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Regional Plan 5 Year Review

Regional Plan Five-Year Review

Regional Council Committee of the Whole
December 3, 2013



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Origin

- Staff report to the Community Design Advisory Committee (CDAC), dated September 18, 2013, with Draft 3 of the revised Regional Plan attached.
- CPED October 10, 2013, motion to design and engage in a process with CDAC to identify the Committee's remaining areas of concern and work to resolve these issues through further revision to the draft plan and/or alternative policy for consideration by Council, and
- Report back to Committee of the Whole on or before November 28, 2013.

Overview

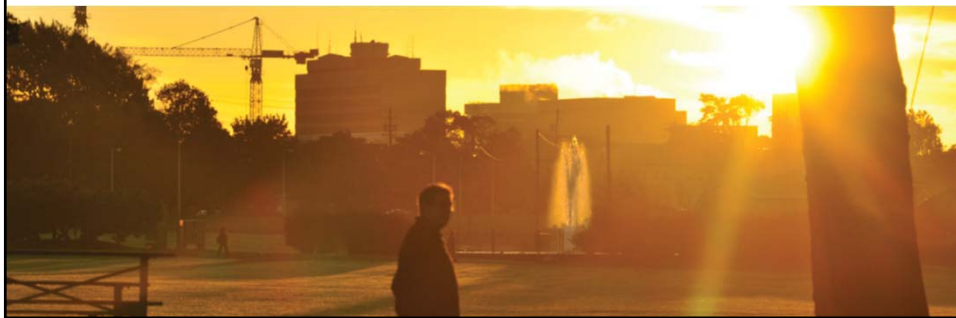
- Part I
 - The RP+5 Review Process & Policy Directions
- Part II
 - Staff response to CDAC Report

Recommendation

- It is recommended that Committee of the Whole:
 - accept the amendments recommended by staff in the discussion section of this report;
 - direct staff to prepare a supplementary report and amendment package for referral to the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Design Review Committee; and
 - direct staff to bring the amendment package back to Regional Council for Notice of Motion to start the adoption process.

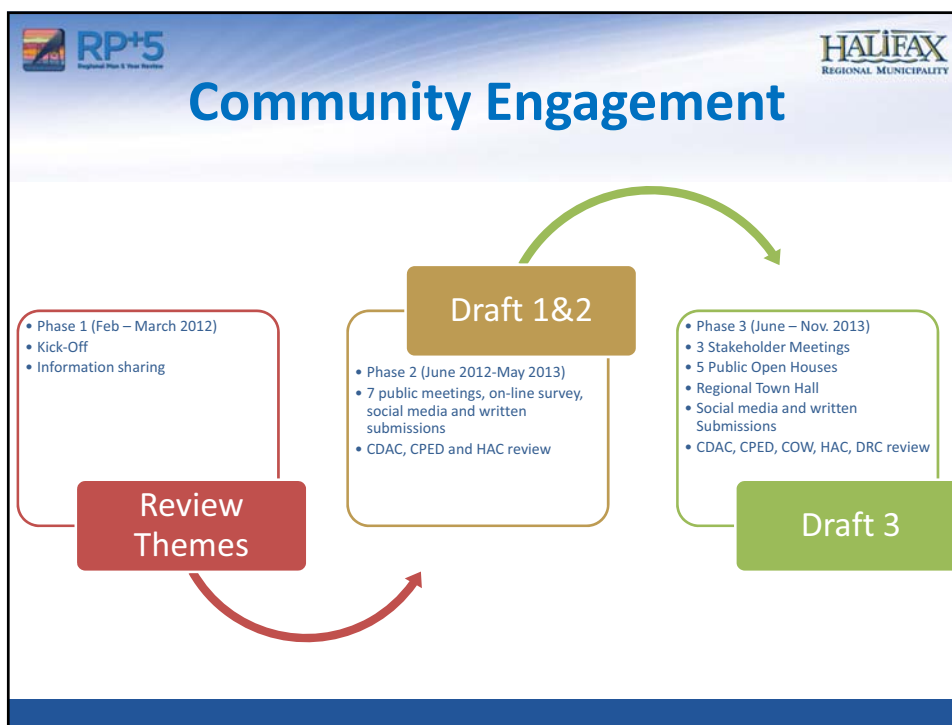
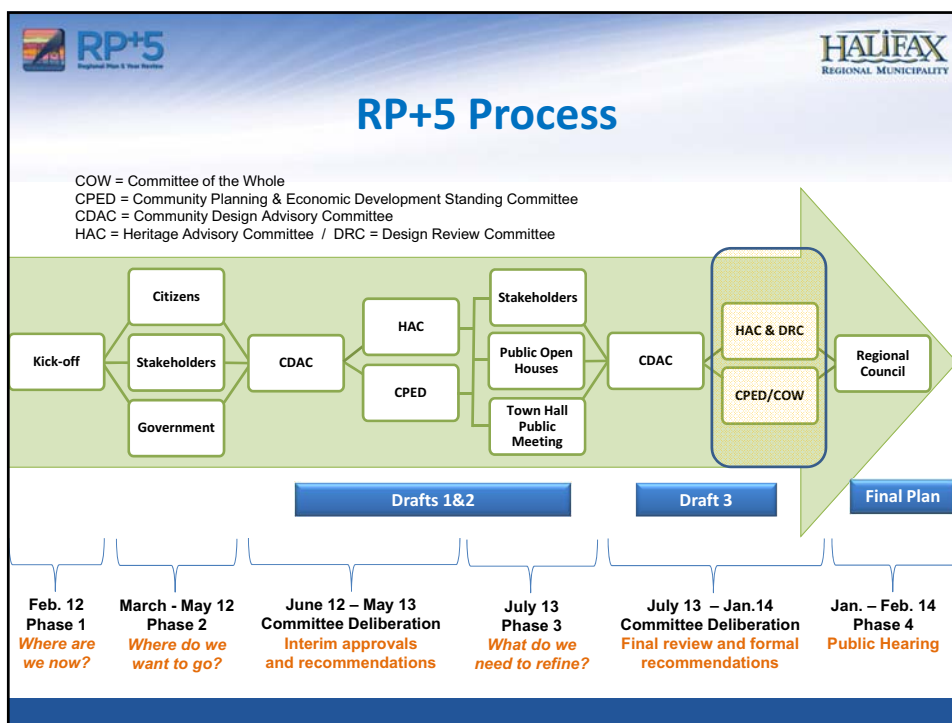
Regional Plan Vision

Enhance our quality of life by fostering the growth of healthy and vibrant communities, a strong and diverse economy, and sustainable environment.



