

**January 10, 2017**

**To:** The Centre Plan Team  
**From:** Community Design Advisory Committee  
**Subject:** Comments on the Draft Centre Plan

The Community Design Advisory Committee has spent close to 3,000 hours in discussion and review the Draft Centre Plan and the update of the Regional Plan over the past number of years. Many residents of Halifax have also turned out to public forms and provided written and online feedback. This engagement reflects a high level of interest and commitment to getting the Centre Plan right.

The committee has identified several issues, content gaps and procedural concerns that may assist the Centre Plan Team as they move forward. For example, one of the main concerns relates directly to the mandate and responsibilities of the committee...principally the requirement that CDAC report regularly to the Standing Committee on Community Planning and Economic Development. It is the recommendation of CDAC that this particular gap be remedied as soon as possible.

In general, the observations below are just that...observations. They do not necessarily reflect consensus concerns, but issues and recommendations identified and/or discussed by committee members. These issues arise from through the unique experience and perspective of committee members, correspondence received by the committee and concerns identified at public forums.

Issues were identified in 20 areas and include:

1. Key Objectives
2. Controlling expectations for the centre plan
3. Completeness of the Draft Plan
4. Measuring regulatory impact
5. Impacts on Development, usability, impacts on development costs, timelines, etc.
6. Urban structure, affordability
7. Monitoring
8. Jobs and economic development...integration with the economic plan
9. Vision rework
10. Looking into the future and dealing with disruption

11. Organizational culture and resources at HRM for implementation
12. Pedestrian first and service standards
13. Connection with other levels of government on social and physical infrastructure investment
14. Committee mandate and responsibilities
15. Committee recognition
16. Heritage preservation and the limits of planning
17. Harbour
18. Corridors
19. Uniformity of heights and the impact on form
20. Urban structures defined

It is the hope of the committee that these observations and recommendations prove useful in formulating the next Draft of the Centre plan.

Yours truly;

Fred Morley

Chair, Community Design Advisory Committee

CC. CDAC Committee Members, Chair and Members of the Standing Community Planning and Economic Development

## 1. Key Objectives

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| Issue or observation   |
| Are the overarching objectives for the Centre Plan established in the 2014 Regional plan consistent with the draft document?   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <p>Objectives of the Regional Plan regarding the Centre Plan p76:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt a Regional Centre Plan which achieves the vision statement and guiding principles endorsed by Regional Council;</li> <li>2. Adopt heritage plans and programs that further preserve and enhance the viability of heritage properties, streetscapes, and districts;</li> <li>3. Prepare capital and operating expenditure programs that enhance development within the Regional Centre, with emphasis of resources on downtown Halifax and Dartmouth, and take advantage of opportunities to strategically leverage other public and private sector investments; and</li> <li>4. Create financial and regulatory incentives to stimulate desired growth.</li> </ol> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm compliance with objectives in the Centre Plan Document. It is the understanding of the committee that objective 1 above is more or less reflected in the Draft Centre Plan.</li> <li>• Identify and deal with gaps between the intention of the Regional plan and the Centre Plan Draft</li> </ul>  |

## 2. Controlling expectations for the centre plan

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| Issue or observation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre Plan addresses many significant economic, environmental, cultural, heritage, and regulatory issues. The Centre Plan may form a part of the solution to these and other complex challenges, but it should not be seen as a panacea for complex problems.</li> </ul>   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <p>There are several pressing issues affecting HRM. These include issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Red tape reduction</li> <li>• Heritage preservation</li> <li>• Culture</li> </ul> <p>All of these big challenges require significant effort and financial commitments to be addressed fully. However, there is a tendency within governments of all levels, where financial resources are lacking, to attempt to address complex problems with simple regulatory, policy or planning solutions. In many cases, planning and regulatory approaches represent a small part of what needs to be a comprehensive solution. An example of comprehensive programming for heritage preservation in another jurisdiction is included below in section 14.</p> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |

- The Centre Plan document should control expectations. Where complex issues like heritage and affordable housing are addressed... these issues usually require far more than planning changes or by-law adjustment for successful outcomes to be achieved. Centre Plan measures should always be put in the proper context.

