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Halifax Regional Council
December 14, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Joe O'Brien, Chair, Regional Planning Committee

DATE: December 6, 2004

SUBJECT: **Regional Planning Consultation and Communication Plan
January to April 2005**

ORIGIN

June 10, 2003 - Council approved Regional Planning Process, Timeline and Workplan
July 25, 2003 - Council approved Regional Planning Consultation Plan
December 7, 2004 - Regional Planning Committee recommended Regional Plan Preferred Alternative - the Proposed Plan to Regional Council

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended Regional Council endorse the Consultation and Communication Plan for the "Regional Plan Preferred Alternative - the Proposed Plan", as outlined in Attachment "B".

BACKGROUND

The Regional Planning Process, Timeline and Workplan outlined the steps where public participation would occur during the process (Attachment "A"). An overall Consultation Plan, approved in July 2003, provided details on the types of consultation tools and communications to be used. In keeping with the overall consultation plan, the Regional Planning Committee have worked with the project team to create a detailed information sharing/consultation program for each step of the regional planning process where consultation was anticipated. The details of each strategy have been provided to Council and the results of each reported.

Consultation thus far has used a number of techniques including public meetings, workbooks, open houses, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and meetings with committees of Council. Information about the regional planning process, issues, and concepts for future growth have been distributed using newsletters, the Regional Planning WebSite, Council reports, community based newspapers, and other media. In addition, both non-statistical and statistical questionnaires/surveys have been used to augment/confirm findings.

DISCUSSION

The technical evaluation of three alternative concepts for growth and their comparison to the base case has been completed. The results of this evaluation, combined with quantitative input from the spring consultation, has lead to the creation of a hybrid, or "preferred" alternative. On December 7, 2004, the preferred alternative, described more aptly as, the "proposed regional plan", was presently to Regional Council.

During the time the evaluation of the alternatives has been going on, efforts to share information to keep citizens and stakeholders informed have continued, including a newsletter distributed in late October. Notification of Council's receipt of the proposed plan and information on the remaining steps in the process have also been communicated.

Consultation and communication on the proposed regional plan during January, February, and March 2005, is outlined in Attachment "B". Direct communication with all stakeholder groups, Council committees and residents' associations, involving both written and telephone communication, is already underway. Regional Planning staff will be attending meetings of various stakeholder groups and council committees beginning in January.

In an effort to work closely with residents' associations, the Regional Planning Committee will host an information session in January. The evening program will include an overview of the preferred alternative and planning process to date, and a discussion on how best to interact with the associations over the remaining steps in the planning process. A social component will allow the representatives of the various associations to meet each other, meet the members of the RPC, and discuss common interests.

January 26th (in Sheet Harbour) is the first of five public forums in the region to present the proposed plan and get feedback on the implications of the concept. If meeting logistics allow, the public forums will use a round table discussion format to get into greater detail to help direct policy formulation. Public forums will also be held throughout February in Cole Harbour, Sackville, Clayton Park West and the Capital District. (Attachment “C” contains a list of the locations, dates and times)

The Regional Planning Committee’s Implementation Working Group (IWG) will continue meeting now through March, providing hands-on involvement by the many sectors - environment, social, health, industry, heritage, natural resources, business - interested in and directly impacted upon by a regional plan. The working group will be reviewing and discussing a wide range of regulatory, incentive and financial tools and identifying those needed to implement the policy of the plan.

An internal Interdepartmental Task Force (ITF) will provide on-going review of draft policy. The appointed representatives from HRM business units will ensure each regional planning policy statement is circulated and reviewed by the appropriate section. As well, each department’s input will be consolidated by their representative and presented to the ITF. The Regional Planning team will also require the assistance of HRM business units to facilitate the input of various provincial and federal departments.