Regional Plan





Scope of Review

Sustainable Solutions

Enhanced Regional Centre

Improved Community Design

Mutually Supportive Land Use and Transit/AT

1. Sustainable Solutions



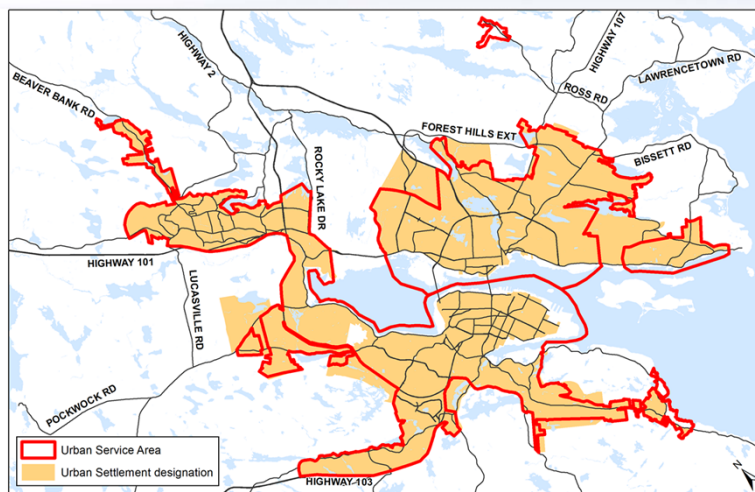
Sustainable Solutions

Manage growth sustainably

- Make the most effective use of land, energy, infrastructure, public services and facilities
- Maintain current Urban Service Boundary and Land Use Designations
- Refine growth targets and use as a criterion for secondary planning
- Encourage growth in defined rural growth centres
- Re-classify some rural growth centres
- Limit the scale of potential amendments in abutting land use designations

What is not changing

Urban Settlement Designation

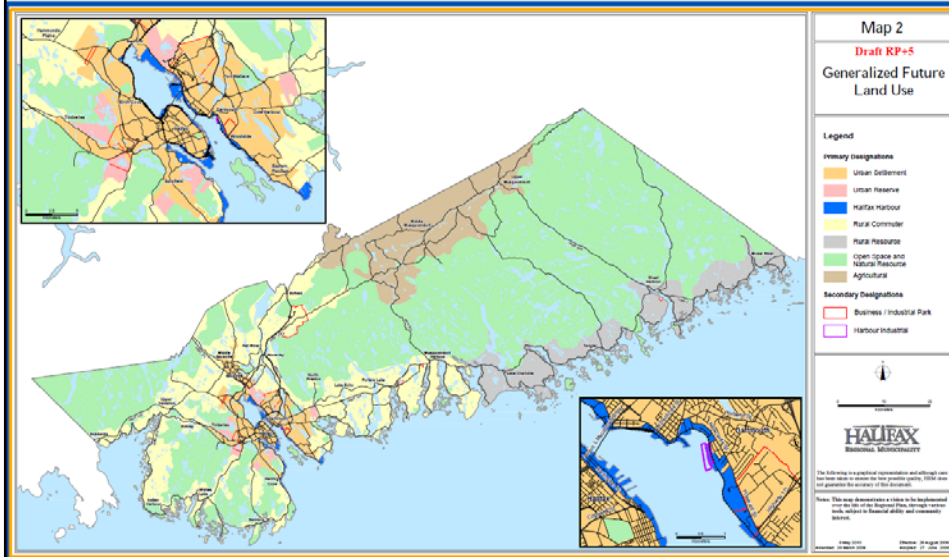




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What is not changing - Foundation



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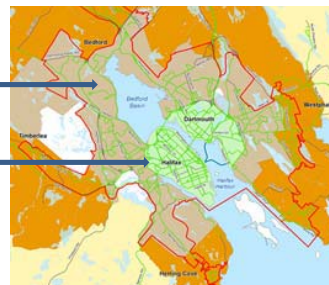
Sustainable Solutions

Growth Target Policy

- The Regional Plan shall target **at least 75%** of new housing units to be located in the Regional Centre and suburbs with **at least 25%** of new housing units within the Regional Centre over the life of this Plan (Objectives).

At least
75%

At least
25%





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Sustainable Solutions

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Protect water, land and air

- Continue to require watershed studies prior to secondary planning
- Protect potable water supply areas (30.5 m riparian buffer and land use planning)
- Commit to water quality monitoring
- Require hydrogeological testing for rural subdivisions > 10 units
- Identify and connect natural corridors
- Protect greenways and AT destinations
- Create Greenbelting and Public Open Space Priorities Plan

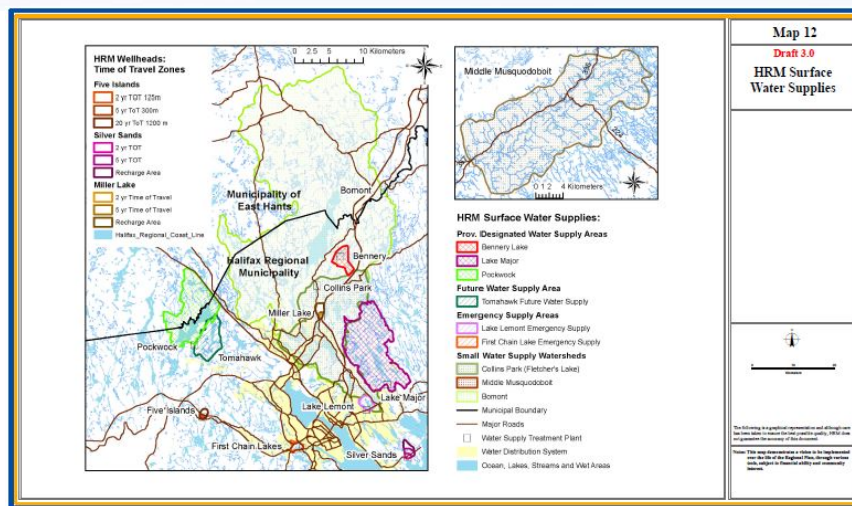


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Sustainable Solutions

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Water Supply Areas



Sustainable Solutions

Protect water, land and air

- Increase protection of trees within riparian buffers
- Maintain and improve forest canopy
- Improve management of storm water and erosion
- Consider food security through secondary planning
- Provide leadership in energy conservation and response to climate change

