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**Item No. 11.3.1**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**September 13, 2011**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair  
Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee

**DATE:** August 22, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Regional Plan Review Scope and Workplan

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**ORIGIN**

The motion of Halifax Regional Council approving the 2011-12 annual budget including funding for Regional Plan Five Year Review, and motion approving the 2011-2012 Corporate Plan including direction to undertake the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the next phase of HRM by Design, known as the Centre Plan

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee approved a motion regarding the Regional Plan Review Scope and Workplan at the August 11, 2011 meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve:

1. Initiation of the process for the five year review of the *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS)* in accordance with RMPS Policy IM-9
2. The scope and schedule for the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* as outlined in the July 27, 2011 staff report.
3. The scope and schedule for the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* project as outlined in the July 27, 2011 staff report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

4. The establishment of a single advisory committee, the Community Design Advisory Committee, to advise Council on the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the HRMbyDesign Centre project encompassing the mandates for both the Regional Plan Advisory Committee and the Urban Design Task Force; and the disbanding of the existing Regional Plan Advisory Committee and the Urban Design Task Force.
5. That Councillor Sue Uteck be appointed to the new Community Design Advisory Committee as the Councillor whose district lies within the Regional Centre

### **BACKGROUND**

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee received a presentation regarding the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the HRMbyDesign Centre Plan Projects at the August 11, 2011 meeting. Staff responded to questions from members of the Committee and following a discussion, the Committee approved the above recommendation.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Committee briefly discussed the proposed workplan and reviewed Attachment 1 of the July 27, 2011 report 'At –A-Glance: Planning Services' Major Projects Work Plan'. Members noted key areas of concern including development controls in rural, coastal and head water areas, rural road standards, and transportation.

The Committee confirmed that members of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee and the Urban Design Task Force were aware of the proposed move to a single committee to carry out the mandate of the two. Note should be made that the Community Planning and Economic Development, after consultation, nominated Councillor Sue Uteck to the new Community Design Advisory Committee as the Councillor whose district lies within the Regional Center.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Budget implications are outlined in full in the staff report of July 27, 2011.

### **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**

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee is made up of 8 elected officials with representation from each of the Community Council. Meetings of the Committee are public and agendas, reports and minutes are available on the web. For additional information regarding community engagement please see the attached July 27, 2011 staff report.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Council could provide direction on changes to the recommended process and/or workplan for the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and/or the HRMbyDesign Centre Plan.

Other options as Council sees fit.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Staff report dated July 27, 2011

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

Report Prepared by: Sherryll Murphy, Deputy Clerk, 490-4211

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P.O. Box 1749  
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**Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee**  
**August 11, 2011**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Community Planning & Economic Development  
Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:**                   Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Austin French, Manager of Planning Services, Community Development

**DATE:** July 27, 2011

**SUBJECT:** **Initiation of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*, and creation of a new Council Advisory Committee**

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**ORIGIN**

- June 27, 2006 – Regional Council’s adoption of the *Regional Plan*, including Policy IM-9, requiring a 5 year plan review, and; Policy EC-3, stating: “HRM shall prepare a *Regional Centre Urban Design Study*.”
- February ’27, 2007 – Regional Council motion approving the Regional Centre Urban Design Study (*HRMbyDesign*) “Vision and Principles” for the Regional Centre.
- July 6, 2010 – Regional Council motion regarding the possibility of creating an HRM Urban Design Department, a distinct group from the HRM Planning Services Department, to better assist in implementing Capital Ideas.
- March 22, 2011 – Regional Council motion regarding restructuring the Regional Plan Advisory Committee in response to the Regional Plan 5 Year Review process.
- April 14, 2011 – Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee motion endorsing Planning Services’ approach to the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review*, and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* project (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint).
- April 28, 2011 – Regional Council motion approving the 2011-2012 annual budget including funding for Regional Plan 5 Year Review, and motion approving the 2011-2012 Corporate Plan including direction to undertake the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the next phase of HRMbyDesign, known as the Centre Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council approve:

1. Initiation of the process for the five year review of the *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy* in accordance with RMPS Policy IM-9.
2. The scope and schedule for the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* project.
3. The scope and schedule for the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* project.
4. The proposed restructuring of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC) and the Urban Design Task Force (UDTF) into a single advisory committee to advise Council on the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* project, and in so-doing, disband the existing Regional Plan Advisory Committee and Urban Design Task Force.
5. Establishing the proposed Community Design Advisory Committee as the primary advisory committee advising Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, on the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*, both of which are projects of regional significance.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Origin.....	1
Recommendations .....	1
Executive Summary.....	3
Background.....	4
Discussion.....	5
1. The <i>Regional Plan 5 Year Review (RP+5)</i> .....	5
2. <i>The HRMbyDesign Centre Plan</i> .....	8
3. Restructuring the RPAC and UDTF.....	11
4. Communications Support for <i>RP+5</i> and <i>Centre Plan</i> .....	13
5. Finding Staffing and Resources Efficiencies.....	14
6. Proceeding With Development While <i>RP+5</i> and <i>Centre Plan</i> are in Progress .....	15
7. Impact on Other Planning Services Work .....	15
8. <i>RP+5</i> and <i>Centre Plan</i> Linkages to HRM's Other Strategic Initiatives .....	16
9. Next Steps.....	18
Budget Implications.....	19
Financial Management Policies / Business Plan .....	19
Community Engagement.....	19
Alternatives.....	19
Attachments.....	20

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Planning Services division of Community Development proposes a multi-year work plan to complete two strategic corporate initiatives, the completion of which is mandated by the 2011-2012 Corporate Plan, approved by Regional Council on April 28, 2011. These two initiatives are the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review*, and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint). To support this work it is additionally proposed that a new Regional Council advisory committee be created, which will replace two existing advisory committees.

1. *The Regional Plan 5 Year Review (RP+5)*: Understanding that conditions change over time, the 2006 Regional Plan was written as a living document intended to be responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. It therefore contains within it a mechanism requiring that it be formally reviewed and updated every five years. Because the overall policy framework and intent of the 2006 Plan remains sound, the review is proposed to be an issue-based process as opposed to a rewrite of the entire document. This review, known as “RP+5” will be shaped by four overarching themes: A focus on sustainable solutions; enhancing the Regional Centre; improved suburban and rural community design, and; land use and transit planning that are mutually supportive. The review will result in new and amended regional policy leading to greater livability and sustainability in all of HRM’s communities.
2. *The HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*: The *Centre Plan* (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint) is phase three of HRMbyDesign, following the establishment of the overall “Regional Centre Vision and Principles” in phase 1, and the creation of the “Downtown Halifax Plan” in phase two. Taken as a whole, the three phases present a 25 year vision of a dense, livable and prosperous Regional Centre that will create sustainable economic and environmental benefits across the entire municipality. Although the Regional Plan positions the Regional Centre as a single cohesive entity, the area is currently governed by multiple municipal planning strategies and land use bylaws. These documents are out of date, are inconsistent in their format and intent, and no longer respond well to our neighborhoods’ challenges and opportunities. Therefore the primary deliverables of this project will be a new Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and new Land Use Bylaw (LUB) for the Regional Centre. This *Centre Plan* will be a reinvention of planning, development, and community design within the Regional Centre, and will be a sustainability and design-based model on which to base future planning efforts across the entire municipality.
3. *The Community Design Advisory Committee*: Planning Services recommends that this new committee be formed by merging the Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC) and the Urban Design Task Force (UDTF). The purpose of the new Community Design Advisory Committee will be to advise Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, on the delivery of the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*. Merging two advisory committees into one will also result in governance efficiencies.

Approval of this report’s recommendations will initiate the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*, and will replace the existing Regional Plan Advisory Committee and Urban Design Task Force with a single new committee known as the *Community Design Advisory Committee*.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Planning Services division of Community Development proposes to launch two major projects: *The Regional Plan 5 Year Review*, and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint).

This report presents for approval the detailed work plan required to successfully complete these key projects. The “Projects at-a-Glance” schedule is provided as **Attachment 1**. These projects will be managed within already-approved budget envelopes, with no additional funding being sought.

### *The Mandate*

The critical importance of these projects is evidenced by their prominent placement in the 2011-2012 HRM Corporate Plan, the 2011-2016 Economic Strategy, the Capital Ideas initiative, and in the current Business Plans for several of HRM’s Business Units. Specifically, completion of these two priority initiatives is mandated in the approved 2011-2012 Corporate Plan. This mandate is found in the “Community Planning” *Council Focus Area*, and through the “Well Planned and Engaged Communities” and “Economic Prosperity” *Community Outcome Areas*. More information on this Council direction is included in Section 8 of the report.