### 3. Lack of Completeness of the Draft Plan

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| Issue or observation   |
| Conversion of the Draft Plan to a policy document...things seem to be missing  |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From Draft minutes of November 23, 2016....."Work is required on setting this document up as a policy document. There are also efforts to determine whether to write a new land-use by-law or amend the existing by-law to allow for the adoption of the Centre Plan. The amalgamation of the By-laws could be handled in the larger By-law Simplification project. To do this, there is the realization that there is a need to revamp staffing to make sure this is done in a timely fashion."</li> <li>• The Draft Plan does a good job presenting high-level info has yet to get into the "meat of the issues" which would allow the committee, public at large, the politicians or development community to provide detailed feedback. The materials not included in the Draft may represent the largest concern of the Committee.</li> <li>• There is no timeline for the inclusion of needed detail.</li> <li>• The regional plan states that work on the regional centre should "prepare new land use policies, bylaws, and design guidelines that ensure high-quality growth at an appropriate density and scale."</li> <li>• It will be difficult for the committee or Regional Council to approve a plan that does include specifics of new bylaws and bylaw changes as identified above.</li> <li>• It has not been suggested how applications under the proposed revised plan would be administered. Similar to the Downtown plan area with split responsibilities between staff and Design Review Committee like body- or a modified development agreement process- with public hearings?</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre Plan must include greater definition of development guidelines, including bylaw changes and potential new bylaws.</li> <li>• The Centre Plan must establish how we intend to administer new applications.</li> <li>• It is the understanding of the committee that the next draft will contain greater detail and clear policy statements (the shalls and shall-nots) required of a complete plan.</li> </ul>  |

#### 4. Measuring regulatory impact

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| <p>Issue or observation</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be some form of cost analysis done on the Centre Plan Policies as part of the approval process. At the very least a fiscal analysis should be done to determine the impact of measures on future municipal revenues.</li> <li>• In keeping with municipal and provincial “red tape” reduction initiatives, new regulations should be developed in a way that significant new or unjustified costs are not imposed on business, government and residents.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Background and Discussion</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has become a trend in governments at all levels and in most jurisdictions to focus considerable effort on reducing “red tape”. In particular, it has become common for jurisdictions to undertake a full costing of new regulations as part of the decision-making process.</li> </ul> <p>The <a href="#">Premiers’ Charter on Regulation</a> outlines key principles governing the development of new regulations in the Maritime provinces. These principles were summarized in Item No. 14.2.1 that came before Regional Council on October 4, 2016.</p> <p>These principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation should be a public policy tool of last, not first, resort.</li> <li>• Government should favour non-regulatory options like education, voluntary compliance, and incentives if they can do the job.</li> <li>• If regulation is enacted, it should be in the lightest form possible, and based on analysis of the costs and benefits to business and government as well as its overall economic impact.</li> <li>• The process of making regulations should be transparent, evidence-based, and consultative with affected parties.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Regional Council authorized</a> the commitment of resources to a partnership with the Nova Scotia Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness in the development of a joint approach to “red tape” reduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, the first action identified in the new economic strategy approved by council is “to develop an approach to red tape reduction”</li> </ul> |
| <p>Committee Recommendation(s)</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost to business and the cost to government of administering new regulations related to the centre plan should be estimated in some way. Council should know the rough cost of the plan and its impact on business climate before it can be considered for approval. One option would be to use the “Standard Cost Model” developed by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and now in use across the provincial government.</li> <li>• A fiscal analysis that estimates the impact of the centre plan on future municipal revenues should be developed.</li> <li>• HRM’s approach to regulation should be consistent with new Provincial Principles on regulation.</li> <li>• The Centre Plan should be fully consistent with the Red Tape Reduction approach established by HRM Council in October.</li> </ul>  |

## 5. Impacts on Development

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| Issue or observation   |
| Impacts of the Centre Plan on development..... is the Plan more usable, does it reduce development costs, improve timelines, etc.  |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Regional Plan policy (p79) operationalizing the development of the Centre Plan states...."The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles adopted for the Regional Centre shall provide guidance for the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. <b>Consideration shall also to be given to incenting development in the Regional Centre, streamlining development approvals, density bonusing and the other applicable objectives" and policies of this Plan.</b></li> <li>Support for the plan is largely based on the expectation that it will provide a superior and more efficient approach to development and development approvals than existing regulations.</li> <li>As indicated in item 3 above, the draft plan does not provide all of the needed information on bylaw adjustments and method of plan administration to fully assess the plan's impact.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulate how the centre plan will be a substantial improvement on the current approach within the Centre Plan document.</li> <li>Provide bylaws changes and additions as part of the plan approval process to allow for the development community to adequately predict chances of project approval and fro city staff to adequately anticipate the economic impact of the plan.</li> </ul>   |

