



Council Focus Area

2009/10 Council Focus Area Report

Community Planning

December 9, 2009

Introduction

During the 2008/09 business planning process, Council identified several areas which it wanted to focus on in the coming years. These issues became the basis for the following strategic outcomes within the Community Planning focus area.

Ongoing implementation of the Regional Plan:

- Functional Plans
- Community Visioning
- Clear and Predictable Development Standards
- Implementation of HRMbyDesign
- Heritage Conservation
- Access to Rivers, Lakes and Coastlines
- Housing Affordability

This report on the Community Planning focus area builds on the direction Council set in 2008/09 and provides an update on the progress to date and proposes short term objectives for 2010/11, and longer term objectives for 2011-13.

Issue - Ongoing implementation of the Regional Plan

Following the adoption of the HRM Regional Plan in August 2006, implementation of the Plan is a priority, with implications for all aspects of work undertaken by HRM on behalf of its residents.

OUTCOMES & GOALS

PROGRESS

1. Functional Plans will prepare guides for strategic operating & capital investments

Goals:

- Completion of 21 Functional Plans
- To address region wide facility planning and service delivery needs

- Currently there are four fully completed functional plans, as well as a number that are nearing completion, ongoing or partially underway. There is only one functional plan that has not yet been initiated; the Storm water Management Functional Plan
- Water Quality Functional Plan to be completed by the end of 2009/10 fiscal year
- Sea level rise modelling for Halifax Harbour Functional Plan to be completed by the end of 2009/10 fiscal year
- Appendix A of this report (pp.10-11) contains a status update on all 21 functional plans, some of which are broken down into specific phases to give a more accurate description of the work completed to date

OUTCOMES & GOALS

PROGRESS

2. Completing Community Visions for all Regional Plan Growth Centres

Goals:

- Guide Council and staff in the preparation of Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) reviews, service delivery and capital project planning
- Build citizen capacity
- Community-led vision development

- Vision Implementation projects underway for Bedford Waterfront, Fall River and Musquodoboit Harbour
- Community Vision drafts complete for Penhorn/Woodlawn, Spryfield, and Middle/Upper Sackville/Lucasville communities
- Next Community Visioning exercises identified for Woodside, Tantallon, and Porters Lake
- Watershed Study completed for Woodside area and Visioning exercise to commence by end of 2009/10 fiscal year
- Watershed Management studies - Terms of Reference prepared for Tantallon and Porters Lake/Lake Echo areas
- Completed Fiscal Capacity and Fiscal Health Analysis
- Completed Cost of Servicing Study for three areas: Sandy Lake, Highway 102 Corridor, and Port Wallace areas
- Complete Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC) review of the Cost of Servicing Strategy by end of 2009/10 fiscal year

OUTCOMES & GOALS

PROGRESS

3. Clear and predictable development standards and procedures

Goals:

- Improved planning processing times
 - Improved quality of development
 - Clarity for developers and community on expectations
- HRMbyDesign's streamlined development approvals process for downtown Halifax in effect
 - Continue monitoring processing time targets for Planning Applications:
 - 2007/08: 50% of the applications met HRM's time line targets
 - 2008/09: 70% of the applications met HRM's time line targets
 - Analysis complete on Council Committee structure with respect to planning processes
 - Council report on recommendation and implementation awaiting Council decision.

4. Implementation of HRMbyDesign

Goals:

- Complete HRMbyDesign process and dissolve the Urban Design Task Force (UDTF)
 - Staff /UDTF recommendation for new Regional Centre Urban Design Guidelines (2010)
 - Complete Heritage Functional Plan and create two new Heritage Conservation Districts in downtown Halifax
 - Complete Cogswell Interchange Master Plan Study
- New MPS, LUB, Design Manual, Heritage Design guidelines and Barrington Street Heritage District in effect for downtown Halifax
 - New Design Review Committee in place to review applications for development in downtown Halifax
 - UDTF membership replenished and work underway on Urban Design Guidelines for the remainder of the Regional Centre
 - Cogswell Interchange Master Plan RFP to be released in early 2010

OUTCOMES & GOALS

PROGRESS

5. Enhanced regulations and support framework for Heritage Conservation

Goals:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Implementation
• Heritage Functional Plan (Heritage Conservation Districts)
• Legislative review of <i>Heritage Property Act</i> (Provincial)
• Social Heritage Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District in effect
• New heritage design guidelines and bonus zoning program in effect for downtown Halifax
• Determination of scope of work for Heritage Functional Plan and the creation of two new Downtown Halifax Heritage Conservation Districts, at Barrington Street South and Historic Properties, is underway (<i>as prioritized by Council with approval of HRMbyDesign</i>)
• Continue work with the Province reviewing heritage legislation (<i>Heritage Property Act</i>)
• Completed review of existing social heritage programs including municipally owned heritage collections and assets
• Initiation of new Social Heritage Strategy by the end of 2009/10 fiscal year |
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OUTCOMES & GOALS

