
The Regional Plan 5 Year Review and the HRMbyDesign Centre Plan

- HRM Planning Services -

Halifax Regional Council
- September 13, 2011 -

Seeking to...

1. Initiate the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review* (RP+5):

- Issue-based – not a rewrite
- Focus on sustainability, community design, & transit HRM-wide
- Enabling policy for *The Centre Plan*
(formerly “Neighbourhood Greenprint”)
- Conclude by late summer 2012

2. Initiate the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*:

- The *Centre Plan Framework* guiding document (by late summer 2012)
- New *Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)*
- New *Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw (LUB)*
- Conclude by approximately 2015

3. Create the *Community Design Advisory Committee*:

- By combining the RPAC and UDTF

Deliverables

1. A revised Regional Plan, focusing on:

- Economic Sustainability: fiscal responsibility for HRM, and lower household costs for residents.
- Environmental Sustainability: green site design and construction regulations, groundwater protection, densification, transit.
- Social Sustainability: Improved housing accessibility and choice, improved heritage protection and cultural programs.

2. The *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*:

- A single harmonized MPS and LUB for Halifax Peninsula and Dartmouth inside the circumferential highway.
- Clear and predictable development regulations and approval processes.
- Robust opportunities for new growth in appropriate areas, while protecting neighbourhood scale and character.
- Complete, walkable, healthy neighbourhoods and communities.

Successes To-Date

***Regional Plan* Successes To-Date**

The Regional Plan – The First 5 Years

Through the strong work and guidance of the RPAC:

- Community Visioning: 6 areas complete, 1 in-progress.
- Secondary Planning: 11 areas complete or in-progress.
- Masterplanned communities in Dartmouth and Bedford actively being developed as mixed use, transit friendly, walkable communities.
- Watershed Study program proceeding as planned (3 complete, 4 in-progress, 3 planned/budgeted).
- 5 Functional Plans complete, 7 nearly complete, remainder in-progress with substantial components completed.
- Cost of Servicing Study: Managing the future of suburban growth.
- Ongoing investment in Transit and Active Transportation linkages.

HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan Successes To-Date



1. Barrington e-Space Barrington Street



2. TD Bank Spring Garden Road



3. Mixed Use Development Queen Street



4. Central Library Spring Garden Road

***HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan* Successes To-Date**

12 restoration projects in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District:

	Building	Total Grant + Tax Credit
2009	Colwell (Mamoya, Certainly Cinnamon)	\$11,000
	Freemanon's (TAO, Korean Grill)	\$300,000
	Green Lantern (Pogue Fado, Tribeca)	\$585,000
2010	NFB (Façade, Argyle Bar & Grill)	\$476,000
	Barrington e-Space (3 buildings)	\$502,000
	NS Furnishings (Telus/Canada Manpower)	\$25,000
	Farquhar (Venus Pizza)	\$205,000
2011	Old Carsand Mosher (Argyle Fine Arts)	\$168,000
	G.M. Smith (Oddjects)	\$19,000
	Brander-Morris (Attica)	\$36,000
	TOTAL HRM Grants + Tax Incentives	\$2,327,000

+ **9** new leaseholds + **3** more opening in this fall = **24 Projects on Barrington**

HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan Successes To-Date

4 approvals for new development
+ **5** developments in pre-application
+ **6** additional projects likely in pre-app shortly
+ **24** projects on Barrington Street
= **39 Downtown Projects**

HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan Successes To-Date



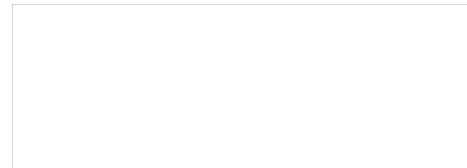
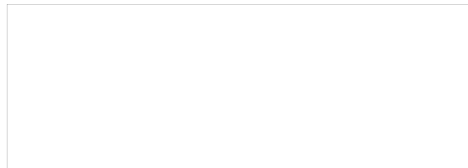
NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM | PROGRAMME DE PRIX NATIONAL



Urban Design Awards
Prix de Design Urbain

2010

2010 RAIC National Urban Design Award



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Why These Projects Now?

Why These Projects *now*?

The Regional Plan 5 Year Review

- Regional Plan adopted by Council in 2006 contains Policy IM-9 directing a “5 year Regional Plan review.”
- 5 year review mandated by Council Focus Areas.
- 5 Year review mandated by Community Outcome Areas of the 2011-2012 Corporate Plan.

