Community Consultation

- i) Consult with the diverse communities of the Regional Centre regarding the survey of potential heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes to jointly identify the diversity of community values.

Inventory

- j) Develop a publicly accessible inventory of potential Heritage Conservation Districts and Cultural Landscapes and their component physical structures and elements.

Heritage Conservation Initiatives

- k) Investigate heritage conservation supports and initiatives that include, but are not limited to, grants for restoration, rehabilitation and enhancements within Heritage Conservation Districts and Cultural Landscapes, and community heritage interpretation initiatives.

Establishment of Cash Contributions for Density Bonus Provision

- l) Support, within the Centre Plan Area, a cash contribution option for the provision of a negotiated Density Bonus under Development Agreement for development within or abutting Heritage Conservation Districts, where such Heritage Conservation Districts allow.

Adaptive Reuse and Height of New Construction

- m) Support the adaptive re-use of Heritage Properties in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and investigate the creation of an alternate standard to supersede Standard 11, stating that the height of new construction on or abutting a Heritage Property, within or outside of a Heritage Conservation District, is an important factor affecting the protection of a Heritage Property 's cultural value as defined in its Statement of Significance.

Statements of Significance

- n) In recognition of the predominantly low to mid-rise character of Heritage Properties and Heritage Conservation Districts in the Regional Centre, revise the requirements for Statements of Heritage Significance to include a detailed description of the significance of a building's scale and context.

2.4.2 CULTURE

The Regional Centre has a strong, active and historically diverse maritime cultural community, one of the key building blocks of a healthy, vibrant and livable city. Cultural policies can provide a range of incentives to encourage and enable the ongoing growth of this sector of the social economy, provide support for emerging artists and craftspeople and give citizens a range of opportunities to experience and participate in community cultural activities, civic celebrations and seasonal events.

Cultural Investments

- a) Ensure that cultural investments reflect and support the social diversity of the Regional Centre and its unique mix of arts and cultural expressions, initiatives, and venues.

First Nations Inclusion

- b) Support the development of a plan in collaboration with First Nations' organizations and groups on the establishment of an engagement protocol with aboriginal peoples in accordance with HRM's statement on First Nations' reconciliation.

Protocol for Identifying and Protecting First Nations Sites of Significance

- c) In recognition of the high potential for the incidence of pre and post contact archaeological resources in the Regional Centre, consult with First Nations to develop a protocol for the appropriate identification, protection and interpretation of sites of cultural value to the Mi'kmaq peoples.

Expanded Live/Work and Home Occupations

- d) Expand live/work opportunities for arts and culture activities and relax home occupation requirements to permit a greater range of uses.

Bonus Density for Arts and Culture Facilities

- e) In developing a bonus density strategy for large scale developments in the Regional Centre, permit the provision and dedication of space for arts and cultural activity as a direct community benefit where appropriate.

Pop-up Structures

- f) Explore opportunities for innovative and creative pop-up structures, spaces, and events on public land, including HRM's right-of-way, throughout the Regional Centre.

One Percent of Capital Project Funding for Public Art Fund

- g) Allocate one percent of HRM capital improvement project funds for the commission, purchase and installation or presentation of public art in the vicinity of the associated capital project (parks, libraries, community centres, roads, bridge, streetscape improvements and other public venues). Art should be commissioned and installed within 5 years of the fund allocation and subject to a process that includes:
- » A formal call for artists to work as a core part of the project team
 - » Selecting the artist through a public art jury process
 - » Allowing for a variety of art forms, including artist-in-residence programs, temporary art, permanent art, and performances

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2.5 HOUSING

Having access to suitable, affordable, and comfortable housing is fundamental to the health and quality of life of all people. The residents of the Regional Centre value affordable housing and housing choice, as these are the building blocks that create diverse communities. Currently the Regional Centre needs more affordable options, and housing that is suitable for families. Providing the right mix of housing will allow people to remain in the Regional Centre as they transition through life, whether they are a single person looking for their first apartment, a household with children, or a retired couple who are looking to downsize their home. This will add to the vitality and stability of Regional Centre neighbourhoods.