## 6. Urban structure, affordability

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| Issue or observation   |
| Urban structure and its use to address affordability through density bonusing  |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <p>A plan for the implementation of <a href="#">Density Bonusing for Private Rental Affordable Housing</a> in the Regional Centre was presented to CPED on September 15, 2016. It had the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an incentive or bonus zoning program for affordable housing benefits, including an Administrative Order and any required financial tools, in accordance with the program goals, assumptions, principles and directions outlined in this staff report; and</li> <li>Direct staff to negotiate with Housing Nova Scotia a Memorandum of Understanding assisting with the monitoring of affordable housing units provided by way of incentive or bonus zoning agreements</li> </ol> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate the recommendations of the density bonusing plan into the Centre Plan</li> <li>That the limits of planning alone to effectively manage affordable housing issues be addressed in the plan.</li> <li>The potential exists for market forces to constrain supply of new apartments given density bonusing restrictions. In this case, a few people may pay less for apartments in new building</li> </ul>   |

but the effect on supply may increase prices for everyone else. In other words, the DB policy has the potential to backfire.

## 7. Monitoring

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| Issue or observation   |
| Monitoring of the Centre Plan  |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The identified indicators were well-chosen in most cases.</li> <li>• There are a large number of indicators listed...presumably some are more important than others and need to be featured in any analysis.</li> <li>• The indicators chosen should be able to clearly articulate the level of success being achieved by the plan.</li> <li>• The monitoring of the indicators should provide early and clear evidence for any needed course corrections for the Centre Plan.</li> </ul>   |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The monitoring of the Centre Plan should take a page from the <a href="#">Halifax Index and state for each indicator... why it is important.</a></li> <li>• A yearly monitoring document should be accompanied by an effective narrative to tell the story of Centre Plan progress.</li> <li>• Consider integration of an annual Regional Centre report with the Halifax Index...staff effort and publication, The Jobs &amp; Economic Development Section of Centre Plan should be very complementary in its approach to the economic strategy.</li> <li>• Indicators should be benchmarked against other comparable jurisdictions where possible as a measure of Centre Plan Performance.</li> <li>• Indicators should be presented in a time series and not a snapshot to better articulate trends.</li> <li>• HRM should consider undertaking an independent review of Centre Plan progress at appropriate intervals.</li> <li>• The Centre Plan should set targets for each indicator so that the extent of progress can be demonstrated.</li> <li>• The number of indicators should be reduced with a focus on including key and easily measurable indicators.</li> <li>• The Monitoring section should be called <b>Monitoring and Reporting...</b> reflecting that is more than just monitoring but also communicating the results.</li> <li>• Review of the plan should start earlier than 5 years out. 5 years will come very quick and really means getting things started on the review after 3.5-4.5 years.</li> <li>• Monitoring should begin in year 1.</li> </ul> |

## 8. Jobs and economic development

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| Issue or observation   |
| Integration with the economic plan   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The description of the “Greater Halifax Economic Strategy” on page 6 reflects actions in the <a href="#">2011 Economic Strategy</a>... not the current one. For example, the current economic strategy recommends in its second action be the development and adoption of a centre plan. There is no language on district heating and cooling in the current economic plan. Updated language is used to cover aspects of this issue in the current economic plan.</li> <li>• The Centre Plan may not be adequately connected to the economic strategy. In the <a href="#">current Economic Strategy</a> 20+ of the 84 actions arguably relate directly to some aspect of the centre plan.</li> <li>• Decentralizing of jobs is as costly (environmentally, cost of municipal services, etc.) as decentralization of residential options. While the Centre Plan does a good job at focusing on the residential options it may not adequately address the issue of commercial sprawl.</li> <li>• Ongoing movement of government services from the regional centre may be creating reverse commute problems and erode service standards required to meet the long-term population goals of the regional centre.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection of the Centre plan to the economic strategy must be strengthened.</li> <li>• There needs to be a significant effort in the industry retention and expansion efforts targeting the regional centre. This should be addressed in the Centre Plan and is a potential connection to the economic strategy.</li> <li>• Update the Priorities Plan section on page 6 to reflect the current economic strategy.</li> <li>• There should be more language that features ideas of economic clusters...and efforts to retain and enhance these. In this respect, the language around incubators is important and represents an opportunity to add context and language around industry clusters.</li> </ul>  |

## 9. Vision rework

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| Issue or observation  |
| The Vision Statement in the Centre Plan is complicated and difficult to understand. It does not articulate a clear vision. Indeed, it is substantially more complex than the vision in the new regional plan.   |
| Background and Discussion   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision of the Centre Plan was approved 2 years ago as part of the <a href="#">new regional plan</a> (page 76) and while it may be inappropriate or difficult to rewrite it, the Committee does believe that it can be framed better. At present, it reads like a mix of vision, mission statements and operational commitments.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a way to frame the vision in a more inspiring way.</li> </ul>   |