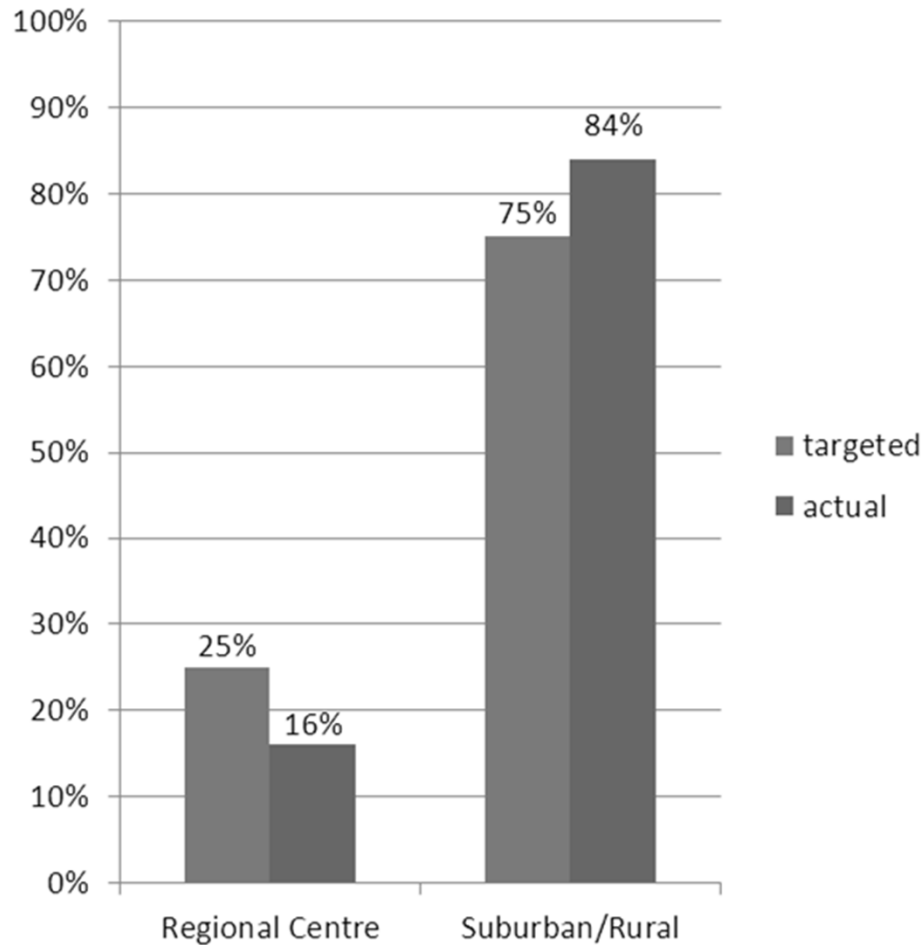
The HRMbyDesign Centre Plan (formerly “*Neighbourhood Greenprint*”)

- Regional Plan Policy EC-3 mandates creation of a “Regional Centre Urban Design Study” (now known as *HRMbyDesign*)
- *HRMbyDesign* phase 1 and 2 are completed, leaving only Phase 3 - the *Centre Plan* (formerly known as the *Neighbourhood Greenprint*).
- *Centre Plan* mandated by Council Focus Areas.
- *Centre Plan* mandated by Community Outcome Areas of the 2011-2012 Corporate Plan.

Why These Projects *now*?