Adding more housing options, given the importance of the Regional Centre as an employment area, will also allow more people to live closer to where they work. In turn, more people living and working in an area leads to more successful shops, restaurants, and businesses; building vibrant neighbourhoods.

OBJECTIVES

- » To provide housing choice and variety throughout the Regional Centre that is attractive to a diversity of people, including families and individuals of all ages.
- » To increase affordable housing units throughout the Regional Centre.
- » To enhance opportunities for new units within existing structures and infill housing.
- » To support special care facilities throughout the Regional Centre.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.5.1 GENERAL

Like many Canadian communities, the Regional Centre's population is shifting. Overall the population is aging, but many neighbourhoods are seeing an increase in new Canadians, young families, and multi-generational households. Recent housing starts and planning applications data reveals a shift in residential development within HRM towards multi-unit housing in urban areas. In order for the Regional Centre to remain economically competitive and support high qualities of life; a diversity of housing types, sizes, and tenures needs to be available across a range of housing budgets. At the same time, new residential development must be contextually appropriate for the communities that it is being built in.

Family-Oriented Housing

- a) Promote family-oriented housing, including those with children, in the Regional Centre by supporting the spaces and facilities that fit the needs of different age groups.
- a) Opportunities for daycares and schools should be encouraged in neighbourhoods with residential and mixed use developments to allow for easy access to these facilities.

Family-Oriented Multi-Unit Dwellings

- b) Encourage multi-unit residential and mixed use developments which adopt elements that can support families in a vertical community. This should include such components as supportive design elements for children in units, accessible play spaces, safe streetscape designs, and affordable multi-bedroom units.

Housing Options

- c) Encourage a mix of housing options to meet the range of needs in the local market. Options should include unit types (high-rise apartments, townhomes, etc.), and pricing, and should work to be inclusive of a range of demographic and economic backgrounds.

Unit Size Diversity

- d) Encourage multi-unit buildings to provide a range of units to accommodate different household sizes, with studio, one-bedroom, and larger units included in each multi-unit building.

Multi-Unit Housing Amenity Space

- e) All new multi-unit residential developments shall provide private outdoor amenity space, either exclusive to an individual unit or as a common amenity available to all units. This may take the form of balconies, courtyards, terraces, rooftop gardens, or deck space.
- f) New tall residential buildings shall provide indoor common amenity space.

Co-operative Housing Development

- g) Continue to encourage and support new and existing co-op housing developments throughout the Regional Centre as a housing model that encourages community building and local ownership of housing.

Housing Diversity in Strategic Locations

- h) Support and promote greater housing choice in the Downtowns, Centres, Corridors, and Future Growth Nodes because of their proximity to commercial areas and employment, and the ability to access these locations by active transportation and transit.

Housing Incentives

- i) Explore incentives to encourage infill housing or accessory dwelling units throughout the Regional Centre where appropriate, including:
 - » Reductions in application fees
 - » Reduced lot standards

Ground-oriented Housing

- j) Encourage ground-oriented housing throughout the Regional Centre as an important component of residential neighbourhoods. These housing units shall be developed to consider the street and support an attractive streetscape through well-designed landscaping, public and private open spaces, and appealing and consistent architectural design elements.

Innovative Housing Forms

- k) Promote innovative housing forms that provide flexible solutions to local needs. These may include formats such as co-housing units, live/work units, micro-units, and accessory dwelling units throughout the Regional Centre. Innovative housing forms shall be enabled through changes to zoning.

Live/Work Housing

- l) Support the provision of live/work units throughout the Regional Centre as a means of supporting smaller home-based businesses. These units can provide opportunities to provide affordable office and work spaces for individuals and start-up businesses that would otherwise be difficult to service in the commercial real estate market.