Sustainable Solutions

Preserve and Enhance Culture & Heritage Resources

- Develop policies, programs and regulations to preserve and enhance the viability of culture and heritage resources in HRM (incl. land use planning)
- Assist communities in identifying and celebrating cultural and heritage assets
- Broaden heritage protection through the identification and preservation of cultural landscapes
- Recognize the importance of arts, including professional arts, to the creative economy and vitality of our region
- Create Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan

2. Enhanced Regional Centre



Enhanced Regional Centre

Attract Residents and Investment

- Complete a Regional Centre Plan which achieves the vision statement and guiding principles endorsed by Regional Council
- Develop heritage plans and programs that further preserve and enhance the viability of heritage properties, streetscapes, and districts
- Prepare capital and operating expenditure programs that enhance development within the Regional Centre
- Create financial and regulatory incentives to stimulate desired growth



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Enhanced Regional Centre

Attract Residents and Investment

- Implement Economic Strategy build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre
- Continue to provide incentives for undergrounding in the Regional Centre
- Protect and enhance public open space and heritage
- Support affordable housing partnerships and density bonusing



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Enhanced Regional Centre

Attract Residents and Investment

- Establish the Urban Transit Service Boundary to improve service in high ridership areas
- Increase investment in active transportation in the Regional Centre
- Improve public health and safety through “Complete Streets” policy
- Re-focus municipal business parks development on industrial uses
- Protect industrial harbour lands

3. Improved Community Design



Improved Community Design Suburban Communities

- Focus new growth in centres where supporting services and infrastructure are already available
- Promote land settlement patterns and urban design approaches that support fiscally and environmentally sustainable transportation modes
- Ensure that there are sufficient lands available along the harbour and in business parks to provide economic opportunities
- Support and enhance our land, port and air transportation facilities



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Improved Community Design Suburban Communities

- Design communities that:
 - a) are attractive, healthy places to live and have access to the goods, services and facilities needed by residents
 - b) are accessible to all mobility needs and are well connected with other communities
 - c) protect neighbourhood stability and support neighbourhood revitalization
 - d) preserve significant environmental and cultural features
 - e) promote community food security
 - f) provide housing opportunities for a range of social and economic needs and promote aging in place



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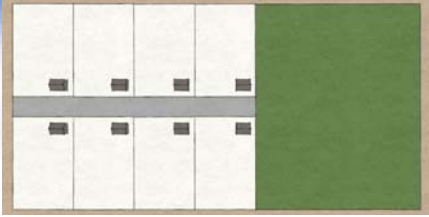
Improved Community Design Rural Communities

- Maintain the integrity of rural communities
- Preserve agricultural and resource lands
- Focus new growth in centres where supporting services and infrastructure are already available
- Balance property rights, lifestyle choices, fiscal and environmental responsibility
- Reduce above grade electrical and telecommunication transmission lines



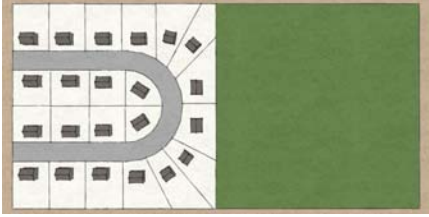
Lower Density Classic Conservation Design

Maximum Density: 1 unit per ha ND



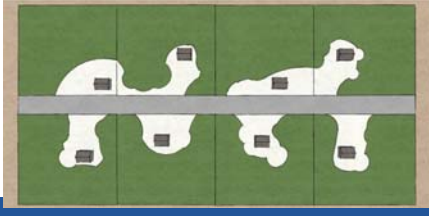
Higher Density Classic Conservation Design

Maximum Density: 1 unit per 0.4 ha ND



Hybrid Conservation Design

Maximum Density: 1 unit per ha ND






4. Land use and transit/active transportation are mutually supportive



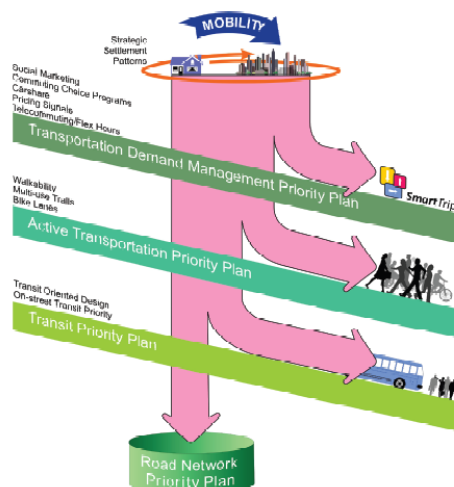


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Land Use and Transportation

Managing mobility



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Land Use and Transportation

Integrated and Sustainable

- Provide alternatives to the single occupant vehicle
- Promote land settlement patterns and urban design approaches that support fiscally and environmentally sustainable transportation modes
- Provide service and infrastructure to meet this demand while influencing choices towards transportation sustainability
- Design complete streets for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel
- Allow transit in all zones on collector roads & expressways



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Land Use and Transportation

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Integrated and Sustainable

- Encourage Transit Oriented Development
- Establish Urban Transit Service Boundary
- Rural transit community support
- Protect greenways connections in secondary planning
- Community consultation required on all proposed regional road works that may be required to meet future vehicle demands
- Continue Regional Coordination

