HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

# Planning for Change Seizing Opportunities Safeguarding our Future



Corporate Plan 2010-2011













The Halifax Regional Municipality is committed to realizing a vision that fosters a community where people love to live, work, learn and play.

HRM's 20/20 Visioning exercise created a statement, which provides a foundation for the Corporate Direction. The Corporate Plan is consistent with the mandate of the Corporation, as well as its vision and values.

### Vision

HRM is a vibrant, caring, and connected community. Our community is built upon diverse cultures, respects the environment and our heritage, supports economic prosperity, and celebrates active citizenship.

### Values

- communities working together
- economic prosperity as the backbone of a successful community
- responsible active citizenship
- social justice for all
- protecting our natural environment
- preserving our heritage
- strength through diversity
- dedication to a learning culture.

(Council endorsed October 3, 2000)



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I am pleased to share this first edition of the Halifax Regional Municipality's Corporate Plan with you. The Corporate Plan provides direction for Council's four year mandate.

In October 2003, Regional Council endorsed a vision that would guide us to 2020. The Halifax Regional Municipality is committed to realizing that vision, and fostering a community where people love to live, work, learn, play and do business.

The 2010/2011 Corporate Plan helps focus our long term vision over the next 4 years. Through Council Focus Areas, we are better able to zero in on our identified priority areas of Transportation, Infrastructure, Public Safety, Community Planning as well as Governance & Communications.

Geographically, we are Canada's largest municipality, covering more than 5,600 kilometres, an area larger than the Province of Prince Edward Island. Unlike many other urbanized municipalities, we have a very large rural area. This presents unique challenges in delivering fair and equitable municipal services, however every challenge presents opportunity.

Halifax continues to serve as the capital city of the Atlantic Provinces. Its economy is strong and diverse. It is one of the top three ports in Canada in terms of traffic and is the regional centre for government, military, post-secondary education, research and development, medical and health services and the financial and business community.

This economic diversity will serve us well as we weather the tough economic conditions facing our region, nation and world.

I invite you take the time to read this first edition of HRM's Corporate Plan and see why the Halifax Regional Municipality is a community where people love to live, work, learn, play and do business.

Respectfully, I remain

Peter Kelly Mayor

# Message from the CAO

As Chief Administrative Officer for the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), I have the distinct honour and pleasure to help guide a vision for our community that will serve us well into the future.

As with all successful organizations, it's the people that make it work. The commitment and dedication of Regional Council, staff and residents give us the motivation and spirit that makes HRM a community where people love to live, work, learn, play and do business.

Meeting the needs, demands and expectations of residents can be a daunting task. With the present economic climate, focusing our objectives has never been more imperative.

The 2010/2011 Corporate Plan gives us our focus for the short term, while allowing us to keep on track with our long term vision. Through Council Focus Areas, we are better able to target our limited resources and better manage the needs of the residents we serve.

Over the next 3 years Transportation, Infrastructure, Public Safety, Community Planning, as well as Governance & Communications will form that focus, while still keeping an eye to the environment and physical accessibility considerations in everything HRM does.

HRM has a diverse economy and a sound financial foundation. We have been successful in reducing our debt load over the last number of years. Decisions of the past and future will help us survive and thrive in the tough global economic conditions facing us in the future.

This Corporate Plan provides the guide by which Regional Council, staff, and the citizens we serve, plan the road ahead, set priorities and clearly define our goals and objectives.

Dan English Chief Administrative Officer







# Facts & Figures - Community

#### **Demographics**

- Geographically the largest municipality in Canada at 5600 square km (2153 square miles)
- Total population approximately 380,000. 10% of HRM's population is rural
- 46% of Nova Scotia's total employment
- 42% of Nova Scotia's total population
- HRM's population is expected to continue its steady growth, adding an additional 100,000 residents over the next 25 years
- Half of HRM's population is under the age of 40, the youngest in Atlantic Canada
- 2<sup>nd</sup> largest natural ice-free harbour in the world

#### Livability

- Conference Board of Canada ranked Halifax 7<sup>th</sup> in its first "Benchmarking the Attractiveness of Canada's Cities" report (2007), calling it a leader in education and the environment
- $9^{th}$  best place to live in Canada in Canadian Business Magazine 2007 ranking
- 2<sup>nd</sup> most sustainable city in Canada (medium-size) in Corporate Knight's 2007 ranking
- HRM is the Atlantic regional cultural cluster, and 57% of Nova Scotian artists reside in HRM
- 6 universities, 3 community college campuses. University and Community College enrollment totals 40,000 students
- HRM offers over 500 programs to youth which attract over 8,000 participants. 1,100 youth received financial assistance to participants in recreation activities
- Existing conventional transit was extended by 23,822 service hours and 452,634 kilometres in 07/08. University U-Pass and the Dartmouth Crossing phase one service is now complete

#### Economy

- HRM is the regional center of business and finance, hospital/medical services, research facilities, public administration and transportation
- HRM is a \$10 billion economy, dominated by service sector activities
- HRM has strong per capita income and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and generates 47% of provincial GDP
- Home to more than half the province's businesses: information & culture; technical, management and educational services; waste management; finance and insurance
- 6 main economic drivers: universities; defense; hospitals; public administration; banking and insurance
- 8 significant industries: port/shipping; air transportation; rail/truck transportation; professional services; tourism; information and culture; admin and support services
- Average household income is \$55,885 above the national average

#### Governance and Finance

- 1996 amalgamation of Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford and Halifax County to form Halifax Regional Municipality
- 23 Councillors, each representing one district, and 1 Mayor, elected at large
- HRM adheres to an effective multi-year financial strategy that includes a debt management plan – outstanding debt has decreased by 25% since 1998, exceeding the plan's goals
- Total debt, excluding Harbour Solutions and refinancing of long-term leases, is down by 21% from a high of \$347.5 million in 1999 to \$273.2 million in 2007
- HRM received an "A+" bond rating from Standard & Poor's



#### Fiscal Issues

- HRM is dependent on property tax for 76% of its revenue among the highest in Canada
- HRM receives 1.7% of total revenue from the provincial government, less than most other major Canadian city
- HRM is required to collect provincially-mandated expenditures that account for 19% of its total revenue
- Compared to other Canadian cities HRM has: low total property tax per dwelling unit, low operating expenditures per dwelling unit, low operating revenue per dwelling unit and a high dependence on property tax
- HRM has an annual infrastructure funding gap estimated at nearly \$50m

#### Environment

- International leader in environmental sustainability i.e. Solid Waste Management strategy
- Harbour Solutions project- largest clean-up of a saltwater body in Canada
- 15 billion litres of wastewater treated per year
- 242 tonnes of paper products and 2,730,000 beverage containers diverted from waste stream, and 100,000 tonnes of organic material composted since 1999
- First major urban area in Canada to reach the 50% waste diversion target
- 100,000+ green (organic) collection carts
- Committed to a 20% reduction in Corporate Greenhouse Emissions by 2012, from 2002 levels
- Have completed over 10,000 tonnes of GHG emission reduction/energy efficiency projects
- Undertaken project to replace 2500 streetlights with LED streetlights
- Completed worlds first geothermal cold storage system: Alderney 5
- One of the largest solar installations in Canada: Canada Games Centre

#### Labour

- Total labour force of 219,500, equalling a 70% participation rate
- 4.8% unemployment rate, lower than national average
- Heavily reliant on in-migration to support population growth, reliance will increase significantly in near future
- Within 20 years, 40% of NS population will be 55 years or older. To meet projected employment requirements over next 25 years, immigration has to rise to 3,500 per year
- Employment growth out paces population growth
- 67.5% of labour force has completed university, college or trade school
- Working-age population of HRM has the highest proportion of graduates from a trade school, college, or university in Canada

#### Film Statistics (January to September 2008)

- Commercials: 12
- Documentaries: 6
- Movies: 5
- Music Video: 1
- Photo Shoot: 1
- Shorts: 10
- Television shows: 10
- Total: 45 films for year



#### Herring Cove Waste Water Treatment Facility













# Facts & Figures - Corporate

- Halifax Regional Municipality is one of the best-managed and most liveable Municipalities in Canada. We strive to provide the best quality of life by providing programs and services which support a healthy, sustainable and vibrant community.
- HRM citizens are served by 23 Councillors, each representing one District, and by
  one Mayor, who is elected at large. The regional council is a political body but has
  no political party affiliation. The Municipality is structured under a Council/Chief
  Administrative Officer governance model. As our elected representatives, Council
  sets the priorities for the HRM municipal government while the administration takes
  that direction and develops policies and procedures for the organization. The CAO
  is responsible for the provision of advice to Council, implementation of policies and
  programs and the overall administration of the organization.
- The Municipality employs approximately 4,000 unionized and non-unionized people, including term and part time employees.

There are nine Business Units which include the following:

**Community Development** which includes planning and development services, culture and heritage, community relations, facility and recreation services.

**Transportation and Public Works** which includes fleet services, Metro Transit, municipal operations, traffic and right of way, real estate and facility services, solid waste resources, strategic transportation services as well as service delivery and quality improvement.

**Infrastructure and Asset Management** which includes facility development, design and construction, real property planning, infrastructure planning and the sustainable environment management office.

**Business Planning and Information Management** which includes information management, information technology, call centre and customer service centres, and corporate planning.

**Legal Services and Risk Management** which includes general litigation, appeals, contracts, labour and employment, prosecutions and regulatory hearings, insurance risk and claims management.

**Finance** which includes revenue, accounting, procurement and stores, payroll, budget, fiscal and tax policy, financial reporting and treasury.

**Human Resources** which includes labour relations, organizational development and health, and total compensation.

Halifax Regional Police and the Halifax Detachment of the RCMP provide an integrated approach to policing across the municipality. The seven policing functions include response, enforcement, crime solving, prevention, education, referral and problem solving.

Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency include fire suppression, emergency rescue response and extrication, dangerous goods response and emergency medical care. Non emergency services include public awareness, inspections, investigations, technical expertise and training.

- **Halifax Water** is the municipal water, wastewater and stormwater utility serving the residents of HRM, pursuant to the Public Utilities Act.
- Halifax Regional Library was created April 1, 1996 from a merging of the Halifax City, Halifax County and Dartmouth Regional Libraries. They provide public library service to the residents of HRM under the direction of the Halifax Regional Library Board.





# Role of the Corporate Plan

### HRM Corporate Planning Framework & Performance Measurement

The Halifax Regional Municipality's Corporate Plan – with its priorities, outcomes, and objectives – is the strategic map for the municipality, with a focus on improving the quality of life for people in Halifax Regional Municipality, now and into the future. It reflects Regional Council's direction and focus areas and describes how HRM intends to achieve planned outcomes on behalf of the community. It also describes the Executive Management Teams priorities critical to optimizing the effective and efficient delivery of programs, services and policies to the citizens of HRM.

The Plan outlines how HRM will take our long term HRM Vision 2020, and address its objectives over the mandate of Council. The key objective of the Plan is that Councillors and staff will work together to achieve priorities identified by the community in the following six areas:

- 1. Safe & Welcoming Communities
  - 2. Diverse Recreation, Leisure & Culture
- 3. Well Planned & Engaged Communities
- 📕 4. Clean & Healthy Environment
- 5. Integrated & Affordable Transportation Networks
- 6. Economic Prosperity

The Corporate Plan enables the whole organization to work toward common outcomes. This means that the municipal budget, human resources and business planning are all linked to the strategic direction contained in the Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan is also a way for Council to communicate their areas of focus to its stakeholders; particularly HRM citizens, and provides a framework for reporting back on progress achieved through the various programs and services provided by the Municipality.

### HRM Corporate Planning Framework





# Reporting Back on 2009/10

The 2009/2010 fiscal year was a busy and productive one at HRM. The municipality has much to be proud of as it continues to achieve success in Community Outcome Areas. The following are but a few examples of the significant progress achieved in the past year.

### Safe and Welcoming Communities

HRM's focus on public safety continues to be paramount, which was demonstrated through the creation of the HRM Public Safety Office in March 2009 to lead and direct a co-ordinated response to the Mayor's Roundtable Report. One extremely successful initiative completed by the Public Safety Office was the Pixels for Pistols gun amnesty program, during which police recovered 1,074 guns and over 10,000 rounds of ammunition.

Another success has been the development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders, one of which is the HRM Safer & Stronger Communities initiative. This partnership has seen various provincial government departments, police and other HRM staff develop community-based actions plans aimed at reducing criminal activity and addressing the root causes of crime in specific communities throughout HRM.

From a strategic standpoint, the direction of the HRM Public Safety Office builds on the crime reduction strategy which has enabled HRM Partners in Policing to realize a decline in crime between 2005-08 and hold crime rates steady in 2009.

Several diversity initiatives are in progress with the goal of promoting a more welcoming community and improving relations between HRM and its diverse citizens. This included the establishment of an advisory group on issues affecting the African Nova Scotia community, and exploration of additional options to use with restorative justice programs. In February 2010, the terms of an agreement were reached between the municipality and the Africville Genealogy Society, which include land, \$3 million toward the reconstruction of the Seaview United Baptist Church to serve as an Africville memorial, as well as support for future community-based improvements. Additionally, continued implementation of the Immigration Action Plan included the launch of a newcomers' guide and translation of the guide into French and Arabic.

## Diverse Recreation, Leisure, and Cultural Choices

Thanks to contributions from other levels of government and unprecedented capital investment, infrastructure projects are flourishing in HRM, especially in the area of recreation and culture. Construction is well underway on the state-of-the-art Canada Games Centre, which is slated for completion in late 2010. This facility will provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities for citizens of HRM. Other significant infrastructure projects underway in 2009/10 include the Prospect Road Community Centre, the HRM 4-Pad Arena Complex, significant upgrades to the Captain William Spry Centre, and detailed planning for the new Central Library.

In September 2009, HRM was one of seven organizations to sign on to Stepping Up, a comprehensive strategy to encourage more physical activity in the region. The other partners include the Capital District Health Authority; Dalhousie University; Halifax Regional School Board; the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia; IWK Health Centre; and Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection. With over 40 actions, the strategy offers a community wide approach to increasing the physical activity levels of residents of HRM. The four goal areas reference leadership, supportive environments, community built and natural environments, and awareness and commitment.

Ongoing activity in relation to HRM's Cultural Plan in 2009/10 included an enhanced focus on supporting public art, initiation of the Mayor's Award for Contemporary Visual Art, the second annual Nocturne: Art at Night event, continued work to paint murals on traffic control boxes throughout the region, and ongoing programs to involve youth in community beatification through art.

HRM continued to enhance its reputation as a world class host through events such as the 2009 World Canoe Championships on Lake Banook, the 2010 Brier, the 2009 Tall Ships Festival, and two major Concerts on the Common. Throughout 2009/2010, planning intensified in preparation for the 2011 Canada Winter Games, which will leave a lasting legacy throughout the region.









www.myhrm.ca





### Well Planned and Engaged Communities

The adoption of the Regional Plan in 2006 provided a focused framework on which to base community planning decisions. Over the past year, HRM has marked many milestones in its continued implementation of the Regional Plan.

The approval of *HRMbyDesign* in 2009 has streamlined the development approvals process for downtown Halifax. For the first time, downtown development is being subject to review by a citizen-based Design Review Committee to ensure that every new building makes a positive contribution to the overall look and feel of the urban core. Also for the first time in HRM, a heritage conservation district has been established on Barrington Street, from the George Street to Spring Garden Road intersections.

*HRMbyDesign* is one of 21 functional plans identified under the Regional Plan. The past year has seen significant progress on plans related to water quality, sea level rise modelling, coastline access, housing affordability, heritage districts, and social heritage preservation.

Residents in identified Regional Plan growth centres throughout HRM have been engaged in a comprehensive Community Visioning process. In 2009/10, vision implementation programs got underway in the areas of the Bedford Waterfront, Fall River and Musquodoboit Harbour, and draft visions were prepared for Penhorn/Woodlawn, Spryfield, and Middle/ Upper Sackville/Lucasville areas.

Over the past two years, processing times for planning applications have steadily improved despite a number of complex and large scale developments throughout HRM. In 2009 planning staff processed 135 applications; an increase of 36 from 2008.

### Economic Prosperity

According to the Halifax Performance Indicators (HPI) established by the Greater Halifax Partnership, HRM's 2009 performance ranked among the highest in overall economic prosperity when compared to Canadian cities that HRM benchmarks to under the region's Economic Strategy. The municipality's strong showing with respect to economic indicators is an indication of this area's diverse and vibrant economy. This diversity makes Greater Halifax more recession resistant than most of its benchmark cities, despite those cities having among the most stable economies in Canada. As the recession lessens, Greater Halifax is still holding its own. Labour force participation is in the top five in the country and unemployment levels remained well below the national average and ahead of much larger centres like Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

The past year has witnessed HRM continue to do its part in promoting economic prosperity by supporting continued implementation of the region's *Economic Strategy*, and maintaining a solid financial foundation through measures like a renewed debt strategy, a significant increase in the capital budget while decreasing overall debt, maintaining a competitive tax burden, managing reasonable growth in expenditures, and achieving a consistently high Standard and Poor's rating.

### Clean and Healthy Environment

HRM continues to distinguish itself as a good corporate citizen by leading the way in reducing pesticide use and continuing to set the national standard for solid waste management. Several innovative energy efficiency projects have been initiated including LED traffic lights, a LED streetlight pilot, and construction of several LEED standard buildings. On Earth Day 2009 the Halifax Regional Municipality launched the *HRM Smart Car Fleet Program*, just one aspect of an overall strategy to provide staff with more sustainable transportation options.

HRM has continued to reduce energy consumption costs in existing facilities, as well as facilities that are approved but not yet constructed. Community centres in East Dartmouth, Fall River, and Prospect are utilizing geothermal technology. Of special note is the *Alderney 5 Geothermal Project* which is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 9000 tonnes per year. The region now has more geothermal energy systems than anywhere in Atlantic Canada.

HRM has been recognized for their efforts in environmental stewardship. The municipality placed second in the annual Corporate Knights Sustainable Cities Ranking of Canadian cities, the Procurement section was a finalist in the Leadership in Green Procurement Award, and Community Development's *MindShift Program* won an award from the Nova Scotia Environmental Network.



Strategies Success









### Integrated and Affordable Transportation Networks

Transportation improvements have been most evident through progress on implementing the five-year transit operating plan. The goal of the plan is to help meet increasing demand and effectively deliver future transit services to HRM. Milestones in the past year included a number of new buses and routes, introduction of the MetroX Regional Express Transit System in Tantallon, a new pilot community bus service for Sambro/Ketch Harbour, and the introduction of transit in Google Maps for HRM.

The Official Sod Turning for Metro Transit's new Ragged Lake Transit Centre took place in June and construction will be completed this year. The new centre will allow for continued transit service enhancements by providing the additional capacity required to house, maintain, and dispatch an increased fleet of vehicles.

Transit is just one component of overall transportation planning. Other work in this area in 2009/10 included traffic management measures, initiation of the Peninsula Corridor Study, development of a workplace commuter options pilot, and completion of a Regional Parking Strategy. In addition, HRM launched an online survey to seek the opinions of residents on sustainable transportation. The results of the survey will be used to assist in the development of a Transportation Master Plan.

Active transportation has formed an important part of the overall transportation plan for the region. An increased focus on exploring modes of active transportation has included an increase in active trail development, emphasis on sidewalks and other walkways, and twenty linear kilometres of bike lanes installed on roadways throughout HRM in 2009.