2.5.2 AFFORDABLE NON-MARKET HOUSING

Providing and supporting the provision of non-market housing is one way to ensure that everyone has a safe and comfortable place to call home. Unfortunately, the current supply of affordable non-market housing in the Regional Centre is inadequate to meet this need. While intervention from other levels of government will be necessary, policies in this plan are aimed at what the municipality can do to support affordable non-market housing throughout the Regional Centre.

Rooming Houses

- m) Explore options for supporting rooming houses in the Regional Centre while establishing contextually-appropriate requirements that address the cumulative impacts of these uses. Requirements may include limits on the number of bedrooms or maximum lot coverages, or requirements for landscaping and open space.

Renewal of Existing Affordable Housing

- n) Encourage the renewal, repair, and upgrade of affordable housing units in the non-profit, public and private sectors.

2.5.3 SPECIAL CARE FACILITIES

Special care facilities, or supportive housing, serve a broad range of residents including aging populations and persons with disabilities. Special care facilities integrated into established communities promote social inclusion by providing assistance to those in need and accepting them as part of the community. When located close to transit, shopping, and other services, these facilities can enable people to age in place as their needs change; can allow families and friends to accommodate loved ones close to home; and can keep existing community social supports intact.

Location

- a) Permit special care facilities in residential, commercial, institutional land use zones, and direct these facilities to locations with high-quality transit service (current or planned). Special care facilities shall be developed in contextually-appropriate forms that consider the surrounding neighbourhood.

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2.6 SUSTAINABILITY

The economic vitality of the Regional Centre, and the well-being of the people who work, live, or visit there, depend on a healthy natural environment. Clean air, water, soil, as well as parks and trees attract new residents, investment, and visitors. Even in urban environments like the Regional Centre the natural environment provides essential ecosystem services on which human settlements and a wide variety of plants and animal depend on. These services include clean air and water, waste decomposition, nutrient cycling and carbon sequestration.

Growth in the Regional Centre needs to occur in a sustainable way to ensure the lasting vitality and health of the environment and the people who live in it. Thinking about where to grow, how to grow, and what to protect as this growth occurs is required. Regional Centre sustainability policies consider both large scale development patterns and small scale building design features, and everything in between. HRM recognizes that a particularly important component of a sustainable Regional Centre is the natural environment. The Regional Centre benefits from numerous natural assets that should be protected, and in some cases enhanced, including lakes, streams, the urban forest, and the harbour. Sustainability policies also consider less tangible but equally important components of sustainable communities, including air quality and energy usage.

OBJECTIVES

- » To improve/innovate stormwater management, water and sewer capacity, and water quality.
- » To promote renewable energy, district energy, and energy efficiency to reduce the Regional Centre's overall energy consumption.
- » To support and promote tree planting, restoration initiatives and other natural processes when possible.
- » To promote and expand urban food production and harvesting to result in greater choices in local and healthy food.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.6.1 GENERAL

To minimize the Regional Centre's collective impacts on the natural environment, sustainable development practices need to be in place that combine the creation of walkable complete communities with high performance infrastructure and green buildings, while minimizing development effects on natural areas.

Service Dependent Growth

- a) Consider only approving residential development when there is adequate existing or presently budgeted services and infrastructure in place.

Infrastructure Investment to Promote Housing Investment

- b) Adequately fund and finance improvements in infrastructure, including green infrastructure, such as utilities, sidewalks, lighting, roads, and landscaping, and, where the possibility exists, upgrade entire or large portions of neighbourhood infrastructure to facilitate growth in strategic areas.

Green Roofs

- c) Encourage the inclusion of green roofs on all moderate height and tall buildings with flat roofs to manage stormwater and improve air quality.

Green Condominium and Apartment Program

- d) Consider launching a Green Condominium and Apartment Program, that works within and respects the building code and national energy code, to examine opportunities to renovate and retrofit existing buildings to reduce their energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

2.6.2 WATER

The Regional Centre has an extensive marine shoreline, and its rivers, creeks, lakes, and wetlands are the visible components of complex hydrological system. This system also includes springs, subterranean streams, and groundwater. Development and urban growth changes the natural flow of water. It also increases runoff from precipitation, reduces groundwater recharge, raises water temperature, and increases water pollution and acidity.

