

Item No. 5
Halifax Regional Council
December 8, 2009

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council



SUBMITTED BY: _____
Brad Anguish, Director, BPIM and Harbour Solutions

DATE: December 3, 2009

SUBJECT: **Report on Progress Against 2009/10 Council Focus Area Objectives**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

As an element of the Corporate Planning Framework and the Budget and Business Planning cycle, staff provide an annual report to Regional Council on progress against Council's Focus Area objectives including go forward plans under each Focus Area.

BACKGROUND

In 2006/7 Halifax Regional Council first adopted the use of Council Focus Areas (CFAs). Council's Focus Areas are an articulation of Council's authorization to the administration on where to apply additional effort and resources. With limited capacity and resources available, Council develops the CFA's to ensure that extra effort is applied to key areas with specific goals.

The Council Focus Areas have been identified as requiring re-allocation of resources and focussed attention, while developing the budget and business plans. The important themes of environmental sustainability and physical accessibility continue to be emphasized in all of these area.

DISCUSSION

Staff have done extensive best practice research on municipalities across Canada, and examined the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Quality of Life Reporting System, to develop Community Outcome Areas for HRM. The six Outcome Areas are as follows:

Safe and Welcoming Communities

Citizens and guests benefit from a safe, welcoming and resilient community.

Integrated and Affordable Transportation Networks

Residents, businesses and travellers enjoy a wide range of well planned, affordable, accessible and efficient multi-modal transportation options and transportation networks that allow the easy flow of people, goods and services throughout the Municipality.

Diverse Recreation, Leisure, and Cultural Choices

The health, well being, culture and diversity of HRM's residents are supported through a broad range of affordable and accessible recreation programs, well kept facilities, learning opportunities, unique cultural and heritage experiences as well as local and world class events and festivals

Well Planned and Engaged Communities

Communities within HRM share the benefits of region-wide managed growth strategies; citizen engagement opportunities; maintained assets and infrastructure; responsive service delivery systems; and recognition of distinct urban, suburban, and rural identities.

Clean and Healthy Environment

HRM is a community that values and protects its natural resources and reduces its ecological footprint, through environmental sustainability strategies that promote clean air, land and water.

Economic Prosperity

HRM is the centre of economic activity for Atlantic Canada and supports and grows a business climate that attracts and retains businesses and residents to the Municipality.

These are considered critical to the Municipality becoming one of the best, most livable municipalities in Canada. The Outcome Areas are reflective of the key elements that make the Municipality attractive to current and prospective residents, and help align the programs and services that the Municipality delivers, with the needs and wants of the people who live, work, play, learn, and do business here. The Outcome Areas ultimately reflect a region where, the residents are actively engaged in their community, people get value for their tax dollar, and they enjoy a high quality of life.

The Outcome Areas are ongoing – they will not be achieved in the short-term, but rather represent continuous goals for the Municipality. While the priorities in any given year may be adjusted to meet the changing needs of the community, these Outcome Areas will remain stable and reflective of the vision and values established for HRM.

Key performance indicators are being developed and will be used to track our progress towards achieving success in these Outcome Areas. While the range of benefits and outcomes that the Municipality is expected to influence is broad, it is acknowledged that priorities must be established to focus resources and empower staff to deliver on key projects and initiatives.

In support of the Community Outcomes, the Council Focus Areas direct expertise, resources and energy to be invested to best meet the needs of our community. The Council Focus Areas represent multi-year issues, that will not necessarily be resolved within the scope of a single year. They are also subject to change as Council deems necessary.

Following the municipal election in 2008, Regional Council undertook an exercise to revisit the focus areas from the previous council mandate and on January 20, 2009 Regional Council adopted the following Council Focus Areas (CFAs):

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Governance and Communication | Transportation |
| Public Safety | Infrastructure |
| Community Planning | |

Staff will be seeking Council’s direction regarding the proposed way ahead for Governance and Communication at COW on December 8, 2009 and the remaining four CFA’s at COW on December 15, 2009. The outcomes and goals for each Council Focus Area are as follows:

I. Governance & Communication		
	Outcome:	Goals:
1	Committee and Council Reform: To meet Council’s objective of creating a council & committee governance structure that is efficient, effective, scaled appropriately, and where decisions are made at the appropriate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of Committees of Council • District Boundaries Review (Council size) • The role & authority of Community Councils
2	Communications: HRM is the source of information about the region’s plans, priorities & growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure a proactive approach to HRM Communications • Internal (Council, Staff) • External (citizens, media, government & stakeholders)

II. Public Safety: Implementation of the Mayor’s Roundtable on Violence Report		
	Outcome:	Goals:
1	Implementation of the recommendations in the report relative to Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a collective diversity strategy

2	Police Community Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance public communication around crime reduction strategies
3	Provincial Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance relationships in developing collective public safety initiatives
4	Sustainability Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a public safety office providing leadership and coordination around public safety
5	Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilize communities through engagement and collective public safety strategies

III. Community Planning: Ongoing implementation of the Regional Plan

Outcome:		Goals:
1	Functional Plans which provide guides for strategic operating & capital investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of Functional Plans to address region wide facility planning and service delivery needs
2	The development of Community Visions for all Regional Plan Growth Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide Council and staff in preparation of Municipal Planning Strategy reviews Service delivery and capital project planning Build citizen capacity for communities developing visions
3	Clear and predictable development standards and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved planning processing times Improved quality of development Clarity for developers & community on expectations
4	Enhanced regulations and support framework for Heritage Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barrington Street Heritage District Implementation Heritage Functional Plan (Heritage Conservation Districts) Legislative review of Heritage Property Act (Provincial)
5	Enhanced public access to rivers, lakes and coastlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master Plans – large subdivisions Strategic acquisition identified in Regional Plan Preserve traditional access points (no development applications)
6	Affordable Market Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clarity - Municipal mandate vs. Provincial mandate Encourage development in areas with low land & infrastructure costs Transit orientated community design & development Mix of Housing types
7	Implementation of HRM by Design: New MPS & Bylaw for Downtown Halifax & remainder of regional centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Hearing for Downtown (Spring 09) Staff recommendations for Regional Centre (Fall 09)

IV. Transportation		
Outcome:		Goals:
1	Transit Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver elements of approved 5 Year Approach to Transit Enhancements • As part of 5 Year Operating Plan optimize existing and future service to achieve efficiencies
2	Active Transportation including Multi Use Trails, Walkways, Bike lanes, sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver elements of the Active Transportation Plan approved in 2006
3	Traffic Management (Transportation Planning) includes inter-governmental coordination, capability projects, network optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce capacity into the network • Optimize the existing network • Continue the Strategic Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee

V. Infrastructure		
Outcome:		Goals:
1	More community facilities and maintenance of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more community recreation facilities and fix existing facilities • Increase Community centre funding • Implement Facilities Master Plan
2	Improved street, road and sidewalk conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve streets, roads & sidewalk conditions
3	Community Beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Creative Communities Strategy • Develop goals for HRM's Urban Forest • Develop a region wide system of parks, trails and beautiful streets • Provide protection to landmarks and cultural landscapes • Create a walkable, livable city
4	Playground, Parkland and Garden Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve playgrounds, parkland and gardens • Protect and promote natural assets, views & water access • Improve existing parks

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget implications as a result of the material discussed herein. The financial impact of any decisions made by Council will be established through the 2010/11 budget process.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the 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.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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.

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