The entire consultation and communication effort over the coming months will be extensive and will place significant demands on staff resources and the efforts of a wide ranging group of individuals both inside and outside the organization. As Attachment “D” illustrates, consultation over the coming months will occur in all sub-regions of the Municipality - rural, Capital District, east, west and central. This next phase of consultation and communication will be critical in bringing about a level of understanding and “buy-in” necessary for the delivery of the final Regional Plan to Council in Spring 2005.

As with past Regional Planning consultation efforts, updates will be provided to Regional Council and notification of specific consultation events and communication activities communicated to Council and the public.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Any ongoing costs associated with the implementation of the components of the consultation process 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

Public consultation on the Regional Plan preferred alternative - the "proposed plan", is essential in bringing about the final level of detail of the draft Regional Plan. Regional Council could direct the Regional Planning Committee to create another plan for consultation and communication or recommend changes to the plan attached to this report. These alternatives are not recommended.

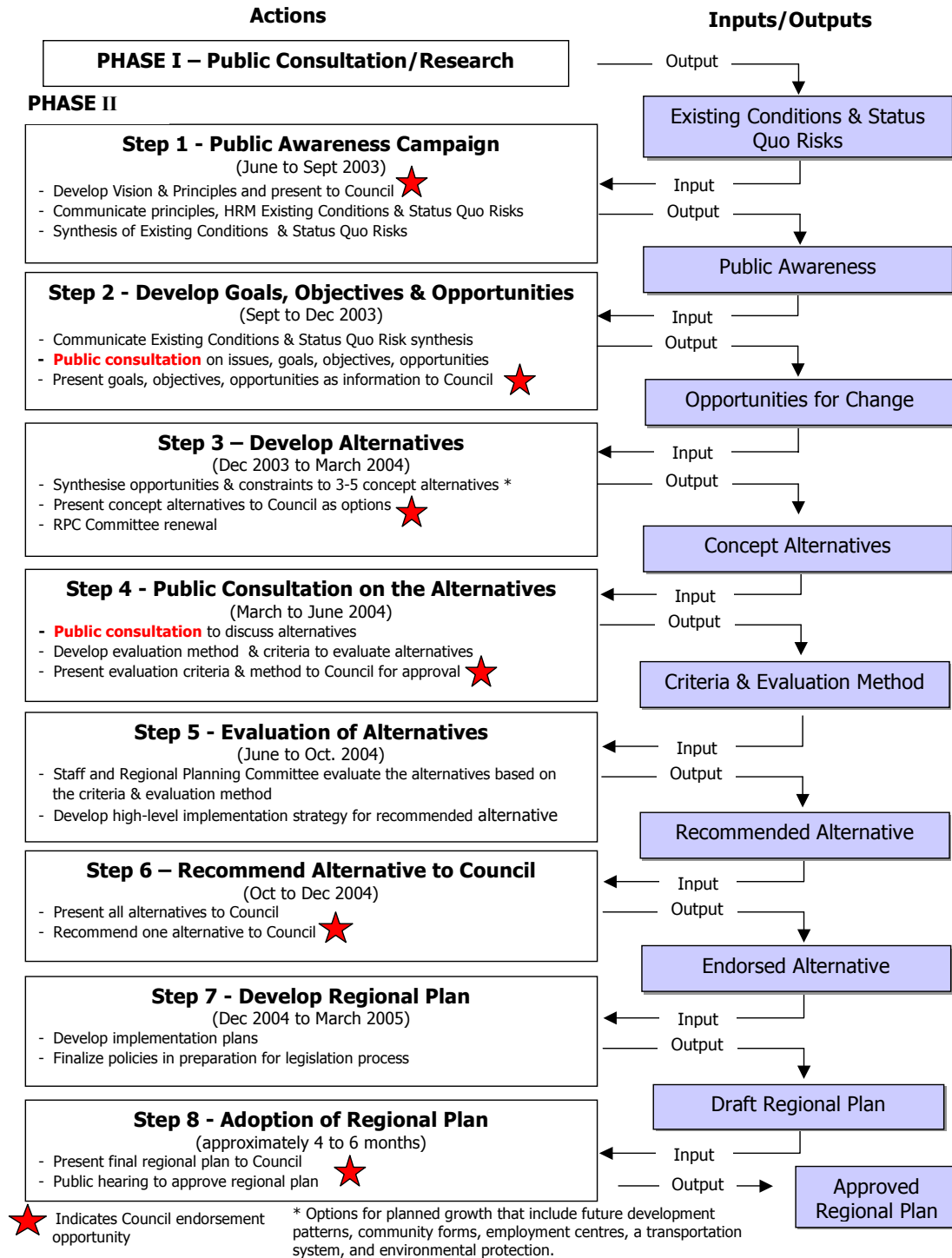
ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment "A" - Regional Planning Process Phase II
- Attachment "B" - Consultation and Communication (Jan-Apr 2005)
- Attachment "C" - Schedule of Public Forums (Jan-Feb 2005)
- Attachment "D" - Consultation Activities Presented by Geographic Sub-Region