Aside from recreational, aesthetic, and economic importance; water is an essential human need that must be conserved and protected as the Regional Centre and HRM continue to grow.

Water and Sewer Capacity

- a) Allow developers undertake and fund a study to determine needed infrastructure upgrades when a proposed development exceeds existing water and sewer capacity.

Stormwater Management Plan

- b) Require all new moderate height and tall development applications to include a stormwater management plan in accordance with best management practices.

Low Impact Development

- c) Consider the inclusion of Low Impact Development technologies (LID) for stormwater management on capital projects and through incentives and development requirements on private land.

Naturalizing Watercourses

- d) Encourage the use of naturalizing watercourses as a low impact development initiative whenever possible.

Lake Water Quality

- e) Monitor water quality in all lakes and develop recommendations to maintain water quality, recreational opportunities, and fish habitat.

Sea Level Rise

- f) Ensure that future development in low-lying coastal areas considers and incorporates measures to mitigate the effects of sea level rise and storm surge events.

2.6.3 WASTE

Waste management practises and diverting waste away from landfills through recycling and other programs can create a healthier and more environmentally sustainable Regional Centre.

Recycling Receptacles

- g) Encourage recycling by integrating recycling receptacles with garbage receptacles as part of the Municipal Service Standards (Red Book) throughout the Regional Centre.

Source separation inside multi-residential and mixed-use development

- h) Consider requirements for all residential multi-unit buildings and residential mixed use development to make accommodations for recycling and composting.

2.6.4 ENERGY

The impact of fossil fuel use on the environment is well known; climate change, air and water pollution are all a result from our dependence on nonrenewable energy sources. Yet people rely on energy to feed themselves, heat and cool their homes, move people and goods, and run the economy. Putting in place sustainable energy strategies that reduce the Regional Centre's dependence on nonrenewable energy will go a long way in creating healthier environments not only for native flora and fauna, but people as well.

District Energy

- a) Consider the creation of a district energy facility in areas of high growth and density, such as Downtowns, Centres, or Future Growth Nodes.

District Cooling

- b) Consider working with utilities to accommodate deep water cooling.

Waste Energy Capture

- c) Identify opportunities to capture and redistribute waste energy.

Building Certification

- d) Consider designing and building all new municipal facilities within the Regional Centre to show leadership in sustainable building design, and at a minimum achieve a LEED silver certification, or an equivalent level in a similar certification system.

Solar Energy

- e) HRM shall consider incentives for, and incorporate solar capture technologies throughout the Regional Centre.

Solar Panel Exemptions

- f) HRM shall exempt solar panels from building height requirements and rooftop mechanical coverage.

2.6.5 LAND

Land within the Regional Centre can be used more sustainably by supporting local food production, removing greenhouse gasses through street trees, and conserving environmentally sensitive areas. Access for city dwellers to natural environments, for health, leisure, and recreation purposes, become increasingly important as urban areas become denser.

Tree Planting

- a) Continue its tree retention, planting and maintenance program to achieve tree canopy targets to ensure that the Regional Centre benefits.

Land Conservation

- b) Work to preserve or restore environmentally sensitive areas, physically unique areas, and important ecological systems.

Animals

- c) Permit domestic fowl and bees in all zones as accessory uses with policies to ensure off-site nuisances are avoided and that these activities are appropriately scaled.

Community Gardening

- d) Permit community gardening in all zones.

Greenhouses

- e) Permit greenhouses in all zones with restrictions on height and scale to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

Edible Landscaping

- f) Consider using edible landscaping throughout the Regional Centre on both private and public land.

Industrial Food Activities

- g) Permit food-related activities such as production, processing, warehousing, retailing and others in all zones at an appropriate scale with surrounding uses.