### 2008/09 Condensed Consolidated Financial Information – in thousands of dollars

Summary of Financial Position	2009	2008
Assets		
Cash and investments	166,151	157,653
Faxes and accounts receivable	90,546	84,06
nventory, prepaid expenses and advances	12,456	12,346
nvestment in Halifax Water	494,017	468,87
Fotal Assets	763,170	722,937
Liabilities		
_ong-term debt	344,230	347,334
Other liabilities	211,384	207,914
Fotal Liabilities	555,614	555,248
Net Assets	207,556	167,689
Nunicipal Position	· · · · · ·	
Amounts to be recovered	(17,798)	(18,875
Fund balances	225,354	186,564
Fotal Municipal Position	207,556	167,689
fummary of Financial Activity	2009	2008
Revenues	2003	2000
axation	540,057	509,313
ess amounts received for provincially mandated services:		
School board	(112,617)	(110,842
Assessment services	(6,133)	(5,926
Social housing	(2,630)	(2,450
Corrections services	(7,907)	(7,819
Amounts received for provincially mandated services	(129,287)	(127,037)
	410,770	382,276
Jser fees and charges	123,756	123,792
)ther revenue	134,514	121,806
Total Revenues	669,040	627,874
Expenditures		
General government services	96,672	86,259
Protective services	159,984	155,272
ransportation services	185,153	175,458
Environmental services	89,648	143,030
Recreation and cultural services	81,989	76,743
Planning and development services	40,867	41,938
fotal Expenditures	654,313	678,700
Net Revenue (Expenditures)	14,727	(50,826
ncrease in equity in Halifax Water	25,140	209,302
ncrease (decrease) in amounts to be recovered and non-financial assets	(1,077)	3,01
Change in Fund Balances	38,790	161,487



### Planning for Change Seizing Opportunities Safeguarding Our Future

Halifax Regional Municipality's greatest resource is people. Through consultation, the citizens of the Municipality have identified the services they want to see delivered today, and what they would like the Municipality to look like in the future. In response, six outcome areas have been identified as critical to achieving a vision of becoming one of the best, most liveable municipalities in Canada. These areas are reflective of the key elements that make us attractive to residents and businesses, and help align the initiatives the Municipality undertakes, for the people who live, work, play, learn, and do business here. The Outcome Areas ultimately reflect a city where the residents are actively engaged in their community, where people perceive value for their tax dollar, and enjoy a high quality of life.

The Outcome Areas are ongoing – they will not be achieved in the shortterm, but rather represent continuous improvement for the Municipality. While priorities in any given year may be adjusted to meet changing needs, the Outcome Areas will remain stable and reflective of our vision and values.

The six Outcome Areas are:

A Safe and Welcoming Community Integrated and Affordable Transportation Networks Diverse Recreation, Leisure, and Cultural Choices Well Planned and Engaged Communities Clean and Healthy Environment Economic Prosperity

Our commitment to organizational performance measurement is key to transparency and accountability. We will continue to focus on assessing if we are doing the right things, and how well we are doing them. Through reviews, ongoing performance measurement and timely reporting to Council and the public, HRM will strive to plan for change, seize opportunities and safeguard our future with improved efficiency.

### **Community Outcome Area**

### 1. Safe and Welcoming Communities

Citizens and visitors benefit from a safe, welcoming and resilient community; through the delivery of effective preventative, investigative, enforcement and community safety programs; open and inviting neighborhoods; and proactive emergency measures planning and response.

### Goal: HRM is a safe community and this is reflected in public perception

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Develop a strategic plan to address violence and public safety in HRM
- The Safer, Stronger Communities Initiative; an intergovernmental committee, will develop community based programs aimed at addressing the root causes of crime and measuring results
- Develop a corporate public safety communications strategy
- Clarify the role and definition of existing Community Response Officers and Community Support Officers proposed through the Mayor's Roundtable
- Develop a committee to improve the downtown bar scene in Halifax
- Work with the Province of Nova Scotia to develop programs regarding student alcohol consumption and abuse issues
- Work with the Province of Nova Scotia to develop specialty courts including a Drug Treatment Court
- Work with the Province of Nova Scotia to explore additional options for using Restorative Justice approaches
- Continue to implement the Youth Advocate Program (YAP), a sustainable anti-gang initiative, in pilot communities within HRM
- Continue the crosswalk safety education campaign





#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

Citizens generally feel safe within their communities. 62% of HRM residents are confident that the police will respond promptly in an emergency.





#### How will HRM measure success?

- Reported incidents of crime (by type)
- · Percentage of surveyed residents who feel safe in HRM
- Percentage of surveyed residents who feel safe in their neighborhood

### Goal: Effective preventative, investigative, and regulatory enforcement programs are in place

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Review and refine Taxi By-Law 108 to address taxi availability, taxi stand locations and the existing Transportation Strategy, to ensure there are adequate late night transportation options supporting the downtown bar scene
- Work with the Province of Nova Scotia to develop legislation and programs to address harassment and intimidation on the street

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Availability of taxis
- New safety related legislation is in place
- The number of bylaw complaints where enforcement action is taken

### Goal: HRM provides timely and appropriate emergency response

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Continue to refine HRM's civic addressing data base to ensure effective emergency dispatching
- Continue to review emergency response capability

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Fire Emergency Response Time (% of calls meeting response service standards in both urban and rural communities)
- Fire Station location review complete
- 911 call response

### Goal: Community safety is enhanced through education and partnerships

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

· Continue to deliver public safety education programs

#### How will HRM measure success?

• Percentage change in fire and crime related incidents in planned safety education areas

### Goal: Buildings, properties, and infrastructure in HRM are safe, healthy, and well maintained

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Continue to inspect buildings for compliance with regulations
- Continue to inspect HRM owned buildings, properties and infrastructure for life cycle planning and compliance with standards

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Number of regulatory inspections conducted (Building, Fire, and Bylaw)
- Number of inspections completed on HRM buildings, properties and infrastructure

### Goal: HRM is prepared in the event of a large scale emergency or disaster

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Negotiate with the Province of Nova Scotia and other Atlantic Provinces, to get financial support for the ongoing operational costs of the Heavy Urban Search and Rescue team
- Designate select Municipally-owned buildings as comfort centres, and ensure they have adequate generator back-up
- Develop and test detailed plans to ensure the delivery of core services to residents in the case of an emergency

#### How will HRM measure success?

• Number of times Emergency Master Plan has been exercised



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

There is a large gap between citizens' expectations and service levels on the maintenance of existing infrastructure facilities, the availability of late night transportation options, and communications regarding criminal activity.

82% of HRM residents are satisfied with fire and emergency services response time.





#### SURVEY



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

Quality of life within HRM is high with approximately 80% of citizens rating HRM as a good or a very good place to live. Features that make HRM attractive include easy access to services and amenities, friendly people, ideal size, and its proximity to water.

HRM is considered a good place to raise a family by 70% of its residents.





### Goal: HRM is a welcoming destination for all residents and visitors

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Work with partners on the Intergovernmental Round Table Population Committee on labour market and immigration issues in the region to assist with the goal of attracting and retaining more people
- Translate versions of the Newcomers Guide into different languages with the initial focus on French and Arabic
- Develop and design a new youth focused Newcomers Guide
- Develop strategies to improve the quality of life for diverse communities
- Review and implement the Community and Race Relations Committee renewal initiative
- · Create opportunities for immigrant work placement in HRM
- Collaborate with stakeholders to develop a collective strategy enhancing relationships between the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and HRM
- HRM will ensure new buildings meet minimum accessibility requirements

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Number of/percentage of new immigrants employed/retained in the community
- Percentage of HRM facilities that meet accessibility minimum requirements for persons with disabilities

### **Community Outcome Area**

### 2. Diverse Recreation, Leisure and Cultural Choices

People enjoy diverse leisure and lifestyle opportunities through access to affordable recreational programs, library services, facilities, parks, trails, and beaches; vibrant entertainment offerings; unique cultural and heritage experiences; and local and world class events and festivals.

### Goal: HRM residents enjoy a broad range of affordable and accessible recreation and life-long learning opportunities

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Implement the goals of the HRM wide Physical Activity Plan
- Conduct public consultation on design of the Central Library project
- Partner with community organizations on learning programs such as audited university programs, English Language Learning, literacy tutoring and income tax clinics
- Enhance access to library materials and resources through a "Google-like" search tool
- · Develop volunteer opportunities for teens and adults
- Enhance opportunities for residents to take advantage of library services from their home computer
- · Implement web based fine, ticket, etc. payment options

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Number of recreation programs and services offered over the last 2 years
- Number of program registrations by age category (Preschool, child, youth, and adult)
- Number of children receiving subsidies from HRM Kids / LOWCO (low income cut off from Stats Canada)
- Percentage of population satisfied with the quality of Library programming and services





#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

Residents like to take advantage of HRM's leisure and cultural opportunities as indicated by the high percentage of residents that visited parks (91%) attended a civic event or festival (78%), or attended a cultural presentation (61%) at least once or twice per year. Many residents are more frequent users, making leisure activities a monthly occurrence.





- Participation rate in Library programs (per capita, per youth and adult capita)
- Library usage per capita (by type of usage)

### Goal: Provision of indoor and outdoor recreational and leisure facilities and assets

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- · Pilot street closures for individual and family recreation use
- Build the four pad arena in Bedford and continue with the long term arena capacity study for additional ice surfaces
- Begin construction of the new Central Library in Halifax and finish construction of the Woodlawn Library in Dartmouth
- Complete construction of the Canada Games Centre and capital upgrades of other Canada Games venues
- Complete construction of the Prospect Recreation Centre
- Investigate the opportunity for a new regional museum and storage facility
- · Complete upgrades to HRM supervised beachfront areas
- Establish processes to maintain and support facilities and their usage including lease and management agreements

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Percentage of surveyed citizens satisfied with HRM's outdoor recreation facilities
- Percentage of surveyed citizens satisfied with HRM's indoor recreation facilities
- Number of facility lease agreements (year to year comparison)
- Number of rental hours scheduled for HRM arenas

### Goal: Preserve, develop and celebrate HRM's arts, culture, and heritage

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

• Continue to implement the HRM Cultural Plan by delivering new cultural festivals and events and exploring a new governance model for major events hosting.