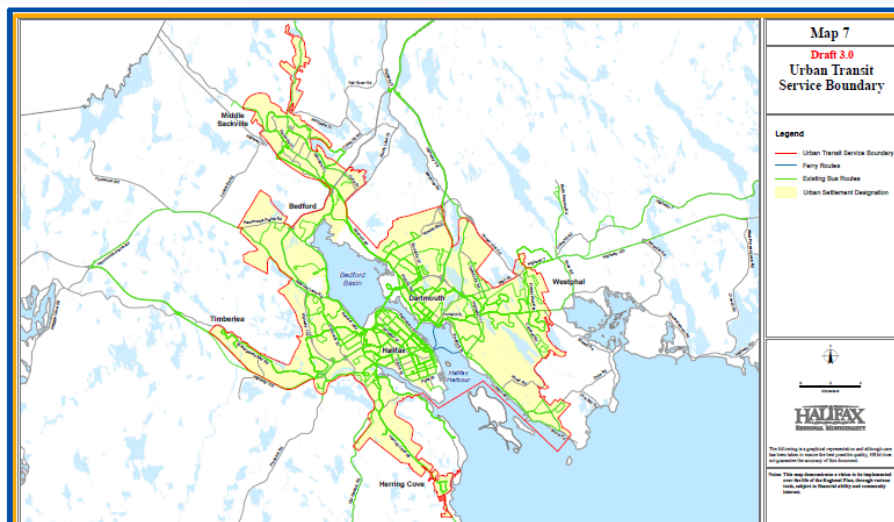


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Land Use and Transportation

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Urban Transit Service Boundary



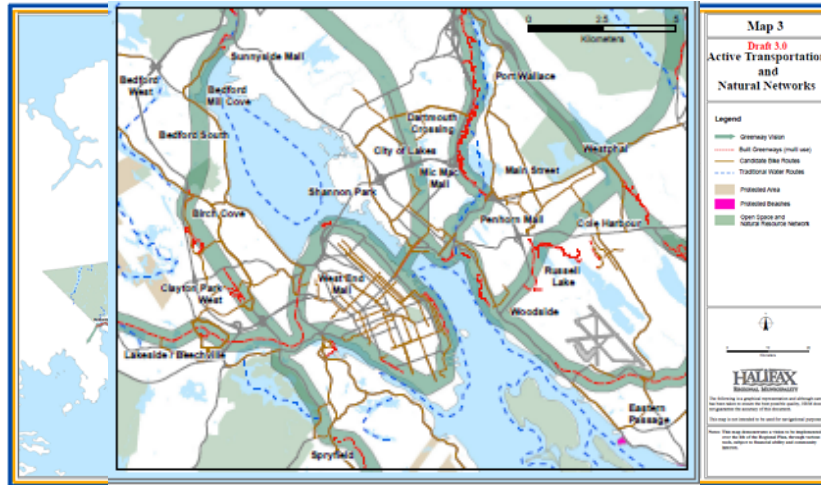


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Land Use and Transportation

Active Transportation and Natural Networks

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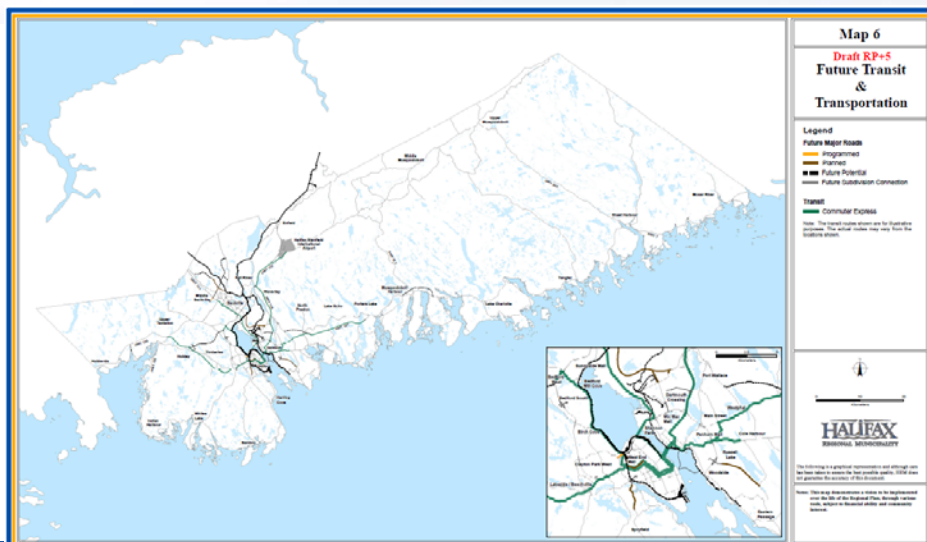


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Land Use and Transportation

Future Transit and Transportation

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CDAC Recommendations and Staff Responses

Sustainable Solutions

CDAC Recommendation 1

- *The Community Design Advisory Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council **incorporate the recommendations contained in this Appendix** [refers to Appendix A of the CDAC report, dated November 15, 2013] **into Draft 3 of RP+5.***

CDAC Recommendation 2

- *The Regional Plan needs to contain a clear policy which states that **there is a sufficient supply of land currently within the urban growth settlement area and current service boundary to meet the development requirements of the Region for the next 30-35 years** and that consideration of development and planning must occur within that context.*

Staff Response to 2

- Where requests are received to initiate secondary planning for any of the suburban growth areas identified by the Regional Plan, **Policy S-2 requires that Council consider:**
 - the need for additional lands;
 - the fiscal implications; and
 - the implications for achieving the HRM growth targets.

Already addressed. No amendments required.

CDAC Recommendation 3

- *In addition to the clear policy statement, as much detail as possible in regard to the nature, type, location of development (as outlined in Table 1.1) **should be expanded to provide clear definitions of the defined development areas under the plan and the boundaries of those areas.** (pg. 16 of Plan document); and*

CDAC Recommendation 4

- *To better represent the policy statement in recommendation 3, CDAC recommends that **Table 1.1 be expanded (or an additional table added) to detail how much capacity is projected in each area type,** where in HRM (west or east side of the harbour and specifics in the urban, suburban, rural growth areas); along with qualitative analysis/statement as to how long the supply carries development (intensification strategies). (pg. 16 of the Plan document)*

Staff Response to 3 & 4

- The Regional Plan has identified growth centres and has established broad growth targets:
 - at least 25% to the Regional Centre and at least 75% to the Regional Centre and suburbs.