Green Parking Lot Design

- h) Support the retrofit and refurbishment of surface parking lots to incorporate Low Impact Design parking lot features such as trees, high quality soil, enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, on-site stormwater management, and generous landscaped areas.

Brownfield Redevelopment

- i) Encourage brownfield site redevelopment, promoting environmental testing, remediation, and appropriate interim uses.

2.6.6 BIODIVERSITY

Global biodiversity is at risk as more species around the world become threatened or extinct. Even locally, a reduction in biodiversity reduces the productivity of ecosystems which makes plants and animals more susceptible to natural disasters, pollution, and climate change. Biodiversity and ecosystems need to be valued and managed and part of the Regional Centre's land base and infrastructure.

Natural Areas Restoration

- a) Identify opportunities for habitat and natural areas conservation and restoration within the Regional Centre.

Small-Scale Natural Areas

- b) Consider the incorporation of smaller natural areas and features such as pollinator meadows, butterfly gardens, manufactured wetlands, and bird habitats in parks and other municipally-owned lands.

Native Species

- c) Promote native species through landscaping requirements for public and private land.

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2.7 JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The long-term success of the Regional Centre is linked to a strong, vital economy and employment opportunities for residents. The diversification of local economic sectors, support for local entrepreneurship, and the development of a supportive business environment can help in building resilience and strength in the local economy, and provide a strong draw for businesses and workers alike.

HRM will build and strengthen the Regional Centre's reputation as the principal economic centre of Atlantic Canada by promoting its talented, educated community; its unique concentration of major industries, employers and institutions (especially in ocean-related sectors); and its attractive urban lifestyle with a high quality of life and access to regional amenities. These efforts will be in cooperation with stakeholders and partners, including the Province and the Halifax Partnership.

The policies below provide general guidance about building a supportive economic environment for both employees and businesses. These policies are supplemented by the discussion of urban form and development, which provides an understanding of how urban structure, especially for intensive employment areas, can support businesses and local economic activity.

OBJECTIVES

- » To work with hospitals, universities, colleges, and other levels of government to support the continued success of these employers in the Regional Centre.
- » To support small businesses and entrepreneurial activities through land use regulation, programs and initiatives.
- » To foster economic participation through support service provision for residents.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.7.1 GENERAL

The long-term economic health of the Regional Centre depends on creating communities where newcomers and residents want to live and work. HRM can also support business within the Regional Centre by ensuring adequate locations for office, retail, institutional, and industrial development are protected in strategic and accessible locations. Strategic public investments; supportive partnerships with business, other levels of government, and institutions; and other incentives can act as catalysts for further economic growth and job creation.

Promoting the Regional Centre

- a) Develop public and private partnerships to expand and promote the unique identities and features of the Regional Centre and market it as an attractive destination for residents, businesses, and tourists.

Diversification and Resiliency

- b) Consider opportunities to build and support employment and commercial diversification, especially through small business incubators and accelerators.

Incentives for Supporting Small Businesses

- c) Consider the development of an incentive program for landowners that allows vacant storefronts in key locations to be used as short-term entrepreneurial incubators and “pop-up” retail and service spaces.

Attracting and Retaining Talent

- d) Build partnerships with universities and businesses to match young workers, recent graduates, and immigrants with high-quality employment opportunities.

Local and Regional Retail Destination

- e) Work to enhance the role of the Regional Centre as a regional retail centre with opportunities for local retail businesses to flourish.

Catalyze Investment

- f) Consider enabling strategic investment, and development opportunities that are catalyst projects with the potential to spur further investment and development in the Regional Centre. These projects may long-term include infrastructure investments.

Diversity of Employment Opportunities

- g) Consider supporting a range of development and employment opportunities that caters to different types of business and a diverse workforce, including housing for live/work opportunities. Opportunities should be located throughout the Downtowns, Centres, Employment Areas, and Future Growth Nodes in areas well served by transit and the active transportation network.

Minimize Disruptions from Projects

- h) Design and coordinate infrastructure and streetscape improvements to minimize disruptions to businesses.