- Establish new African Nova Scotian office and begin to establish an operational framework
- Participate in the development of the National Urban Aboriginal Study

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Percentage of surveyed population who are satisfied with HRM's major sporting events
- Percentage of surveyed population who are satisfied with concerts and major cultural events hosted in HRM
- Percentage of surveyed residents who have participated in an HRM-sponsored program and/or event

# SURVEY

#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

Roughly 25% of HRM residents use trails, participate in recreation or leisure programs, or attend local community centre or recreation facilities at least once a year. The cost of recreation programs (52%) or facilities (46%), and the lack of facilities within a reasonable distance from people's homes (40%) were cited as the main reasons for nonparticipation.

Residents want to see a balance of different sized recreation and community facilities throughout the Region.





### **Community Outcome Area**

### 3. Well Planned and Engaged Communities

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

#### Goal: Smart growth is achieved as per the Regional Plan

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Develop a project plan for the Five-Year Review of the Regional Plan
- Facilitating collaboration between all three levels of government on the investment in and redevelopment of publicly owned lands in the Regional Centre as a demonstration of public sector leadership for the private sector to follow
- Foster the sustainability and success of the regional centre through the ongoing implementation of the Regional Plan and HRM by Design
- Continue regular monitoring of residential land supply versus demand for additional housing by geographic area
- Improve time lines for planning application approval processes
- Complete Watershed/Servicing Studies in Tantallon, Lake Echo/Porter's Lake and Musquodoboit Harbour (Phase II)
- Proceed with implementation of completed Watershed/ Servicing Studies for Shubenacadie Lakes
- Commence discussions with adjoining municipality for implementation of Hubbards Watershed/Servicing Study
- Prepare terms of reference for Watershed/Servicing Studies for East Preston/North Preston and Sheet Harbour
- Continue work on remaining 16 Functional Plans, with a focus on Heritage, Housing Affordability and Wastewater Management (Halifax Water)
- Undertake a Regional Groundwater Resources Study to identify where sufficient groundwater is available to support wells, or where the extension of piped services may be warranted.
- Complete the Cogswell Interchange Master Plan

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Movement toward the stated growth distribution targets of the Regional Plan (urban / suburban / rural)
- Percentage of infrastructure developments and upgrades / capital expenditures aligned with Regional Plan
- Investment in and redevelopment of publicly owned lands within the regional centre

#### Goal: Ensure balance between new development and the protection of heritage and cultural assets as per the Regional Plan

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Develop design guidelines and a planning program for phase II of HRMbyDesign in the Regional Centre
- Introduce two more Heritage Conservation Districts in downtown Halifax Barrington Street South and Historic Properties
- Complete the Social Heritage Strategy (HRM heritage buildings, collections, programs and services), as a component of the Heritage Functional Plan

#### How will HRM measure success?

• Annual development activity in the Heritage Conservation District

### Goal: Communities and Citizens are more engaged in community leadership, planning and development

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Commence Community Visioning exercises in Woodside, Tantallon & Porter's Lake areas
- Continue to implement the six approved community visioning exercises
- Design and deliver a broad community visioning and relationship building program for the Preston area
- Develop a collective volunteer strategy for HRM involving all stakeholders
- Redesign and amalgamate Volunteer Awards and Volunteer Conference events to ensure greater impact and efficiencies



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

The top five capital projects as noted by residents, and listed in order of priority were: improved streets and road conditions (53%), upgrades or expansions to water treatment facilities (31%), increased capacity of major roadways (31%), improvements to active transportation facilities (26%), and redevelopment of the downtown core (22%).

One half of the population of HRM believes that the quality of life has stayed the same. Factors that contributed towards a better quality of life include improved public transportation, increase in amenities, shops and restaurants, improvements in roads and highways, and access to healthcare and doctors.

In the debate on heritage vs. development, 63% of residents believe in a mixed approach to development.



#### SURVEY



Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

25% to 30% of HRM residents participate in Municipal government in some form by attending public meetings, volunteering, or contacting HRM at least once a year.

70% of HRM residents would like to hear from the Municipality at least once every three months on topics such as development projects, tax dollar spending, and Council decisions.

The majority (43%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the Municipality's communication efforts, with 30% of citizens stating that they are satisfied.

A recurring theme of the need for improved communications from the Municipality was evident throughout the results, and the Municipality needs to improve both the delivery approach and the messaging to increase citizen engagement.



- Continue to provide leadership training programs, a volunteer training calendar, volunteer data base, and resource centre for volunteers
- Undertake a review of various grants and contribution programs to better serve volunteer community
- Focus and expand training programs to address specific sectors and communities of interests
- Complete the board of director design and recruitment process for new Canada Games Centre
- Design and deliver new programs and services to enhance relationships between HRM and newcomers, aboriginal peoples, African Nova Scotians, and youth as well as increase opportunities for active civic engagement
- Complete the redesign of Halifax.ca website and develop and deliver an electronic newsletter, ensuring content is aligned with the Corporate Plan outcomes and Council Focus Areas
- Continue to utilize the "Good Neighbours, Great Neighbourhoods" initiative to encourage and promote community and citizen involvement

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Voter turnout
- Number of Candidates offering (for elected Municipal positions)
- · Rate of citizen participation on Boards and Committees
- Percentage of residents surveyed that are satisfied with the communication efforts of the Municipality
- Percentage of surveyed residents satisfied with HRM's public consultation on HRM initiatives
- Level of volunteerism in communities & Region (trend)
   Percentage of HRM residents who volunteered at a neighborhood / community organization or event
- Subscriber base for HRM electronic newsletter
- Website analytics track visits to Halifax.ca, patterns of use and most frequently visited pages

### **Community Outcome Area**

### 4. Clean and Healthy Environment

A community that values and protects its resources, and reduces its ecological footprint for present and future generations through strategies that promote clean air, land and water, and reduced use of carbon fuel.

#### Goal: Ensure clean air / energy

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Make application to the Eco-Trust program for the Green Thermal Utility Project and for LED street lighting
- Complete the Alderney 5 Energy Project
- Convert conventional traffic signals to LEDs
- Convert up to 2008 conventional streetlights to LED cut-off lights

#### How will HRM measure success?

- HRM Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Total / Percentage Change)
- Year over year change in urban forest canopy cover on HRM land
- Total urban forest canopy cover
- Reduced energy consumption

#### Goal: Ensure clean water

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Meet or exceed all Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality
- Fully restore the Halifax Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Complete the Harbour Solutions Project
- Continue to respond to customer feedback on the quality and safety of municipal water from the Annual Customer Survey
- Determine roles and responsibilities for storm water management and initiate the Storm Water Management Functional Plan



#### SURVEY



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

Public opinion on the quality of HRM's drinking water and air quality in communities is good (over 70% were satisfied), but quality of the water in Halifax Harbour was seen as poor (75%).

Over 50% of residents are in favour of investments in alternative energy sources for Municipal buildings and assets even if they cost more to buy or run.

Almost all, or 96%, of HRM residents participate in the Blue Bag/Paper Recycling, and Green Cart composting program (90%).



- Complete the Water Quality Monitoring Functional Plan
- Consolidated a Municipal response to the Provincial Water Strategy in an effort to clarify responsibilities
- Collaborate with the Province to implement the proposed Wetlands Conservation Policy
- Seek amendment to the Municipal Charter to enable HRM to implement a Bylaw providing increased protection of green space vegetation
- Continue Watershed Management Studies

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Citizen satisfaction with drinking water quality (Percentage of users rating drinking water quality as excellent or good)
- Harbour Water Quality Monitoring
- Water quality of HRM lakes

#### Goal: Ensure clean land

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Work with NS Department of Environment on developing plans and programs to meet new compost guidelines and reach Environmental Goals and Sustainability Prosperity Act targets for waste diversion of 300kg/capita/year by 2015
- Monitor the diversion of construction and demolition materials
- Continue to implement programs for source separation in HRM buildings and facilities
- Explore new technologies to increase the recycling of materials into bio-chemicals and bio-fuels
- Work with industry to find more sustainable markets for recyclable materials
- Increase the quality of compost resulting from the source separated organics, by eliminating contaminants from the organics stream

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Percentage Protected / Reserved land
- Waste Diversion Rate

### Goal: Enhance environmental education and awareness programs

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Continue working with Natural Resources Canada on Regional Adaptation Collaboratives to consider the effects of climate change and sea level rise on urban planning and infrastructure decisions
- Continue to support Community Education efforts through participation in the Nova Scotia Environmental Network Education Caucus and promotion of environmental events including Earth Day, Power of Green, and others.
- Continue to implement Recreation Earth Education Program and Mindshift Program
- Continue to implement the Municipality's Anti Idling Campaign
- Continue to share "Naturally Green" messages about wastewater, recycling, composting, climate change adaptation, LEED-certified new construction and other environmentally conscious initiatives

#### How will HRM measure success?

• HRM ranking on Corporate Knight's Survey





### **Community Outcome Area**

### 5. Integrated and Affordable Transportation Networks

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

### Goal: HRM provides an integrated, multi-model transit system

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Advocate for increased and sustainable funding for public transit from the Provincial and Federal governments
- Explore the feasibility of a Capital Transportation Authority
- Finalize the Transit Functional Plan
- Introduce the Eco-MOBILITY Pilot Project, with the objective to generate revenue from less sustainable modes of transportation (single-occupant vehicles, in particular) and invest that money in more sustainable transportation options
- Introduce a new Upper Water Street route in response to expanded activities occurring as a result of the Seaport Farmers Market, NSCAD classes, cruise ship traffic and Pier 21
- Work with Department of National Defense to develop an alignment for the connector road in order to improve transportation patterns in the Portland Hills/Russell Lake West area
- Develop on-road priority measures for transit buses
- Completion of the Ragged Lake Transit Centre
- Construction of the Bridge Terminal and expand the Mumford Terminal
- Construct a new terminal in Burnside and a redesign of the Burnside service to meet the growing demand and changing needs of this key employment centre
- In an effort to address the needs of riders with accessibility challenges, HRM will continue the conversion of service to Accessible Low Floor for a further two to three routes, and increase Access-a-Bus service