No amendments recommended.

CDAC Recommendation 5

- *The Regional Plan should contain a clear policy statement that the **Regional Plan and definitions contained in the Plan (such as urban growth settlement areas, etc.) shall take precedence over all other strategic plans, including the Transit Service Boundary and those of Halifax Water, and that all strategic plans must align with the Regional Plan as approved by Council.***

Staff Response to 5

- Section 232 (1) of the HRM Charter states: ***“The Municipality may not act in a manner that is inconsistent with a municipal planning strategy.”***

Already addressed. No amendments required.

CDAC Recommendation 6

- *In regard to policy G15 (Governance pg. 106), the Regional Plan should include a policy statement that clearly outlines that the **service boundary and urban growth area boundary, as outlined in the Plan, are to be considered hard boundaries** meant to ensure the growth targets are achieved in a fiscally responsible and sustainable way, and that **changes to those boundaries may only be considered under extraordinary circumstances as provided for in the plan; and***

CDAC Recommendation 7

- *That policy G-15, in regard to extraordinary circumstances for consideration of expansion of the service boundary (see recommendation 6) **should state that expansion would only be considered for “minor lot adjustments or boundary additions provided they do not create a separate lot for residential dwellings” or similar wording as provided for under Ontario’s green belting laws.***

Staff Response to 6 & 7

- Policy G-15 currently allows Council to consider extending serviced development into the abutting designation *“provided other policies of this plan are satisfied and the proposed development is limited in scale”*.

Already addressed. No amendments required.

CDAC Recommendation 8

- ***The Regional Plan contain policy controls that substantially minimize growth/settlement on local and trunk roads between designated rural growth centres. (section 3.4.5 pg. 53).***

CDAC noted that this will require substantial reduction from the 100 allowable subdivision currently in the plan (suggestion of 30) and a new or expanded policy mechanism (beyond current policies of non-acceptance of roads by HRM and prohibition of development in open space/resource designation) to achieve this outcome. The policy direction should not eliminate division of lots for purposes of family residences.

Staff Response to 8

- The revised plan has adopted several measures to encourage development within centres:
 - **Outside of Rural Growth Centres:** maximum of 100 dwelling units for Lower Density Classic Conservation Design Development and 30 dwelling units for Hybrid Conservation Design Developments. The allowable density is reduced to 1 unit per hectare.
 - **In growth centres:** 2.5 dwelling units/ha may be considered or higher where a secondary planning strategy has been adopted

No amendment recommended.

Staff Response to 8

- A further reduction in the number of lots outside of Centres would not necessarily reduce total development between centres but **may lead to a larger number of smaller developments with more fragmented non-disturbance areas**

No amendment recommended.

CDAC Recommendation 9

- ***That the Plan policy position in regard to riparian buffer should be 30 metres (as compared to the proposed 20 metres) to better align with provincial policy (Department of Environment) and provide enhanced environmental protection. (section 2.3.3 pgs. 32-33) Policy consideration could be given to allowing a waiver to 20 metres when appropriate to consider and does not compromise environmental protection. A minority position was put forward that stated that the expansion to 30 metres is not required.***

Staff Response to 9

- Policy E-16 maintains the 20 m minimum standard but allows for a higher standard where secondary planning strategies have been adopted based on watershed studies and deliberation with local communities.

No amendments recommended.

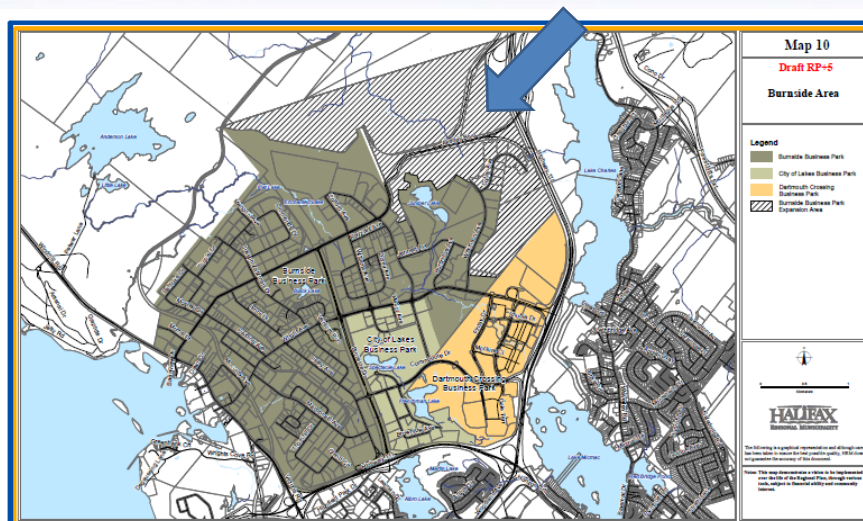
CDAC Recommendation 10

- *Policy EC-3 (section 5.3.1 pg. 67) should be worded to make it clear that **no stand-alone commercial or any residential (R) uses will be permitted in HRM Business Parks (BI designation) and, if adopted by Council, the policy should override current SMPS and LUBS designations.***

Staff Response to 10

1. Insert a policy to identify the Burnside Business Park Expansion Area (illustrated on Map 10 of the Revised Regional Plan) with a statement that these lands are to be reserved for general and light industrial uses, as well as accessory office and retail uses, and that the Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law be amended accordingly as part of the amendment package; and
2. Have Council instruct staff to initiate a review of the land use by-law provisions for Aerotech Business Park.