### *The Outcome*

These interrelated and mutually supportive initiatives have been designed to make substantial improvements to the way that our communities develop and grow, to the way that HRM does business, and to ensure HRM’s continued economic, environmental and cultural sustainability. The projects will result in:

- New clear, predictable and expedient development approval processes that will create significant economic development opportunities.
- Improved architectural and community design, and heritage and natural resource protection, for all areas of HRM.
- Improved relationship between land use patterns and the provision of transit and active transportation services.
- Intensification of opportunities for living and working in the Regional Centre, including improved housing affordability and diversity options through density bonusing and accessory suites.
- Regional Centre growth and change focused on vacant and under-utilized “opportunity sites” and along major urban corridors while protecting the scale and character of existing established neighbourhoods.
- A smaller environmental footprint for HRM through the reduction in energy and resource consumption that accompanies dense, walkable communities;
- Help to keep the cost of municipal services low (and thereby protect the residential tax rate) by focusing growth in areas where infrastructure and services already exist.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. The Regional Plan 5 Year Review

#### *Regional Plan Review Overview*

The Regional Plan, adopted by Council in 2006, forms a comprehensive guide for the future growth and development of HRM. It presents a coordinated and integrated approach for achieving sustainable and balanced growth in a way intended to preserve the environment, maintain a strong economy, emphasize the provision of transit services, and promote communities that would be compact, well planned, vibrant and healthy. The Plan remains a strong and well-conceived blueprint for growth. It has led to several notable initiatives that are helping to shape our future. Just a few examples of these are: The HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan; the HRM Cultural Plan; the HRM Community Engagement Strategy; the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP); components of the Transportation Masterplan; the Business Parks Functional Plan; the Active Transportation Plan, and; the implementation of Transit-Oriented Community Masterplans in suburban areas.

Understanding that conditions change over time, the Regional Plan was written as a living document intended to be responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. It therefore contains within it a mechanism requiring that it be formally reviewed and updated every five years. The first of these 5 year reviews will commence in the summer of 2011, and is expected to last for approximately 12 months. Because the overall policy framework and intent of the 2006 Plan remains sound, the review is proposed to be an issue-based process as opposed to a rewrite of the entire document. The Principles of the 2006 Regional Plan remain strong as we undertake the first five year review. They state that the Regional Plan:

- Provides a framework which leads to predictable, fair, cost-effective decision-making;
- Supports development patterns that promote a vigorous regional economy;
- Preserves and promotes sustainability of cultural, historical and natural assets;
- Supports appropriate roles for the Halifax/Dartmouth central business district and local business districts as a focus for economic, cultural and residential activities;
- Manages development to make the most effective use of land, energy, infrastructure, public services and facilities and considers healthy lifestyles;
- Ensures opportunities for the protection of open space, wilderness, natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas; and
- Develops integrated transportation systems in conjunction with the above principles.

#### *Regional Plan Review Challenges*

This review is timely as the world has changed a great deal in the five years since the Regional Plan's adoption, and we now face new challenges, as well as an intensification of previous challenges. For example, much more is known today about the impact of development on climate change and sea level rise. Energy and resource scarcity is more acutely felt. The linkages between public health and development patterns are more clearly understood. The cost of



providing municipal services is considerably higher and rising. The cost of building and maintaining roads and other public infrastructure has increased and will continue to do so, while at the same time the transit and active transportation needs of HRM residents have evolved and expanded considerably.

More tangibly, the growth of residential units over the past five years exceeded the targets set in the 2006 Regional Plan for suburban and rural areas, but has fallen short of the target established for the Regional Centre (see table below). Although the Regional Plan’s targets contemplated growth over a twenty-five year time frame, after five years the growth distributions are not on-track to meet those targets. Accordingly, much work needs to be done to increase growth within the Regional Centre to meet the urban target and improve our overall sustainability.

Targeted vs. Actual Residential Unit Construction Over the Past 5 Years:

	Regional Centre	Suburban	Rural
<b>Targeted 25 yr. Growth</b> 2006 Regional Plan	25%	50%	25%
<b>Actual growth</b> 2006-2011(Source: CMHC)	16%	56%	28%

And just as importantly over the past 5 years, community understanding of the relationship between the density of urban development and sustainability has become much more sophisticated, and therefore the community’s expectations for HRM’s response to this interrelationship has grown. The Regional Plan’s position on each of these issues will be examined as part of the review process.

Clear and compelling communications will be vital to the success of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and in building support for the plan review’s strategic direction, as well to the success of HRM’s sought-after legislative amendments. For this reason a robust communications program is part of the project scope. More detail on communications is provided in Section 4 of this report.

*Regional Plan Review Opportunities*

The Regional Centre: The past five years has seen the emergence of significant new opportunities for HRM. Primary among them is better positioning the Regional Centre for success as the economic and social engine of the region and the province, and in so doing improving HRM’s overall sustainability as a result of increased density of urban development. The prosperity that will result from improving the Regional Centre’s position will ensure that all of HRM’s communities will continue to receive the level of services and amenities they currently enjoy.

Suburban and Rural Areas: Outside of the Regional Centre there are opportunities to make significant improvements in our community design standards so that they result in communities that are more functional, attractive and sustainable. There are also emerging opportunities to

make improvements to HRM's approach to the provision of transportation, transit and active transportation infrastructure.

Support to act on these urban, suburban and rural opportunities is felt from the two senior levels of government as well as from the community, and the Regional Plan review will play a key role in advancing each of them.

#### *Themes of the Regional Plan Review*

1. Focus on Sustainable Solutions: There will be an increased focus on optimizing the environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability of our future growth and development. This will include standards for low impact "green" development, ensuring that new development pays its fair share in order to protect the tax rate, expanded tools for the provision of housing affordability and heritage protection, and support for cultural programs.
2. Enhancing the Regional Centre: The Regional Centre holds enormous potential for new residential and commercial growth in areas that enjoy already established and paid-for infrastructure and services. However, new land use policies, bylaws, and design guidelines are required to ensure high quality growth of the appropriate density and scale. Additionally, new incentives should be used to attract development to the Regional Centre in order to achieve the Regional Plan's urban growth targets. These new incentives may include such tools as streamlined development approval processes, tax incentives, and density bonusing.
3. Improved Suburban and Rural Community Design: Suburban areas have enjoyed enormous prosperity and growth over the past several decades.. Because this growth is expected to continue, the Plan review will focus on improving community design standards. These new design standards will lead to more attractive and sustainable ("green") communities than we have seen in the past, and will result in more beautiful, walkable and complete communities. Rural areas will similarly benefit from new design standards.
4. Land Use and Transit/Active Transportation are Mutually Supportive: The primary consideration is directing growth to appropriate areas based on existing infrastructure and services (i.e. growth centres and corridors). The growth areas must then be supported and reinforced by an appropriately designed transit service and active transportation infrastructure. There must be a continued focus on improving the experience of transit users, expanding the transit service in appropriate areas with the appropriate equipment, and maximizing ridership while minimizing single-occupant vehicle commuting. Investment in active transportation options should continue to be supported, and be accelerated wherever possible.

#### *Regional Plan Review Scope*

The plan review will result in new and amended policy under the Regional Plan's 6 existing chapters, in addition to new policy under a new "Regional Centre" chapter. These regional policies will enable corresponding secondary plan policies, land use bylaw regulation, and the creation of supporting fiscal and legislative tools. The Regional Plan review scope, including a list of deliverables, is provided in **Attachment 2**.

The scope of the Regional Plan Review will include identifying the requirement for new municipal powers in several areas to further the municipality's strategic objectives. A number of HRM Charter and other legislative amendments will therefore be sought. Anticipated amendment request topic areas currently include: density bonusing; design control; new tax and financial tools; tree preservation; off-site/clustered septic systems; changes to wastewater management districts; capital cost contributions for soft services; green building standards, and; others as may evolve through the plan review process

Because such amendments are outside of HRM's control, these amendments pose a risk to the success of these initiatives, and therefore pose a risk to the Economic Strategy and Corporate Plan. A high level of corporate focus, as well as collaboration with the Province, must therefore be brought to bear on these amendments. A clear and compelling communications strategy will be designed to support the amendments. More detail on the required communications support is provided in Section 4 of this report.

#### *Regional Plan Review Schedule*

The *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* will be completed within one year. By September 2012 Regional Council will be presented with a final recommendation report for new and amended Regional Plan policy. This schedule is illustrated in the "Projects at-a-Glance" table provided as **Attachment 1**.

