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Halifax Regional Council  
December 6, 2005

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Betty MacDonald  
Betty MacDonald, Director Governance & Strategic Initiatives

**DATE:** December 1, 2005

**SUBJECT:** **Regional Plan Draft #2**

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## INFORMATION REPORT

### ORIGIN

Report to Regional Council from Regional Planning Committee tabling Draft #2 of Regional Plan, dated November 23, 2005.

### BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2005 the last of six Regional Plan updates was provided at Community Council to highlight major changes to Draft #1 of the Regional Plan. The Regional Planning Committee (RPC) have considered the comments received at Community Council in preparing Draft #2 and have presented Draft #2 for tabling by Regional Council. Staff is confident the changes being proposed by the Committee are consistent and support the goals and objectives of the Regional Plan approved by Council.

This report provides additional information to Regional Council as follows:

1. Comparison of Changes: Regional Plan Draft #1 and Regional Plan Draft #2
2. Regional Plan Land Development Policy Implementation Costs
3. Legal Implications: Hydrogeological Assessment Policy
4. Glossary of Terms

**DISCUSSION**Comparison of Changes: Regional Plan Draft #1 and Regional Plan Draft #2

Regional Plan Draft #1 was presented to Council last April, and since then the Regional Planning Committee and staff have continued to seek public input to improve the Plan. In September, staff presented options for change at a Council Workshop and prepared 23 individual district fact sheets and general fact sheet. Released in October, the fact sheets outlined the immediate and longer terms changes to be brought about by the adoption of HRM's Regional Plan. There is a desire however, on the part of Council and the general public to understand what exactly has been changed from Draft #1 of the Regional Plan to the new Draft #2. Attachment #1 provides a comparison and summary chart of the changes made. Council will see from the chart, staff and the Committee have listened to the suggestions made by the public. While some suggestions would have jeopardized the goals and objectives of the plan and could not be followed, a number were accommodated. Many of the issues raised during the consultation process will be addressed during community planning and visioning exercises to follow regional planning.

Land Development Policy Implementation Costs

The cost to provide the growth-related services as envisioned by the Regional Plan will be significantly less than the expected Base Case.<sup>1</sup> This benefit will be shared among HRM, other levels of government and private property owners. The issues associated with the financial impacts of implementing the Plan will be addressed in a Finance Functional Plan to be prepared after the Regional Plan's adoption. It is important however, Council be aware of the costs associated with the Plan's implementation on land development.

Land development costs for large rural subdivisions should lower due to reduced road lengths required for construction of either of the two proposed Open Space Design Development forms, as compared to traditional large-lot development. Road construction costs, estimated at \$200/ft, would total about \$3.3 million for a traditional development of 115 units (designed for HRM on a sample parcel in the Rural Commutershed). Open space design alternatives reduced these costs by more than \$1 million. Costs for constructing clustered septic fields substantially offset savings for higher density open space design developments but these clustered systems are not required on the "hybrid alternative", an approach now encouraged under the revised draft of the regional plan.

Regional Plan Policy will increase administration costs for subdivisions due to detailed surveying work needed to establish watercourse setbacks. These costs are estimated at \$1,500 per lot for properties abutting watercourses. Survey work, also estimated at \$1,500 per lot, will be required to establish elevations pertaining to storm surge protection policies for coastal properties. It is

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<sup>1</sup> The Base Case assumes no changes to HRM's existing land development regulation regime.

fundamental to the regional plan's successful implementation these surveys be undertaken in order to protect HRM's watercourses from degradation. Coastal storm protection is needed to protect both life and property.

Hydrogeological assessments will be required as part of Development Agreement approvals for large rural developments. These costs are estimated at \$500 to \$1,000 per lot. This information is necessary for Council to make informed decisions on Development Agreements pertaining to water quality and quantity issues.

If the regional plan is adopted, parkland dedication for most subdivisions will increase from five percent to ten percent. This does not apply to higher density Open Space Design Developments. Many health and aesthetic benefits are realized by the community through this policy.

In some cases, costs will be borne by the private property owner, for referral of applications for major developments to the Nova Scotia Museum, if an archaeological assessment is required. These costs, estimated at \$100 to \$200 for each application, are considered minimal relative to the very significant cost associated with the potential destruction of archeological resources.

Multiple unit residential developments as well as commercial, institutional and industrial developments in the Urban Settlement Designation will be required to install bicycle racks. These will occupy approximately 18 square feet of space and are estimated to cost about \$150 per space to construct. Bicycle racks support the active transportation objectives of the plan producing benefits for the health of individuals as well as the community at large.