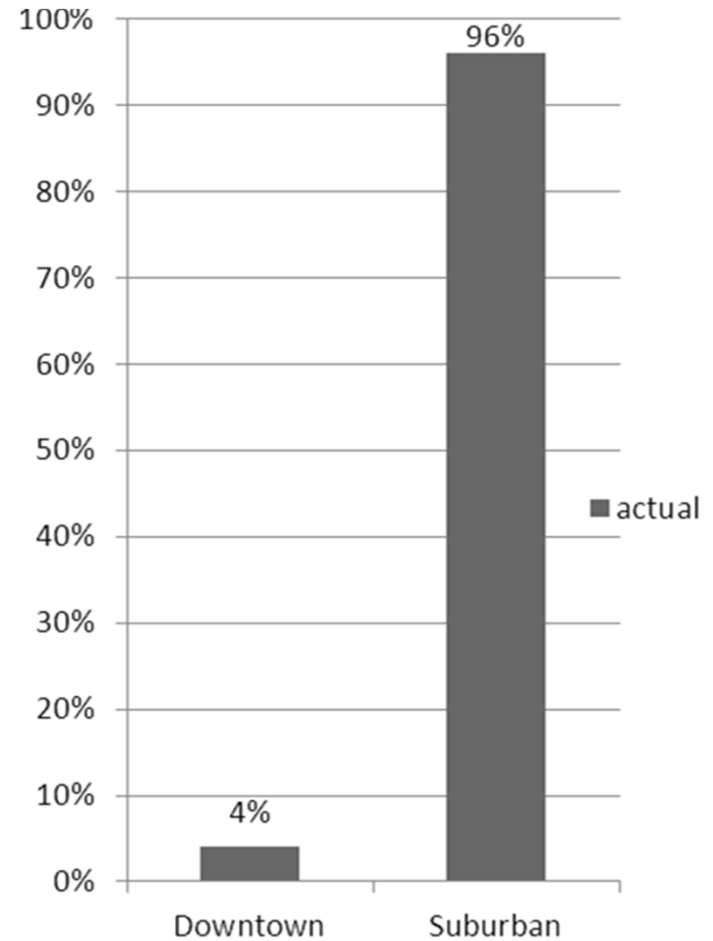
- Residential: 2006 Regional Plan growth targets: 36% *below* urban target, 12% *over* suburban and rural targets.
- Residential: 40 year trend of declining urban population (approx. 22% of total), and increasing suburban population (approx. 72% of total).
- Residential: Typical per-unit municipal servicing costs: approx. \$1,400/year for high density, approx \$5,200/year for low density.
- Office: Last four years: *600ksf* new office in suburbs while only *24ksf* new office downtown (4% of new supply). Eight consecutive quarters of increasing downtown office vacancy rates.
- Office: Since 2005 downtown's share of total HRM office space has dropped 13% to represent less than 43% of all HRM office space.
- Sustainability: EGSPA (GHGs 20% below '90), MOU b/w PNS & UNSM.
- Development in the Regional Centre, where services and infrastructure already exist , is HRM's growth alternative with the lowest cost to the environment and to the taxpayer.

Why These Projects *now*?



**New Residential Units
2006-2011**

(Source: CMHC)



**New Office Space
2008-2011**

(Source: CBRE)

Support for HRM Corporate Priorities

HRM Corporate *Priorities*

Council's Corporate Plan

- Council Focus Areas:
Community Planning,
Communications
- Community Outcomes:
Planning, Economy,
Environment, Leisure,
Transportation, etc.
- Administrative Priorities:
Fiscal Health, Excellence
in Service Delivery

Council's Economic Strategy

- Strengthen the
Regional Centre
- Improve quality of Life
- Attract & Retain Talent
- Leadership on the
Environment
- Alignment & Inertia
- Taxation &
Competitiveness
- Public Transportation

Regional Plan (+ 5 Year Review)

- Land Use
- Growth Management
- Environment
- RP 5 Year Review
focused on the
Regional Centre,
Economic
Development, Transit
& Transportation, and
Sustainable Solutions

HxD Centre Plan

- Regional Centre
densification
- Corridor intensification
- Neighbourhood
protection
- Sustainable urbanism
- Livability and
walkability
- Clear and predictable
development process

Corporate Plan: ***Council Focus Areas***

Community Planning

- Ongoing Implementation of the Regional Plan
 - Functional Plans provide guides for strategic operating and capital investments.
 - Clear and predictable development standards and procedures.
 - Enhanced regulations and support framework for heritage conservation.
 - Affordable market housing.
- Implementation of HRMbyDesign
 - Re-urbanization strategy for neighbourhoods of the Regional Centre, known as the HRMbyDesign [Centre Plan].

Corporate Plan: ***Council Focus Areas***

Community Planning

- 2011-2012 Objectives:
 - Complete scoping exercise for the Regional Plan 5 Year Review (in 2011).
 - Monitor and improve timelines for planning applications.
 - Incorporate the HRMbyDesign Centre Plan under the Regional Plan 5 Year Review, and Council to provide direction on the approach.
 - Issue RFP for completion of the Cogswell Interchange Masterplan.
 - Continue work on the Housing Affordability Functional Plan.