It should be noted that one year is not a long time to complete a plan review, particularly when the legislated timelines for the public hearing and amendment adoption process are taken into account. For this reason, delivery of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* by September 2012 is contingent on no expansion of the current scope of the review. At Council's direction the scope can increased, but it should be understood that in that scenario delivery of the completed review by September 2012 would not be possible.

## **2. The HRMbyDesign "Centre Plan"**

### *Centre Plan Overview*

Policy "EC-3" of the 2006 Regional Plan mandated the creation of the overarching "Regional Centre Urban Design Study" to guide future growth in the Regional Centre. The Regional Centre boundary is shown in **Attachment 3**. The Regional Centre Urban Design Study subsequently became known as HRMbyDesign, and is comprised of three major phases:

- Phase 1: The completed *Regional Centre Vision and Principles*, adopted by Regional Council in 2007. (Please refer to **Attachment #4**)
- Phase 2: The completed *Downtown Halifax Plan*, adopted by Regional Council in 2009.
- Phase 3: The *Centre Plan*, (formerly known as the Neighborhood Greenprint), the initiation of which is the subject of this report.

The *Centre Plan* is the final piece of work remaining to be completed in order to comply with the direction of Policy EC-3 in the *Regional Plan*. It is the community planning and design initiative that applies to all of the Regional Centre, with the exception of downtown Halifax which was

addressed in phase 2. Taken as a whole, the three phases of HRMbyDesign present a 25 year strategy for a dense, livable and prosperous Regional Centre that will create sustainable economic and environmental benefits across the municipality.

The *Centre Plan* project is necessary because, although the Regional Plan positions the Regional Centre as a single cohesive entity, the area is currently governed by multiple planning strategies and bylaws. These documents are out of date and no longer respond well to our neighborhoods' interests and concerns. Not only are they inconsistent in their format and intent, but they tend to be unresponsive to the Regional Centre's current opportunities and challenges. The difficulties with the existing policies and regulations are well understood, and have been the subject of long-standing requests from Council and residents to address them. The *Centre Plan* project will address these challenges through the creation of a new Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw that will replace the mosaic of current policies and regulations.

### *Centre Plan Challenges*

In response to rapidly emerging economic and environmental realities, Canadian cities urgently require a more progressive, creative form of urbanism in order to become more sustainable, healthy, liveable and resilient. Implementing a better form of urbanism means densifying residential and commercial opportunities in the Regional Centre and making strategic public investments to precipitate private investment. This intensification of the urban core will be the foundation of our ability to achieve solutions to the critical challenges of climate change, ecological integrity, energy resiliency, public health, fiscal health, and global competitiveness.

In HRM this shift toward a better form of urbanism began with the HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan, and will now continue throughout the Regional Centre with the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*. The *Centre Plan* will recognize the integral value of high quality urban design and appropriately scaled and located growth and change. The *Centre Plan* will meaningfully engage with all levels of government, NGOs, businesses and residents in the act, and art, of city making. In so-doing HRM will join other Canadian cities in implementing a clear new urban model based on mixed-use, higher density, investment in the public realm, and complete, vibrant, walkable neighbourhoods emphasizing sustainable movement choices.

Perhaps the greatest challenge currently facing HRM is the stagnation of population growth and ongoing loss of investment and employment from the Regional Centre. The *Centre Plan* is a key element of HRM's suite of strategic initiatives (along with the *Corporate Plan*, *Economic Strategy*, the *Regional Plan*, and *Capital Ideas*) intended to address these alarming trends and leave a prosperous, livable and sustainable future for our children.

The *Centre Plan* project will bring significant innovation and improvement to the way that we have traditionally overseen the growth and change in our communities. To write a new *Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy*, *Land Use Bylaw*, and *Design Guidelines* is an ambitious undertaking of significant proportions. Compounding the scale of this effort is the fact that the documents will be written in the "new" language of community design and sustainable urbanism that is not present in current policy and regulation other than in downtown Halifax. Making large scale change requires very thorough and well-planned discussions with the community. It will be HRM's responsibility to quantify and clearly articulate the benefits that such change will have on all HRM residents, businesses, and institutions. A clear and compelling

communications program will be required to enable us to meet this responsibility. More detailed information on the required communications support is provided in Section 4 of this report.

### *Centre Plan Opportunities*

The *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* will be a reinvention of planning, development, and community design within the Regional Centre, and will be a model on which to base future planning efforts across the entire municipality. The *Centre Plan* will:

- result in walkable and complete neighborhoods throughout the Regional Centre;
- focus growth, change and density on vacant and underutilized land (“opportunity sites”) and along major urban corridors;
- protect the character and scale of existing neighborhoods to a degree not possible under current policy;
- ensure that patterns of land use and transit/active transportation are mutually supportive;
- create economic development opportunities through new, clear, predictable and expedient development approval processes;
- reduce HRM’s environmental footprint through the reduction in energy and resource consumption that accompanies dense, walkable communities;
- introduce improved housing affordability and diversity options to the Regional Centre through density bonusing and accessory suites, and;
- help to keep the cost of municipal services low (and thereby protect the residential tax rate) by focusing growth in areas where infrastructure and services already exist.

### *Centre Plan Scope*

The *Centre Plan* project will deliver three new documents:

- **Document #1:** The *Centre Plan Framework*: A detailed guiding document establishing the framework for future growth and intensification of the Regional Centre through a design and sustainability-based approach. The Framework is already partially complete. It is based upon the *Regional Centre Vision and Principles* approved by Council 2007 (see **Attachment #4**), which were in turn based upon *HRMbyDesign’s* 2006-2007 public consultation program. The Framework will be the guide book for the creation of documents 2 and 3 below. The scope of the *Centre Plan Framework* is provided as **Attachment 5**.
- **Document #2:** A new *Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy* (MPS): A policy document based on the *Centre Plan Framework* document that will replace all MPS documents currently in existence within the Regional Centre with an updated strategic vision. This will include policies enabling the creation of new land use bylaw regulations.
- **Document #3:** A new *Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw* (LUB): A regulatory document based on the *Centre Plan Framework* document and *Regional Centre MPS* that will replace all land use bylaws within the Regional Centre with a form-based approach to development

to be administered through a largely as-of-right approval process. This will include detailed design guidelines to protect and enhance existing neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The scope of work for the creation of Document 2 (MPS) and Document 3 (LUB) is illustrated in the “Regional Centre MPS & LUB Scope” provided in **Attachment 6**.

Clear communications will be vital to the success of the *Centre Plan* project, and in building support for its strategic direction. For this reason a robust communications program is part of the project scope. More detail on communications is provided in Section 4 of this report.

#### *Centre Plan Schedule*

The *Centre Plan* project will take place in two major phases:

Phase 1 will deliver the *Centre Plan Framework* (document #1), and when completed will be bundled with the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* recommendations to be delivered to Regional Council in September, 2012.

Phase 2 will occur over the following 2-3 years. This phase will include a multi-year public consultation and outreach program, as well as the detailed drafting of the new Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), Land Use Bylaw (LUB), and Design Guidelines.

The *Centre Plan* project schedule is illustrated in the “Projects At-a-Glance” schedule provided as **Attachment 1**.

### **3. Restructuring the RPAC and UDTF**

#### *The Regional Plan Advisory Committee (RPAC)*

In 2004 the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) was convened as a working committee to help guide the creation of Regional Plan policy. Subsequent to Regional Plan adoption, the RPC was restructured from a working committee to an advisory committee to advise on the administration of the Plan’s policies. To achieve that restructuring, the committee’s Terms of Reference was rewritten and its name was changed to Regional Plan *Advisory Committee* (RPAC). The working and advisory versions of the committee were very different from one another in terms of work load and expertise. One advises on the *creation* of policy and the other advises on the *administration* of policy. With the commencement of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (both of which have region-wide impact) it is recommended that the committee revert back to a *working* committee model in order to advise Regional Council on the creation of policy with region-wide impact.

#### *The Urban Design Task Force (UDTF)*

In 2006 the Urban Design Task Force was convened as a working committee to help guide the creation of HRMbyDesign. Members were originally appointed for 18 months, with council later extending their appointment until such time as the Downtown Halifax Plan was adopted, which occurred in 2009. In 2010 the UDTF’s membership was refreshed in anticipation of the next phase of *HRMbyDesign* (the *Centre Plan*). However, as a result of competing corporate priorities the *Centre Plan* project was deferred in mid-2010 and the UDTF has been in voluntary hiatus

since that time. With the re-starting of the *Centre Plan* project the knowledge and skill set represented by the UDTF will be required in order to advise Regional Council on the creation of secondary plan policy, land use bylaw regulations, and design guidelines within the Regional Centre.