The benefits of the plan must also be considered alongside of these costs. Greater environmental protection, increased ability of the municipality to service development, greater access to public transit, and a more financially predictable and sustainable financial plan are substantial benefits the general public may expect.

#### Legal Implications: Hydrogeological Assessment Policy

Council has previously requested the Provincial Government consider an amendment to the Municipal Government Act to allow HRM to require hydrogeological assessment prior to granting subdivision approval. Further to correspondence with provincial government staff, it has been determined there is sufficient authority under the Municipal Government Act to allow HRM to require hydrogeological assessment relating to rural developments administered by a development agreement. There is no such authority for by-right subdivision developments. Policy S-14 in Draft #2 requires such an assessment be carried out so Council will know when approving a Development Agreement reasonable attention has been paid to the quantity and quality of water available. The assessment must be carried out by an independent, qualified professional, contracted by the property owner. This policy does not offer any guarantee each landowner within a rural residential development will always have sufficient water in their well to satisfy their needs. HRM, in administering this policy, must take steps to make property

owners aware the municipality does not carry liability for the information provided by the independent contractor. However, there are potential liability issues for the municipality because property owners may still choose to make claims against the municipality if water quality or quantity issues arise.

### Glossary of Terms

The Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan) will not contain a glossary of terms when it becomes a legal document due to the difficulties such definitions can sometimes present for plan policy implementation and legal interpretation. It is important however, Regional Council understand the terminology used in the Regional Plan. A glossary is therefore attached to this report for information purposes (Attachment #2). The definitions are intended to provide clarity to the Regional Plan. They are not legal definitions. It should be noted however, definitions contained in the Regional Land Use Bylaw are to be used for regulatory administration of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy.

### BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with the completion of the Regional Plan will be allocated from the resources of the Governance and Strategic Initiatives business unit.

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### ALTERNATIVES

This report is for information purposes only and to supplement the Regional Planning Committee's report to Council dated November 23, 2005.

### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1	Comparison of Changes: Regional Plan Draft #1 - Regional Plan Draft #2
Attachment #2	Glossary

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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## Attachment #1

Comparison of Changes: Regional Plan Draft #1 and Regional Plan Draft #2

Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>1. Conventional Subdivisions</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permitted up to 4 lots on an existing road and 1 lot on a new road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permits any number of lots on an <i>existing</i> local road</li> <li>• Provides wide frontages on <i>existing trunk and route</i> highways</li> <li>• Provides up to 8 lots on a <i>new road intersecting</i> a local road</li> <li>• Within the Rural Resource designation, provides up to 8 lots on a new road intersecting <i>local roads or trunk and route</i> highways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infill lots along <i>existing</i> local roads make fiscal sense</li> <li>• Some new local road development can be justified</li> <li>• Safety concerns addressed - wide frontage requirements on trunk and numbered routes and restrictions on new roads (i.e new intersections with trunk roads limited except in areas with little growth pressure)</li> <li>• Public input called for more opportunity for conventional subdivision development for rural landowners</li> </ul>

Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>2. Cluster Subdivisions</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required Open Space Development "Classic" design (small, clustered parcels and large natural areas held in public or common ownership) for all subdivisions with more than 4 lots</li> <li>• Required 1 unit per 0.4 hectare gross density (lots 10,000-20,000 sq ft)</li> <li>• Required 70% of total land area held in common as natural open space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides new "Hybrid" Open Space Development option to permit 1 unit per hectare with most of the site divided into private lots</li> <li>• Permits approximately 20% site disturbance on each lot</li> <li>• Provides for individual on-site septic and well</li> <li>• Provides for open space to be preserved under individual private ownership</li> <li>• Provides density and parkland dedication incentives for "Classic" Open Space design where 60% open space is retained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local environmental conditions may affect the feasibility of the "Classic" Open Space model</li> <li>• Large lots are important to the rural market</li> <li>• "Hybrid" model offers more flexibility, comparable number of units, and 35% reduction in road length than conventional approach</li> </ul>
<b>3. Service Boundaries</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showed lines anticipating major changes where boundaries for piped water and/or sewer would be changed (eg. Tantallon, Fall River, Bedford West, Middle Sackville)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defers major changes to Fall River, Tantallon and Bedford West service boundaries to Community Plan Reviews</li> <li>• Maintains Middle Sackville lands within service boundary (as per existing Sackville MPS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft 1 did not have the benefit of detailed knowledge about each affected community</li> <li>• Local knowledge and consultation will help resolve servicing issues.</li> <li>• Remedial action taken on sewer system (for Middle Sackville)</li> </ul>
<b>4. Development Restrictions due to Limited Road Capacity</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided for Traffic Authority Engineer to refuse development in areas with traffic safety risk and insufficient road capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specifically lists Beaver Bank and Hammonds Plains as growth management areas due to traffic concerns</li> <li>• Maintains provision for Traffic Authority Engineer to refuse development in areas with traffic safety risk and insufficient road capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases certainty in managing growth and addresses safety on roadway network</li> </ul>

Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>5. Roads and Corridors</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included specific road construction and improvement projects in the first 3 years, between 4 to 25 years and beyond 25 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a more flexible time frame for future roads</li> <li>Identifies additional long-term road corridors for land acquisition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public input called for more flexibility while maintaining priorities</li> </ul>
<b>6. Regional Parks</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed 12 Regional Parks, of which 7 originated from the 1975 Regional Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adds a new Regional Park at Feely Lake near Middle Sackville</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widespread public support for an expanded Regional Park system</li> </ul>
<b>7. Islands</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not address protection of islands or coastal communities as it relates to island development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires development on islands by agreement with conditions to protect coastal communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong public interest in protecting coastal communities while recognizing interest in developing private islands</li> </ul>
<b>8. Minimum coastal elevation and setback</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required coastal elevation of 5 m with variance only through site specific coastal study to allow for inaccuracies in existing topographic mapping</li> <li>Placed onus on the developer to undertake a coastal impact study to reduce elevation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires coastal elevation of 2.5 m with no variance permitted</li> <li>States coastal elevation requirement is an interim measure pending coastal hazard mapping at which time the requirement will be amended to better reflect specific context of each lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cost of the study would be very high for small developments</li> <li>Coastal and property protection achieved with more certainty and no additional cost to developers</li> </ul>
<b>9. Capital District Sub-designation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided for detailed policies to be developed under a Secondary Planning Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides for policies to be developed as amendments to the Regional Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the regional significance of new policies</li> </ul>
<b>10. Harbour Designation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided for detailed policies to be developed under a Secondary Planning Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides for policies to be developed as amendments to the Regional Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlights the regional significance of new policies</li> </ul>



Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>11. Changes to growth centres</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified over 40 centres recognizing lands suitable for significant residential growth which are already, or will become, focal points for varying levels of service, amenity and employment for the surrounding communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarifies HRM will continue to make investments in communities not identified as centres</li> <li>Changes Spryfield centre from Suburban Local Centre to Suburban District Centre</li> <li>Adds Jeddore as Rural Commuter Local Centre</li> <li>Adds Cherry Brook/Lake Loon/East Preston as Rural Commuter Local Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some public concern that centre designation would have an impact on municipal investment in areas not identified as centres</li> <li>HRM responded to a small number of submissions to re-consider some areas as centres</li> </ul>
<b>12. Housing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes policy wording "shall require to consider"</li> <li>Includes special policy to provide for seniors citizen housing by agreement</li> <li>Provides for density bonusing to achieve a mix of housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarifies HRM's role - supporting the role of the market and other levels of government through planning policy, <u>not</u> delivering or managing social housing programs</li> <li>Clarifies Community Plan reviews must only consider diverse housing</li> <li>Clarifies the definition of "affordable housing" will be determined at the Functional Plan level</li> <li>Removes senior citizen housing policy</li> <li>Clarifies density bonusing as a planning tool to be considered by community planning processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy interpreted by some to mean Community Plans would be compelled to allow housing such as basement apartments in all neighbourhoods</li> <li>Some questioned the clarity of the affordable housing definition and HRM's role in addressing the issue</li> <li>Definition of affordable housing (or eligibility) can only be determined on the basis of specific incentives</li> <li>HRM cannot regulate tenure and cannot go beyond the requirements of the National Building Code</li> <li>Density bonusing must be guided by the larger planning context</li> </ul>

Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>13. Culture and Heritage</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placed emphasis on built heritage</li> <li>• Placed emphasis on Registered Heritage Properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides more recognition of culturally significant views, landscapes and heritage districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong public support for giving more attention to cultural heritage and diversity</li> <li>• Strong public support for more holistic approach to protecting physical heritage</li> <li>• Provides better linkage with Cultural Plan underway</li> <li>• Clarifies intent of built heritage policies</li> </ul>
<b>14. Regional Plan Discretionary Approvals</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided for discretionary approval of similar uses on properties which abut one another for lands which are located where any land use designations abut one another for 1) development of uses permitted within the abutting designation by either rezoning or development agreement within the abutting designation, or 2) development of uses permitted within the zone on the abutting property within the abutting designation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now also provides for discretionary approval of amendments within the Urban Reserve Designation where it abuts the Urban Settlement Designation to accommodate serviced development where generally consistent with the Urban Settlement Designation and with preference given to lands naturally tributary to trunk municipal service systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate adjustments to achieve efficiency in municipal service systems and continuity of urban form</li> <li>• Provides for review process to respond to changing circumstances and conditions</li> </ul>

Regional Plan Draft 1	Regional Plan Draft 2	Rationale for Change
<b>15. Functional Plans</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided policy support to undertake 20 functional plans as a part of Regional Plan implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides policy support to undertake 26 functional plans</li> <li>• Moves the Wind Energy Functional Plan under a new Community Energy Functional Plan</li> <li>• Provides for additional functional plans:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Capital District Public</li> <li>-Infrastructure</li> <li>-Road &amp; Road Network</li> <li>-Public Transit</li> <li>-Community Energy</li> <li>-Halifax Harbour</li> <li>-Urban Streetscape</li> <li>-Underground Utilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong public support for giving more attention to broader range of community energy initiatives</li> <li>• Provide clarity as to the ongoing management of strategic initiatives, partnerships and demonstration projects</li> <li>• Provide clarity as to the plan's intent to create detailed management guides for setting budgets for programs, services and facilities consistent with Plan implementation</li> </ul>
<b>16. Project Implementation and Scheduling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included a table at the end of the Regional MPS showing major projects with a general implementation schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table removed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council should review project implementation schedule in light of Corporate Business Plans and Budgets</li> </ul>
<b>17. Other changes</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included "Finance" as a separate chapter</li> <li>• Included "Housing" as a separate chapter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes Finance policies in the Economy chapter</li> <li>• Includes Housing policies in the Settlement chapter</li> <li>• Discusses in greater detail the relationship between the Regional Plan and existing Municipal Planning Strategies and the transition to Community Visioning and Secondary Plan review process in the Implementation chapter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adds strength and clarity to the Plan</li> </ul>

## Attachment #2

**Glossary**

*The following definitions are intended to provide clarity to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). They are not legal definitions, nor a legal part of the Regional MPS. Definitions contained in the Regional Land Use Bylaw are to be used for regulatory administration of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy.*

**Abutting** - A property is said to abut another property where there is a property line in common between the two properties. The term also applies to buildings that share a wall, as in the case of attached or row style buildings. Abutting Land Use Designations appear on the Generalized Future Land Use Map with common boundary lines.

**Active Transportation** - Human-powered, personal travel chosen as an option to motorized travel and includes walking, running, hiking, the use of wheelchair, cross-country skis, skateboard or canoe or kayak on water.

**Adjacent** - Properties or buildings are said to be adjacent to one another when they are clearly abutting, but also more inclusively when they are clearly within one another's visual sphere of influence. For example, buildings that are visible to each other across a roadway, street, or backyard are said to be adjacent, whereas buildings that are next to one another are said to be both adjacent *and* abutting.

**Apartment** - A room or suite of rooms with kitchen facilities occupied or capable of being occupied as an independent and separate housekeeping establishment.

**Apartment Building** - A single building comprising three or more dwelling units but does not include townhouses.

**As Appropriate** - This term is used in the Regional MPS to allow flexibility in the approach used to successfully meet the objectives and implement the policies of the Regional MPS.

**Background Studies** - Certain types of analyses that must take place before detailed secondary planning exercises can be completed. These studies, such as watershed analyses and urban design studies for the Capital District are defined in policy.

**Best Management Practices** - A systematic method of operation that a designated agency or government body determines to be the most effective, practical means of reducing pollution and/or the consumption of natural resources.

**Boarding Or Rooming House** - A dwelling in which the proprietor supplies either room or room and board, for monetary gain. Also known as Single Room Occupancy (SRO).

**Brownfield Site** - Properties which had contained industrial or commercial uses, which have been abandoned, or are underused and in decline. Brownfields are sometimes characterized by derelict buildings, contamination resulting from previous industrial uses, or undesirable activity occurring on or near the sites

**Buffer** - A separation distance intended to reduce the impact between two adjacent uses or a human activity and a natural feature. For example a riparian buffer, along a stream or river,

would serve to protect the water course from damage caused by erosion or contamination from a building site.