Corporate Plan: ***Council Focus Areas***

Communications

- Improve internal and external communications
- 2011-2012 Objectives:
 - A further increase in pro-active 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 Areas.

Corporate Plan: *Community Outcome Areas*

- Major Projects Work Plan supports all 6 Outcome Areas

1. Well-Planned & Engaged Communities.

2. Clean & Healthy Environment.

3. Safe, Inclusive & Welcoming Communities.

4. Integrated & Affordable Transportation Networks.

5. Diverse Recreation, Leisure & Cultural Experiences.

6. HRM is the Economic Engine of the Region.

Corporate Plan: ***Administrative Outcomes***

HRM's Finances are Well-Managed

- Maintain an approach that maximizes fiscal health and ensures appropriate controls.
- Develop and revise long term financial strategy, in conjunction with the Regional Plan 5 Year Review.

HRM's Resources are Aligned with Corporate Strategic Planning

- Accurately reflect Council Priorities in the Corporate Plan and business plans, and ensure budget aligns with Corporate Plan and business plans.

Citizens are Satisfied with the Quality of HRM Services

- Communicate the linkages between service delivery and strategic outcomes.
- Consult with the business community, review existing service standards and processes, and identify areas for improvement.

2011-2016 *Economic Strategy*

VISION

AS THE ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR THE REGION, HALIFAX IS A TRULY INTERNATIONAL CITY WHERE PEOPLE LEARN, WORK, EASILY START AND GROW A BUSINESS, CAPITALIZE ON IDEAS AND LIVE WITHIN A DIVERSE, VIBRANT, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY.

Our vision represents a call to action. It defines our economic future. It defines the future of our city, an international city, a green city, a blue city, a proud and well-known city, a place where business thrives and a place where people want to live. This is our vision. This is Halifax.

GOALS

REGIONAL CENTRE

Build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre that attracts \$1.5 billion of private investment and 8,000 more residents by 2016

BUSINESS CLIMATE

Promote a business climate that drives and sustains growth by improving competitiveness and by leveraging our strengths

TALENT

Create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for career advancement

INTERNATIONAL BRAND

Create a unique, international city brand for Halifax

MAXIMIZE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Capitalize on our best opportunities for economic growth