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.

Report Prepared by: Susan Corser, Planner II, Regional Planning
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Attachment "A"
Regional Planning Process Phase II (approved June 2003)



Attachment "B"

Regional Planning Consultation and Communication Plan STEP 7 - Develop Regional Plan December 2004 to March 2005

Purpose of Consultation and Communications

To facilitate buy-in of the Regional Plan by Regional Council, stakeholders and HRM residents.

Goals

1. To raise residents and stakeholder groups' awareness of:
 - < the benefits of the proposed Regional Plan;
 - < the reasons for selecting the proposed Regional Plan;
 - < the regional planning project and how it will affect residents.
2. To demonstrate how we have used the public's input to date to form the Regional Plan.
3. To provide better than adequate opportunities for public participation.
4. To understand the issues/attitudes residents or groups have with the Regional Plan so we can address them prior to the public hearing.
5. To encourage support for the delivery of a Regional Plan to Regional Council in the Spring.

Target Audiences

- < Council
- < Regional Planning Contact List
- < Implementation Working Group
- < Residents of HRM (including rural residents)
- < Interdepartmental Task Force
- < HRM staff
- < Stakeholder groups
 - Planning Advisory Committees
 - Committees of Council
 - Residents Associations

Strategies

1. Launch the “proposed Regional Plan” with detailed explanations as to how it will affect residents in different areas of HRM.
2. Outline the benefits of the “proposed Regional Plan” to the rural, suburban and urban residents.
3. Focus on the fact the “proposed Regional Plan” is a direct result of public feedback.
4. Continue to communicate and reinforce the relationship of the Regional Plan with the community plans.
5. Keep the Regional Plan in HRM residents’ minds, through strategic media relations and/or advertising.

Key Messages

- < The “preferred alternative”, or “proposed Regional Plan”, will become the Regional Plan.
- < The Regional Plan is based on extensive research, balances environment, economic and community perspectives, and reflects what residents of HRM have told us they want for the future.
- < The Regional Plan will benefit all areas of HRM - rural, suburban and urban.

Tactics

Tactic	Purpose & Specifics	Audience
<p>Distribution Network</p>	<p>Purpose: To improve circulation of Regional Planning information.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < contact all councillors for suggestions of locations - local businesses, community facilities, etc. < canvas in the community for interest and confirm list < post listing of locations and dates when materials will be available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < HRM residents (particularly rural residents)
Deadline: December 2004		
<p>Implementation Working Group (IWG)</p>	<p>Purpose: To engage sector-based stakeholders in achieving implementation solutions (tools to implement policy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Specific stakeholder groups
Deadline: November 2004 to March 2005		
<p>Guide to the Proposed Regional Plan</p>	<p>Purpose: To outline what the proposed Regional Plan is, how it will work with other municipal documents and policies, and to inform the public about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < the details of the “proposed Regional Plan” < the <u>results</u> of the evaluation of the Alternatives. < which communities were selected for growth centres and why. < the benefits of the “proposed Regional Plan” to urban, suburban, rural residents < how the RP will work. (i.e. different ways the plan will make life different) < how residents can still get involved. (i.e. PIMs, Public Hearing) <p>Action: Distribute to contact list and libraries, recreation centres, etc. via distribution network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Regional Planning contact list < Stakeholder Groups < Media < HRM residents
Deadline: December 2004		

