

News Release

Regional Council Approves HRMbyDesign Downtown Plan

(June 16, 2009) - Halifax Regional Council this afternoon approved HRM's landmark urban design plan, better known as the HRMbyDesign downtown plan.

The plan is the result of three years of detailed planning work, public meetings, and consultation with thousands of HRM citizens, led by the Urban Design Task Force, a committee of council that includes 14 citizens and three Councillors.

"HRMbyDesign introduces a new streamlined development approval process that will stimulate economic growth and, ultimately, make our downtown a more vibrant place to live and work," said Mayor Peter Kelly.

The new development approval process in downtown Halifax, which replaces the current development agreement process, is based on clear and predictable policies and regulations that govern maximum building heights, design, building materials, and overall streetscape quality.

For the first time, development in downtown Halifax will be 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 will be established on Barrington Street, from George Street to Spring Garden Road. This conservation district includes stronger demolition controls and a financial incentives package for property owners to encourage heritage restoration.

"This urban design plan represents the hard work of many individuals and reflects the vision community members have for their downtown," said HRMbyDesign Project Manager Andy Fillmore. "It is a plan that strikes a balance between encouraging new growth and protecting our built heritage."

HRMbyDesign is a key element of the Regional Plan adopted by Council in 2006. Among the many objectives of the Regional Plan was the revitalization of the downtown core.

To learn more about HRMbyDesign the www.hrmbymdesign.ca website.

- 30 -

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