
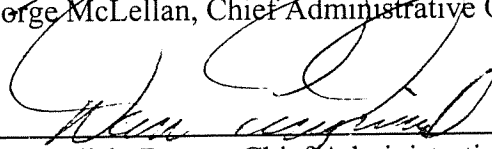

Halifax Regional Council
June 25, 2002

July 2, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer


Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 17, 2002

SUBJECT: Capital District Boundary

ORIGIN

- Report to Halifax Regional Council, dated April 10, 2002
- Committee-of-the-Whole Session of Halifax Regional Council, May 21, 2002

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the physical boundary for the Capital District as illustrated on Map 1, Attachment A.

BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2001, the Capital District project was initiated, with formation of the Capital District Task Force taking place later that year. The initiative was undertaken in order to address short term issues facing the urban business core areas and to provide an approach for addressing strategic and long term opportunities and needs. At that time, no precise boundary of the Capital District was delineated, but for the purpose of launching the project, the areas identified included the combined areas covered by the Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission, Downtown Halifax Business Commission, Spring Garden Road Business Commission and Gottingen Street Merchants Association, as well as appropriate adjacent areas such as Cogswell Interchange, Quinpool Road and portions of residential neighbourhoods adjacent these areas. Council was informed that a physical boundary of the District would be identified as deemed necessary in on-going work.

During subsequent presentations to Council regarding project updates and deliverables, several members have raised questions concerning the inclusion of certain areas within the Capital District. The purpose of this report is to present a proposed physical boundary for the District, for Council's consideration and approval.

DISCUSSION

In an attempt to physically define this area, staff suggests there are three components on which to focus; Economic Assets, Sense of Place and Service Delivery.

Economic Assets

The downtown areas of Halifax and Dartmouth represent a major economic engine of HRM, the province and the region. It is a huge investment area for both the private and public sectors. This District is unique from other areas of the municipality and province because of its scale in the following areas:

- Regional centre for commerce
- Centre for local and provincial government
- Port development (working waterfront)
- Regional, National, and International tourism destination node
- Regional centre for cultural and heritage facilities/activities
- Regional centre for entertainment and recreation facilities/activities
- A principal shopping area (retail) for the region
- Provincial and Regional centre for health, education and military facilities

The sustainability and growth of these facilities and functions is acknowledged as a high priority for Regional Council and the Task Force. A strong Capital District will help ensure the future health and sustainability of HRM as a whole.

Sense of Place

The downtown areas of Halifax and Dartmouth represent the focal point of the municipality, a place with which all members of the community identify and in which they have a sense of belonging and pride. This somewhat intangible attribute is derived from values such as historical significance, arts and cultural facilities, entertainment (festivals and events), open space areas and parks, and the waterfront (industrial activity and recreation). The area provides a personal feeling that one is situated in a unique location which is of great interest, vitality and value. It is important that all development and activities within the Capital District preserve and enhance this sense of place.

Service Delivery

One of the primary reasons for the establishment of the Capital District is to coordinate planning and service delivery. The Capital District Task Force is charged with this responsibility, and is comprised of representatives from all applicable Business Units and the various Business Commissions. Stemming from the Visioning exercise that was undertaken during late 2001 / early 2002, a list of deliverables has been developed to include, in part, the following:

- Intragovernmental Cooperation (among Business Units)
- Intergovernmental Cooperation (Provincial and Federal governments and their Agencies)
- Urban Design
- Heritage Preservation
- Beautification
- Maintenance Improvements
- Safety Improvements
- Identify and develop opportunity parcels

The service delivery of these items is both exciting and challenging. Given limited resources, careful consideration must be given to the geographic limits in which these services and projects can be successfully provided.

Proposed Capital District Boundary

Given the above considerations, staff is recommending that Capital District be defined as the areas illustrated on Map 1 (Attachment A). It is comprised of a Primary Area and a Secondary Area.

The Primary Area includes that where direct service delivery, as described above, will be provided.

Within Halifax, the Primary Area generally stretches from Pier 21 in the south, along Barrington Street to the Spring Garden Road area, west to Summer Street, and includes the Quinpool Road commercial corridor as far as Connaught Avenue. It also includes the Halifax Common, the Gottingen Street corridor and the North Barrington Street corridor to the MacDonald Bridge.

Within Dartmouth, the Primary Area includes the Coast Guard lands in the south, Dartmouth Cove lands, the Prince Albert Road corridor to Lake Banook, Sullivan's Pond and Ochterloney Street, and the Dartmouth Common to the MacDonald Bridgehead.

The Capital District is also proposed to include a Secondary Area which is situated adjacent the Primary Area. The Secondary Area delineates those areas which may be influenced or impacted by projects or activities within the Primary District, or conversely, may originate projects which may impact or influence the Primary Area. At the present time, no direct service delivery by the Task Force is expected to be provided within the Secondary Areas. Examples of sites situated in the Secondary Area include the Port Authority lands south of Pier 21, lands of Dalhousie University along Spring Garden Road, Victoria General Hospital and Queen Elizabeth II Health Services Centre, lands of DND Maritime Command (Dockyard and Dockyard Annex) and Nova Scotia Hospital lands. In several locations, the Secondary Area includes portions of existing residential neighbourhoods or mixed residential/commercial neighbourhoods abutting the Primary Area.

Council will note that the boundary includes several of the major street corridors that lead directly to the downtown core area, including Prince Albert Road, Barrington Street, the upper portion of Gottingen Street, and Quinpool Road. These represent important "gateway" locations that are contiguous to the core areas, and are important in terms of streetscape aesthetics and wayfinding. With specific reference to Quinpool Road, this corridor functions as a major traffic artery coupled with a vibrant local commercial centre. Issues that have been identified by the Quinpool Road business community are similar to those of the core areas. A Business Commission has been formed and a tax levy has been implemented. The Commission has had representation on the Capital District Task Force since its inception. Staff is therefore recommending that its inclusion in the Capital District continue, however, should Council choose not to include this area, it is important that HRM continue to work with and support this group.