- Develop the Annual Service Plan for the first year implementation of the five year Strategic Operational Plan
- Continue to expand the Metro X service along Highway 103 from Exit 4, as well as to Halifax International Airport along Highway 102
- Begin the design and Transport Canada approval process for a new Woodside Ferry to address the lifecycle of the current ferries and increased demand for enhanced service from Woodside

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Change in transit service availability: Hours of service
- Change in transit service availability: Total kilometers of service
- Percentage of riders surveyed reporting satisfaction with transit service
- Revenue Ridership (percentage change / total)
- Metro Transit ridership

Goal: HRM boasts a Region-wide, visible and connected active transportation network of on-road and off-road facilities

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Advance the Chester Spurline; which includes eight kilometres of trail from Beechville to Joseph Howe
- Leverage federal/provincial cost sharing
- Upgrade existing trails connecting Portland Estates and Portland Hills to the Metro Link
- Terminal Station and the Mount Hope Interchange, to meet active transportation standards
- Develop an agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia on mixed use provincially-owned trails
- Create additional bike lanes through paving the road shoulders and lane realignments

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Number of new kilometres of sidewalks / Total kilometres as well as utilization
- Number of new kilometres of bike lanes / Total kilometres as well as utilization
- Number of new kilometres of paved trails / Total kilometres as well as utilization



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

The primary mode of transportation for 70% of HRM residents that commute regularly to work or school is their own vehicle. Only 4% currently walk or car pool, and 17% use public transit.

Citizens suggest a range of service improvements that would motivate them to use public transit. Increased service frequency tops the list at 41%, followed by punctual service (37%), more direct/limited stops (35%), and added service to rural areas (28%).





#### SURVEY



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

The new MetroLink service, improved surveillance systems on buses, and improved services on Sundays or during special events has prompted about 20% of residents to try public transit.

The largest gaps between citizens' expectations and Municipal performance in the area of transportation were: maintenance of streets and roads, a lack of downtown parking alternatives or parking availability, the management of rush hour traffic, snow and ice removal, transit coverage - particularly to rural areas, and transit service frequency.



• Number of new kilometres of rural trails / Total kilometres as well as utilization

#### Goal: Well planned transportation networks allow the easy flow of people, goods and services throughout the Municipality

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- In preparation for the five year review of the Regional Plan, HRM will build a more advanced computerized trip demand model which will have much greater capability of projecting demands on both the roadway and transit network
- Support the province and development industry and share the cost of construction of the Larry Uteck and Margeson Drive Interchanges including construction of two HRM owned roundabouts
- Implement asset specific life cycle management software for fleet and roads and explore opportunities for strategic asset management software
- Support land use planning policies and implementation strategies that ensure community amenities are linked by sidewalks, trails and paths

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Average commute time to work
- Modal split (primary mode of transportation)
- Percentage of paved lane kilometres rated as good to very good (based on SDI values)
- Percentage of sidewalk kilometres rated as good to very good (based on % defective values)
- Percentage of curb kilometres rated as good to very good (based on the condition rating standard)
- Number of Park & Ride spaces
- Rate of utilization of Park & Ride spaces
- Percentage of residents living within 1 kilometre of higher order transit route (including the ferries)
- Percentage of residents living within 400m of a local transit route
- Percentage of time service standards are met for snow and ice control
- Percentage of streets with sidewalks

### **Community Outcome Area**

### 6. Economic Prosperity

According to the Conference Board of Canada, HRM is one of nine economic hub cities in Canada. As the centre of economic activity for Eastern Canada, our citizens benefit from an attractive business climate, good employment opportunities, a culture of learning, and a tax system that offers good value for the taxes they pay.

Economic prosperity creates a vibrant and prosperous municipality that will be in the best position to attract and retain workers, improve the income of its residents – especially over the long term. Economic growth increases municipal revenues. As incomes and opportunities rise, the tax base expands thereby enabling HRM to enhance the quality of life for all its citizens.

#### Goal: HRM and stakeholder alignment and engagement

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Continue to work with partners to implement the Economic Strategy
- Conduct a review of HRM's current Economic Strategy, building on its successes in order to position the Municipality for sustained economic growth
- Develop an 2011-2016 Economic Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Conduct regular collaborative sessions with Council on economic development
- Ensure alignment between the Regional Plan and the Economic Strategy review process highlighting in particular the Cultural Plan and Event Strategy
- Develop a framework for strategic decision making that engages all three levels of government and major stakeholders in ensuring the viability and success of the Regional Centre in acknowledgement of its Hub City status
- Capitalize on areas of common interest between the three levels of government and major stakeholders to seek opportunities for cost sharing in the Regional Centre



#### SURVEY



#### Key Findings – 2010 Citizen Survey

A generally positive economic outlook exists within HRM. However residents feel that improvements to road conditions, investments in the transit system, a change to the tax structure, increased public safety, and increased efforts to attract and retain businesses and young professionals would further improve economic prosperity.



#### How will HRM measure success?

- HRM rating on Economic Strategy Scorecard
- 2011-16 Economic Strategy developed
- Regional Plan review progress
- Number of cost shared initiatives within the Regional Centre

#### Goal: Create an attractive business climate

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Investigate ways to widely distribute HRM's good news and success stories
- Develop tools to gauge economic impact of HRM services
- Incorporate more information on economic impacts in Council Reports to assist with decision making
- Explore options to increase investment in the Capital District
- Collaborate with stakeholders to continue making improvements to regulatory approval processes
- Further engage the business community on transportation planning
- Collaborate with other levels of government on an end to end approach to tax competitiveness
- Improve access to online information to encourage economic development
- Maintain and enhance HRM's fiscal health

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Fiscal Health Indicators
- Growth in commercial tax base
- Non residential building permits within the Regional Plan growth centres
- Percentage of development permits approved that meet processing standards
- Annual business park sales
- Standard and Poor's rating
# Goal: HRM maintains a reasonably competitive tax environment

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

• Continue to monitor HRM's tax rates, regulatory processes and overall competitiveness in comparison to other Canadian cities

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Commercial taxes compared to other benchmark Canadian cities
- · Commercial tax revenue as a percentage of total tax revenues
- Percentage of surveyed residents that believe that they receive good value for the taxes they pay
- Percentage of surveyed businesses that believe that they receive good value for the taxes they pay (GHP Business Retention Survey)

#### Goal: Make investments to support economic prosperity

#### What will HRM do to achieve this?

- Work with provincial and federal partners to consider a private sector proposal to develop a new convention centre in the downtown core
- Work with Halifax Gateway Council partners to support the Halifax Gateway Strategic Plan 2010-2015, though such means as HRM's Atlantic Gateway Action Plan and by considering Gateway priorities when evaluating HRM's own transportation and infrastructure priorities
- Continue to work with Atlantic Gateway partners like the Port of Halifax, Stanfield International Airport and the Province to examine ways to improve the efficiency of access to and from facilities associated with them
- Launch the Strategic Urban Partnership to increase the level of public and private investment in the Regional Centre, with initial focus on the Capital District in order to generate sustainable economic growth for the entire Municipality
- Endeavour to change LEED criteria relative to transit service











- Review infrastructure priority list and evaluation matrix to ensure there is sufficient emphasis on economic impact
- Develop a long term capital investment plan and asset management plan

#### How will HRM measure success?

- Percentage of capital budget aligned with Gateway initiatives
- Public investment in the Capital District
- Number of financial, legislative and policy tools implemented to stimulate private investment

# **Council Focus Areas**

For any organization to make progress, there has to be a clear set of goals and expectations. For municipal governments, the priorities may be required to adapt quickly, as community issues are diverse and can change. Halifax Regional Council acknowledges the community stewardship role with which it is entrusted. Not only ensuring that basic municipal services are provided effectively and efficiently, but having the vision and foresight to provide focused direction in specific areas of importance to the Municipality.

Council's Focus Areas (CFA) are an articulation of Council's direction to the administration on where to apply additional effort and resources. With limited capacity and resources available, Council develops the CFA's to ensure that extra effort is applied to key areas with specific goals.

The following Council Focus Areas have been identified as requiring reallocation of resources and focused attention while developing the budget and business plans over the course of Council's four year mandate. The important themes of environmental sustainability and physical accessability will continue to be emphasized in all of these areas.