PROGRESS

6. Enhanced public access to rivers, lakes, and coastlines

Goals:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master plans - large subdivisions• Strategic land acquisition identified in Regional Plan• Preserve traditional access points• Capital Infrastructure improvements to all supervised beachfront facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master plan areas identified• Open space design principles incorporated into development agreements• Open Space Functional Plans underway• Community Visioning Action Plans underway• Some lands have been acquired• Completed capital improvements to Lake Banook beachfront areas• Strategy developed to implement capital improvements to all supervised beachfront facilities by 2013. Areas to be prioritized based on the number of facility users• Completed inventory of all regional publicly owned lands with water frontage, or water access points |
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7. Housing Affordability

Goals:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarity - Municipal mandate versus Provincial mandate• Encourage development in areas with low land and infrastructure costs• Transit oriented community design and development• Provide a mix of housing types | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed detailed planning for three Master Plan areas• Completed detailed design and capital costs for Bedford West• Continue monitoring Regional Plan's success prior to five-year review• Both reports were presented to the Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC) |
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Direction Sought

Short Term (2010/11)

Functional Plans:

- Continue work on remaining 16 Functional Plans; focus on Heritage and Housing Affordability
- Project scope for five-year review of Regional Plan

Community Visioning:

- Complete Watershed Management studies in Tantallon & Porter's Lake areas
- Commence Community Visioning exercises in Tantallon & Porter's Lake areas
- Complete Community Visioning exercise in Woodside area
- Ongoing implementation of approved Community Visions (6)
- Watershed/Servicing Studies
- Undertake Regional Groundwater Resources Study

Heritage Conservation:

- Complete Social Heritage Strategy
- Initiate public consultation process to establish 2 new Heritage Conservation Districts

Clear Development Standards:

- Implement Council recommendation for amendments to its' committee structure
- Monitor and improve time lines for planning applications
- Process Municipal Servicing/LIC requests

Implementation of HRMbyDesign:

- Regional Centre Urban Design Guidelines and planning program for next neighbourhoods under HRMbyDesign
- Complete Cogswell Interchange Master Plan

Access to Rivers, Lakes, and Coastlines:

- Conduct function suitability and risk analyses of HRM-owned water access points to identify: community needs deficiencies, future uses, and water quality
- Review supervised beachfronts to identify next priority areas to receive capital infrastructure upgrades, improvements and replacements

Housing Affordability:

- Housing Affordability Functional Plan gets underway

Long Term

Functional Plans:

- Complete five-year review of Regional Plan
- Implement remaining Functional Plans

Community Visioning:

- Continue Community Visioning and Implementation programs

Clear Development Standards:

- Continue monitoring and improving planning application processing times

Implementation of HRM by Design:

- Continue Regional Centre neighbourhood planning and design initiatives

Heritage Conservation:

- Introduce two more Heritage Conservation Districts: Barrington Street South and Historic Properties
- Implement Social Heritage Strategy

Access to Rivers, Lakes, and Coastlines:

- Complete a strategy for prioritizing replacements or improvements to traditional and newly acquired water access points
- Identify new visual and traditional water access points to meet demand
- Complete capital improvements and upgrades for all remaining supervised beachfront areas

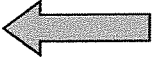

Housing Affordability:

- Complete Housing Affordability Functional Plan and begin implementation

APPENDIX

Regional Plan Functional Plans - Status Update

Complete	Near Completion	Ongoing	Partially Underway	Not Yet Underway
1. Emission Reduction	5. Water Quality Monitoring	7. Opportunity Sites	11. Housing Affordability	14. Storm water Management
2. Cultural - including Public Art Policy	6. Capital District Public Infrastructure	8. Underground Utilities	12. Communication Towers	
3. Community Energy		9. Potential Hazards to Development	13. Wastewater Management	
4. Business Parks		10. Finance		
15(i). Urban Design Guidelines - Downtown Halifax	←	15(ii). Urban Design Guidelines - Remainder of Regional Centre		
16(i). Communication & Public Education - Community Engagement Strategy	←	16(ii). Communication & Public Education - Other Components		
17(i). Halifax Harbour - Wrights Cove Study - Western Shore Bedford Basin Study - Northwest Arm Waterlot Infill Policy	←	17(iii). Halifax Harbour - Other Components		
18(i). Transportation - Active Transportation - Regional Parking Strategy	←	18(ii). Transportation - Road & Road Network - Transportation Demand Management - Public Transit		
19(i). Open Space - Community Facilities Master Plan	←	19(ii). Open Space - Other Components		
20(i). Urban Forestry - Inventory	←	20(ii). Urban Forestry - Policy Development		

Complete	Near Completion	Ongoing	Partially Underway	Not Yet Underway
21(i). Heritage - Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD) - Inventory of Municipally owned heritage assets			21(ii). Heritage -Social Heritage Strategy -Prioritized next 2 HCDs, Barrington South & Historic Properties	