2011-2016 *Economic Strategy*

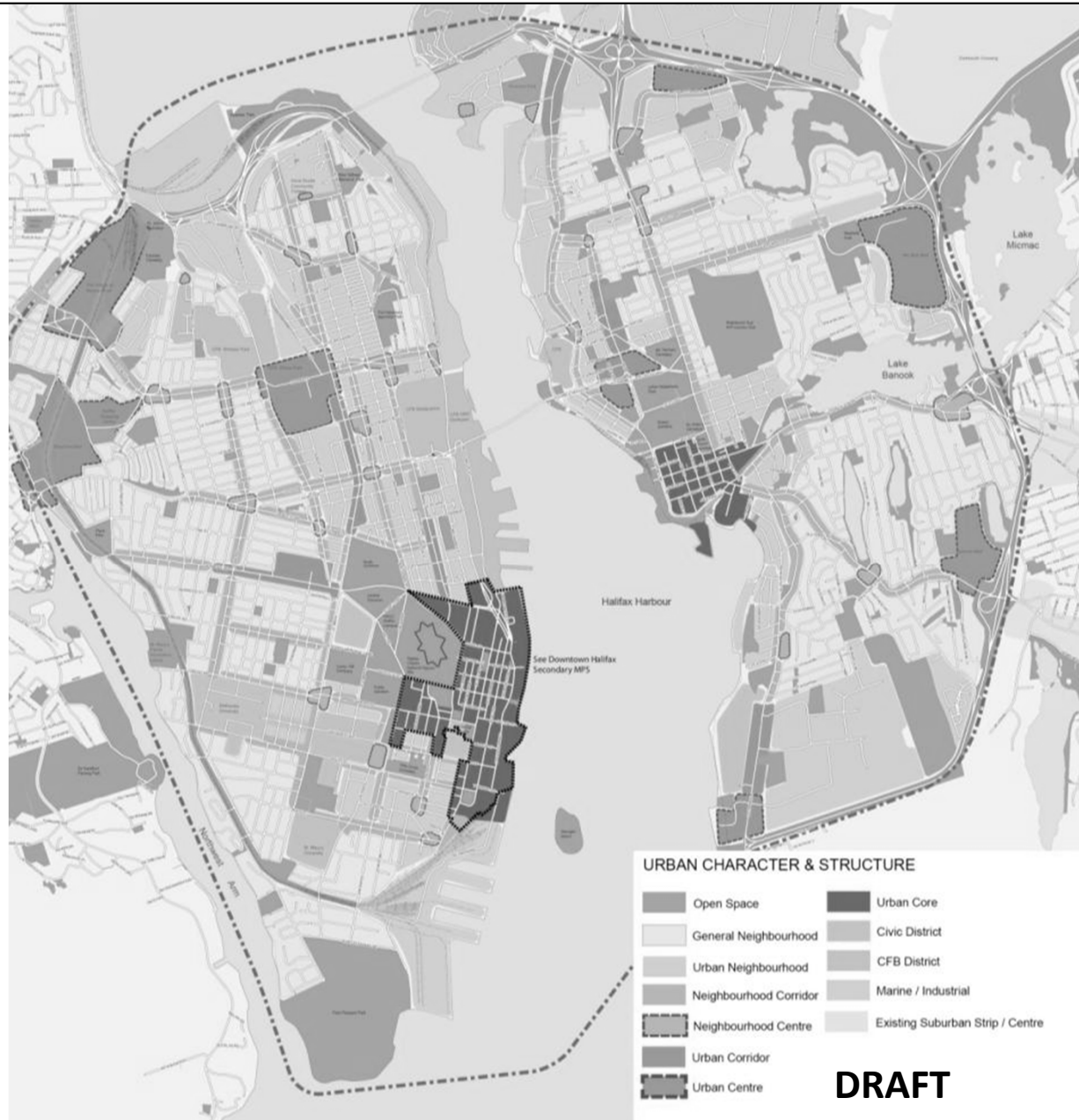
FIVE-YEAR OBJECTIVES	SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (YEARS 1-2)	LEAD	BUSINESS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	MEASUREMENT
Direct and oversee a pro-development policy environment within the Regional Centre.	Review HRM's and Province's regulatory, tax and development fees and processes to make private land development inside the Regional Centre more attractive.	SUP	MEDIUM	Increased building permits in Regional Centre
	Rebalance the Regional Plan's current population distributions to be more sustainable so as to increase density in the urban core.	HRM	LOW	
	Adopt incentives to encourage development of privately owned vacant and under-utilized land in the Regional Centre.		HIGH	
	Raise awareness of the availability and location of public parking in the Regional Centre .		MEDIUM	
	Develop a 5-year Carbon Rebate Program as an incentive to purchase new homes in the Urban Core.	SUP	MEDIUM	
	Redesign public consultation approach and development approval criteria to decrease limitations to urban development and intensification.			
	Provide density bonuses and other incentives for increasing density along transit corridors and at neighbourhood centres in the Regional Centre.			
Further the liveability and attractiveness of our urban core.	Adopt a comprehensive 5-year, \$50 million intergovernmental capital improvement campaign to repair and enhance the public realm in the Urban Core.	SUP	MEDIUM	Regional Centre population growth
	Establish an ongoing dedicated "Strategic Urban Reserve" fund for Urban Core beautification, "pole-free area," public art and infrastructure improvements.			
	Progress the plan to implement a downtown Halifax district heating/cooling network.			
Reinvent current approach to mobility in the Regional Centre.	Create a new transportation model that conveniently connects goods with their destinations while not interfering with residents' safe enjoyment of the Urban Core.	HRM	MEDIUM	More private investment in Regional Centre (\$1.5 billion)
	Implement the Active Transportation Plan with a priority on Regional Centre bike lanes.			Public perception of downtown vibrancy
Celebrate and enable a rich variety of cultural and creative opportunities in the Regional Centre.	Increase public investment and funding for cultural institutions, programs, and public gathering spaces.	SUP	MEDIUM	
	Activate Regional Centre public spaces with public art, culture, educational, and democratic activity through formal and informal programming.			
	Develop a plan to improve inter-modal connection of Regional Centre cultural spaces by bus, ferry, car, car-sharing, taxi, bike, walking, etc.			
	Create an inventory of cultural institutions, events and programs in the Regional Centre.			
	Create a plan to develop vacant public and private lands in the Regional Centre for cultural institutions, public spaces and private mixed uses as part of the "Opportunity Sites Task Forces".			
	Develop a strategy to create cultural public gathering places in the Regional Centre to achieve the "Bilbao Effect".			

