

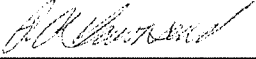


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Item # 10.1.1

**Harbour East Community Council
June 9, 2011**

TO: Chair and Members of Harbour East Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Phillip Townsend, Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management

DATE: April 14, 2011

SUBJECT: Initiate Preparation of the Cole Harbour Open Space Land Use Plan

ORIGIN

2006 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy Policy E-19:

“HRM shall prepare an Open Space Functional Plan to determine an economically and environmentally sustainable strategy for the equitable maintenance and distribution of parks and open spaces throughout the Municipality.”

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Community Council direct staff to prepare an Open Space Plan for the Cole Harbour Estuary Study Area.

BACKGROUND

Staff has been engaged in the preparation of a variety of individual open space planning projects within the general area of the Cole Harbour Estuary. Projects include the HRM Rehab Lands, Bishop Property, Cole Harbour Causeway, and the Nova Scotia Power Transmission Line, as well as various trail planning initiatives. There is pressure to make open space land use decisions on these projects but there is a lack of a vision and Council Policy. As well, a risk exists that not all data has been discovered or researched thoroughly.

The 2006 approved Regional Plan is currently under review, known as Regional Plan + 5 or RP+5. There is an open space planning component to the RP+5 initiatives.

DISCUSSION

Real Property Planning (RPP) staff has been challenged to administer and coordinate these individual projects without an overall open space land use planning policy.

Staff has yet to engage the public in a comprehensive manner and feel they are missing relevant information that can only be collected through a public engagement process. An open space planning initiative would include an inclusive public engagement strategy with the objective to inspire citizen confidence in staff and complete the research and analysis stages of the project.

Given the fact that projects like the Davies and Bishop Properties are owned by very patient Cole Harbour residents, there is a risk that future public open space access opportunities may be lost.

A Cole Harbour Estuary Open Space Plan would satisfy a component of the RP+5.

With an approved Cole Harbour Estuary Open Space Plan, Council will have set before them an updated open space inventory, a consolidated understanding of the land use issues and pressures, the results of a modern public engagement process, professional analysis of the opportunities and constraints, and a resulting policy plan that reveals Council's Vision, Direction and Implementation Strategy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The project scope will engage staff in the form of a Steering Committee and Technical Team. Due to the importance of a successful Public Engagement process, a consultant will be hired (using existing consulting services) to set the framework and facilitate up to two workshops and an open house. This cost would be covered in the 2011 RPP Operating Budget.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A comprehensive public engagement strategy will be prepared as part of the Project. It will be monitored by a Steering Committee and consist of electronic communication, a user survey, and a minimum of two gatherings in the Workshop and Open house format. Hiring a consultant is being considered.

ALTERNATIVES

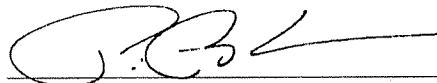
Staff can continue to work on the individual projects without an Open Space Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

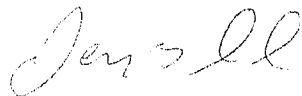
Conceptual Study Area

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

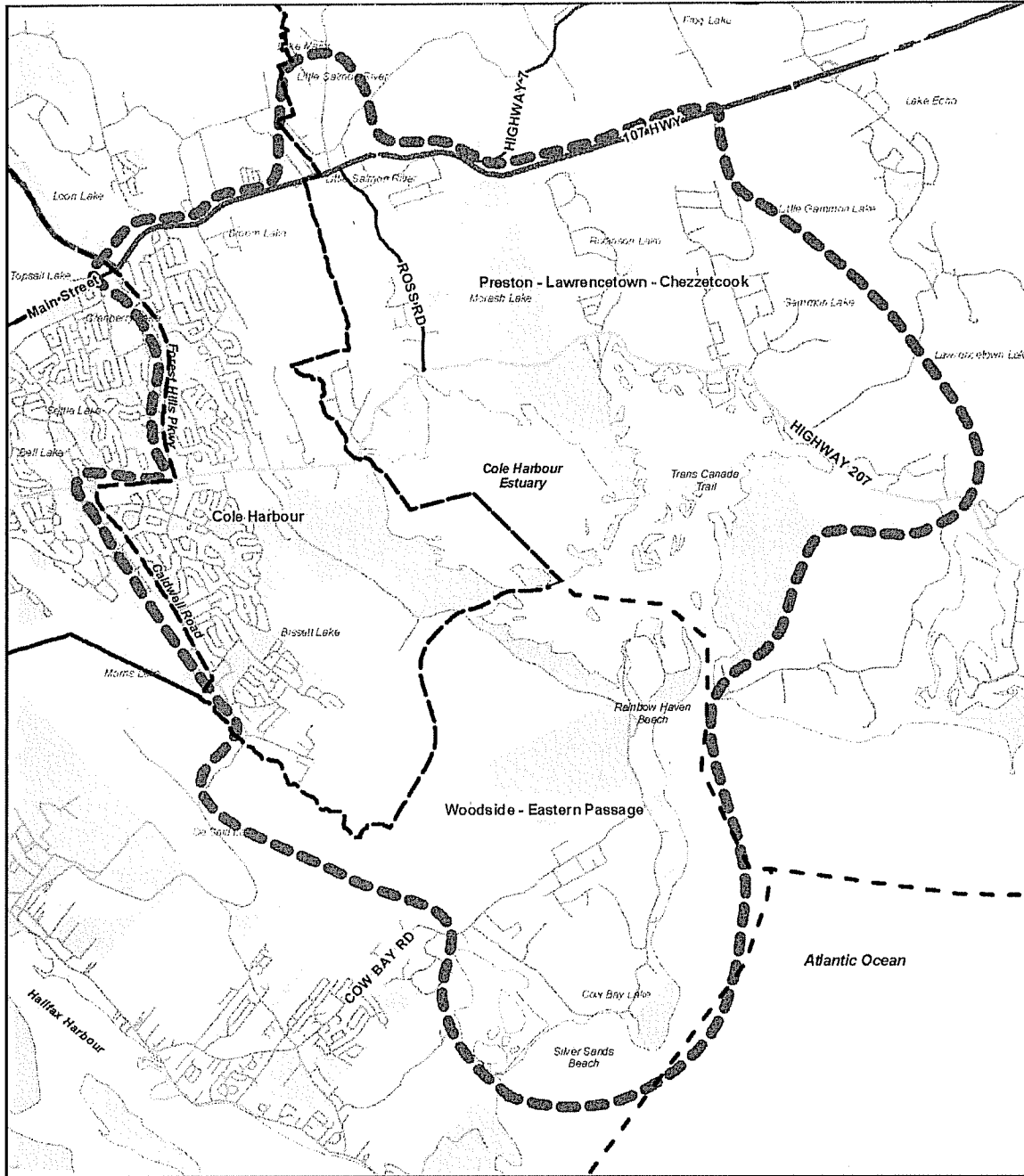
Report Prepared by : Robert Jahncke, Landscape Architect Real Property Planning, IAM, 490-4002



Report Approved by: Peter Bigelow, Manager of real Property Planning, IAM, 490-6047



Financial Approval by: _____
For Bruce Fisher, MPA, CMA, A/Director of Finance/CFO, 490-6308



Conceptual Study Area May 4, 2011

Legend:
●●● Study Area Boundary
- - - District Boundaries
..... Government Owned Properties

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Kilometers

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Attachment A