



## **Our Seven Solutions: Saving the Municipality Money and Saving the Environment**

As the staff reports generated through the first round of consultations for the first five-year review of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RP+5) are being delivered to the Community Design Advisory Committee (CDAC), the Our HRM Alliance would like to present the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee with “Our Seven Solutions”.

The Our HRM Alliance continues to grow, having membership from forty community organizations. In almost every district of the Municipality, the Alliance formed to present to government the broad support for measures that will make Halifax Regional Municipality more liveable and more sustainable. The Seven Solutions are:

1. Use greenbelting to concentrate growth and preserve natural areas and eco-services
2. Invest in the downtown core and growth centres
3. Prioritize investment in transit and active transportation
4. Adhere to residential growth targets
5. Evaluate development charges to ensure that the Municipality is not burdened by growth
6. Protect water resources
7. Commit to measuring successes and deficiencies of actions identified in the RMPS

The details of the Seven Solutions have been altered slightly since their release in November 2011, as the Alliance has responded to the concerns of its member groups. The seven themes have not changed, but details have been clarified in response to community input.

In the report entitled “HRM is sustainable”, staff recommended that the Review not investigate Greenbelting. The report stated that Greenbelts were outside the scope of the Review, and that HRM already has enough policy tools in place to effectively manage sprawl. In fact, investigating Greenbelts to manage growth was included in the scope of RP+5 in Appendix 1. The Our HRM Alliance contends that HRM is not managing sprawl effectively. Watershed studies and the oversizing of sewer and water lines continues. HRM missed the residential growth targets outlined in the 2006 RMPS by nine per cent for the urban category, meaning that suburban and rural outpaced their agreed-upon growth targets.

The staff report seemed to suggest that the measures that HRM has in place now are “good enough”. The residents of HRM deserve more. Rather than having setbacks from watercourses of 20 meters, HRM should have 30 meter riparian buffers that are held by the public to facilitate access. Residents of the Municipality deserve to be setting new standards for environment and fiscal responsibility.

The Our HRM Alliance is in favour of growth and development. It merely wants the growth and development to be of low impact and in the right areas. It is with this concentrated growth that HRM will be able to manage its fiscal and environmental health.



**OURHRM**  
ALLIANCE

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The Alliance is happy to provide councillors with the second edition of our “Little Green Book”.

The Our HRM Alliance remains committed to the Seven Recommended Solutions proposed in November 2011. Further work has been undertaken to develop and refine the solutions, but in essence, they remain unchanged.

The Alliance would seize the opportunity to further share its extensive research and consultation with the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committed.

Please contact Jen Powley at [hrm@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:hrm@ecologyaction.ca) or 429-0924 to discuss the RP+5 and Our Solutions.

Thank you,

Jen Powley  
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