<p>Communication to/with Committees of Council & Community Councils</p>	<p>Purpose: To seek buy-in for Regional Plan. Communicate with applicable council committees, attend (joint) committee meetings where possible, recruit committee support (in writing) and request committee presence at Council (to publicly endorse the preferred alternative)</p> <p>Action: Seek responses and recommendations.</p>	<p>< Committees of Council & Community Councils</p>
<p>Deadline: Regularly until March 2005</p>		
<p>Communication to/with Other Stakeholder Groups</p>	<p>Purpose: To meet with assigned groups to keep them informed.</p> <p>Action: Prepare new slide show - "The Proposed Regional Plan".</p>	<p>< Stakeholder Groups</p>
<p>Deadline: Regularly until March 2005</p>		
<p>Communication to/with Residents Associations</p>	<p>Purpose: To coordinate meeting of 65+ association chairs to determine how best to network with residents' associations, raise their level of understanding of the preferred alternative, and keep them interested and involved.</p> <p>Action: Invitation, RSVP and short survey.</p>	<p>< Residents Associations</p>
<p>Deadline: January 2005</p>		
<p>Audiovisual Show</p>	<p>Purpose: To use as basis for talking to stakeholder groups about the preferred alternative.</p> <p>(Other possible uses: Council intermissions, Cable 10, libraries, etc.)</p> <p>Action: Prepare show.</p>	<p>< Stakeholders</p>
<p>Deadline: January 2005</p>		
<p>Public Forums</p>	<p>Purpose: To inform public about the proposed Regional Plan at five locations:</p> <p>A. Sheet Harbour B. Cole Harbour C. Halifax West D. Sackville E. Capital District</p>	<p>< HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media</p>

Deadline: January/February 2005		
Materials for Public Forums	<p>Purpose: To communicate key messages of the proposed Regional Plan.</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>Create materials appropriate for display.</p> <p>Prepare responses for FAQ (for staff) on the topics/issues likely to be of concern to residents, stakeholder groups, etc.</p> <p>Prepare one page brochure for unaddressed admail on the proposed Regional Plan stating the key message... “my preference for how we grow as a region is...” (or perhaps we use the guiding principle) - use photos: nature; outdoor living; clean water; children; good transit; attractive, affordable housing/streetscapes (mixed use). May refer reader to online survey asking specific yes/no questions (fast forum technique).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media < Staff
Deadline: January (before Public Forums)		
Promotions for Public Forums	<p>Purpose: To encourage residents’ involvement.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite key stakeholders / area leaders to participate (use RP’s list of groups - invite one/two reps per) - Advertise in newspaper (daily & community), radio, Cable 10 if possible, Seniors Advocate, etc. - Unaddressed admail to all households (mail drop) with list of events, images and minimal text (1 page). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media < Staff
Deadline: December & January (before Public Forums)		

<p>Displays</p>	<p>Purpose: To use strong visuals to keep the Regional Planning ideas in residents' minds.</p> <p>Action: Update the ferry terminal displays and other displays using new images and results and implications of the preferred alternative - the Regional Plan. Other possible uses - shopping centres, trade fairs, events etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media < Staff
<p>Deadline: January (before Public Forums)</p>		
<p>Communicate Comments from Public Forums</p>	<p>Purpose: To illustrate how critical residents involvement is and how it factors into the process.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post comments on WebSite - Prepare a report on the comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media < Staff
<p>Deadline: February (after Public Forums)</p>		

