

*Information Item 2*



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**REGIONAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

May 26, 2010

Ms. Dale Godsoe  
Chair, HRM Urban Design Task Force

Dear Ms. Godsoc:

**Re: Cost of Servicing Study and Requests to Initiate Secondary Planning Strategies**

On behalf of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC), I thank the UDTF for taking the time to express its opinions on the above topic. You have my commitment that our Committee will give full consideration to your submission as part of its deliberations on this matter, upon receipt of staff's Supplementary Report.

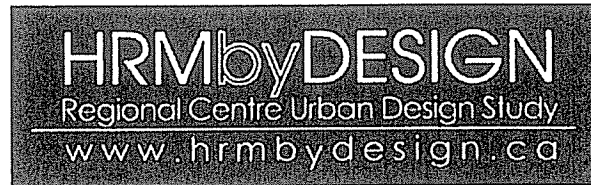
Yours truly,

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Fred Moxley  
Chair, HRM Regional Plan Advisory Committee

6.1.1  
May  
RPAC

Fred Morley, Chairman  
and members of the  
HRM Regional Planning Advisory Committee



May 5, 2010

Members of RPAC,

As you know, HRM by Design, the HRM's regional centre development plan, is proceeding into phase two, having had the downtown plan adopted by Regional Council in the spring of 2009. HRM by Design was mandated by the 2005 Regional Plan, and as a result, RPAC is required to review and make recommendations to HRM Council on it.

The Urban Design Task Force is the citizen's group tasked with HRM by Design and we look forward to presenting the next phase of the plan in 2011. We feel that HRM by Design has not only created some specific plan amendments to the Regional Plan, but we feel that it has, and will continue to, influence the Regional Plan, as it enters its 5 year review. We feel that HRM by Design sets clear rationale and parameters for even more growth in the Regional Centre than the Regional Plan has predicted, and we hope that this growth will further be encouraged as the Regional Plan is amended.

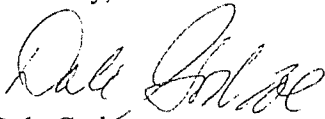
Specifically, we have concerns about an issue that is coming before you, for a recommendation to Council. At your October 21, 2009 meeting, HRM planning staff advised RPAC of 3 developments that are proposed for areas currently designated as "urban settlement", meaning that they can be developed sometime within the 25 year life of the plan. These urban settlement designations are Port Wallis, Sandy Lake, and Highway 102 West Corridor. Staff did not recommend approval at that time. In order for development to proceed in any of these reserves, Council must approve secondary planning processes. This will happen only after a recommendation from RPAC. We strongly encourage this committee to recommend *against* Council approving these requests, as they will undermine the municipality fiscally, environmentally, and will fundamentally go against the goals of HRM by Design, at this time.

As the HRM planning presentation clearly outlined, there is currently three times the capacity in already approved suburban development to accommodate growth projections over the next 20 years. A likely growth scenario for the suburbs is 32,600 people in the next 20 years. Secondary plans have already been granted for Bedford West, Bedford South, and Morris-Russell Lake. This brings HRM's estimated suburban supply to 77,000 - 100,000 people. There will be no need for additional suburban land any time soon. More importantly, HRM will bear significant costs if approval proceeds. Beyond the staff resources required in the secondary planning process, and beyond the capital cost contributions that the developers will cost-share with the municipality, HRM will be on the hook for an additional \$18 to \$65 million (depending on the provincial contribution).

This decision will impact HRM's bottom line. It will also make a strong statement about how much HRM is willing to support the Regional Plan and HRM by Design. Both of those plans speak to smart growth, and appropriate development, that provides both choice and present and future fiscal responsibility.

The Urban Design Task Force feels strongly enough about this issue to request that RPAC reaffirm its own commitment to the Regional Plan, and support HRM staff in recommending against moving forward with secondary planning processes in these, or any other future suburban growth areas. If the need arises, these areas can be examined as part of the regular review process for the Regional Plan in 2016. This is an important decision that will have far reaching consequences for the HRM.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Godsoe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dale Godsoe  
Chair, HRM Urban Design Task Force