

RP+5 Stakeholder Consultation Session  
[Draft 2 – Revised Regional Plan]



**Environment, Transportation, Health**

St. Mary's Boat Club  
1651 Fairfield Road, Halifax  
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**Questions 1 - What brings you here today?**

- Blue Mountain, Birch Cove Lake
- Down with wiggle room
- Don't be afraid to say no to Developers
- Create the regional parks network we were promised – create an annual budget to buy land
- Direct growth
- A clearly mapped greenbelt where development does not occur
- Support community transit
- Strategy for developing rural transportation (not just a footnote under transit)
- HRM support for community based transportation in rural areas
- Have more effective planning process – by planners not by developers
- UFMP – educate all of us of the value of our trees
- Community engagement:
  - don't forget to keep in touch with the public\_who will be educated
  - be subject to enforcement
  - engage with others
  - keep council to the “Agenda”
  - no wiggle room
- Ensure access to healthy food in Regional Center
- Functional Plan:
  - Dogs – off leash strategy
  - Policy needs review
  - Licensing
  - Education

- Enforcement
- Protecting (HRM) wilderness heritage
- Food security – opportunity in RP to enable work on food security
- Affordable housing
- Regional parks – moving forward
- Eliminate discrimination in zoning by-laws for housing for people with disabilities
- Bonusing for affordable multi-unit one level units with seniors in mind
- Adequate rural development controls
- The ability to meet our targets
- Evaluation – don't wait 5 years – S.M.A.R.T. indicators
- Meeting our growth targets
- Get rid of by-right development
- Don't measure km of road, measure active transportation use
- New 9.1 Objective:
  - Define RP deliverables and create an implementation timeline/road map
- Have robust, reliable measurement parameters that indicate quality of life, not just direct \$\$
- Include community environmental targets, not just corporate HRM targets
- Explore conflicting goals/ideas with the plan:
  - Sustainable transportation; regional centre VS expand/enhance business parks
- Greenbelting
- Higher growth targets for urban core
- Greenbelting will not happen with G-16 (Section 9.7) – remove discretionary approvals provision
- Ensure watershed balance
- HRM tree retention plan (HRM wide)
- Water shed protection
- Hard surface tax
  - Stormwater Management - get the functional plan done
- Storm water treatment
- Watercourse buffers
- Buffers to all wetlands 30m
- Save all islands (page 53)

- HRM ownership of all 30m buffers
- Mandatory septic tank pump out
- Water quality testing program be expanded
- Stream gauging
- Who will do the heavy lifting?
- Volunteers need to be resourced/respected in their efforts to support RP+5
- Trails
- Trees
- Watercourses
- Dogs off leash
- School – safe routes
- Water monitoring
- Idle no more at HRM facilities
- Community engagement
- Way-finding/signage for AT/RT
- Regulation of water, trees etc. on private property (Boscobel!)
- Increase riparian buffers 20m to 30m
- Implement watershed study recommendations
- HRM lake water quality program – needs to be re-instituted
- 30m buffer
- Portable water source protection with watercourse buffers 20m vs. 30m
- Floodplain mapping for all watercourses
- Daylight Sawmill River
- 100% on site water retention for redevelopment
- Watershed tax for proper planning = \$500,000 each
- Stormwater:
  - Educate
  - Remediate
  - Enforce
  - Plan for the future if barriers exist – don't wait till it's an issue. Get in time for approvals
- 2006, Policy E22 – emissions reduction:
  - Where did it go?
  - Policy re “no idling” at HRM facilities (at the least)
  - Climate change
- Vision statement needed for transportation sector

- Re-prioritize transportation spending:
  - Choices
- Need more ambitious goals and targets for sustainable transportation
- Strengthening A.T. plan to include stronger language and need to integrate all ages into plan
- 3<sup>rd</sup> mode funding for AT
- Where active transportation meets traffic, AT gets preference (e.g. stoplights, bike lanes)
- Words vs. Doing:
  - Transportation section: 1<sup>st</sup> few pages good but then why are road widening and the 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge there?
  - Stop planning for and prioritizing for cars
- Get rid of need for third harbor crossing
- Focus on multi-mode transportation network connection
- Active transportation targets are weak - 25 years to double AT is a lack luster objective
- Transportation:
  - Pedestrians have right too, work at malls/private land owners – transit and AT
- Trails/greenways:
  - Define greenway
  - Create trail building standards – urban, rural, suburban
  - Adequate resources for volunteers – trail tool box