Content of the Projects

1. Regional Plan 5 Year Review

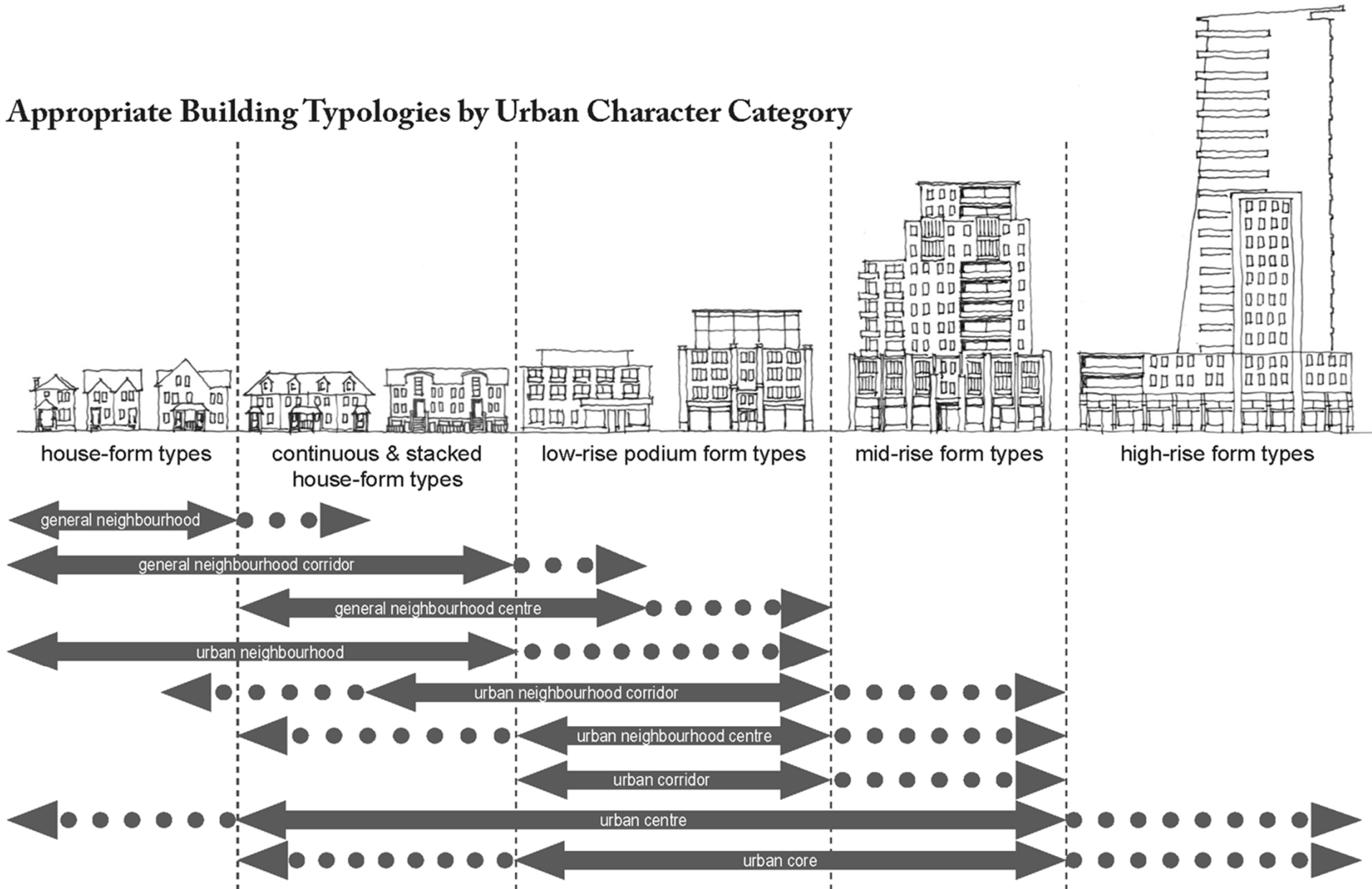
	Theme			
	1. Focus on Sustainable Solutions	2. Regional Centre Focus	3. Improved Communi- ty Design	4. Transit Supports Land Use
Chapter 1: The Environment				
1.1 Policy direction for Sustainable Suburban and Rural Community Design	●		●	●
1.2 Rural Groundwater Mapping & Hydrogeological Assessments	●		●	
Chapter 2: Settlement & Housing				
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	●		●	
Chapter 3: Transportation				
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	●	●	●	●
Chapter 4: Economy and Finance				
4.1 Embed Economic Strategy in Regional Plan	●	●	●	●
4.2 Policy direction for expansion of CCC program	●	●		●
4.3 Potential Business Park Expansion				●
Chapter 5: Culture and Heritage				
5.1 Regional Centre is a focus of the Regional Plan Review	●	●	●	
5.2 Enhanced and Clarified Heritage & Culture programs	●	●	●	
Chapter 6: Water, Wastewater, Utilities & Solid Waste				
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)	●		●	
Chapter 7: The Regional Centre (NEW CHAPTER)				
7.1 Policy enabling creation of new Regional Centre MPS & LUB (Greenprint)	●	●	●	●
7.2 Other Regional Centre policy (i.e. design related, sustainability related)	●	●	●	●