*Finding Efficiencies: Creating the "Community Design Advisory Committee"*

If the current committee reporting structure were to proceed it would be quite process-heavy and there would be duplication of mandate between the RPAC and the UDTF. In order to provide the most efficient reporting structure possible, which will contribute to a timely delivery of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review and Centre Plan*, it is recommended that the RPAC and UDTF be restructured into a single committee advising the CPED, going by the name *Community Design Advisory Committee*. This restructuring is supported by Regional Council's March 22, 2011 motion to:

*"...Maintain the current Regional Plan Advisory Committee Citizen Appointments at this time until a review of the process of the Regional Plan is identified, and; that Council Members appointed to the Regional Plan Advisory Committee be the Chairs, or their designates, from the Transportation, Environment and Sustainability, and Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committees."*

It is therefore proposed that the new *Community Design Task Force* be convened with the following membership to ensure representation of diverse geographic communities, continuity of knowledge from the existing RPAC and UDTF, and specific skillsets relevant to community planning and design:

- The Chairs, or designates, of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, the Transportation Standing Committee, and the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (3).
- A councillor whose district lies within the Regional Centre (1).
- The Chair of the existing Regional Plan Advisory Committee (1).
- The Chair of the existing Urban Design Task Force (1).
- Citizens-at-large (5) appointed from key sectors: Community Design; Environment; Development/Business; Culture/Social; Health.

It is proposed that this 11 member committee will be the primary advisory committee advising Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, on the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*. The new committee will also oversee the implementation of an appropriate public engagement program for these two projects. This approach will help to streamline the delivery of these key strategic initiatives. A draft Terms of Reference for the new *Community Design Advisory Committee* is provided as **Attachment 7**.

*A Note on the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC)*

The *Regional Plan 5 Year review* and the *Centre Plan* will have an impact on HRM's policies, regulation and service delivery relating to heritage conservation. For example, new heritage conservation districts and expanded heritage incentive programs will likely be proposed. This indicates a role for the Heritage Advisory Committee in advising Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, on these projects. No change to the HAC's current role is proposed.

*A Note on the District 12 Planning Advisory Committee (D12PAC)*

During phase 2 of *HRMbyDesign* (the *Downtown Halifax Plan*), the District 12 PAC requested that they be recognized as an advisory body to Regional Council on that Plan's adoption. However upon review of a February 18, 1997 resolution of Regional Council regarding "plan amendments of regional significance," it was determined that it is Regional Council, and committees of Council directed by Council for that purpose, who are the appropriate bodies to advise on amendments of regional significance and not the Community Councils or their Planning Advisory Committees. As described earlier in this Section, the new Community Design Advisory Committee is being established expressly for the purpose of advising Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, on the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*, both of which are of regional significance. As was the case during the *Downtown Halifax Plan* process, the District 12 PAC is invited to provide comment on the *Centre Plan* process as would any other HRM resident, however this report clarifies that the District 12 PAC does not have formal standing as an advisory committee for these projects.

**4. Communications Support for RP+5 and Centre Plan**

Clear communication will be vital to building understanding and support for the Regional Centre 5 Year Review and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*.

Through solid communications HRM can reinforce the significance of the Regional Plan as the blueprint for responsible growth within HRM, underscore what's been achieved since implementation, and create a positive climate for engaged and informed plan review participation. A good communications plan will underscore the many successes of the Regional Plan to date while ensuring it is understood that the Plan is a living document that must be reviewed periodically to remain truly responsive to the changing world around us.

The Centre Plan is a highly change-oriented project that will bring forward many new concepts in community design. The project will result in changes to the status quo that will have implications for homeowners, business, and the development process. A comprehensive and well-conceived communications strategy will be critical to ensuring that the community understands the *Centre Plan's* intent and impact, and supports its outcomes.

These two strategic initiatives will result in requests for amendments to provincial legislation. It is critical that such requests are packaged and communicated in a clear, timely and effective manner to Regional Council, provincial staff, and the Legislative Assembly. This is a key element of the proposed communications approach.



A comprehensive communications strategy that coordinates and integrates the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* will likely include:

- Public lectures
- Social Media, Blog, Facebook, Twitter, Chat Room, etc.
- Creation and maintenance of project websites
- Planning and running numerous large-scale public consultation events
- Open houses
- World cafes
- Media relations
- Editorial board meetings
- Streaming video from public meetings
- Crisis communications
- Newsletters
- Council communications
- A strategy to receive and respond to public comment
- Public Advertisements via multiple forms of media

Direction for this improved and proactive communications approach is found in the Corporate Plan, more detail about which is provided in Section 8 of this report.

##### **5. Finding Staffing and Resources Efficiencies**

The combined scope of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *Centre Plan* project is substantial. The project will require significant staff resources as well as funding for a variety of background research. And while the *Regional Plan Review* will be completed within one year, the *Centre Plan*, given the magnitude of its scope, will require several years to complete. (These timelines are provided as **Attachment 1**). Although the funding for these staffing and research resources has been approved in the 2011-2012 budget, there is still room to find efficiencies by sharing resources between the two projects.

The two major projects will be primarily carried out by the same planning, urban design and support staff from Community Development. Additionally, the background research that is part of the scope of the projects is equally relevant to both projects. These commonalities open the door to substantial efficiencies if the two projects teams were to be combined as a single project team in a single project office:

- Not only will the same data be shared between these two similar and inter-related projects, but the same administrative, communications, and technical staff resources will be shared, thereby eliminating a great deal of duplication and resulting in substantial cost savings.
- This approach will ensure a seamless link between the two projects such that their content and findings inform one another and are mutually supportive (no “siloes”). A common project management team further reinforces this seamless link. Because of this, both major projects will achieve stronger and better integrated results.

- When team members for major projects like these are brought together within the same project office space there is a very productive synergy that results. Team members are fully immersed in the projects with their teammates, which allows for uninterrupted exchange of ideas and also builds strong bonds between team members. This effect was readily observable in the 2006 Regional Plan project office, and more recently in the Canada Games project office.

## **6. Proceeding With Development While RP+5 and Centre Plan are in Progress**

The *Centre Plan* project will result in a new *Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy* (MPS) and *Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw* (LUB) in approximately 3-4 years. Further detail on this timeframe is provided in Section 2 of this report. During this time, there will continue to be as-of-right development (development that meets the requirements of the current land use bylaws). There will also continue to be discretionary rezoning and development agreement applications that are made pursuant to the current planning policies.

During the development of the *Regional Centre MPS and LUB*, it may become apparent that certain forms of development, that while allowed under the *current* policies and regulations, may be incongruent with a direction being embodied in the creation of the *new* policies and regulations. In such situations, the existing planning documents will continue to be the framework under which such development will need to be considered by staff and Council. However, in the course of developing the *Regional Centre MPS and LUB*, if it becomes apparent that the current planning documents do not adequately address any immediate and pressing development issues, planning staff may present interim amendments to the current planning documents to address such matters. Such issues may be brought forward by staff, Council, the public, or other stakeholders.

While the *Regional Centre MPS and LUB* are being developed, there may also be applications for site-specific plan amendments. Such applications are different from as-of-right projects, rezonings, and development agreements applications, which are enabled under the existing policy and regulatory framework. Council has complete discretion as to whether it wishes to consider such applications by way of a formal process. For these types of site-specific applications, staff will provide an assessment to Council on whether a particular project is congruent with the direction that is being taken with the development of the *Regional Centre MPS and LUB*. Staff will also advise Council on whether a project should be considered as a separate application or considered through, and as part of, the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* itself.

## **7. Impact on Other Planning Services Work**

As indicated in the 2010/11 Business plan and budget presentation to Council, the demands of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and subsequent *Centre Plan* work to create the new Regional Centre MPS and LUB will require suspension of new Community Visioning and comprehensive community planning projects for the duration of the *RP+5* and *Centre Plan* projects. This is brought about by the need to divert staff resources to these two key projects. It is noted that Community Visioning and comprehensive community planning projects that are already underway will be concluded prior to the diversion of staff resources.

The *RP+5* and *Centre Plan* work creation will not divert staff resources away from the processing of planning applications such as rezonings, bylaw amendments, site specific plan amendments and development agreements, and therefore will not impact HRM's ability to process applications within the Council approved timelines.