Summary Report	Purpose: To include all major issues raised, the extent and nature of support and opposition, advantages and disadvantages of proposed action, the groups and sectors positively effected/ adversely effected, and include any modifications to the preferred alternative based on the citizen input.	< Council
Deadline: March (after Public Forums)		
WebSite	Purpose: To communicate detailed Regional Plan information and to offer an online feedback opportunity. Action: Prepare online surveys and/or comment boxes for Public Forums.	< HRM residents < Stakeholder Groups < Regional Planning contact list < Media < Staff
Deadline: Ongoing		
Media Relations	Purpose: To generate media coverage of Regional Planning topics to educate the public and encourage participation. Actions: Pitch story ideas when new reports/studies, etc., are complete - i.e Preferred Alternative, Public Forums, etc.	< Media (including rural & community newspapers) < HRM residents
Deadline: Ongoing		
Community Newspapers	Purpose: To encourage media coverage in community newspapers and other stakeholder publications, particularly in more rural communities. Action: Prepare monthly/regular column.	< Media < HRM residents (particularly rural)
Deadline: Ongoing		
HRM News	Purpose: To inform HRM staff about the proposed Regional Plan and how it affects them.	< HRM staff
Deadline: Ongoing		

Interdepartmental Task Force	Purpose: To ensure the proposed Regional Plan works effectively with all business units. Action: Hold regular meetings. (May also coordinate staff briefings for different business units)	< HRM staff
Deadline: Ongoing		

Attachment "C"

**Halifax Regional Municipality
Regional Planning Public Forums
January-February 2005
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm**

DATE	LOCATION
Wednesday, January 26	Duncan MacMillan High School 481 Church Point Road Sheet Harbour, NS
Thursday, February 3	Halifax West High School 283 Thomas Raddall Drive Halifax, NS
Thursday, February 10	Sackville High School 1 Kingfisher Way Lower Sackville, NS
Thursday, February 17	Cole Harbour Place 51 Forest Hills Parkway Cole Harbour, NS
Wednesday, February 23	Pier 21 - Heritage Hall

Attachment “D”

Regional Planning Consultation Activities (January to April 2005) *presented by geographic sub-region*					
	Geographic Sub-Regions of HRM				
	Rural	Western	Central	Eastern	Capital District
Public Forums	Sheet Harbour, Duncan MacMillan High School - Jan 26	Halifax West High School - Feb 3	Sackville High School - Feb 10	Cole Harbour Place - Feb 17	Pier 21 - Heritage Hall - Feb 23
Council Committees ¹	U	U	U	U	U
Residents' Associations ²	U	U	U	U	U
IWG ³	U	U	U	U	U
Distribution Network	Sheet Harbour Public Library, Musquodoboit Harbour Public Library	Tantallon Public Library, Keshen Goodman Public Library, Capt. William Spry Public Library, Halifax North Memorial Public Library, J.D. Shatford Memorial Public Library	Sackville Public Library, Bedford Public Library	Cole Harbour Public Library, Alderney Gate Public Library, Dartmouth North Public Library, Woodlawn Public Library	Spring Garden Road Public Library

¹ See list of council committees attached - Appendix “A”

² See list of residents' associations attached - Appendix “B”

³ See list of sector representatives attached - Appendix “C”

Regional Planning Consultation Activities (January to April 2005) *presented by geographic sub-region*					
	Geographic Sub-Regions of HRM				
	Rural	Western	Central	Eastern	Capital District
Community Newspapers	Eastern Shore Observer, Guysborough Journal, Highway 7 Eastern Shore Magazine	The Masthead News	Bedford Magazine, The Canal Post, The Laker, Bedford/Sackville Daily News, The Weekly Press, The Beaverbank/Kinsac Bulletin	Dartmouth Laker, Shearwater Warrior	The Southender
Media	Daily News Mail Star	Daily News Mail Star	Daily News Mail Star	Daily News Mail Star	Daily News Mail Star
Displays		Halifax Ferry Terminal		Dartmouth Ferry Terminal	Halifax Ferry Terminal
Regional Planning Contact List	U	U	U	U	U