**Business Parks and Industrial Parks** - A large, contiguous area purposely developed to contain only commercial or industrial uses. Generally, business parks contain retail, commercial, and office uses whereas industrial parks are dominated by both light and heavy manufacturing uses.

**Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** - A public urban transportation system using busses to transport passengers quickly between major stops or stations.

**Capital Cost Charges (CCC's)** - Charges associated with new development to cover the related indirect cost of water systems, wastewater systems, storm water systems, streets, traffic signals, bus bays, and intersection improvements.

**Capital District Sub-designation** - The downtown commercial areas of both Halifax and Dartmouth (and their respective waterfronts), as well as the Gottingen Street, Spring Garden Road and Quinpool Road commercial areas. The Sub-designation also includes other areas of influence such as nearby hospital, university, defence and port lands.

**Capital Transportation Authority** - A government agency organized to manage transportation infrastructure throughout HRM, bringing together participants with an interest in transportation, such as the Provincial Dept of Transportation and Public Works, Metro Transit and the Halifax Dartmouth Bridge Commission.

**Carrying Capacity** - The number of individuals who can be supported in a given area within natural resource limits, and without degrading the natural social, cultural and economic environment for present and future generations.

**Centralized Services** - A system of pipes and related facilities leading to (for sewage) a common collection point or treatment facility, or coming from (for water) a common source and distribution network. Contrast with **shared septic systems** and **on-site septic systems**.

**Centre** - A centre include lands suitable for significant residential growth, and are already, or will become, focal points for varying levels of service, amenity and employment for the surrounding communities. HRM will continue to make investments in communities not designated as centres.

**Character** - The combined effect of all of the architectural elements of a building or group of buildings.

**Community Planning Strategy** - A Secondary Planning Strategy pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, which forms part of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). Community Planning Strategies include all municipal planning strategies that were in existence at the time of the adoption of the Regional MPS and will include future planning strategies adopted to guide and direct development in greater detail at the community level than can be dealt with under the Regional MPS.

**Community Visioning** - a process that will be initiated upon the adoption of the Regional Plan to explore how the Regional Plan could be expressed in different ways in different locations while retaining its overall intent. Community Visions will define goals and objectives compatible

with this Plan while bearing in mind limited municipal resources. The process will be broad in scope, involving many different disciplines such as architecture, engineering, ecology and open space design. In this way, the Community Visioning will prepare the way for the official Secondary Plan reviews that will follow. While it will have no legal status, it will be useful for understanding options and opportunities which the reviews themselves will take into account.

**Comprehensive Development Designation (CDD)** - An area where specified new developments are subject to an agreement between the proponent and the Municipality before they can proceed.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** - A method of preventing crime by changing or managing the physical environment to produce behavioural effects that will reduce the incidence and fear of crime.

**Cultural Landscapes** - geographic areas which have been modified, influenced or given special cultural meaning. These cultural landscapes provide opportunities for the interpretation and understanding of important historical settings and past patterns of land use.

**Density** - A measure of the number of people or housing units occupying a given area of land. The measure reflects the general character of the housing types in a neighbourhood. **Low density** generally refers to a neighbourhood that would result from an area developed as one and two unit housing; **medium density** generally applies to townhouses or apartment buildings no higher than 3 storeys; and **high density** generally refers to taller apartment buildings resulting in more people per hectare.

**Eco-system** - A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** - A legislated process to identify, analyse and evaluate the anticipated effects of development on those elements of the natural environment that are deemed to be environmentally sensitive and/or significant. The purpose of an EIA is to determine if a proposed development can proceed without irreparable damage to those areas that this plan sets out to protect.

**Environmentally Sensitive/Significant Area** - An area in which a biological or physical feature is highly susceptible to damage, or is rare, unique or important enough to warrant its protection.

**Estuary** - the region near a river mouth affected by tides and where the fresh water of the river mixes with the salt water of the sea.

**Fine Particulate Matter (PM)** - Airborne microscopic particles in the air created by air pollution such as burning fossil fuels and wood.

**Floodplains** - Low and flat lands adjacent to rivers, lakes and oceans subject to periodic flooding.

**Flood Risk Areas** - Areas where flooding is likely to occur.

**Floodway Fringe (1 in 100 Year)** - A Floodplain that is likely to flood on average once every 100 years.

**Floodway Zone (1 in 20 Year)** - A Floodplain that is likely to flood on average once every 20 years.

**Functional Plans** - The purpose of a functional plan is to guide the management of the Municipality. They do not represent land use policy but rather HRM's intent to create detailed management guides for setting budgets for programs, services and facilities consistent with the implementation of this Plan. Functional Plans will also guide HRM in the ongoing management of strategic initiatives, partnerships and demonstration projects useful to seeing the full potential of this Plan realized over time.