On July 6, 2010 Regional Council passed a motion directing Planning Services to examine the creation of "*an Urban Design Department, a distinct group from the Planning Services Department...*" The intent behind this motion was that planning staff working on development applications would not be distracted from that work by requests to help out with long term strategic projects like *RP+5* and the *Centre Plan*. By adopting the approach of bringing together a dedicated project team focused solely on the *RP+5* and *Centre Plan* projects (described in Section 5 of this report), Planning Services is meeting the intent of that motion.

#### **8. RP+5 and Centre Plan Linkages to HRM's Other Strategic Initiatives**

These key projects support a number of HRM's strategic direction-setting policy pieces, as follows.

##### ***Council Focus Areas (2011-2012 Corporate Plan)***

###### **1. Community Planning:**

- Ongoing Implementation of the Regional Plan;
- Re-urbanization Strategy for neighbourhoods of the Regional Centre, known as the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint);
- Incorporate the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (formerly known as Neighbourhood Greenprint) under the scoping exercise for the Regional Plan review.

###### **2. Transportation:**

- Transit Enhancements and Active Transportation (includes multi use trails, walkways, bike lanes, sidewalks);
- Transportation Planning; Examination of street classification, street standards, emergency evacuation, and freight movement under the Road Network Plan.

###### **3. Governance and Communications:**

- Improved Internal & External Communications;
- A further increase in proactive communication, especially, in relation to Council Focus Areas and Corporate Plan Community Outcome Areas, will be delivered;
- Effort will be aligned to support communications needs identified by Corporate Plan outcomes.

##### ***Community Outcome Areas (2011-2012 Corporate Plan)***

###### **1. Safe, Inclusive and Welcoming Communities:**

- Citizens feel safe and are engaged in their communities and neighbourhoods;
- Ensure policies, strategies, facilities and programs are inclusive of diverse communities;
- Attract, develop and retain a diverse and quality workforce;
- Educate communities about their role in adapting to Climate Change and related weather events;

- HRM has attractive and vibrant downtown and business districts;
  - Build strategic partnerships to foster investment, social capital and economic development;
  - Implement good urban design and artistic opportunities to develop interactive and inclusive public places;
  - Citizens and businesses have confidence in HRM's regulatory and enforcement programs;
  - Incorporate communication and community engagement planning into regular business practices.
2. Integrated and Affordable Transportation Networks:
- A transportation system plan that supports sustainable growth patterns throughout the Municipality;
  - Undertake strategic land use planning to optimize the use of the transportation system;
  - Complete the 5 year review of the Regional Plan;
  - A cost effective, integrated, multi-modal transportation system supporting the Economic Strategy, and;
  - Adopt additional Capital Cost Contributions that will benefit transportation initiatives.
3. Diverse Lifestyle Opportunities:
- Ensure public spaces and places are beautiful and safe areas that facilitate community identity, social connections and interactions;
  - HRM neighbourhoods are inclusive, vibrant, and mutually supportive, with strong linkages to the Regional Centre;
  - The Regional Centre is HRM's culture, leisure and entertainment capital, and;
  - Support the use of HRM's urban spaces in new and innovative ways to facilitate unique and interesting programming.
4. Well Planned and Engaged Communities:
- Enhance communications;
  - Increase public awareness of Regional Plan;
  - Engage citizens in *Regional Plan 5 Year Review*;
  - Implement the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* (formerly known as the Neighbourhood Greenprint);
  - Implement the Community Engagement Strategy;
  - Increase understanding and awareness of HRM's strategic goals;
  - HRM supports diverse and changing communities;
  - HRM has vibrant, diverse and beautiful communities;
  - HRM's services support the region's diverse communities, and;
  - Coordinate functional infrastructure with community growth.
5. Clean and Healthy Environment:
- Achieve the corporate GHG reduction of 20% below 2002 levels.

6. Economic Prosperity:

- The Regional Plan review is done to ensure it is reflective of Regional Centre and sustainability priorities;
- As part of Phase three of *HRMbyDesign* (the *Centre Plan*), develop high density, self-contained, residential neighbourhoods that are well serviced by transit;
- Consider incentives and adopt development policies that encourage investment in the Regional Centre;
- Bring vacant HRM owned properties to market for strategic development;
- Consult with business community, review existing service standards and processes, and identify areas for improvement, and;
- HRM's regulatory, tax, and policy framework attracts sustainable development & investment;

*The 2011-2016 Economic Strategy*

The Regional Centre:

- Build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre that attracts \$1.5 billion of private investment and 8,000 more residents by 2016;
- Direct and oversee a pro-development policy environment within the Regional Centre;
- Further the liveability and attractiveness of our urban core;
- Reinvent current approach to mobility in the Regional Centre, and;
- Celebrate and enable a rich variety of cultural and creative opportunities in the Regional Centre.

Business Climate:

- Promote a business climate that drives and sustains growth by improving competitiveness and by leveraging our strengths;
- Reduce regulatory, tax and policy issues that can inhibit development and investment;
- Focus on quality of place including the need for civic engagement, public investment and initiatives to increase social capital, and;
- Increase the engagement and active support of the private sector in the economic growth of Halifax.

Maximize Growth Opportunities:

- Identify and respond to high value, high potential economic growth opportunities and encourage investment, exports, business productivity, innovation & competitiveness.

9. Next Steps

Upon Regional Council's approval of the recommendation contained in this report:

1. The project staff team for the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *Centre Plan* project will be formed and the two major projects will commence.
2. The *Community Design Advisory Committee* will be formed.

3. A detailed community engagement and public consultation plan will be designed (see Community Engagement section below).
4. Staff will return to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, and through that body to Regional Council, for regular interim updates and approvals at key milestones as was done during the HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan process.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The scope and schedule of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*, as presented in this report, will be funded entirely through existing approved budget allocations. No new funding is being sought. Funding for the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and the *Centre Plan* is available in the following three accounts:

- Operating Account #C310-Planning & Applications
- Project Acct #CDG01283-Regional Plan 5year Review (2011/12 budget remaining \$584,708.55)
- Project Acct #CDV00738-Center Plan/Design (Visioning) (2011/12 budget \$165,000)

### **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**

The community engagement approach for the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* and *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan* project will build upon several of HRM's recent public consultation success stories. These include the 2006 Regional Plan, the *HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan*, and the *Central Library* project, to name a few.

Full-time day-to-day communications support is fundamental to the success of the community engagement program for these high profile, high priority initiatives. Upon completion of a communication and public engagement strategy, it will be brought to The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee and Regional Council for review and approval.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Regional Council may direct changes to the approach for completing the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* or *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Projects "At a Glance" Schedule
2. Scope: The *Regional Plan 5 Year Review*
3. Map: Regional Centre Boundary
4. *HRMbyDesign's* Regional Centre Vision and Principles
5. *Centre Plan* Phase 1 Scope: The *Centre Plan* Framework document
6. *Centre Plan* Phase 2 Scope: Creation of New Regional Centre MPS and LUB
7. Draft Terms of Reference for the new *Community Design Advisory Committee*

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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: Andy Fillmore, Urban Design Project Manager, 490-6495

**Original Signed**

Report Approved by: Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, 490-6717

**Original Signed**

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

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## At-a-Glance: Planning Services' Major Projects Work Plan

