

Item No. 3
Committee of the Whole
December 4, 2012

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original signed by 
Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by
Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 29, 2012

SUBJECT: Recommended Priority Outcomes

ORIGIN

Following a municipal election Regional Council has traditionally provided direction to staff in the form of Priority Outcomes. This report provides staff's recommended priority outcomes for Council's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Consider the Priority Outcomes as described in Attachment A of this report and approve as amended, and direct staff to develop the 2013/2014 Budget and Business Plans in support of these priorities; and
2. Direct staff to present the 2013/2014 draft Budget and Business Plans to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee for review and discussion prior to consideration by Regional Council.

BACKGROUND

Over the last three municipal elections, Regional Council has established their priority outcomes and directed staff to develop plans to advance those outcomes. The priority outcomes have traditionally been grouped and referred to as Council Focus Areas, and serve to focus efforts in areas that Council considers most important for the community.

The priority outcomes are not tactical; they describe a desired state or outcome sought. The tactics used to advance these outcomes are considered annually by Regional Council as part of the Budget and Business Planning Process.

DISCUSSION

Included as Attachment A of this report are the recommended Priority Outcomes. These Recommended Priority Outcomes are staff's advice on which Outcomes require heightened attention at this time. They have been informed in large part by the Regional Plan, Economic Strategy, and 2012 Citizen Survey.

Some of the possible tactics for each of the recommended priority outcomes are contained in the Priority Outcome Background document previously distributed to Council.

Staff is seeking Council's direction to ensure that the Recommended Outcomes are those that Council sees as Priorities. Is there anything missing or should some be removed or amended?

In addition to direction on Priority Outcomes, staff is seeking endorsement of the Proposed 13/14 Budget and Business Planning Process, specifically, using the Audit and Finance Standing Committee of Council to vet the Business Plan and Budget in advance of Tabling with Council. This approach is intended to streamline the process for Regional Council, while still providing ample opportunity for detail review and discussion.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Although there is no direct impact on the budget, providing direction on Priority Outcomes will have a direct influence over the recommendations staff make for the 13/14 Budget and beyond.

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 foundation of HRM's strategy is the Regional Plan. The Regional Plan was developed with extensive public consultation and the current review (RP+5) continues that rigorous consultation process. In addition, the Citizen Survey conducted in January of 2012 sought to solicit public opinion on community priorities. All of the direction in the Regional Plan, Citizen Survey Results, and staff expertise has been used to develop the Priority Outcome Recommendations

included in this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no Environmental Implications to this report.

ALTERNATIVES

Council could choose not to provide priority outcome direction to staff and deal with their priorities during the 13/14 Budget deliberations. This approach is not recommended by staff since delaying priority direction would inevitably prolong and delay the budget approval process.

Council could choose to add, delete, and amend the Recommended Priority Outcomes and direct staff to develop the 2013/2014 Budget and Business Plans in support of those priorities.

Council could choose not to direct staff to present the 2013/2014 draft Budget and Business Plans to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee prior to consideration by Regional Council. Staff would then make all 2013/2014 draft Budget and Business Plan presentations to Regional Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Recommended Priority Outcomes

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: Ed Thornhill, Manager of Corporate Planning, 490-4480

Original Signed by Director

Financial and Report Approval by: _____
Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & Information Technology/CFO, 490-6308

Attachment A – Recommended Priority Outcomes

1. Regional Plan Review

The Regional Plan Review (RP+5) is completed, setting direction for strengthened policies to reflect changing community conditions.

2. The HRM by Design Centre Plan

The Centre Plan is completed for the Regional Centre supporting the following specific outcomes:

- new clear, predictable and expedient development approval processes that will create significant economic development opportunities;
- improved architectural and community design, and heritage protection;
- 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;
- growth and change focused on vacant and under-utilized “opportunity sites” and along major urban corridors;
- a smaller environmental footprint for HRM through the reduction in energy and resource consumption that accompanies dense, walkable communities;
- lower municipal service costs that is to be archived by focusing growth where infrastructure and services already exist; and
- the protection and enhancement of the scale and character of existing established neighbourhoods

3. Transit Financial Roadmap

A financial strategy that will allow Councilors and the citizens of HRM to fully understand the cost associated with public transit service in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

4. Transit Strategic Framework

A Five-Year Plan that provides strategic guidance on how to plan, manage and operate the Metro Transit system in order to support the overall goals and objectives of the Regional Plan.

5. Transit Technical Solutions Roadmap

A Technical road map that provides strategic guidance to identifying requirements, assisting with procurement decisions and guides solution implementation around Metro Transit technical systems in order to support the overall goals and objectives of the Regional Plan.

6. Transit State of Good Repair

A Transit state of good repair plan that applies to the long term sustainability of both assets and service delivery.

7. Road Network Expansion/Optimization

The Road Network is optimized to accommodate future population and employment growth, as identified the regional settlement pattern.

8. Expand and Enhance Active Transportation Network

An Active Transportation Network that provides a safe and effective regional network of connected sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails.

Attachment A – Recommended Priority Outcomes

9. Transportation Demand Management

A Transportation Demand Functional Plan and programs that improve the efficiency and sustainability of the transportation network through the promotion of alternatives to single occupant vehicle trips and encouragement of behavior change.

10. Parking Strategy

HRM has an adequate supply of parking to support the needs of business and residents.

11. Economic Strategy – AGREATERHalifax

- HRM aligns its resources and service delivery efforts to enhance the business climate and maximize on Economic Development opportunities.
- 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 – A business climate that drives and sustains growth by improving competitiveness and by leveraging our natural strengths;
- Talent – A welcoming community where the world’s talent can find great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for career advancement;
- International Brand – A unique, international city brand for Halifax; and,
- Maximize Growth Opportunities – The best opportunities for economic growth are capitalized on.

12. HRM Business Parks

HRM has an appropriate inventory of land available for the Logistics Park that will service the Gateway as well as for business seizing opportunities related to the Irving Shipbuilding project.

13. Arts and Culture

HRM’s Arts and Culture Community is fully engaged and supported through partnerships, funding, and national associations in an effort to become a cultural capital of Canada.

14. Youth at Risk

HRM has programs that divert youth from engaging in counterproductive behaviors that often lead to more serious criminal actions.