Front row (left to right): Steve Streatch, Sue Uteck, Linda Mosher, Mary Wile, Debbie Hum, Gloria McCluskey, Mayor Peter Kelly, Jerry Blumenthal, Jackie Barkhouse, Barry Dalrymple, Russell Walker, Deputy Mayor Brad Johns, Darren Fisher Back Row (left to right): David Hendsbee, Bill Karsten, Perter Lund, Tim Outhit, Jim Smith, Lorelei Nicoll, Jennifer Watts, Robert Harvey, Dawn Sloane, Stephen D. Adams, Reg Rankin





# Council Focus Area: Community Planning

## 1. Ongoing implementation of the Regional Plan

# Functional Plans which provide guides for strategic operating and capital investments

#### Goal:

• Completion of 21 Functional Plans to address region wide facility planning and service delivery needs

#### The development of Community Visions for all Regional Plan Growth Centres

#### Goal:

• Guide Council and staff in preparation of MPS reviews, service delivery and capital project planning, build citizen capacity, communities developing visions

#### Clear and predictable development standards and procedures

#### Goals:

- · Improved planning processing times
- · Improved quality of development
- · Clarity for developers and community on expectations

# Enhanced regulations and support framework for Heritage Conservation

#### Goals:

- Barrington Street Heritage District Implementation
- · Heritage Functional Plan (Heritage Conservation Districts)
- · Legislative review of Heritage Property Act (Provincial)

#### Enhanced public access to rivers, lakes and coastlines

#### Goals:

- · Master Plans large subdivisions
- · Strategic acquisition identified in Regional Plan
- · Preserve traditional access points (no development applications)

#### Affordable Market Housing

- · Clarity Municipal mandate vs. Provincial mandate
- Encourage development in areas with low land and infrastructure costs
- · Transit orientated community design and development
- Mix of housing types

## 2. Implementation of HRM by Design: New MPS and Bylaw for Downtown Halifax and remainder of regional centre

#### Goals:

• Re-urbanization Strategy for neighbourhoods of the Regional Centre known as HRMbyDesign Neighbourhood Greenprint

# Council Focus Area: Governance & Communication

#### 1. Committee and Council Reform

To meet Council's objective of creating a council and committee governance structure that is efficient, effective, scaled appropriately, and where decisions are made at the appropriate level

#### Goals:

- · Alignment of Committees of Council
- · District Boundaries Review (Council size)
- · The role and authority of Community Councils

#### 2. Communications – Internal and External

# HRM is the source of information about the region's plans, priorities and growth

- · To ensure a proactive approach to HRM Communications
- · Internal (Council, staff)
- · External (citizens, media, government & stakeholders)

















# Council Focus Area: Infrastructure

# 1. More community facilities and maintenance of existing facilities

#### Goals:

- Provide more community recreation facilities and fix existing facilities
- · Increase community centre funding
- · Implement Community Facilities Master Plan

## 2. Improved streets, roads and sidewalk conditions

#### Goals:

- Develop and implement a strategy to focus a larger percentage the capital budget toward streets, roads and sidewalk recapitalization
- Procure and implement new software to provide timely and accurate street and sidewalk condition assessments
- Develop and implement a corporate asset management plan that will help ensure street and sidewalk recapitalization expenditures are applied to the most appropriate locations

#### 3. Community Beautification 📒 📒

#### Goals:

- · Development of a Creative Communities Strategy
- · Develop goals for HRM's urban forest
- Develop a region wide system of parks, trails and beautiful streets
- · Provide protection to landmarks and cultural landscapes
- · Create a walkable, livable city

# 4. Playground, Parkland and Garden Improvements

- · Improve playgrounds, parkland and gardens
- · Protect and promote natural assets, views and water access
- Improve existing parks

# Council Focus Area: Public Safety

1. Implementation of the Mayor's Roundtable on Violence Report by way of the recommendations set out in the action plan approved by Council on February 17, 2009.

- · Implementation of recommendations in the report relative to:
  - · Diversity develop a collective diversity strategy.
  - Police Community Response enhance public communication around crime reduction strategies.
  - Provincial Partnerships enhance relationships in developing collective public safety initiatives.
  - Sustainability Initiatives create a public safety office providing leadership and coordination around public safety.
  - Community Engagement mobilize communities through engagement and collective public safety strategies.











# Council Focus Area: Transportation

#### 1. Transit Enhancements

#### Goals:

- Deliver elements of approved 5 year approach to transit enhancements
- As part of 5 year operating plan optimize existing and future service to achieve efficiencies
- 2. Active Transportation including multi-use trails, walkways, bike lanes, sidewalks

#### Goal:

- Deliver elements of the *Active Transportation Plan* approved in 2006
- 3. Traffic Management (Transportation Planning) includes inter-governmental coordination, capability projects, network optimization

#### Goals:

- Introduce capacity into the network
- · Optimize the existing network
- Continue Strategic Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee

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HRM Corporate Plan 2010-2011

# HRM Administrative Mission & Value Statements

#### "To be the best managed municipality in Canada."

The following core values act as a guide to all employee decisions, actions and behaviours:

- Act with Respect
- Deliver Quality Service
- Value Diversity
- Act with Integrity
- Be accountable

The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for leading the organization in carrying out the direction of Council. The Executive Management Team (EMT) has identified the following three administrative priority areas in which additional emphasis is required over the coming year. Each address areas of service delivery, and together form the basis for that which the CAO recognizes as strategically important for making HRM one of the most livable, best managed municipalities in Canada.

A Corporate Performance Report is produced following the end of each quarter. It is designed to provide information about the level of achievement on key measures for the organization. The report measures HRM's performance against three administrative priorities:

- 1. Practising Fiscal Responsibility
- 2. Making HRM an Employer of Choice
- 3. Providing Excellence in Service Delivery

## Healthy Financial Position

Standard & Poor's Rating				
Period	Credit Rating	Outlook	Trend	
2004/05	A	Stable	~	
2005/06	A	Positive	~	
2006/07	A	Positive	~	
2007/08	A+	Positive	~	
2008/09	A+	Stable	~	

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HRM Corporate Plan 2010-2011









# Administrative Priority I: Fiscal Responsibility

Fiscal responsibility is achieving a balance of legislative compliance, public expectations, and needs through the efficient and effective management of municipal resources.

#### 1. HRM's operating and capital budget are responsibly managed

2010/11 Objectives

- Maintain an approach that manages debt and ensures appropriate controls
- Conduct multi-year business planning to provide a more predictable financial framework
- Comply with all financial and administrative policies and practices as well as legislative requirements

#### 2. HRM Infrastructure assets are well managed

2010/11 Objectives

- Report select asset class conditions to Council including:
  a. Sidewalks
  - b. Streets & Roads
  - c. Fleet
- Facilities Gap align resources to develop condition reports for 2011/2012
- Develop and continue to refine the Capital Investment Plan and infrastructure planning tools
- Update Capital section of Multi Year Financial Strategy to reflect PSAB 3150 (Tangible Capital Asset Accounting)
- Formalize within the organization, roles of Asset Owner, Asset Manager, and Asset Steward

#### 3. HRM manages and mitigates future risks

2010/11Objectives

- Review and/or implement strategies to increase the health of reserves
- Develop an Enterprise Risk Model

#### 4. Council is engaged in Corporate Strategic Planning

2010/11 Objectives

- Accurately reflect Council Priorities in the corporate plan and business plans and ensure budget aligns with the corporate plan and business plans
- Establish an effective consultation process that ensures Council's appropriate involvement in the creation of the annual budget
- Deliver regular progress reports to show that Council's priorities are being implemented

# Administrative Priority II: Employer of Choice

The Halifax Regional Municipality is an organization where employees experience a supportive, respectful workplace that offers challenging, interesting work and where their contributions are appreciated, recognized and fairly rewarded. As a result, HRM will continue to attract and retain employees who deliver high-quality services to meet the needs of its citizens.

#### 1. HRM ranks in the top 100 Employers in Canada

#### 2010/11 Objectives

- Ongoing implementation of a progressive Human Resources (HR) People Plan
- Implement a workforce planning tool to enable the forecasting of human resource requirements to meet business needs
- Establish three key indicators to measure HR performance across the organization
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships to enhance organizational effectiveness
- Develop a strategic, long term approach to improve employee engagement throughout the organization
- Develop and implement an internal communications strategy to enhance employee engagement and organizational awareness
- Develop a communications plan to respond to results of the Employee Engagement survey, specifically total compensation

#### 2. HRM develops skilled and effective leaders

#### 2010 Objectives

- Improve the performance evaluation process for senior managers to ensure better alignment with Council and corporate priorities
- Implement a leadership development program with first year focus aligned with business requirements and workforce planning needs







# Administrative Priority III: Excellence in Service Delivery

The culture of Halifax Regional Municipality is one where community (citizen) focussed service delivery is recognized by all employees as a priority and personal responsibility. As a result, the level of customer satisfaction can, and will, be measured by identifying and reporting on performance in critical service areas.

# 1. HRM has comprehensive service standards and tools in place to enable effective analysis of programs and services

#### 2010/11 Objectives

- Inventory existing external service standards and identify gaps
- Where standards exist, achieve a minimum of 88 percent compliance

#### 2. Citizens are satisfied with the quality of HRM services

2010/11 Objectives

- Improve community satisfaction with the quality of service
- Continue to improve and refine the citizen inquiry and referral process

# 3. HRM ensures the cost of services are competitive, efficient and effective

2010/11 Objectives

- Conduct ongoing service reviews to identify resource capacity and opportunities for operational efficiencies
- Continue to implement recommendations of internal operational reviews
- Implement improvements in response to recommendations of the Auditor General
- Ensure appropriate service fees and fines are maintained

HRM Corporate Plan 2010-2011

# Summary of HRM's Priorities

## **Community Outcomes**

- 1. Safe & Welcoming Communities
- 2. Diverse Recreation, Leisure & Cultural Choices
- 3. Well Planned & Engaged Communities
- 4. Clean & Healthy Environment
- 5. Integrated & Affordable Transportation Networks
- **6.** Economic Prosperity sol Focus Areas

Community Outcomes

## **Council Focus Areas**

- **1.** Community Planning
- 2. Governance & Communications
- 3. Infrastructure
- **4.** Public Safety
- **5.** Transportation

Administration Administrative Priorities

- **1.** Fiscal Responsibility
- 2. Employer of Choice
- **3.** Excellence in Service Delivery

HRM's Main Revenue Sources, 2009-2010 (budget)				
Property taxes	\$555 million			
Transit fares	\$32 million			
Deed transfer taxes	\$29 million			
Waste disposal fees	\$11 million			
Parking and other fines	\$6 million			
Licenses and permits	\$5 million			
Recreation fees	\$4 million			
Parking meter revenues	\$3 million			

# HRM's Financial Plan

# How Your Tax Dollars Are Spent

# HRM Has Only One Major Revenue Source: Property Tax

Each year, HRM must generate revenue to provide necessary services to residents. HRM's Charter regulates how we can raise revenue and provides limited flexibility for alternative revenue sources.