Variety in Commercial Size

- i) New at-grade space designed for retail use shall be built in flexible spaces that allow units to be expanded or made smaller over time to facilitate a diverse range of businesses.

Maker Spaces

- j) Encourage small-scale maker spaces in commercial and mixed use areas throughout the Regional Centre to provide opportunities for small business start-up and incubation. Establish requirements to ensure these spaces have minimal off-site impacts, especially in areas with residential uses.

Public WiFi

- k) Recognizing that publicly available WiFi access should be available in some public spaces throughout the Regional Centre, consider providing additional investment to add coverage in key public spaces.

Local Engagement and Partnerships

- l) Consider building partnerships with business owners, local entrepreneurs, and associated organizations to gather innovative ideas and feedback about local economic development within the Regional Centre.

2.7.2 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

HRM is committed to helping business succeed in the Regional Centre through supportive policies and simplified procedures.

Timely Approvals

- a) Ensure that commercial development is permitted as-of-right when it is locally appropriate and in line with the Urban Structure policies that apply to it.

Business Tax

- b) Work with partners, including local Business Associations, to assess the impacts of changes to the calculation and collection of property tax.

Encouraging Residence-based Businesses

- c) Support home-based and live/work businesses by expanding the range of professions permitted in these spaces and allowing these uses throughout the Regional Centre.

2.7.3 KEY EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIES

Several key employers and industries provide a large proportion of employment within the Regional Centre. Supporting these companies and institutions, with the aim of helping them grow, will protect existing employment and encourage additional job growth.

Office Locations

- a) Encourage the concentration of office space in the Downtowns and Centres, in areas with high-quality transit service (current and planned).

Office Re-use

- b) Permit the conversion of existing office space to other uses to provide flexibility in the local real estate market. For Employment Areas, the majority of gross floor area must remain in commercial or industrial use.

Healthcare Facilities

- c) Support the retention and expansion of health care institutions in the Regional Centre. This includes the expansion and redevelopment of existing hospital facilities, and the development of convenient and accessible health clinics and medical offices throughout the Regional Centre. These uses should be concentrated where possible in areas with high-quality transit service (current and planned).

Education

- d) Support the retention and expansion of post-secondary educational institutions in the Regional Centre, including universities, colleges, and trade schools. Work with public and private education providers to site new facilities in areas with high-quality transit service (current and planned).

Partnerships with Education

- e) Support educational institutions through investigating the sharing and co-location of public facilities such as libraries, recreation facilities, and community centres.

Government

- f) Work with senior levels of government to site offices and service centres in the Downtowns and Centres where the associated employment and services will support the concentration of population and businesses. Government uses shall be sited in areas with high-quality transit service (current and planned).

Tourism Location

- g) Encourage tourism, hospitality, and visitor support services to cluster in the Downtown areas, with a particular focus on the waterfront.

Shipping/Logistics

- h) Continue to support the operations of the Port of Halifax as a strategic infrastructure link, and its key role in the regional economy. Work with partners to improve the infrastructure and services that support the Port.

2.7.4 COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The long-term economic health of the Regional Centre is vital when creating communities where residents and newcomers want to live and work. Equally important is ensuring that existing and future residents have a good quality of life who will want to, or be able to, remain in the Regional Centre.

Bonus Density for Community Amenities

- a) In developing a bonus density strategy for large scale developments in the Regional Centre, permit the provision and dedication of space for community amenities, such as daycares, as a direct community benefit where appropriate.

Engagement with the Immigrant Community

- b) Work with immigrant communities to address specific challenges to businesses and workers, and improve the provision of community services.

Mobile Food Markets

- c) Encourage the expansion of the mobile food market to areas of the Regional Centre underserved by affordable grocery stores and markets.

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Active Frontage

Building facades that are visually interesting and allow people on the street to see inside the building.

Active Transportation

Human-powered, personal travel chosen as an alternative to motorized travel and includes walking, running, hiking, the use of wheelchair, cross-country skis, skateboard or canoe or kayak on water.