Land Use and Transportation Industrial Lands - Burnside Expansion



CDAC Recommendations and Staff Responses

Enhanced Regional Centre

CDAC Recommendation 11

- *The Regional Plan should include a policy statement that specifically states policies related to the Plan objectives of:*
 - 1. incenting development in the Regional Centre;***
 - 2. streamlining development approvals in the Regional Centre 3) density bonusing in the Regional Centre shall be addressed in the policies of the Centre Plan. (sections 6.4 and 6.5 pgs. 76 &77).***

Staff Response to 11

- Consistent with the *Greater Halifax Economic Strategy: 2011 – 2016*

Accept CDAC recommendation.

CDAC Recommendation 12

- ***CDAC recommends that work on the Centre Plan be commenced immediately and that a timeline be established for submission of the Centre Plan to Regional Council; and***

CDAC Recommendation 13

- *CDAC recommends that policy work in regard to incenting development in the Regional Centre be initiated immediately and in parallel with the Centre Plan and explore the reduction and/or removal of development fees and charges, and that early implementation of incentives be considered.*

Staff Response to 12 &13

- Work has commenced on the Regional Centre Plan and a staff report will be forthcoming with a timetable for completion

Already addressed. No amendments required.

CDAC Recommendations and Staff Responses

Improved Community Design

CDAC Recommendation 14

- ***Policy 6.2.2 (RC subsection 5 pg. 75)
regarding complete communities should be
extended to include ALL communities in HRM,
not just urban.***

Staff Response to 14

- Objectives for Settlement and Housing and apply to all communities of HRM (Section 3.1.4)
- Specific design requirements are also established in Tables 3-1 and 3-2, and policy S-9 which require these criteria be adhered to in preparing secondary planning strategies.

Already addressed. No amendments required.

CDAC Recommendation 15

- *Policy 9.2.1 (pg. 103) CDAC recommends that the length of time a community planning process should take from initiation to completion, under the legislative planning process, be set out in policy in the Regional Plan; and*

CDAC Recommendation 16

- *CDAC recommends that Regional Council establish a target for the completion of community plans (how many- over what time frame- in what priority) and a measurement and reporting framework to measure progress against those target.*

Staff Response to 15 &16

- Include a policy under Section 9.4: Secondary Planning Strategies that requires Council, at the time of initiating a planning process to establish a target date for bringing the matter back to Council for consideration of approval and, if the target date cannot be achieved, require that a report be submitted with the reasons.



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CDAC Recommendation 16A

- *It is recommended that Community Plans be consistent with the Regional Plan.*



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Staff Response to 16A

- Policy G-9 states as follows:
*When new secondary planning strategies or amendments to existing secondary planning strategies are brought forward for approval, HRM shall consider **whether the proposed objectives and policies are consistent with or further achieve the objectives and policies of this Plan.***

Already addressed. No amendment required.

CDAC Recommendation 17

- ***CDAC recommends that, for clarity, a link or appendix outlining the Community Engagement Policy, as approved by Regional Council, be included in the Regional Plan.***

Staff Response to 17

- **Establish links to all functional plans and strategies referenced by policy in the Regional Plan.**

CDAC Recommendations and Staff Responses Integrated Land Use & Transportation

Recommendation 18

- *CDAC recommends that Policy T14 Read: Table 4-1 and Map 6 represent the road network projects that **may** be required to meet future vehicle demands. **No projects shown on this table shall be approved for construction until the Road Network Functional Plan is prepared that has included a public consultation process that provides rationale for the projects as they relate to one another, to growth targets as outlined in this plan, and to sustainable transportation initiatives and provides projected capital and operating costs for road construction projects.***

Staff Response to 18

- Amend policy T-14 to state that none of the projects presented on the table are to be constructed until HRM has informed the public on the Road Networks Priorities Plan and the Plan has been endorsed by HRM.

CDAC Recommendation 19

- *Move Policy T-3 (Section 4.2.2 pg 59) “street shall be designed to support pedestrian, bicyclists and public transit and to improve public health and safety” to the Objectives section to show the policy is intended to impact all transportation decisions.*

Staff Response to 19: Adopt CDAC recommendation.

CDAC Recommendation 20

- *To assist in understanding, CDAC recommends that, in conjunction with policy T-12 (pg. 61) clear definitions of the areas for modal split targets be provided, perhaps through mapping and accompanying text. Definitions should include:*
 - 1. outlining the definitions of the Regional Centre/inner suburban/suburban/rural edge;*
 - 2. the boundaries of those areas and*
 - 3. where those boundaries are in regard to other boundaries outlined the plan (such as the service boundary); and*

CDAC Recommendation 21

The Committee recommends the following adjustments to the modal split targets to 2031 in the Regional Plan (based on the opinion of the Committee):

Regional Centre (modal shift target to 2031)

<i>Transit</i>	<i>Active Transportation</i>	<i>Car</i>
28%	37%	35%

Inner Suburban (modal shift target to 2031)

<i>Transit</i>	<i>Active Transportation</i>	<i>Car</i>
30%	8%	62%

Suburban Edge/Rural (modal shift target to 2031)

<i>Transit</i>	<i>Active Transportation</i>	<i>Car</i>
10%	4%	86%

Staff Response to 20 & 21

1. Add the following text to the Plan preceding Policy

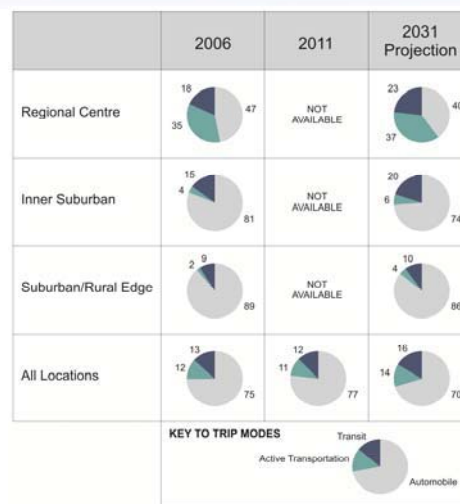
T-12:

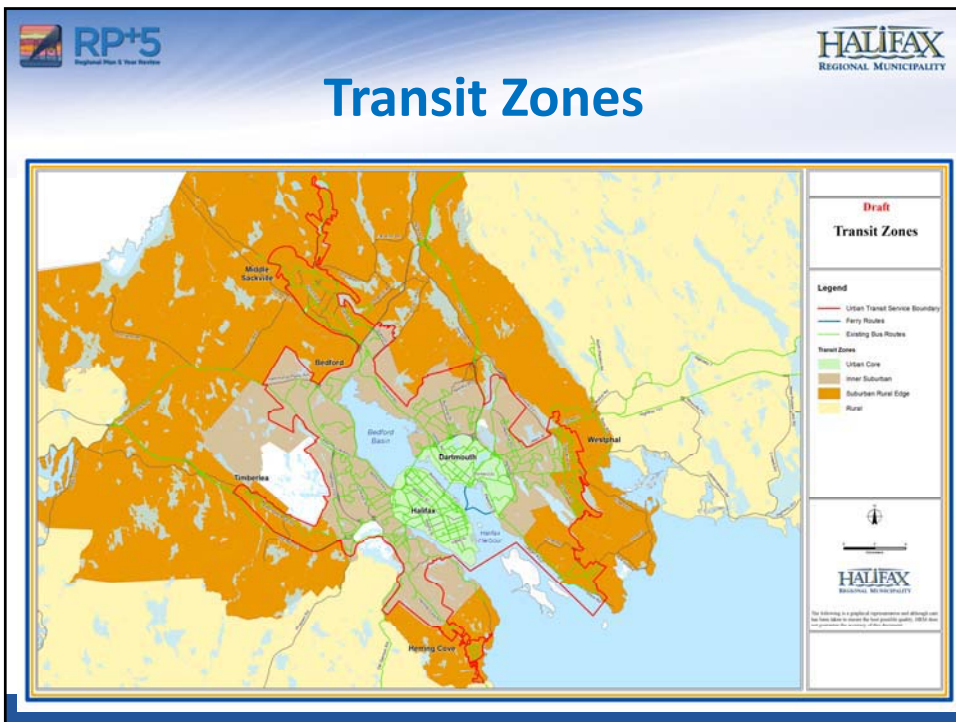
“Modelling of transportation network demands requires a projection of what percentage of trips will be made by transit. This is referred to as “transit modal split”. Although the regional demand model contains different transit modal split percentages by area, based on Statistics Canada data, there is a reasonable commonality to modal splits throughout four larger zones:

- Regional Centre
- Inner Suburban
- Rural/Suburban Edge
- Rural”

2. Change the wording in Policy T-12 to replace the word “targets” with the word “projections”.

Modal Split Projections





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CDAC Recommendation 22

- That, irrespective of the modal shift targets adopted by Council that table T-12 (pg. 61) **provide information on the baseline splits in all areas from 2006 (approval of the plan); current 2013; and targets out to 2031 so that measurement against the baseline, current and projected targets can be reviewed.**

Staff Response to 22

- Region-wide data will be added.
- Should further data be released by Statistics Canada for 2011 in time for inclusion in the plan, it will be added.

CDAC Recommendation 23

- *That wording in Policy T-10 (pg. 60) is changed from “**shall consider mixed use residential and commercial areas** designed to maximize access to public transit (transit oriented development)... ” to “**shall require mixed use residential and commercial areas** designed to maximize access to public transit (transit oriented development)... ”*

Staff Response to 23

(Revised)

- Amend policy T-10 to state as follows:

HRM shall ~~consider~~ require mixed use residential and commercial areas designed to maximize access to public transit (Transit Oriented Development) within the Urban Transit Service Boundary through secondary planning strategies and shall strive to achieve the intent of this policy through land use by-law amendments, development agreements and capital investments.

CDAC Recommendations and Staff Responses Measurement & Review General Comments

CDAC Recommendation 24

- ***CDAC generally agrees with the measures and indicators as currently outlined in the Plan Appendix A (pg108).***

Staff Response to #24: No amendment required.

CDAC Recommendation 24A & 25

- ***24A: CDAC recommends that targets (where appropriate) and baselines for the performance measure in Appendix A be added; and***
- ***25: CDAC recommends that Council direct an annual progress review of the Plan in the form of a report to Council outlining achievement against Plan measures and objectives (section 9.3 pg. 104).***

Staff Response to 24A & 25

- Amend policy G-4 to commit to developing targets, where appropriate and also commit to an annual report to Council.

CDAC Recommendation 26

- *Section 9.7 Discretionary approvals. CDAC recommends that an additional reason be added to policy G.14 (a) (pg. 105) which would read: “vi) provided the proposal does not contradict targets for growth as outlined in the Regional Plan.”*

Staff Response to 26

- Policy G-14 includes decision criteria for developments which require development agreements pursuant to the Regional Plan (including housing targets). There are three types of developments:
 - conservation by design developments (policies S-14 to S-17);
 - island developments (policy S-18); and
 - residential developments in Middle Sackville (policy SU-6).
- Changes proposed by CDAC would introduce too much uncertainty into the DA process.

No amendment recommended.

CDAC Recommendation 27

- *CDAC recommends that a “Strategic Implications” section be added to the template for Council reports to ensure strategic objectives, as outlined in the Regional Plan, are before Council with all recommendations.*

Staff Response to 27

- If directed by Council, a section entitled “Regional Plan Implications” could be added to each staff report containing recommendations.

No amendment required.

CDAC Recommendation 28

- *While CDAC supports the staff recommendation in regard to undergrounding utilities as found in the Plan. **A minority position was presented that undergrounding should be supported and encouraged but not mandated in the Plan until such time as the effect on housing affordability is better determined.***

Staff response to 28: No amendment required.

CDAC Recommendation 29

- *For purposes of clarity, Policy E12 (pg 29&30) be expanded to read: HRM shall prepare a Greenbelting and Public Open Space Priorities Plan “to protect and preserve connectivity between natural areas and open resource lands, to enable their integration into sustainable community design, to help define communities, to benefit the Municipality’s economy and the physical health of its people, and to reflect and support the overall purposes of this Plan.”*

Staff Response to 29

- Staff agrees that this statement carries out the intent of this Priorities Plan

Adopt this recommendation.