We do not have access to the variety of revenue sources that other orders of government have – income, lottery, sales and liquor tax – that increase as earnings and spending grow. Our major source of revenue is property tax.

# HRM Shares its Main Source of Revenue, Property Taxes, with the Province

A typical property tax bill in 2009 was \$2,270\*. Of that amount, approximately \$740 goes to the Province and others for education, correctional services, assessment services, public housing, and to the School Boards for Supplementary Education Funding. This leaves \$1,530 for municipal services.



# Three Government Budgets

There is one taxpayer supporting three levels of government. The illustration shows the amount governments receive from an average household tax bill of almost \$18,300.

Of this, the municipal government receives \$1,530 (\$2,270 minus \$740 transferred to the Province, PVSC and school boards). From this \$1,530, HRM provides many of the visible, day-to-day services you rely on, such as:

- Police services
- Libraries
- Fire and emergency services
- Transit
- Roads
- · Garbage collection and recycling
- Recreation (parks, playgrounds, rec centres, arenas, community programs and continuing education)

While the income tax you pay fluctuates based on your income, property taxes – the only real source of revenue available to the municipality – do not. Municipalities across the country struggle to provide hard services to communities with a relatively small portion, roughly 8 per cent, of the total tax bill residents pay.

An estimate of the annual taxes paid by an HRM household living in a typical, three-bedroom home in 2009:

Federal:	\$8,290	(or 45.3% of taxes paid)
Provincial:	\$8,470	(or 46.3% of taxes paid)
Municipal:	\$1,530*	(or 8.4% of taxes paid)

\*\$2,270 less \$740 to the Province, PVSC and school boards



# What You Get for Your Municipal Property Tax Dollar

The following monthly estimates are based on the taxes levied on a typical home at the urban tax rate (based on HRM's 2009-2010 approved budget). These estimates reflect the tax bill paid on the typical home. The actual cost to provide service to such a home will vary according to a wide variety of factors. Commercial taxes, fees, and other revenues also help offset the cost of services.

# HRM Partners in Policing A typical household pays \$32.80 per month



## Fire and Emergency

A typical household pays \$22.64 per month (including fire hydrants)



## *Libraries* A typical household pays

\$5.73 per month

Parks and Open Spaces A typical household pays \$5.52 per month





# Community Development

A typical household pays **\$4.12** per month





# Water, Wastewater and Stormwater

A typical household pays \$20.59 per month, \$23.38 for sewer/stormwater



# Recycling, Composting and Refuse

A typical household pays **\$10.42** per month

# Governance and Administration

A typical household pays **\$5.42** per month









## Recreation

A typical household pays **\$6.13** per month





# Taxes On A Typical Home

Under Provincial law, property taxes are levied on the "assessed" value of a home. The value is set by the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC), not by HRM. HRM's tax rate is levied on this assessed value.

HRM has three main tax rates: urban, suburban and rural. Everyone's tax bill is different; there is a wide range of property values, depending on property assessment.

#### Typical Property Tax for Single Detached Houses in Canadian Cities 2009

City	Typical Property Tax
Surrey	\$1,671
Medicine Hat	\$1,758
Calgary	\$1,873
Red Deer	\$1,908
Winnipeg	\$1,908
Lethbridge	\$2,145
Edmonton	\$2,224
St. John's	\$2,224
Halifax	\$2,270
Regina	\$2,292
Saint John	\$2,462
Fredericton	\$2,583
Victoria	\$2,594
Grande Prairie	\$2,642
Burnaby	\$2,730
Vancouver	\$2,739
Saskatoon	\$2,868
Montreal	\$2,938
Toronto	\$2,950
London	\$3,015
Laval	\$3,077

The City of Edmonton's annual survey and description of a "typical" home is a benchmark for property taxes across the country. The chart above shows how HRM ranks against other major cities across Canada. A "typical" home is defined as a 25-year-old, 1,200 square-foot bungalow.

# **Overview of Budgets**

# Budget Summary

# **Operating Budget**

The development of the annual operating budget is a process that starts with Council Focus Areas and the development of the Fiscal Framework. The framework is developed following receipt of the annual assessment roll from the Property Valuation and Services Corporation, and is presented to Council to provide an overview of revenues and expenditures, based on a status quo level of service. With this review, Council then provides staff with direction regarding the assumptions for services and taxation that underlie the development of the budget ensuring that the expenditure target incorporates Council priorities and strategic direction for the coming fiscal year. This direction is incorporated into the draft business unit budget envelopes. Each business unit develops their business plan within this envelope to deliver services required by the HRM Charter, as well as any new or enhanced services as directed by Regional Council through the Council Focus Areas.

On March 23, 2010, Regional Council reviewed the Fiscal Framework for the 2010-2011 year and requested staff to complete the preparation of a budget based on an increase in transit area rates of \$10,000,000 to increase the additional cost of providing an expanded transit service, and to provide for a general tax revenue increase of \$6,000,000. The remaining 'gap' of \$14,000,000 at that time would be closed through a combination of forced expenditure reductions and revenue increases.

The following expenditure reductions and revenue increases are proposed to be implemented in the 2010/11 Budget:

- Efficiency initiatives include out of town and local travel, general office supplies, consulting fees, professional development, courier and postage.
- Fee and fine increases include solid waste tipping fees, parking revenues, sports fields and ice rentals, criminal records checks, streets and services permits, etc.
- Service adjustments include elimination of urban Visitor Information Centres, elimination of mobile household hazardous waste events, elimination of summer weekly green cart collection, relocate Customer Service Centre in Cole Harbour, deferred trails spending, and reduction in Public Art spending.
- \$3.5 million compensation reduction. The compensation reduction will be spread across the entire organization through vacancy management and elimination of some positions as they become vacant. It is uncertain what the overall service impact will be, however one strategy will be to delay filling vacancies to accrue the payroll reduction. This will have a negative impact in various areas by delaying delivery of service and increasing the workload of incumbent staff.

Some key highlights of the operating budget, as proposed, are:

- The gross amount of the operating budget is \$729,815,877 million, a net increase of \$26.2 million or 3.7% over the 2009-10 budget.
- Increased demand due to growth in transit, additional contributions to solid waste reserves, and additional compensation costs are some of the main reasons for increases to business unit costs.
- In the operating budget there are gross business unit revenues of \$136 million, an increase of \$11.5million over 2009-10

The net budget by business unit is shown in the following table:

	by Business	s Unit		
	2009-2010	2010-2011	Change	over
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Var as %
Office of the Auditor General	330,000	659,494	329,494	99.8
CAO	9,910,990	10,391,427	480,437	4.8
Fire & Emergency Services	54,247,800	55,630,216	1,382,416	2.5
Financial Services	4,073,530	2,076,773	(1,996,757)	(49.0
Human Resources	4,772,160	4,895,029	122,869	2.6
Legal Services	2,194,390	2,228,105	33,715	1.5
Transportation & Public Works	99,028,770	97,082,486	(1,946,284)	(2.0
Infrastructure and Asset Mgmt	8,116,000	8,283,127	167,127	2.1
Community Development	19,619,990	20,318,619	698,629	3.6
Regional Police	66,381,740	69,154,989	2,773,249	4.2
Outside Police BU (RCMP)	20,353,100	20,625,700	272,600	1.3
Business Planning & Info Mgmt	19,013,818	19,287,095	273,277	1.4
Library	15,148,000	15,541,750	393,750	2.6
Total	323,190,288	326,174,810	2,984,522	0.9

## Project Budget

Most funding for the project budget is provided through reserves, debt financing and direct transfers from the operating budget (Capital from Operating or "pay-as-you-go"). Since all of these funding sources require payments from the operating budget, the processes for operating, reserve and capital budgets are closely linked. The Debt Servicing Plan, HRM's financial planning modelling system, and cash flow projections from reserves, are all used to determine the total funding capacity available for the capital budget. Contributions to reserves, principal and interest payments, and Capital from Operating are included in the operating budget. Non-Tangible Asset Projects are funded directly from the Operating Budget.

- The gross amount of the project budget is \$157,250 million.
- The net amount of the project budget is \$90,214,167, net of reserve withdrawals of \$29 million, cost sharing of \$33.5 million, \$4.3 million of projects secured with local improvement charges, \$225,000 in capital cost contribution charges.

• The net project budget will be funded by \$28.9 million of capital from operating, \$300,000 from the Capital Reserve Pool (Crespool), \$25.6 million from Gas Tax, Operating Budget expenditures of \$4.2 million related to Non-Tangible Capital Asset projects and borrowing of \$31.2 million or 19.8% of the gross capital budget. This compares to borrowing of \$51.2 million or 74% of the gross project budget in 1997-98.

<b>Project Budget Summary</b>	
Municipally Funded Portion of Project Budget	

	2009-10 Net Budget	2010-2011 Net Budget	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Buildings	21,086,448	25,820,667	4,734,219	22.5%
Business Tools		743,000	(785,300)	-51.4%
Community & Property Development	1,687,000	1,892,000	205,000	12.2%
District Activity Funds	1,495,000	1,495,000	0	0%
Equipment & Fleet	7,225,000	7,707,200	482,200	6.7%
Metro Transit	27,204,800	21,638,300	(5,566,500)	-20.5%
Parks & Playgrounds	6,350,000	5,939,000	(411,000)	-6.4%
Roads & Streets	21,500,000	16,500,000	(5,000,000)	-23.2%
Sidewalks, Curbs & Gutters	3,500,000	2,370,000	(1,113,000)	-32.3%
Solid Waste	0	0	0	
Traffic Improvements	8,435,000	6,109,000	(2,326,000)	-27.6%
HRM Total Projects	100,012,148	90,214,167	(9,797,981)	-9.8%

The net amount of the project budget is \$90,214,167, net of reserve withdrawals of \$29 million, cost sharing of \$33.5 million, \$4.3 million of capital projects secured with local improvement charges, \$225,000 in capital cost contribution charges.