Adaptive Re-Use

Adapting a site or building for a use other than its original use.

Affordable Housing

Measuring housing affordability involves comparing housing costs to the ability of a household to meet those costs. Affordable housing costs a household no more than 30% of their gross monthly income.

Bio-Swale

Bioswales are gently sloped channels lined with vegetation that are designed to slow, store, drain, and filter stormwater.

Bonus Density

An increase in built area in exchange for public amenities and/or benefits that contribute to the livability and proper planning of the neighbourhood affected by the resulting increase in density.

Brownfield Sites

Properties which had contained industrial or commercial uses, which have been abandoned, or are underused and in decline. Brownfields are sometimes characterized by derelict buildings, contamination resulting from previous industrial uses, or undesirable activity occurring on or near the sites.

Compact Development

Development that uses land efficiently and is generally characterized by medium to high density, connected streets, and shorter distances between destinations.

Complete Community

Communities that include a range of uses and housing options to accommodate people in all stages of life and at a variety of income levels. Complete communities provide a place for residents to live, work, shop, learn, and play. These communities contain mixed uses and compact development that enables people to safely and conveniently access the goods and services they need in their daily lives, all within a short journey.

Complete Streets

Complete streets, an approach to planning, design, operations and maintenance of roadways, that enables safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless if they are on foot, on a bike, using transit, or in a private vehicle.

Co-op housing / Cooperative Housing

Housing cooperatives provide non-for-profit housing for their members and only charge enough to cover costs, making co-op housing more affordable than average private sector rentals.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

An approach to the planning and design of the built environment that aims to reduce crime and make people feel safer.

Culturally Accessible

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people from a diversity of cultures.

Cultural Landscapes

Geographic areas which have been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning. These cultural landscapes provide opportunities for the interpretation and understanding of important historical settings and past patterns of land use.

Density

A measure of the number of people or housing units occupying a given area of land. The measure reflects the general character of the housing types in a neighbourhood. Low density generally refers to a neighbourhood that would result from an area developed as one and two unit housing; medium density generally applies to townhouses or apartment buildings no higher than 6 storeys; and high density generally refers to taller apartment buildings resulting in more people per hectare.

District Energy

An energy system that generates steam, hot water, or cold water at a central facility that is then distributed to heat or cool a group of buildings within a defined area or district.

Dwelling Unit

One or more rooms used or designed to be used by one or more persons as a place of abode which contains not more than one kitchen and includes but is not limited to living, sleeping and sanitary facilities.

Floor Area Ratio

The gross area of all floors in a building, measured from the inside of external walls, divided by the area of a lot.

Green Infrastructure

A network of natural and semi-natural engineered landscape elements designed to provide products and services such as stormwater management, water filtration, and improved air quality.

Green Roof

The flat roof of a building that is covered, or partially covered, by vegetation.

Greyfield Sites

Developed sites that are underutilized and well positioned for redevelopment.

Heritage Conservation District

Defined in the Heritage Properties Act.

Heritage Property

A building, public building interior, streetscape, cultural landscape or area registered in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Human Scale

The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size and proportion of parts of a building or its details, that relates in a positive way to the visual and physical experience of a pedestrian.

Incubator

A shared space that offers a supportive environment and workspace for people such as entrepreneurs and artists to grow their business or develop their craft.

Infill

The development of vacant parcels or redevelopment of existing housing or other buildings.

Intensification

The development of a property, site, or area at a higher density than currently exists. This can occur through development, redevelopment, infill, and expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

Intensity

The relative measure of the number of people and jobs in an area.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

A widely recognized sustainability certification program for buildings and communities that measures performance based on environmental sustainability.

Live/Work Unit

A single unit that includes both the primary living quarters of an occupant with their commercial or office space.