**Generalized Future Land Use Map (GFLUM)** - A map showing broad locations where different classes of land uses are intended to occur

**Geographical Information System (GIS)** - A method of electronically mapping, storing and retrieving data on parcels of land.

**Goal** - A statement that describes a general, desirable future end-state. Goals are used to guide planning, policies, programming, and land use.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG)** - Any gas that traps reflected heat from the earth's surface and contributes to global warming. Water vapour (H<sub>2</sub>O), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) are the primary greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions** -The act of releasing a **greenhouse gas** to the atmosphere from a source.

**Groundwater** - Water found below the surface of the land, either in soil or bedrock. Groundwater supplies dug or drilled wells.

**Habitat** - The land and water which supports the food supply and shelter of wild animals.

**Hazard Lands** - Areas requiring special management or regulations because of specific risks or characteristics, such as steep slopes subject to erosion, floodplains, wetlands, or watershed lands

**Heritage Advisory Committee** - A committee established by the Municipality to advise on existing or potential heritage property pursuant to the Heritage Property Act.

**Heritage Property Act** - Provincial legislation that provides for the identification, designation, preservation and protection of heritage property, including buildings, structures, streetscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas.

**High Capacity Transit** - High-speed and high-frequency transit service with a high-quality of passenger amenities.

**High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV)** - Vehicles that carry two or more persons, including the driver. An HOV includes a transit bus, vanpool, carpool, or any other vehicle that meets the minimum occupancy requirements.

**Home Occupation** - An accessory use of a dwelling for gainful employment.

**Housing Stock** - The total supply of dwellings available in a given area or community.

**Implementation Strategy** - A list of prioritized steps to achieve the intent of all the policies and plans within a Regional Planning theme area, including indication of cost and time required to achieve the steps.

**Industrial Park** - See Business Park

**Infill** - see Residential Infilling and Intensification

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)** - A broad range of computer, electronics, advanced sensor, and communications technologies. When integrated into the transportation system infrastructure, these technologies help monitor and manage traffic flow, reduce congestion, and provide information to travellers.

**Land use designation** - general land use designations as shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map (Map 2). These designations form the legal framework for achieving the growth management strategy of this Plan. The land use designations are: 1. Urban Settlement Designation; 2. Urban Reserve Designation; 3. Rural Commuter Designation; 4. Rural Resource Designation; and 5. Agricultural Designation.

**Land use regulation** - Policies in this Plan which will bring about change to land use regulation immediately upon adoption of the MPS are accompanied with appropriate regulation in either the land use by-law or Subdivision Bylaw or by a contract with the Municipality governing land use known as a Development Agreement. These policies are normally recognized by statements such as: "HRM shall through the land use by-law require..."

**Low-rise building** - A building which is no more than 3 storeys high.

**Mass, Massing** - The way in which a building's gross cubic volume is distributed on the site, which parts are higher, lower, wider, or narrower.

**Masterplan** - The result of a formal process to coordinate the long term development on a large area of land with land owners, community residents, and public agencies.

**Mixed-use Compact Community** - An area where mutually complimentary uses exist, usually within walking distance of each other (e.g. apartments above a store or residences near office space and employment opportunities).

**Modal Split** - The proportion of commuters who use a particular type of transportation or mode to get to work (e.g. number of people using private cars verses public transit verses active transportation modes).

**Municipal Government Act (MGA)** - Provincial legislation that enables municipalities to govern.

**Natural Corridor** - Naturally vegetated or potentially re-vegetated lands that connect, link or border critical ecological attributes and functions and also provide ecological functions such as habitat, migration routes, hydrological flow, connections or buffering from adjacent impacts. These include such components as woodlands, waterbodies, watercourses, valley lands, riparian zones, and shorelines.



**Natural Open Spaces** - Lands with scenic and/or environmental features that are intended to be left primarily in an undisturbed and undeveloped state.

**Natural Resource** - Anything that is provided by nature to meet human needs, such as minerals, air, water, and trees.

**Neighbourhood** - A group of dwellings usually including other uses such as community centres and businesses which have similar characteristics and which can be identified as distinctive from other groups nearby. While the size of a neighbourhood varies, they are usually several blocks in area.