As is the practice begun in 2008-09, Council will approve not only the project budget for the coming year (2010-2011), but also, in principle, the detailed project budget plans for the following years. This year, the project budget incorporates a 5 year capital plan with detailed project plans for 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15.

In 2010-2011 project spending will see a decrease of \$9.8 million over the 2009-2010 budget.



The main changes in HRM's five (5) year Capital Plan relate to the expiry of infrastructure funding and the financing of projects approved in 2009/10 under various Federal and Provincial funding plans. HRM received Economic Stimulus Funding and Build Canada (Major Infrastructure Funding) in 2009/10, and will in 2010/11.

# Reserve Budget

Reserves are used in planning for HRM's future needs. A reserve budget is created and this funding is incorporated into the financial plan as an integral part of the operating and capital budgets. Many reserves are funded through HRM's general tax rate. Others are funded from independent revenue sources (e.g. Burnside Industrial Park reserve etc).

- Reserve balances are projected to increase from \$41.7 million to \$62.7 million.
- Equipment and operating reserves will increase by \$8.2M. Equipment and operating reserves are projected to increase mainly due to contributions to snow and ice reserve and the Operations Stabilization Reserve.
- Capital Reserves show an increase of \$12.7 million. This increase is primarily due to a contribution of \$10.3 million to the Waste Resources Reserve to plan for future expenditures. Within capital reserves there is a \$25.6M contribution and corresponding expense related to Gas Tax projects.

# Significant Budgetary Issues and Challenges

## Infrastructure

HRM's infrastructure and major capital assets support the delivery of municipal services, our future prosperity, economic development, competitiveness, public safety, and overall quality of life. The long term sustainability of the existing infrastructure and corporate assets directly impacts the ability to provide quality service to the community. Since amalgamation in 1996, the community has grown by 30,700 dwelling units and demand for sustainable, efficient, and effective service delivery has increased. In addition to these demands on existing resources, new infrastructure, assets, and service capacity improvements are proposed to support community-based initiatives such as the Regional Plan, Community Visions, the Cultural Plan, HRM by Design, the Active Transportation Plan, Sustainability Initiatives, HRM's Economic Strategy, and the Community Facility Master Plan.

Despite the fact that additional resources have been consistently applied to HRM's project budget in recent years, the demand for service has grown at a pace that exceeds HRM's funding capability. The gap is steadily growing between the demand for service and the ability to fund both maintenance of deteriorating infrastructure and acquisition and construction of new infrastructure. This "Infrastructure Gap" represents a significant challenge to HRM for the foreseeable future.

The creation of the Infrastructure Council Focus Area provided staff with clear direction to address the "Infrastructure Gap". In response to this direction, the Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM) business unit was created in October of 2007 solely dedicated to managing this important issue. By working closely with Council, internal HRM business units, and all HRM's external business partners, IAM's role is the development of prudent project business plans and project budgets and the creation of sound policy and long range plans focussed on the financial and environmental sustainability of the infrastructure and assets that support the delivery of services to the residents of HRM.

On February 19, 2008, HRM Council gave direction that in 2008/09 a higher percentage of HRM's project budget be focused on reinvestment in our infrastructure and assets, and that some alternatives be developed to enable increased investment in infrastructure. This is consistent with Economic Strategy objectives to see a higher level of municipal investment in public infrastructure.

Effective 2009/10 HRM will be required to be able to report on all of the assets owned by the municipality, their condition, their expected remaining useful life, and their estimated value as part of new financial accounting requirements for Nova Scotia municipalities. HRM's Asset Management Project is well underway, and will provide information to refine and improve HRM's infrastructure planning and project budgeting.

Addressing these competing infrastructure related demands is a matter of prudent choices, effective timing and taking strategic advantage of leveraging opportunities when they arise. This budget exercises prudent financial management by taking the initial steps in a multi-year strategy to deal with the infrastructure gap while maintaining a balanced approach to meeting community needs.

## Provincial Assessment Cap

In 2006, the Province of Nova Scotia enacted legislation which reduced the cap on property assessment increases from 10% (as set in 2005) to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cap applies only to certain homes and excludes apartment buildings, household improvements and commercial assessment. For the 2010-2011 tax year the cap has been set at the CPI rate of 0.0%. While market values of single family homes have increased by over 15% on average, these increases have been capped with no change for over 80% of homes.

## Revenue Capacity

To maintain current levels of service, to rebuild and maintain a crumbling infrastructure and to plan for and fund future growth, HRM requires a predictable and appropriate revenue stream.

With a heavy dependence on property tax revenue, and limited potential for additional revenue from this source, this creates some challenges.

Pressures and constraints affect both HRM's revenues and expenditures. On the expenditure side, a key factor is the rising costs of providing current levels of services. These costs typically increase much faster than the CPI inflation, as municipalities face significant construction costs, material costs and unionized labour contracts not reflected in CPI. In addition to the rising cost of maintaining existing services, there are many new initiatives that HRM would like to introduce, but cannot afford unless significant new revenues are found or substantive decisions are made to rationalize new and existing services.

On the revenue side, HRM depends on taxation, grants and user charges to support its services and programs. Each of these sources have limited room for expansion. Ten years ago, HRM was facing a heavy debt burden with large debt servicing payments. With the introduction of the Multi-Year Financial Strategy in 1998, HRM has been steadily paying down this debt and limiting new debt issued. This has reduced the annual debt servicing payments required, freeing up more of HRM's revenue for other purposes.

Under Nova Scotia provincial legislation, municipalities must produce balanced budgets. Therefore, any increase in spending levels is fully dependent on either raising additional revenue or reallocating resources (funding new initiatives with the money saved by reducing or eliminating existing programs). This is something that is looked at each year within business units as they work with given levels of funding to provide the most important services in support of municipal objectives.

Finding new sources of funding, using these funds in the best possible manner, and re-allocating resources to reflect shifting priorities will require decisions to be made. HRM faces difficult choices but will be assisted in these decisions by the planning and strategies put in place over the past few years, including but not limited to, the Regional Plan, the Economic Strategy and Council Focus Areas.

## Other Challenges Ahead

HRM, as an organization, is facing several challenges and changes in the coming years, which include:

- a recovering economic situation;
- hosting the 2011 Canada Winter Games;
- the pending retirement of a significant number of senior HRM staff and difficulty in recruitment and retention of new employees; and
- changes in technological tools needed to deliver municipal services (i.e. implementation of the new Revenue Tool, continued optimization of HANSEN, SAP and other existing tools) and planning for future technological needs.

# A Multi-Year Financial Strategy (MYFS)

## The Multi-Year Financial Strategy (MYFS)

HRM's business planning and budgeting system has its origins in Council's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, approved in 1999. An important component of that policy is the debt strategy. The goal of the original Capital Debt Policy was to reduce overall capital debt, provide predictability around debt available for the project budget each year and to provide improved structure around the project budget and related assumptions.

In 2009 the Debt Servicing Plan was reviewed and revisions were approved by Council. Based on that review, the objective is to grow the Project Budget while reducing reliance on debt, and, increasing capital from operating. The goal is to eventually have all ongoing "Base" Projects (ie: recapitalization) funded through Capital from Operating or Reserves and to use debt only for new "Capability" projects. To achieve this, targets for debt and capital from operating have been set based on a "per dwelling unit" amount. Tax supported debt per dwelling will be reduced by 3% each year. To support the project budget, Capital from Operating per dwelling will grow by 3% each year over the consumer price index (inflation). The combination of these two factors will allow the project budget to grow but the proportion of that budget being funded by debt to fall. HRM Debt outstanding at March 31 of each year is estimated as follows:



# **Operating Outlook**

HRM's Corporate Plan provides strategic direction on how the organization will deliver programs and services to enable the community to realize its long term vision. In order to achieve this, we need to take a longer term view of the overall capability to better inform strategic and operational decision making. The following outlook is that view to the future, enabling the organization to make preparations for sustained efforts in the areas of highest strategic importance to Council and the community.

Although the following table shows growing operating "gaps", it is for illustration and planning purposes only. HRM is required by legislation to operate a balanced budget, such that any deficit from one year must be budgeted as an expenditure in the following year.

	Proposed Budget	Estimate		Forecast	
	20010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Municipal Property Taxes	-\$357,203,600	-\$364,347,672	-\$371,634,625	-\$379,067,318	-\$386,648,664
Corporate Revenues	-\$89,782,900	-\$95,288,273	-\$96,757,502	-\$98,261,387	-\$99,800,745
Service Related Revenues	-\$127,809,000	-\$130,823,705	-\$133,909,519	-\$137,068,121	-\$140,301,226
Municipal Revenues	-\$574,795,500	-\$590,459,650	-\$602,301,647	-\$614,396,826	-\$626,750,636
Regional Area Rate Transfer Taxes	-\$132,647,300	-\$133,280,900	-\$133,280,900	-\$133,280,900	-\$133,280,900
Total Revenues	-\$729,815,877	-\$746,601,642	-\$763,773,480	-\$781,340,270	-\$799,311,096
Fiscal Costs	\$136,109,341	\$140,500,853	\$145,034,055	\$136,109,341	\$154,543,964
Service Delivery Costs	\$462,510,334	\$477,433,040	\$492,837,220	\$508,738,410	\$525,152,645
Municipal Expenditures	\$598,619,675	\$617,933,892	\$637,871,275	\$658,451,929	\$679,696,610
Regional Area Rate Transfers to Province:	\$131,196,202	\$135,429,193	\$139,798,761	\$144,309,310	\$148,965,391
Total Net Expenditures	\$729,815,877	\$753,363,086	\$777,670,036	\$802,761,239	\$828,662,000

#### Assumptions and Multipliers

In preparation of the Operating Outlook, the following assumptions were used:

%





CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