Year 1 (by Sept. 2012)	Year 2 (by end-2013)	Years 3 & 4 (by end-2015)
<b>The Regional Plan 5 Year Review:</b>		
<p><b>Suburban and Rural Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy directing improved design, fiscal responsibility, livability and sustainability of suburban &amp; rural communities.</li> <li>Rural groundwater mapping.</li> <li>Research expansion of CCC program to more accurately reflect true cost of development.</li> <li>Review Community Visioning program</li> <li>Review growth potential and central servicing of growth centres.</li> <li>New Regional Plan policy (i.e. growth distribution, potential greenbelt, etc.).</li> </ul> <p>Enhanced and clarified heritage &amp; culture programs and policies.</p>	Regional Plan Review Complete.	Regional Plan Review Complete.
<p><b>The Regional Centre:</b> Policy enabling the creation of new Regional Centre MPS &amp; LUB (Greenprint).</p>		
<b>The Neighbourhood Greenprint:</b>		
<p><b>The Regional Centre:</b></p> <p>Background studies, and the completion of the Neighbourhood Greenprint document (high level direction for later creation of a new MPS and LUB). Includes direction for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing affordability thru density bonusing</li> <li>Open space, streetscapes and heritage</li> <li>Regional Centre-wide reurbanization strategy and urban design guidelines</li> <li>Appropriate building types, scales, and design guidelines</li> <li>Commence process for legislative amendments for density bonusing and design control.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Major Public Consultation program</b> on creation of new design-based Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB).</p> <p>Other Regional Centre-related deliverables to be incorporated into Greenprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for a Regional Transportation Authority</li> <li>Ensure transit service supports desired land use patterns</li> <li>Coordination of Transit and Active Transportation initiatives</li> <li>Embed Corporate Plan and Economic Strategy outcomes into new MPS/LUB.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Implementation of Neighbourhood Greenprint:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing of new design-based MPS and LUB for Regional Centre.</li> <li>Adoption of new design-based MPS and LUB for Regional Centre</li> <li>Legislative amendments for Density Bonusing and Design Control.</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Ideas:</b>		
<p><b>The Strategic Urban Partnership:</b></p> <p>Fully formed and operational by end of 2011.</p>	Operational. Strategic initiatives and investments being championed to three levels of government and stakeholders.	Operational. Strategic initiatives and investments being championed to three levels of government and stakeholders.
<p><b>The Opportunity Sites Task Force:</b></p> <p>Operational, jointly with HRM and PNS.</p>	Operational. Public lands moving to market in support of strategic goals.	Operational. Public lands moving to market in support of strategic goals.
<p><b>New Financial, Policy and Legislative Tools:</b></p> <p>Begin research and analysis of new tools.</p>	Process of policy and legislation creation/amendment underway.	Process of policy and legislation creation/amendment concluded.
<b>Parallel Projects – to be delivered as separate initiatives, 2012-2016</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Rural Road standards</li> <li>Revised Red Book standards</li> <li>Suburban/rural MPS and LUB amendments</li> <li>Review of Service Boundary</li> <li>Additional Suburban Masterplans</li> <li>Revised Open Space Subdivision standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing Functional Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Harbour Plan</li> <li>Regional Centre Open Space Plan</li> <li>Stormwater Management Plan</li> <li>Wastewater Management Plan, etc.</li> <li>Urban Forestry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



# SCOPE: Regional Plan 5 Year Review

Attachment #2

Deliverable	Theme			
	1. Focus on Sustainable Solutions	2. Regional Centre Focus	3. Improved Communi ty Design	4. Transit Supports Land Use
<b>Chapter 1: The Environment</b>				
1.1 Policy direction for Sustainable Suburban and Rural Community Design	●		●	●
1.2 Rural Groundwater Mapping & Hydrogeological Assessments	●		●	
<b>Chapter 2: Settlement &amp; Housing</b>				
2.1 Policy direction for Improved Suburban & Rural Community Design	●		●	●
2.2 Policy direction for review of Open Space Subdivision standards	●		●	
2.3 Review "Visioning" Program for Growth Centres			●	
2.4 Review growth potential and central servicing for Growth Centres	●		●	
<b>Chapter 3: Transportation</b>				
3.1 Transit Service Supports Desired Land Use Patterns	●	●	●	●
3.2 Support for Regional Transportation Authority		●	●	
3.3 Coordination of Transit & Active Transportation Initiatives	●	●	●	●
3.4 Policy direction for improved Rural Road Standards	●		●	●
3.5 Policy direction for review of Red Book standards	●	●	●	●
<b>Chapter 4: Economy and Finance</b>				
4.1 Embed Economic Strategy in Regional Plan	●	●	●	●
4.2 Policy direction for expansion of CCC program	●	●		●
4.3 Potential Business Park Expansion				●
<b>Chapter 5: Culture and Heritage</b>				
5.1 Regional Centre is a focus of the Regional Plan Review	●	●	●	
5.2 Enhanced and Clarified Heritage & Culture programs	●	●	●	
<b>Chapter 6: Water, Wastewater, Utilities &amp; Solid Waste</b>				
6.1 Policy direction for underground utilities (subdivision bylaw amendments)	●	●	●	
6.2 Review Central Servicing of Rural Growth Centres	●			●
6.3 Wastewater Management Districts (maintenance)	●		●	
<b>Chapter 7: The Regional Centre (NEW CHAPTER)</b>				
7.1 Policy enabling creation of new Regional Centre MPS & LUB (Greenprint)	●	●	●	●
7.2 Other Regional Centre policy (i.e. design related, sustainability related)	●	●	●	●
<b>Parallel Projects (to be delivered as ongoing stand-alone initiatives)</b>				
<i>Greenprint:</i> Neighbourhood Greenprint guiding document	●	●	●	●
<i>Greenprint:</i> Regional Centre MPS & LUB	●	●	●	●
<i>Greenprint:</i> Housing affordability and choice in Regional Centre	●	●	●	●
<i>Greenprint:</i> New financial, policy & legislative tools to support Regional Centre	●	●	●	●
<i>Ongoing Functional Plans:</i> (eg. The Harbour Plan, Regional Centre Open Space)	●	●	●	●
Review of Service Boundary (suburban lands available for development)	●			●
Additional Suburban Masterplans if necessary	●		●	●
Suburban/Rural MPS/LUB amendments	●		●	
Red Book Review and Revision	●	●	●	●
Legislative Amendments to support HRM Strategic Initiatives	●	●	●	●



# THE NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENPRINT

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **A INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENPRINT .....**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION &amp; BACKGROUND .....</b>
1.1	THE REGIONAL CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STUDY .....
1.2	THE REGIONAL CENTRE .....
1.3	PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY .....
1.4	STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH .....
1.5	COMPONENTS OF HRMByDESIGN .....
1.6	URBAN DESIGN VISION STATEMENT .....
1.7	FIVE CAMPAIGNS FOR A GREAT CITY .....
1.7.1	A SUSTAINABLE CITY .....
1.7.2	A CITY OF LIVABLE & COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOODS .....
1.7.3	A DISTINCT & UNIQUE CITY .....
1.7.4	A CITY OF VIBRANT & EXCITING PLACES .....
1.7.5	A BEAUTIFUL CITY .....
1.8	GUIDING PRINCIPLES .....
1.9	COMPONENTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENPRINT .....
<b>2</b>	<b>HRMbyDesign PUBLIC CONSULTATION OUTCOMES – 2006-2007 .....</b>
2.1	FORUM 1 OUTCOMES .....
2.2	FORUM 2 OUTCOMES .....
2.3	FORUM 3 OUTCOMES .....
2.4	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....

### **B PUBLIC REALM STRATEGIES.....**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>PROMINENT OPEN SPACES .....</b>
2.1	STRATEGY DESCRIPTION .....
2.2	PUBLIC PARKS.....
2.3	INSTITUTIONAL OPEN SPACES & CEMETERIES .....
2.4	REINFORCING LOCAL DISTINCTION AND IDENTITY .....
2.5	OTHER OPEN SPACES.....
2.6	OFF-STREET CYCLING & TRAIL ROUTES.....
2.7	GREEN STREETSCAPES.....

- 3 PROMINENT STREETSCAPES .....**
  - 3.1 STRATEGY DESCRIPTION .....
  - 3.2 BOULEVARDS .....
  - 3.2.1 PARKWAY BOULEVARDS .....
  - 3.2.2 URBAN BOULEVARDS .....
  - 3.2.3 CIVIC BOULEVARDS .....
  - 3.3 AVENUES.....
  - 3.4 MAIN STREETS.....
    - 3.4.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD & DISTRICT CONNECTORS .....
    - 3.4.2 PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETSCAPES .....
- 4 HERITAGE PROTECTION .....**
  - 4.1 INTRODUCTION .....
  - 4.2 POTENTIAL HERITAGE PROTECTION AREAS .....
  - 4.3 POTENTIAL HERITAGE PROTECTION STRATEGIES .....
- 5 MOBILITY .....**
  - 5.1 TRANSIT .....
  - 5.2 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION .....
  - 5.3 TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION .....

**C REURBANIZATION STRATEGY & URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES.....**

- 1 INTRODUCTION.....**
  - 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO REURBANIZATION: URBAN CHARACTER AREAS.....
  - 1.2 PROTECTING NEIGHBOURHOOD STABILITY.....
  - 1.3 APPROPRIATE FORMS OF REURBANIZATION.....
  - 1.4 APPROPRIATE SITES FOR REURBANIZATION .....
  - 1.5 APPROPRIATE FORMS OF INFILL IN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS.....
  - 1.6 URBAN CATEGORY SUMMARY CHART.....
- 2 GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOODS, CORRIDORS & CENTRES.....**
  - 2.1 FUNCTION AND CHARACTER .....
  - 2.2 LOCATIONS AND TYPES .....
  - 2.3 INTENSIFICATION OBJECTIVES .....
  - 2.4 ANATOMY OF A GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOOD.....
    - 2.4.1 CREATING A GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE .....
  - 2.5 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....
  - 2.6 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES.....
    - 2.6.1 BUILDING PLACEMENT AND STREETWALL.....
    - 2.6.2 MASSING AND HEIGHT.....
    - 2.6.3 PARKING .....
    - 2.6.4 SITE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES .....