2. The Centre Plan











2. The Centre Plan

Appropriate Building Typologies by Urban Character Category



2. The Centre Plan

		Reurbanization Level	Typical Sites	Density Targets	Typical Built Form Typologies	Typical Uses	Street Types	Street Frontage
	General Neighbourhood	low - reinforce neighbourhood character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> infill on vacant or underutilized sites regeneration of dysfunctional, condemned, or incompatible development adaptive reuse and/or additions 	10-15 u/a (25-37 u/ha)	Predominant Types: House Forms Other Possible Types: Continuous & Stacked House Forms	Residential (often single detached), School, Place of worship, Day care, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Locals Other Possible Types: Boulevards, Neighbourhood Connectors	set back from street edge, moderate variation in setback between buildings
	General Neighbourhood Corridor	low - compatible house forms		10-40 u/a (25-100 u/ha)	Predominant Types: House Forms Continuous & Stacked House Forms Other Possible Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms	Residential, School, Place of worship, Day care, Corner store (limited convenience retail), Compatible office uses, Compatible public uses serving surrounding neighbourhood, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Boulevards, Main Streets, Neighbourhood Connectors	minor to moderate set back from street edge, moderate variation in setback between buildings
	General Neighbourhood Centre	moderate - where serves 2 or more neighbourhoods		10-40 u/a (25-100 u/ha)	Predominant Types: Continuous & Stacked House Forms Other Possible Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms	Residential (including row houses, low apartments, and apartments above other uses), School, Place of worship, Day care, Convenience retail, Office uses, Public uses, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Main Streets Other Possible Types: Boulevards, Neighbourhood Connectors	set back at or near the front property line, continuous sidewalk to building edge
	Urban Neighbourhood	low/moderate - reinforce neighbourhood character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greenfield residential greyfield: incompatible/underutilized commercial infill on vacant or underutilized sites regeneration of dysfunctional, condemned, or incompatible development adaptive reuse and/or additions 	15-75 u/a (37-185 u/ha)	Predominant Types: House Forms Continuous & Stacked House Forms Other Possible Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms	Residential, School, Place of worship, Day care, Corner store, Live-work, Compatible office uses, Public Uses, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Locals Other Possible Types: Boulevards, Neighbourhood Connectors	set back from street edge, moderate variation in setback between buildings
	Urban Neighbourhood Corridor	moderate/high - compatible intensification		15-75 u/a (37-185 u/ha)	Predominant Types: Continuous & Stacked House Forms Low-Rise Podium Forms Other Possible Types: House Forms Mid-Rise Forms <i>subject to conditions set out in these guidelines</i>	Residential, School, Place of worship, Day care, Retail, Live-work, Office uses, Public Uses, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Boulevards, Main Streets Other Possible Types: Neighbourhood Connectors	minor to moderate set back from street edge, moderate variation in setback between buildings
	Urban Neighbourhood Centre	moderate/high - compatible intensification		15-75 u/a (37-185 u/ha)	Predominant Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms Other Possible Types: Continuous & Stacked House Forms Mid-Rise Forms <i>subject to conditions set out in these guidelines</i>	Residential, School, Place of worship, Day care, Retail, Live-work, Office uses, Public Uses, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Main Streets Other Possible Types: Boulevards, Neighbourhood Connectors	set back at or near the front property line, continuous sidewalk to building edge
	Urban Corridor	high - with appropriate transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> infill on vacant or underutilized sites greyfield: small and large format retail adaptive reuse and/or additions 	40-100 u/a (100-250 u/ha)	Predominant Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms (Mixed-Use) Other Possible Types: Mid-Rise Forms (Mixed Use) <i>subject to conditions set out in these guidelines</i>	Retail or Public use at grade is required, Residential, Live/Work, Secondary School, Place of worship, Day care, Offices, Public uses, Public Open Space	Predominant Types: Avenues	no setbacks, continuous retail frontage, continuous sidewalk to building edge
	Urban Centre	high - with appropriate transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brownfield: obsolete industrial 	25-125 u/a	Predominant Types: Continuous & Stacked House Forms Low-Rise Podium Forms Mid-Rise Forms	Residential, Retail, Live/Work, Secondary School, Place of worship,	All Types	varies