**Question 2 – What is working; what do you like about the new draft?**

*(Note - following the initial discussion of question 1, participants re-organized themselves into topics (tables). Participants were free to move from table to table; they were not asked nor expected to remain with one topic)*

- Water Table:
  - Better protection of watershed than before
  - Ground water studies
  - 20m set-back
- Governance Table:
  - Commuter system works well

- Cheap land around urban areas
- People with modest income can own houses
- Housing Table:
  - Affordable housing
  - Mixed housing
- Active Transportation Multi-Modal Table:
  - Transit to high density areas
  - Transit in key areas
  - Overall objectives good
  - Growth targets good
- Measurement Table:
  - We have a target
- Greenbelting Table:
  - We now have a definition

**Questions 3 and 4 – How could the draft plan be further refined? What would successful implementation look like?**

**Water Resources Table**

- Significant environmental features – needs to be defined
- There is a requirement for having sufficient groundwater yet applicants are being approved for subdivision
- Significant environmental features should include old growth forests
- Integrated storm water management master plan
- Is a waste water treatment system considered infrastructure? Is it allowed in riparian buffer
- 50% underdeveloped ratios
- Policy E14:
  - The buffer is 20m; some water supply sources have a 30.5 buffer from a watercourse
    - Benefits: consistency in the Provincial and Municipal laws
  - Do not allow resource extraction (forestry/mining/quarries) in areas where potable water is extracted

- Policy SU-21 – add septic tank pump out
- Policy E-16 - change to 30 m
- Policy E-18 - change to acquisition
- Policy E-19 - change to 1996, not 2013
- Policy E-15
  - All wetlands important, not just those 2000m2 and larger
  - Buffer to all wetlands – 30m
- Policy E-21 – remove designated watercourse; should be all watercourses
- Policy E-24 - add word ‘natural watersheds’
- Policy E-25 - HRM reinstate/expand their watercourse testing program
- Policy S-19 - Great
- Policy S-21 - Remove ‘request’ Province of NS – change to HRM ‘shall’
- Policy EC-4
  - more funding for trails AT
  - 50% of square footage in Industrial Parks – 50% must be downtown
- SU-13 - Hard surface
- SU-11 - Daylighting – YES – Sawmill River!!
- SU-12:
  - HRM will conduct/do storm water treatment
  - Remove by-right
  - Ground-water testing
  - More trail staff
  - More planning staff
  - More money for resources

### **Community/Rural Transportation Table**

#### **Table 10 – Page 60:**

- Adopt the term ‘community transportation’ for rural transportation
  - Benefits – clarity

### **Governance and Measurement Table**

- Build it and they will come
- Double assessments in the central district in 7 years
- Attack barriers to living downtown:
  - Survey – how to densify economically
  - Define market for working housing – set targets per building
  - Market different size housing

- Remove zoning barriers ASAP
- Replace emphasis on free parking – at 2% a year – and put in pedestrian and cycling space
- Policies SU-14 and G-16D – danger zone!

### **Greenbelting, Zoning and Growth Targets Table**

- Policy G-16:
  - Delete, move forward with discussions between developers and planning department
  - Add containment to the term of Greenbelting
  - Too much wiggle room – get rid of it
- Policy SU-15 – delete
- Map a greenbelt that protects significant, connected (wherever possible) natural areas and zone it as Greenbelt and prohibit development on these areas.
- Create a sufficiently large annual budget for land acquisition.
- Deal more firmly with developers who have bought land speculatively and in areas needed for the greenbelt. Expropriation, where necessary, should be used.
- A possible surcharge on development that will have a negative impact on the environment.
- Landscape appropriate development.
- Map a greenbelt that connects areas and stop development.
- Annual budget for acquisitions; expropriate where necessary.
- Policy S-33(d) – add “the number of residents permitted should be compatible with the prevailing land use” to S-33(d) permitting licensed homes for special care of more than three.
  - Benefits
    - Removes discrimination in current by-laws and is consistent with principles of inclusion.
    - People who need affordable housing will be able to access healthy food.
- Section 9.1 – more targets that are measureable
  - Measure progress in 5 year targets
- Chapter 2:
  - The Greenbelting plan is not defined as it is implemented in other cities. Define what it is and when it will be implemented by.

