
News Release

Regional Plan Encourages Healthy, Vibrant, Sustainable Future for HRM

(Thursday, June 12/ 2003) – Effective land use, development patterns that support the economy, integrated transportation systems and the preservation of open space, cultural and natural assets are some of the main messages in the Regional Planning principles approved this week by Halifax Regional Council.

Fred Morley, Chair of HRM's Regional Planning Committee. "The Regional Planning process in HRM began in 2001, with an initial public consultation and research phase, that ended in December 2002. The information gathered during this time formed the basis of the new principles and the five major themes of the Regional Plan: economy, environment, settlement patterns, transportation and Halifax Harbour."

The population of HRM is on the rise, climbing 26 per cent from 264,421 residents in 1971, to 359,168 residents in 2001. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that up to an additional 100,000 residents will reside in HRM by 2026. The Regional Plan will be a detailed, long-range plan outlining where, when and how growth should take place in the region.

The Regional Planning Committee, comprised of three Regional Councillors, five community representatives and Chief Administrative Officer George McLellan, have developed a vision, process and seven principles for the Regional Plan, which will guide the development of the plan over the next two years.

The Committee's vision is for HRM to adopt a broad regional plan which, over the next 25 years, will guide its physical development in a way that promotes healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities.

Public participation is an important element of the Regional Planning process. The plan will seek to address the needs and views of all parts of HRM, recognizing the diversity of its citizens, community and geography.

A major public participation program is scheduled to begin this Fall to identify goals and objectives within the theme areas. This will follow a Summer awareness campaign to help residents better understand the many complex issues facing the region.

For more information on HRM Regional Planning, or to be added to a direct mailing list, visit www.region.halifax.ns.ca and follow the link to Regional Planning.

The Regional Planning Guiding Principle is: “ The Regional Plan will seek to address the needs and views of all HRM, recognizing the diversity of its citizens, community and geography.”

The seven Regional Planning principles are to:

- Provide a framework that leads to predictable, fair, cost effective decision making.
- Support development patterns that promote a vigorous regional economy.
- Preserve and promote sustainability of cultural, historical and natural assets.
- Support appropriate roles for the Halifax/Dartmouth central business district and local business districts as a focus for economic, cultural and residential activities.
- Manage development in a way that will make the most effective use of land, energy, infrastructure, public services and facilities and considers healthy lifestyles.
- Ensure opportunities for the protection of open space, wilderness, natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas.
- Develop integrated transportation systems in conjunction with the above principles.

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