Low Impact Development (LID)

Low Impact Development practices minimize stormwater water runoff at its source, mimicking natural hydrological processes, through site planning and physical installations. LID can improve water quality in terms of pollutant removal, reduced nutrient loading through the use of plants, and natural features to filter and distribute stormwater. LID installations most frequently include grassy swales (bioswales), which can include pipe filter drains, curbs with cutouts, or infiltration trenches and pits.

Low-rise Building

A building which is no more than 3 storeys high.

Maker Space

A space where people can gather to work on projects and share resources and knowledge.

Mass, Massing

The combined effect of the height, bulk, and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

Mixed-use

Different land uses that are arranged in close proximity. These different uses may be located on the same site, in the same building, or along the same street.

Moderate Height Building

A building which is four to six storeys high.

Multimodal

Refers to facilities or trips that incorporate more than one mode of transportation.

Open Space

Open space includes unbuilt lands and waters set aside and reserved over the long-term for public service, conservation, and community-shaping purposes. It can include public and privately-owned lands such as parks and trails, significant habitat and wilderness areas, natural resource lands, corridors for active commuting and connecting communities, water resources, cultural landscapes and coastline.

Pedestrian Oriented

Elements of planning and urban design that prioritize the needs and comfort of pedestrians. The intent is to create safe, comfortable, and more enjoyable environments for people of all ages and abilities. Specific pedestrian orientated design elements include connected streets, short blocks, four way intersections, hard surfaced pathways and an extensive sidewalk network.

Physically accessible

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people with a variety of physical abilities.

Placemaking

An approach to planning and design that aims to create memorable, quality public spaces.

Pocket Park

A small urban park.

Pop-up

A temporary structure, space or event.

Public Realm

The parts of an urban area, whether publicly or privately owned, that are available for everyone to see, use and enjoy, including streets, squares and parks; all land to which everyone has ready, free and legal access at all times. It includes the features and amenities within those lands, such as benches, lights, sidewalks, etc. Also commonly referred to as “public domain” and “public space”.

Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy

Secondary Municipal Planning Strategies in HRM include all secondary planning strategies that were in existence at the time of the adoption of the Regional MPS and will include future planning strategies adopted to guide and direct development in greater detail at a level more focused than the Regional Plan.

Secondary Suite

Refers to the concept of adding an additional dwelling unit to an otherwise single-unit house. Secondary units are usually incorporated into the main house, such as a basement or third floor apartment subject to meeting applicable Land Use Bylaw and National Building Code requirements and securing applicable permits.

Setback

The distance from the property line to the nearest part of the associated building or structure, measured perpendicular to the property line. Zoning By-laws typically require minimum setbacks to ensure that the use of a property does not infringe on the rights of neighbours; to allow room for wider sidewalks, lawns and trees; to preserve access to light, sunshine, and views; for amenity spaces; or for access and circulation.

Shared street

A street, also known as a Woonerf, where pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles (restricted to low speeds) share the same space.

Socio-economically accessible

Planning, design, and programming that enables access by people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

Streetscape

The elements within and along the street that define its appearance, identity, and functionality, including adjacent buildings and land uses, street furniture, landscaping, trees, sidewalks, and pavement treatments, among others.

Tall Building

A building which is seven or more storeys high.

Transit Hub

A transit facility that supports high frequency transit use and is integrated with multiple modes of transportation, including walking and cycling.

Transit Oriented Development

A mix of residential, retail, and office uses with a supporting network of roads, bicycle ways, and pedestrian ways focussed around a major transit stop designed to support a high level of transit use.

Transit Priority Measures

Strategies to increase transit operating speeds and transit travel time reliability in mixed traffic, such as traffic signal priority or queue jumps.

Universal Accessibility

Design elements that make places and activities accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Urban Agriculture

The practice of growing, processing, and distributing food in an urban environment.

Urban Forest

Every tree within the city.

Viewplane

An unobstructed line of sight that allows a person to see a particular landform, building or landscape.

Walkable

Refers to a single route, or a system of routes, between points that is relatively short, barrier free, interesting, safe, well-lit, comfortable and inviting to pedestrian travel.

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