Appendix "A" - Council Committees⁴

Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities
Bedford Watershed Advisory Board
Bikeways Advisory Committee
Community and Race Relations
Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board
District 12 Planning Advisory Committee
District 16 Planning Advisory Committee
Emergency Measures Advisory Committee
Energy and Underground Services Committee
Halifax Watershed Advisory Board
Harbour East Planning Advisory Committee
Heritage Advisory Committee
North West Planning Advisory Committee
North West Transit Advisory Committee
Private Roads Committee
Program and Service Review Committee
Regional Taxi and Limousine Committee
Rural Fire Management Committee
Solid Waste Resource Advisory Committee
Tax Structure Review Working Group

⁴ This list does not represent a complete list of all Committees of Council, but those with some degree of involvement in the Regional Planning process.

Appendix "B" - Residents' Associations

Admiralty Place Residents Association	Prospect Peninsula Residents Association
Bayers/Westwood Residents Association	Prospect Ratepayers Association
Beaver Bank Community Awareness Association	Ratepayers Association of Goffs and Devon
Brookside Community Homeowners Association	Regatta Point Landowners Association
Brunswick Heritage Area Residents Association	Ridgevale Residents Association
Central Dartmouth Neighbourhood Association	Rockwood Subdivision Residents Association
Commons North Neighbourhood Association	Spider Lake Residents Association
Downtown Residents Association	Springvale/Fairmount Residents Association
East Preston Ratepayers Association	Spryfield Residents Association
Fergusons Cove Residents Association	Stonemount Residents Association
Halifax Regional Homeowners Association	Timberlea Residents Association
Commons North Neighbourhood Association	Timberlea Village Ratepayers Association
Brunswick Heritage Area Residents Association	Upper Musquodoboit Ratepayers Association
Bloomfield Heritage Residents Association	Valley Residents Association
Peninsula South Community Association	Victoria Park Residents Association
Barrington Street South Neighbourhood Association	Waverley Ratepayers Association
Jubilee Neighbourhood	Austenville Residents Association
Barrens and Backlands Subgroup	District 9 Residents Association
Harbourview Residents Association	Herring Cove Residents Association
Ridgevale Homeowners Assoc.	Kingswood Ratepayers
Portland Estates Residents Association	
St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association	
Greater Prince's Lodge Residents	
Glenbourne Homeowners Association	
Clayton Park West Homeowners Association	
Halifax Ward 8 Association	
Harbour Drive Residents Association	
Lake of the Woods Home Owners Association	
Lake Thomas Park Residents Association	
Lakeview Homeowners Association	
Lawrencetown Citizens Committee	
Lockview Area Ratepayers Association	
Maplewood on the Lakes Residents Association	
Middle & Upper Sackville Homeowners Association	
Millwood Residents Association	
Miller Lake Drive Residents Association	
Montebello Residents Association	
Musquodoboit Harbour Ratepayers and Residents Association	
North Woodside Community Association	
Penhorn Residents Association	
Portland Estates Residents Association	

Appendix "C" - Regional Planning Committee Implementation Working Group

Sector

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Robin Barrett | Development/Resource |
| 2. Angela Bishop | Social |
| 3. Suzanne Bona | Development |
| 4. Judith Cabrita | Tourism |
| 5. Susanna Cheng | Transportation |
| 6. Michael DiPenta | Business |
| 7. Gerald Gabriel | Rural Business |
| 8. Leanne Hachey | Business |
| 9. Garnet Holman | Agriculture |
| 10. Jerry MacKinlay | Environment |
| 11. Clare O'Connor | Health |
| 12. Peter Oram | Resource |
| 13. Kevin Riles | Development |
| 14. Brenda Shannon | Heritage |
| 15. Downey Thompson | Resource |