- New development should cover hard and soft costs – include Capital Cost Changes.
- Set hard urban containment boundaries.
- Set up dedicated bus and commuter lanes.
- We have a 25 year+ supply of approved lots – use it.
- Eliminate potential for wiggle room in Policies SU-4 & G-16.
- Add “containment” to definition of greenbelting.
- Add rural chapter to plan.
- Policy SU-15 (a), (b), and (c) – too much wiggle room - get rid of it
- Chapter 4 – take out Road Network Plan
  - Bayers Road widening and 3<sup>rd</sup> harbor crossing - why are they there, but not modal split targets?
- I don’t understand the rationale that the RP+5 is a review not a re-write. That has been used as an excuse not to change things, but the policy itself states in G-12 that the plan will be reviewed every year to gauge whether it is meeting its objectives. HRM is 10% off with its growth target of 50% suburban development. This is not considered a big deal, but it will cost taxpayers \$670 million. How could this not mean that HRM needs a new tool to reach its targets? That’s what the HRM Alliance presented with greenbelting, nothing radical, not changing growth targets, just helping getting to where HRM wants to be.

### **Multi-modal Transportation Table**

Define AT clearly, sell it to citizens – everyone wins

- Page 57 under objectives:
  - Add in an objective that highlights the importance of multi-modal – use that word not just integrated – integrated is good but also say/highlight multi-modal
  - Including all systems – all trips are multi-modal so prioritize plan for that
  - Big moves! Big investment in transit – not just widening roads for cars!
  - Invest where we want the modal shifts
  - No more status quo
  - 8-80, child and youth friendly planning and transport guidelines – (Catherine O’Brien @ CBU)
  - Put people 1<sup>st</sup> then goods:



- Conversation should emphasize moving people and goods not the mode choice
  - Shift our priorities:
    - Spending and plans toward transit, AT, multi-modal systems
  - The future is not single occupancy vehicles
  - Where is the section/direction for the completion of a complete street plan – can't list say design complete streets without further direction. Make sure it actually happens.
  - Direction and further details needed
- Page 60-61:
  - Remove widening of roads for cars! Models are out of date that say we should do this
  - No third bridge! Spend that money on the priorities listed – i.e. transit etc. trains for commuters. Money spent in wrong place if you do that!
  - Remove details of road\_network. Priority plan – no other plan has those details in this regional plan - i.e. AT, Transit, etc. Road network plan too detailed for this high level of a plan! Remove details (road widening) OR have that detail for all sections.
  - It makes it seem like it is the priority
  - Keep the scale of detail the same - this plan (RP & 5). Would reflect objective better/for real.
  - Stop widening roads for cars! That goes against the objectives on page 57 if you make it easy to drive by investing our limited \$ on widening roads for cars then people will continue to drive! Don't say one thing in the objectives and another in the details.
  - If you widen, widen for bus only. Maybe you don't have to widen; instead limit cars further and put the money in transit!
- Page 62:
  - To street design – add in that developers must build for all road users – sidewalks, paths, etc.
  - Children can't drive
- Multi-Modal Transportation Transit - Chapter 4:
  - Identify locations or corridors for designated transit lanes, transit priority
  - Identify locations of corridors or transit priority lanes on transit maps
    - Benefits – improve multi modal TOD!

- Chapter 4 – 4.2.5:
  - Road Network Priorities Plan - we cannot have projects such as a 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge crossing and still consider our transportation approach as sustainable transportation. Remove: 3<sup>rd</sup> Bridge Bayers Road
    - Benefits - commit to sustainable transportation
- Chapter 4 – Active Transportation:
  - If we are going to truly have a multi-modal system we need to have a bolder goal. Also, we need to focus on building bike lanes and greenways on the peninsula, not just in the suburbs, 50 kms. of bike lanes on streets on the Peninsula/Regional Centre.
  - Benefits:
    - Extreme AT
    - Improve Health
    - Reduce road maintenance costs
    - Reduce emissions
    - Reduce parking demand
- AT/Transportation:
  - Identify streets like Argyle that should get new street standards
- Section 4.3 - look at special street design for key entertainment streets in Downtown; update engineering standards to include shared road designs – Argyle
- Section 4.2.2 - look at including something about local street bikeways; policy to support traffic calming and diversion in connection to supporting bike routes
  - Suggested Refinement – supports local street bikeways in Regional Centre
- Section 4.2.2 / Policy T-3 - make a commitment to give priority to the bike lanes on designated AT Routes that will allow for reduction in service for car traffic but increase service for cycling and pedestrians.
- Concern that details of the plan don't necessarily fulfill the intention of plan objectives
- Scale issue within the plan - details have been removed about AT from the plan but details about roads have been left in – specifics are provided about roads but not investments on AT and Transit; implies more buy-in about roads
- Good-strong priority given to AT, but missing reference to walking
- HRM isn't listed on Walk Z1 website as a signatory – who is responsible for this file? Recreation? AT?