**Neighbourhood Planning Strategy** - A secondary planning strategy, pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, which forms part of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). Neighbourhood Planning Strategies include all secondary planning strategies that were in existence at the time of the adoption of the Regional MPS and will include future planning strategies adopted to guide and direct development in greater detail at the neighbourhood level than can be dealt with under the Community Planning Strategy.

**Nitrogen Oxides (Nox)** - Chemical compounds that are produced mostly by burning fossil fuels.

**Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF)** - A measure of the level of aircraft noise caused by airplane movements near an airport.

**Non-Market Housing** - Accommodations which are provided and managed by a government or non-profit agency, and generally made available at below the cost of similar housing provided by the private sector.

**Objective** - A statement of desired conditions. An objective provides the result or outcome of a goal.

**On-site Septic System** - A wastewater (sewage) treatment system that uses the natural ability of the soil on a building site to treat waste water from that building.

**Open Space** - primarily undeveloped and undisturbed areas of land.

**Open Space Designation** - a land use category to refer to several types of land uses with a wide range of functions. It includes publicly or privately owned, undeveloped land or water, intended to be preserved for agricultural, forest, community form, ecological, historical, public safety, or recreational purposes.

**Open Space Network** - mainly a network of provincial crown lands as well as lands owned by private companies for forest production and harvesting. It includes regional parks, natural corridors and trail systems that have been developed by government agencies, non-governmental organizations and private land owners.

**Open Space Design Development** - a form of development designed to conserve a connected system of open space. It begins with the identification of primary and secondary conservation areas to be protected and follows with locating building sites.

**Classic Model** - Developments are designed to achieve connectivity in open space by retaining conservation areas under the single ownership of a condominium corporation or HRM.

**Hybrid Model** - where environmental conditions make the Classic Model not feasible, the entire parcel, with the exception of roads and parkland, may be subdivided into individual, privately-owned lots. Maximum building site disturbance areas and maximum road development standards may be established for these areas.

**Opportunity Sites** - Vacant or under-used properties which could be redeveloped for a higher or more appropriate use.

**Overlay** - Refers to additional conditions or characteristics which can be mapped that are applied on top of those which apply to a parcel of land. An overlay zone usually relates to a different aspect of development than the underlying zone and sometimes covers more than one underlying zone.

**Park Classification System** - describes the function, design features and the number of households served by park type. Municipally owned parks include Neighbourhood Parks, Community Parks and District Parks. Regional Parks include provincially and federally owned parks.

**Park & Ride Lot** - A specially designated area where drivers park their cars and continue their trip on public transit or other organized transportation to their final destination.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development** - Development designed to accommodate pedestrians by ensuring travel origins and destinations are within reasonable walking distance of each other, and where the design of the development encourages people to walk.

**Performance-based Zoning** - A regulatory climate in which the end results (the "performance") are mandated rather than the means to achieve them.

**Permit Incentive/Bonus Zoning** - under the *Municipal Government Act* municipal governments in Nova Scotia can provide incentive or bonus zoning that relaxes one set of requirements if an applicant exceeds in other requirements or undertakes action in the public interest. It is a tool that can be considered through the secondary planning process for heritage protection and to support affordable housing development or renovation.

**Policy** - A statement of intent.

**Principle** - A statement of philosophy regarding the various sectors of the regional plan, such as environment, transportation, settlement, and the economy. Principles guide goals and objectives.

**Profile (building)** - Different from building scale or building massing, a building's profile refers to its cross-sectional shape or, put another way, its shape upon the horizon. A building's profile would be examined in relation to the profiles of other buildings in its immediate and general vicinity.

**Proportion** - The relationship of two or more dimensions such as the ratio of width to height of a door or window, or of a building.

**Public Transportation** - Transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, that provides to the public general or special service on a regular and continuing basis.

**Queue-jumping** - The ability of transit vehicles to get priority to move through areas of traffic congestion.

**Residential Care Facilities** - private, public and non-profit residential living arrangements that may provide meals, housekeeping, transportation, individualized personal care and health services for people who require assistance with activities of daily living as defined in the *NS Homes for Special Care Act*.

**Residential Infilling and Intensification** - The process of adding new dwellings to a **neighbourhood** by building on vacant lots, or redeveloping existing housing or other buildings.

**Resource Production** - The process of using a resource such as minerals, forests or agricultural land to create a product such as aggregate, lumber or crops

**Riparian** - Referring to any watercourse or body of water.

**Road classification** - Roads are classified according to their primary function, typically based upon vehicular traffic speeds and volumes (refer to Map 8, Road Hierarchy Classification). This classification system will replace the existing ones which predate amalgamation. The roads are described as arterial, major collector, collector and local and will be further defined within the Transportation Master Plan.