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Thank you

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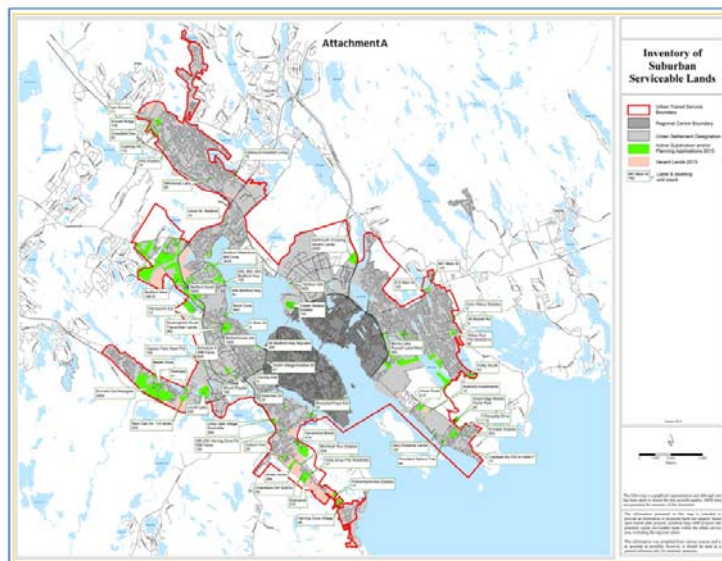
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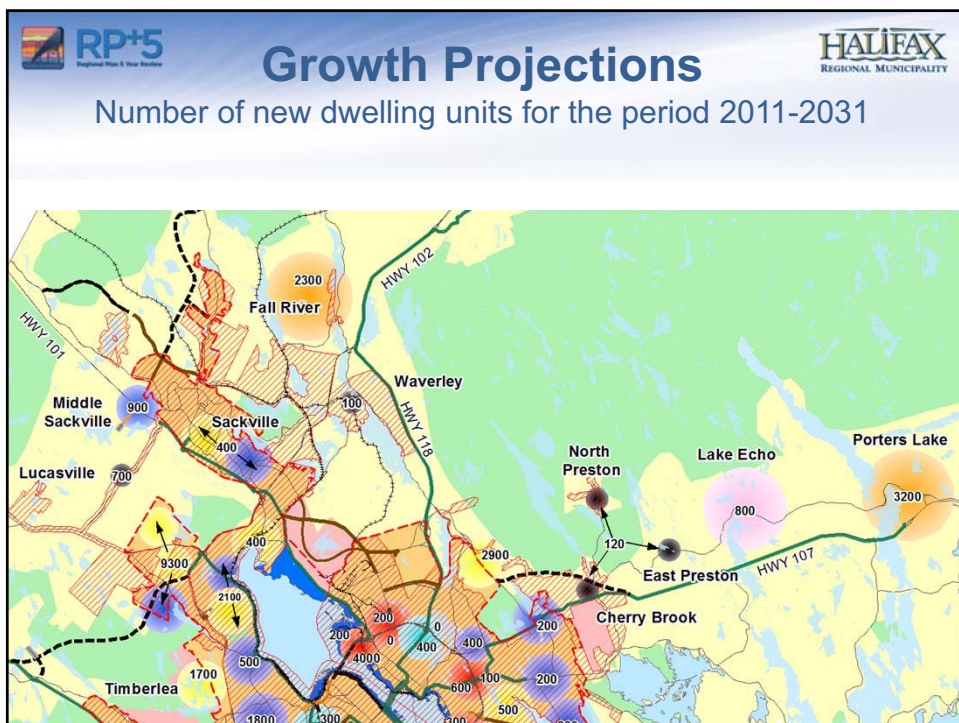
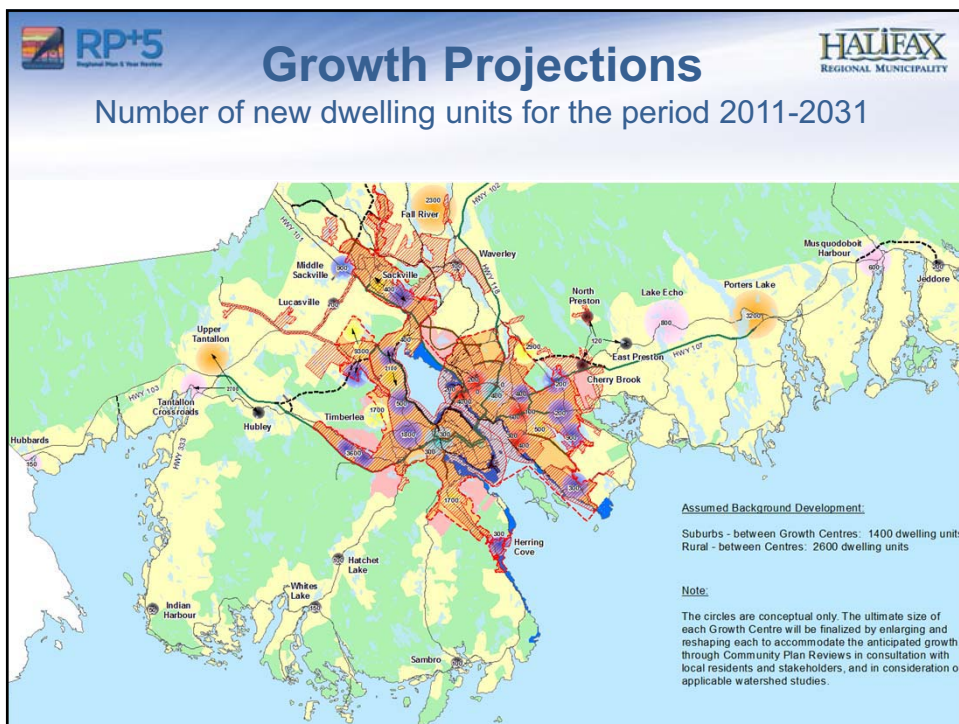


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Suburban Lands Inventory





Grandfathered Subdivisions