Other Commercial Areas and Strips Within HRM

Council has made staff aware that other commercial areas of the municipality require attention, to address the needs of the business communities, the functional aspects of these corridors, and to prepare and implement streetscape improvements and development opportunities. The recently approved Sackville Drive study is a case in point, and other initiatives have been identified for Herring Cove Road and Cole Harbour Road. While these areas are outside the Capital District area as defined herein, it is proposed that the Regional Planning project will investigate and make recommendations on the future development opportunities and programs for all such commercial areas. Also, the recently announced Clean Community Campaign (under Gary Martin) will provide opportunities for these areas with respect to safety, maintenance and beautification issues.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no capital or operating budget implications arising from the proposed Capital District boundary as presented herein.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose to revise the boundary(s) for the Capital District as presented.

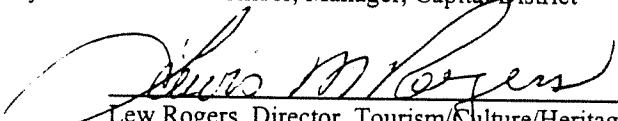
ATTACHMENTS

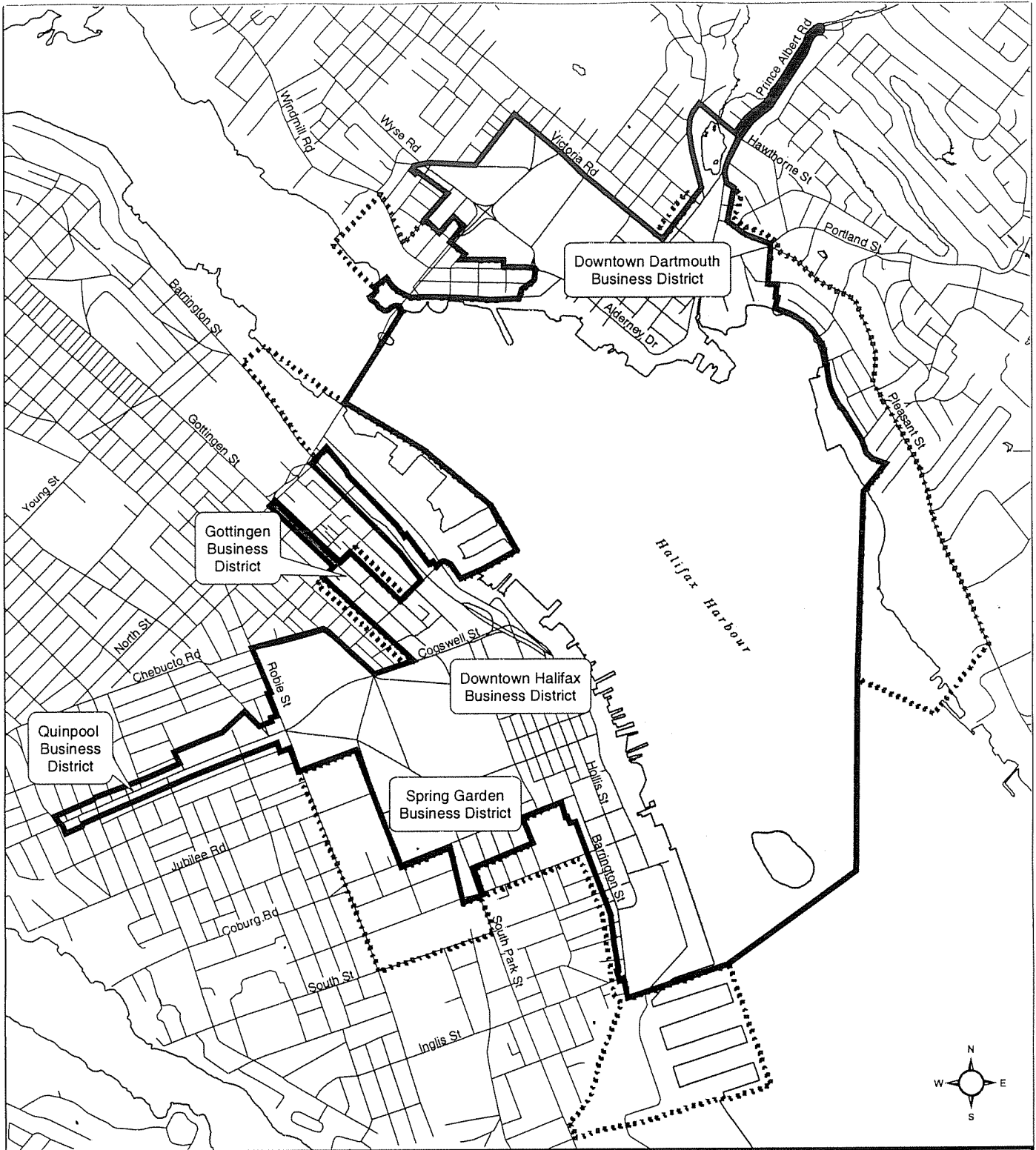
Attachment A Map 1 - Proposed Boundary - HRM Capital District

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report prepared by: Roger Wells, Regional Coordinator, Planning and Development Services

Report Approved by: Carol Macomber, Manager, Capital District


Lew Rogers, Director, Tourism/Culture/Heritage



Map 1
Attachment A

- Primary Area
- Secondary Area (influence/impact)

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**Proposed Boundary
HRM Capital District**