**Saltmarsh** - A community of organisms dominated by plants that are tolerant of wet, saline (salty) soils; generally found in low-lying coastal habitats which are periodically wet.

**Scale (building)** - The size of a building relative to another building or the size of one building's elements relative another building's elements.

**Scale (human)** - Refers to a range of building details from small (masonry units, doorknobs, window muntins, etc.) to medium (doors, windows, awnings, balconies, railings, signs, etc.) to large (expression of floor lines, expression of structural columns, cornice lines, etc.).

**Secondary Planning Strategy** - The three levels of plans will be called the Regional MPS, Community Planning Strategies (previously called Municipal Planning Strategies) and Neighbourhood Planning Strategies (previously called Secondary Planning Strategies). Collectively, Community Planning Strategies and Neighbourhood Planning Strategies will be called Secondary Planning Strategies.

**Secondary Unit** - Refers to the concept of adding an additional dwelling unit to an otherwise single-unit house. Secondary units are usually incorporated into the main house, such as a basement or third floor apartment subject to applicable permit conditions.

**Service Area Boundary** - The limit of an area of HRM to which the municipality has committed to extend piped water and sewer lines. There are some 'water-serviced' areas that have piped water only.

**Serviced Development** - Lots or buildings that have a piped water supply and sewer.

**Shared Septic System** (or Cluster Systems) - A wastewater treatment system that combines wastewater from several adjacent buildings for treatment in a common land-based treatment system.

**Single-occupancy vehicle (SOV)** - A motorized vehicle carrying only the driver.

**Sprawl** - Generally unplanned, scattered development characterized by low density, haphazard, and disorganized settlement patterns and by being inefficient to service.

**Stormwater Runoff** - Surface water collecting and draining on land immediately after a rainfall.

**Sustainable** - Using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

**Telecommuting** - Using telecommunications, such as telephone and internet, to work, shop or learn from home or other locations instead of at an organization's premises.

**Traffic Calming** - The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behaviour and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. (Institute of Traffic Engineers, Subcommittee on Traffic calming)

**Transit Oriented Development (TOD)** - A mix of residential, retail, and office uses with a supporting network of roads, bicycle ways, and pedestrian ways focussed around a major transit stop designed to support a high level of transit use.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM) or Transportation System Management (TSM)** - A strategy to reduce auto trips, provide travel alternatives and improve the efficiency, safety and capacity of the existing transportation network. While TDM generally relates to changing behaviour and TSM relates to facility changes, both are referred to as TDM.

**Universal Design** - A strategy to ensure access to public facilities is available to all people regardless of their ability or mobility.

**Unserviced Development** - Lots or buildings that rely on wells for their water supply, on septic tanks and septic fields for sewer disposal, or both.

**Urban Reserve Designation** - defines areas abutting the Urban Settlement Designation which could be serviced with central services beyond the 25 year time horizon of the Regional Plan to ensure the Municipality has a long-term supply of land which can be serviced.

**Urban Service Area** - areas (designated in the Subdivision Bylaw) within the Urban Settlement Designation and the Harbour Designation where municipal wastewater and water distribution systems are to be provided.

**Urban Settlement Designation** - defines those areas where serviced urban forms of development will occur throughout the next 25 years.

**View Plane** - An unobstructed line of sight that allows a viewer to see a particular landform, building or landscape.

**Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)** - Carbon-containing gases and vapours such as gasoline fumes and solvents.

**Watercourse** - Any lake, wetland, river, stream, ocean or other body of water.

**Water Service Areas** - existing developments serviced with a water distribution system and on-site sewage disposal systems. Additional areas may be considered subject to certain criteria and approval as a wastewater management plan.

**Watershed** - The area of land within which all water drains into common outlet into a larger body of water. Sub-watersheds are smaller portions of a watershed each of which drain to a common point within the larger watershed.

**Watershed or sub-watershed studies** - studies that shall inform comprehensive secondary planning processes concerning natural watercourses. These studies shall determine the carrying capacity of the watersheds to meet the water quality objectives which shall be adopted following the completion of the studies.

**Wetland** - Lands commonly referred to as marshes, swamps, fens, bogs and shallow water areas that are saturated with water for a large part of the year. These lands exhibit plant and animal life adapted to a wet environment.

**Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI)** - Any area where combustible woodland is found adjacent to homes and other buildings.