## Transportation Table

- Choice, level of playing field
- Make other choices easier
- Balancing the playing field is important in increasing modal split
  - Public transit options used to be more varied
- Bus-only access to bridge
- Using RP+5 for a vision
- Car sharing – HOV lanes
- Land-uses – difficult in finding things like grocery stores in urban areas
- Recognition that transportation is a complex issue requiring a reprioritization of investment
- Does the plan have teeth
- Connections to schools in rural areas a concern; roads should be designed to accommodate other users
- What does good implementation look like – measurements
- Allocation of transport and PCW budget – 10% of road capital
- Education about where funding is going, in particular the hike in transit fare
- Doubling AT budget
- Break mode share goals into regions (i.e. urban rural suburban) in the statement on AT work sheet (“next 25 years, the number of residents...”)
- More collaboration with school community, municipality in terms of children’s AT
- Is maybe using total km of new infrastructure not a good measure? Instead discuss # of users on the infrastructure. Where is the investment?
- Improving connectivity; get people to P&R; public bikes
  - connecting modes, bike racks, showers, fare cards integrated with renting public bikes
  - water access required for paddlers/boaters – canoeing for transport
- Are design standards adequate to meet the needs of complete streets
  - how to overcome as-of-right when trying to require sidewalks? How to retrofit streets when there are structural rehab on roads
- Regional plan – where is this in the Regional plan
- Addressing future demand for industrial area where transportation is available to support it – Bayer’s, Burnside
- Connectivity to & within those industrial areas

- How are the values of sustainability/multi-modality in on-the ground
- Development, if we believe in growth targets, what do we need to commit to in order to achieve them?
  - What sort of follow through is required, it seems like there have been a number of projects that have undermined these goals
- Lack of education & lack of enforcement have been detrimental
  - Consider making sidewalk multiuse trails with clear definition between uses
  - Why are large employers locating far from places that could easily accommodate a cycling or walking trip
  - Commercial Tax encouraging location & siting of large employers far from transit
  - Fact sheets – AT sheet needs to be cleaner for readers (i.e. no definition), show how AT is applicable for all residents (i.e. by all ages), try to “sell” it.
- Diversity of needs – AT in rural & urban communities i.e. inadequate shoulders, no sidewalk)
- Table 4.1 - Take out projects; other modes don't include projects
- Complete streets policy:
  - was taken out and now is an objective – should it be a policy statement?
- Key policy directions CONFLICT :
  - integrate land use and transport vs. preserve and expand industrial land holdings
    - expand business parks
- We have residential growth targets; consider employer/business growth targets for Regional Centre
- Map 3:
  - Trails - ? blue routes – not mentioned, please consult trails groups – i.e. Linear Trail is now – Washmill
- Map 13:
  - Does not match up with promotion of BMBCL Regional Park as on halifax.ca – May 31/12
  - COLT is not going downtown yet but is now in from Lakeside to Joe Howe
  - Perhaps a dotted line for future/heavy for completed
  - Signage/way finding to assist AT users

- To help the public understanding Glossary of Terms – Greenway
- Misuse of Urban/Suburban – i.e. Urban settlement in Suburban zones
- Evaluation:
  - needs to be measureable/timeline/sustainable
  - who will do it? HRM or volunteers?
  - i.e. UFMP – how many trees planted as well as cut?
  - how many trails/AT?
- Complete Streets Policy vs. as-of-right for submissions and all new commercial buildings
- Add walking charter – recognized as a global movement
  - Benefit - more walking public – safer
- Crosswalks – keep painted; educate
- Winter maintenance/harmonize snow removal – new policy – for AT success
- Climate change? Emissions reduced – lost from old plan (Policy E-22)?
- Parks – Mainland Common - not allowed to be identified in 2006, still not on any radar