2. The Centre Plan

1. Complete *Centre Plan Framework* Document
2. Internal and External Coordination
3. Data Gathering
4. Communications
5. Public Consultation
6. Mapping and Diagrams
7. Write new MPS & LUB
8. Legislative Amendments
9. Staff reports and Council Approval
10. Ministerial Approval

3. New Committee Structure

Community Design Advisory Committee:

It is proposed that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee merge with the Urban Design Task Force to form the CDAC.

11 members proposed:

- Chair or designate from the Community Planning & Economic Development, Transportation, and Environment & Sustainability standing committees **(3)**.
- A Councillor whose district lies entirely within the Regional Centre **(1)**.
- The chairs of the existing RPAC and UDTF **(2)**.
- Citizens from key sectors: Community Design; Environment; Health; Development/Business, and; Social/Cultural **(5)**.

Supporting Information

Project Phasing

Project	Yr. 1 mid '12	Yr. 2 mid '13	Yr. 3-5 '14-'16	Yr. 6 '17
1. Regional Plan 5 Year Review	✓			
2. Neighbourhood Greenprint, MPS & LUB	✓	✓	✓	
Capital Ideas (Strategic Urban Partnership, Opportunity Sites Task Force, new financial regulatory and legislative tools)	✓			
Ongoing Functional Plans (i.e. Stormwater Management Plan, Wastewater Mgmt. Plan, Housing Affordability, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parallel Projects (i.e. Harbour Plan, Open Space Plan, Additional Suburban Masterplans, Redbook Review & Revision)	✓	✓	✓	✓
10 Year Regional Plan Review				✓

Communications Requirements

Needed to Support:

- The Regional Plan Review
- The Centre Plan
- Legislative Amendments
- Internal & Council Communications
- Strategic Urban Partnership
- Opportunity Sites Task Force

Communications Tools:

- Public Lectures
- Internet-based communications
- Open Houses
- World Cafes
- Media Relations
- Editorial Board Meetings
- Crisis Communications
- Newsletters
- Receive & respond to public comments

Impact on Other Planning Services Work

Development Applications:

- Planning Services is committed to meeting the Council approved processing timelines for development applications:

TYPE	Avg. from Benchmark Cities*	HRM Timelines
Development Agreements	4-6 mos.	8 mos.
MPS Amendment	4-6 mos.	10 mos.
MPS Amendment + DA	n/a	11 mos.
LUB Amendment	4-6 mos.	6 mos.
Rezoning	n/a	6 mos.

* Benchmark Cities: St. John's, Quebec City, London, Regina, Victoria

Impact on Other Planning Services Work

Community Planning and Visioning:

- Will complete visioning and community planning processes that are currently underway.
- Other projects we have already committed to will be completed.
- No new projects will be commenced until the RP+5 project has concluded, at which time project resources will be re-evaluated (eg. watershed studies, community visioning projects, or secondary planning strategy reviews).

The Recommendations

Recommendations

CP&ED Recommends that Regional Council:

1. Formally initiate the process to amend the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy.
2. Approve the scope and schedule of the *Regional Plan 5 Year Review*.
3. Approve the scope and schedule of the *HRMbyDesign Centre Plan*.
4. Restructure the UDTF and RPAC into a single Committee to be known as the *Community Design Advisory Committee*.
5. Establish the *Community Design Advisory Committee* as the primary advisory committee to CP&ED and Regional Council for the RP+5 and Centre Plan projects

Note: We are not asking Council for any budget approval. Project budgets were approved with the 2011-2012 HRM Budget.