- 3 URBAN NEIGHBOURHOODS, CORRIDORS AND CENTRES .....**
  - 3.1 FUNCTION AND CHARACTER .....
  - 3.2 LOCATIONS AND TYPES .....
  - 3.3 INTENSIFICATION OBJECTIVES .....
  - 3.4 ANATOMY OF AN URBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD.....
    - 3.4.1 CREATING AN URBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD CORRIDOR.....
    - 3.4.2 CREATING AN URBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE .....
    - 3.4.3 REINTEGRATING INCOMPATIBLE HIGH RISE FORMS .....
  - 3.5 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....
  - 3.6 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES.....
    - 3.6.1 BUILDING PLACEMENT AND STREETWALL.....
    - 3.6.2 MASSING AND HEIGHT.....
    - 3.6.3 PARKING .....
    - 3.6.4 SITE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES .....
  
- 4 URBAN CORRIDORS.....**
  - 4.1 FUNCTION AND CHARACTER .....
  - 4.2 LOCATIONS AND TYPES .....
  - 4.3 INTENSIFICATION OBJECTIVES .....
  - 4.4 ANATOMY OF AN URBAN CORRIDOR .....
  - 4.4.1 FROM COMMERCIAL STRIP TO URBAN CORRIDOR .....
  - 4.5 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....
  - 4.6 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES.....
    - 4.6.1 BUILDING PLACEMENT AND STREETWALL.....
    - 4.6.2 MASSING AND HEIGHT.....
    - 4.6.3 PARKING .....
    - 4.6.4 SITE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES .....
  
- 5 URBAN CENTRES.....**
  - 5.1 FUNCTION AND CHARACTER .....
  - 5.2 LOCATIONS AND TYPES .....
  - 5.3 INTENSIFICATION OBJECTIVES .....
  - 5.4 ANATOMY OF AN URBAN CENTRE.....
    - 5.4.1 TRANSFORMING A SHOPPING MALL INTO AN URBAN CENTRE .....
  - 5.5 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....
  - 5.6 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES.....
    - 5.6.1 URBAN STRUCTURE.....
    - 5.6.2 STREET AND BLOCK NETWORK.....
    - 5.6.3 OPEN SPACE NETWORK.....
    - 5.6.4 BUILT FORM.....
  
- 6 URBAN CORES.....**
  - 6.1 DARTMOUTH'S URBAN CORE .....

**D REGIONAL CENTRE APPROPRIATE BUILDING FORM GUIDELINES .....**

- 1 INTRODUCTION.....**
- 2 HOUSE FORMS .....**
  - 2.1 SINGLE DETACHED .....
  - 2.2 SEMI DETACHED & DUPLEX.....
  - 2.3 MULTIPLEX .....
  - 2.4 COACH HOUSE.....
- 3 CONTINUOUS & STACKED HOUSE FORMS.....**
  - 3.1 TOWN HOUSES.....
  - 3.2 STACKED FLATS .....
- 4 LOW RISE FORM .....**
  - 4.1 LOW RISE.....
- 5 MID RISE FORM .....**
  - 5.1 MID RISE .....
- 6 HIGH RISE FORM .....**
  - 6.1 HIGH RISE.....
- 7 OFFICE TYPES: MID RISE & HIGH RISE FORMS .....**
  - 7.1 OFFICE .....

**E IMPLEMENTATION.....**

- 1 INTRODUCTION.....**
- 2 REGIONAL CENTRE SECONDARY MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRAEGY.....**
- 3 REGIONAL CENTRE LAND USE BYLAW .....**
- 4 REGIONAL CENTRE DESIGN GUIDELINES .....**
- 5 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND DIVERSITY .....**
- 6 DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES .....**
- 7 DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESSES .....**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENPRINT PHASE 2: New Regional Centre MPS and LUB**

1. Design of the Document Structure (the “template”) of the new MPS and LUB:
  - Best practices research on preferred format of form-based codes, graphic and tabular bylaws, etc.
  - Insertion of all Greenprint topic areas into new template (the transect, built form rules, design guidelines, public realm, etc.).
  - Ensure all themes of existing MPS and LUBS are carried forward (Parks & Open Space, Transportation, Commercial, Marine Uses, Functional Plan inputs, Housing, etc.).
  - Internal multi-business unit review of over-arching Regional Centre vision.
  - Amend existing documents (policy, regulation, maps, Charter as needed).
  - Create new mapping templates and diagram standards.
2. Coordination with Other HRM Business Units:
  - Secondment of staff from other Business Units as required.
  - Ensure consistency with and support of all HRM Functional Plans, Regional Plan, and other HRM initiatives (Economic Strategy, Capital Ideas, Cultural Plan, etc.).
  - Workshops with Traffic, Transportation, Parks, Finance, Real Property Planning, etc.
  - Review by and involvement of HRM Legal Services throughout process.
3. Data Gathering:
  - In-the-field surveys of use/character/dimensional traits of existing neighbourhoods.
  - Identify “Issues, Opportunities and Challenges” in all neighbourhoods.
  - Mapping and diagramming work: Representing data (technical maps), Communicating to the public (presentation maps and diagrams).
  - Community/attitudinal surveys.
  - Collection of “institutional wisdom” (experience of councillors and staff from past cases, records of permits for renovations and construction, drawing in previous research, successes, failures, etc.).
4. Communications:
  - Branding and messaging of “Neighbourhood Greenprint.”
  - Ongoing design and maintenance of website; management of comment boards.
  - Advertising.
  - Change Management.
  - Marketing/communications strategy prepared, including:
    - i. Editorial board meetings;
    - ii. Talking points for interview requests;
    - iii. Letters to editors / columns;
    - iv. Fact sheets;
    - v. Social Media campaign to spread information and gather comment;
    - vi. Greenprint Blog.
5. Public Consultation:
  - Introductory public meetings in Halifax and Dartmouth.
  - Ongoing Public workshops in both Halifax and Dartmouth .
  - Engagement of major stakeholders, institutions, etc.
  - Consultation design, event planning/staffing.

- Prepare “Summary of Public Comments” and “Response to Public Comments” documents.
  - Internal business unit communications, including constant Community Development staff updates.
  - 4 week public comment period on 2 separate drafts of MPS and LUB.
  - Involvement of Community Engagement staff.
  - Final Public Hearing for adoption.
6. Writing the new MPS and Bylaw:
- Entirely new MPS, new vision, new principles.
  - Establish the over-arching Regional Centre vision (knit together Regional Plan, HRM by Design, Greenprint, Economic Strategy, Capital Ideas, external consultant studies, etc).
  - The LUB as a Form-Based Code:
    - i. Tables for each of the 10 transect areas + sub-transect areas;
    - ii. Design guidelines – writing and illustrating;
    - iii. MPS Policy writing: sustainability, transportation, heritage, institutional, residential, commercial, marine, industrial, open space, water/sewer/infrastructure.
  - Mapping and Diagramming:
    - i. New maps for all chapters (currently 20-30 maps);
    - ii. 3D models and diagrams;
    - iii. Design guideline images & photos.
  - Harmonizing the DHSMPS and DHLUB with the new Regional Centre MPS & LUB.
  - Amend existing policy and regulation.
  - Proposal of necessary HRM Charter amendments.
  - Final review by HRM Legal Services.
7. Document Production:
- Document design and layout.
  - Management of master files (version control, single point of contact).
  - Tables, graphs, etc.
  - Multiple drafts for internal review.
  - Draft 1 for Public Review.
  - Draft 2 for Public Review.
  - Final Draft for CP&ED Cmte & Council.
  - Final Amendments per Council direction.
8. Staff Reports Required for MPS and LUB Adoption:
- Development of a “Council Approval” strategy, e.g.:
    - i. Information flow: what information, when delivered;
    - ii. Interim (milestone) approvals (similar to downtown plan approach);
    - iii. Presentations, COW, lunch & learns, etc.
  - Recommendation report to CP&ED to secure a positive recommendation for final adoption from Council.
  - Final Recommendation report:
    - i. Approval of new MPS and LUB;
    - ii. Approval of amendments to existing policy and regulation;
    - iii. Approval of potential HRM Charter amendment requests.



Strategic Urban Goals →		More People Living & Working in Regional Centre			A Positive Business & Development Climate in the Regional Centre			A Beautiful, Vibrant & Walkable Regional Centre		
Tools ↓	Indicators →	New Retail/ Commercial Leases	New Office Space	New Res'l Units w/ variety of size and affordability	Uptake of Incentive Programs	Length of Project Approval Process	New Buildings/ Projects/ Leases	Streetscape / Public Realm Improvements	Design Excellence Building & Storefront Upkeep	Infrastructure Investment: Transit & trails, etc.
		<b>Public / Private Partnership</b>								
1.	Matching heritage facade grants	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	
2.	Local Improvement Charges							●		●
3.	Local Area Rates							●		●
4.	Downtown Capital Cost Contributions †			●				●		●
5.	Return on Investment Model for municipal investment †						●	●		●
6.	Hotel Marketing Levy							●	○	●
7.	FCM/NGO Partnerships †			●				●	○	●
<b>Planning &amp; Regulatory</b>										
8.	Regional Plan		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
9.	HRMbyDesign Downtwn Hfx Plan & N'hood Greenprint.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	Density Bonusing Program (Downtown Halifax)		○	○	●		●	●	●	●
1	Current Halifax and Dartmouth MPS & Bylaws	○	○	○		○	○			
<b>Municipal Resources</b>										
1	Heritage improvement tax credits	●	●	●	●		●		●	
1	New Tax Incentives (eg. Tax Holiday, comm'l tax review) †	●	●	●	●		●		●	
1	Public Improvement Reserve Accounts †							●	○	●
1	Urban Development Agreements †	○	○	○	●		●		○	
1	Urban Enterprise Zone †	○	○	○	●		●	●	○	●
1	Opportunity Sites Task Force †	○	○	○	●		●		○	
1	Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) †	●	●	●	●		●	●		●
1	Continuous Transit/Active Transp. Service Improvements		○				○	●	○	●
<b>Provincial Resources</b>										
2	Provincial Grants				○		●	●	○	●
2	Cost Sharing						●	●		●
2	Legislative Amendments	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○
<b>Federal Resources</b>										
2	ACOA	○	○	○	●		●	●	●	●
2	Build Canada Fund						●	●		●
2	Gas Tax †			○			●	●		●

Potential New Financial, Regulatory and Legislative Tools

Attachment 6

† Indicates tool is not currently in use in HRM

●=Definite Impact

○=Possible Impact

Halifax Regional Municipality

## COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

**DRAFT: May 24, 2011**

### **Purpose:**

The **Community Design Advisory Committee** is established to advise the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee of Regional Council on the development and implementation of:

- The Regional Plan 5 Year Review, and;
- The Neighbourhood Greenprint project, including the creation of a new Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, and a new Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw.

### **Background:**

The *Regional Plan* was adopted by Regional Council in 2006 and forms a comprehensive guide for the future growth and development of HRM. Understanding that conditions change over time, the Regional Plan was written as a living document intended to be responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. It therefore contains within it a mechanism requiring that it be formally reviewed and updated every five years. This review will commence in 2011.

The 2006 Regional Plan mandated the creation of the “Regional Centre Urban Design Study” to guide future growth in the Regional Centre. The study, now known as HRM by Design, has two major phases. The first was the Downtown Halifax Plan, adopted by Regional Council in 2009. The second is the *Neighbourhood Greenprint*, which is the community planning and design initiative that applies to the remainder of the Regional Centre. The Neighbourhood Greenprint project will be undertaken concurrently with the Regional Plan Review in 2011.

These two strategic planning initiatives are fundamental to the future planning and growth of HRM. To ensure that Regional Council, through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, has the benefit of the best possible advice and expertise in the course of these projects, a new advisory body will be formed: the *Community Design Advisory Committee* (CDAC). The time line for completion of these two projects is approximately three (3) years.

### **Purpose of the Committee**

The CDAC is a body with a two-part mandate. It reports Study progress to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee of Regional Council at key milestones, and it makes ongoing recommendations to staff regarding areas of strategic importance to the development and implementation of the Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the

Neighbourhood Greenprint project. The CDAC will provide a key communication and working link between Regional Council and the community, and will advise on the delivery of a public participation program.

1. *Reporting to Council:*

At key project milestones the Community Design Advisory Committee will make information or recommendation reports on the two projects to Regional Council through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee. This reporting relationship will ensure that the Standing Committee and Regional Council remain apprised of the status of the projects and are given the opportunity for their incremental approval.

2. *Advising Staff:*

The Community Design Advisory Committee will advise the staff project team on:

- Public consultation strategies;
- Communications strategies, newsletters, website, media;
- Assist in articulation of project principles for approval by the Standing Committee and Regional Council, and;
- Other matters as they arise.

Responsibilities:

1. To provide regular reports Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee on overall progress of the projects;
2. To provide regular feedback and advice to the staff project team;
3. To meet with staff team at a frequency that is sufficient to achieve project goals and meet the time-line that has been established for completion of the projects;
4. Abide by HRM's rules and procedures affecting the business of Boards and Committees as outlined in Administrative Order 1;
5. Entertain and encourage participation from stakeholders through the consultation events outlined in the consultant team's work plan, as well as additional events as required;
6. Assist in the planning and implementation of public participation meetings and communication initiatives as required to raise the profile of the projects, and to effectively represent the views and concerns of HRM citizens and stakeholders;
7. To review and make recommendation to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee on any proposed amendments or additions to the Regional Plan;
8. To review and make recommendations to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee on the deliverables of the Neighbourhood Greenprint project, and;
9. Be subject to the government of Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information and HRM Administrative Orders 40 & 41 regarding Conflict of Interest and Irregular or Illegal Conduct.

Membership:

The Committee will be comprised of 11 members as follows:

- The Chair, or designate, of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (1);
- The Chair, or designate, of the Transportation Standing Committee (1);
- The Chair, or designate, of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (1);
- A Regional Councillor whose district lies within the Regional Centre (1);
- The Chair of the existing Regional Plan Advisory Committee (1);
- The Chair of the existing Urban Design Task Force (1);
- A citizen-at-large appointed from the Community Design sector (includes architecture, urban design, and city planning) (1);
- A citizen-at-large appointed from the Environmental sector (1);
- A citizen-at-large appointed from the Regional Centre Land Development/Business sector (1)
- A citizen-at-large appointed from the Social/Cultural sector (1), and;
- A citizen-at-large appointed from the Public Health sector (1).

Selection Criteria:

After the *primary* membership criteria above has been met, the citizen-at-large applicants will be evaluated according to the following *secondary* selection criteria:

- individuals who will contribute to a CDAC that is equitably represented across geographic communities as well as across communities of interest.
- individuals demonstrating a willingness and ability to commit to the three-year term of the projects, including some evening meetings.
- individuals bringing specific skills and experience related to the responsibilities outlined in this terms of reference.

*The nominating body for all appointments (except as provided for by virtue of their positions) shall be the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee of Council with final appointment to be made by Regional Council. All members serve at the pleasure of Regional Council.*

Appointments

The term of appointment shall be as follows

- Councillors who are chairs/designates of Standing Committees – at the pleasure of the Standing Committee

- Councillor whose district lies within the Regional Centre – Three (3) year terms.
- Citizens-at-large – Three (3) year terms.

Chair and Vice-Chair:

The Community Design Advisory Committee shall elect from its non-council member(s) a chair and vice-chair position.

The role of the Chair, in whole or part, can and will be shared with or delegated to the Vice-Chair. The Chair (Vice Chair) is an impartial individual who guides the process and facilitates meetings. The Chair (Vice Chair) will keep the group focused on the agreed-upon task, suggest alternative methods and procedures, and encourage participation by all committee members. The Chair (Vice Chair) will work with staff in preparing agendas and meeting summaries, and guide in drafting products and summaries of the committee. The Chair (Vice Chair) will act on behalf of the Committee as spokesperson to Council and the media as required.

Meetings:

Meetings will be held monthly (or at a frequency that is necessary to conduct the business of the Committee). A regular meeting schedule will be determined at the start-up meeting for the Committee. In addition to regular Committee meetings, additional means of communication will be necessary to conduct the business of the group.

Quorum:

The quorum for regular meetings shall be five (5), with one (1) member being a Councillor.

Procedure

Meetings shall follow the rules of order (Administrative Order #1) approved by Council, as amended from time to time.

Decision Making

Decisions about what to recommend to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee will be made by motion and vote of the committee and minority reports may be submitted if any member wishes to do so.

Resources

The Municipal Clerks Office will provide staff resources to the Community Planning Advisory Committee.

*These Terms of Reference for the Community Design Advisory Committee were approved by the HRM Regional Council on: \_\_\_\_\_.*