10. Looking into the future and dealing with disruptive technology

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| Issue or observation  |
| The potential disruptive influences of rapidly evolving technologies are not fully addressed in the document. While the future is addressed through section 1.3.2 “The Regional Centre in 2031”, this section is very slim for what should be the visionary centre piece of a very long-term plan.  |
| Background and Discussion   |
| <p>Population projections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1.3.2 seems centred around population growth projections only, and may not adequately address other issues that will affect the Regional Centre over the next number of years.</li> </ul> <p>Technological Disruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “future section” does not discuss technology disruptions. Some of these disruptions are upon us. The Draft document does not address the impacts of some of existing and emerging disruptors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <a href="#">sharing economy</a> (Airbnb, Uber, etc.) is expected to grow 20-fold by 2025 according to a recent publication by <a href="#">PWC</a>. Participants in the sharing economy operate in a “grey” zone. Most communities have not addressed these developments except through “old economy” regulation.</li> <li><a href="#">Autonomous vehicles (automobile, busses, truck, etc.)</a> will dramatically change the nature of cities. For example the need for downtown parking may disappear...affecting space requirements and municipal revenues. Will people still find downtowns convenient if they can do business as their car drives them to work from the suburbs? What will it mean for wayfinding and signage requirements? There are many unanswered question. Most city plans have not yet addressed AV issues in any meaningful way yet this technology is very close to broad application.</li> <li>In the future will be electric cars, not as an exception, the norm. We do address the need for permitting on charging stations but in our future world, this will be a necessity like gas stations and will become part of our standard infrastructure.</li> <li>Our future city will also change dramatically through the Internet of Things (IOT) where infrastructure will be continually monitored through Cognitive Buildings.</li> <li>Communication technology will be so good, we won’t even need to commute because of technologies like virtual reality.</li> <li>There will be more urban food production through highly efficient vertical gardens, etc.</li> <li>Recognizing the influence of disruptions and developing progressive policy to address these is an opportunity for national and international leadership.</li> </ul> </li> <li>At home work opportunities are addressed in the Centre Plan, but only in a very generic way. Examples could be given to better profile this emerging trend.... in particular by addressing sharing economy developments in Halifax.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify the current population, the base on which growth is based, and year by year population growth expectations.</li> </ul>   |

- Provide an estimate of the population of the regional centre in 2016....to be used as a starting point for the plan.
- While the future is difficult to predict, there are trends and developments that should be anticipated and addressed in the plan. This issue could be addressed through a more extensive “Futures” section of the Centre Plan. This is an opportunity for leadership.
- Rework section 1.3.2 “The Regional Centre in 2031” into a more complete over the horizon review.
- Review of the plan should start earlier than 5 years out. The committee would recommend that review should begin in year 1.
- Climate change should be a policy consideration in the Draft Centre Plan.

11. Organizational culture and resources at HRM for implementation

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| Issue or observation   |
| Organizational culture and resources at HRM for implementation   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff resources required for implementation and monitoring of the Centre Plan (p141) may not fully describe the commitment that will be required.</li> </ul>  |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be a more comprehensive accounting of resource requirements....more like a business plan costing. This could occur as part of the Centre Plan or as part of a Centre Plan Implementation Document.</li> <li>• Connections to other plans and to existing programs should be made clear.</li> </ul> |

12. Pedestrian first and services standards

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| Issue or observation   |
| The articulation of a “ <a href="#">Pedestrian First</a> ” theme to the strategy is a breakthrough. This is a tremendous perspective and highly appropriate for the Regional Centre discussion given its unique importance as a means of travel, environmental and health benefits and current trends. However, these wholesome statements need to be activated by new initiatives designed to make pedestrian activity safer and easier and policy commitments to maintenance standards that support this thrust.   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most significant issue with respect to pedestrian first may be maintenance issues, <a href="#">particularly winter maintenance of sidewalks</a>. Standards for maintenance in parts of the regional centre have degraded in recent years.</li> <li>• One of the key objectives outlined in the Regional Plan for the development of the Centre Plan suggested that the need for capital and operational commitments required for effective plan implementation be clearly articulated. <b><i>Objective 3, p76 Regional Plan.... “Prepare capital and operating expenditure programs that enhance development within the Regional Centre, with the emphasis of resources on downtown Halifax and Dartmouth, and take advantage of opportunities to strategically leverage other public and private sector investments.”</i></b></li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Pedestrian first” themes seem to blend into active transportation, but active transportation seems synonymous with bicycle transportation in the document. The <a href="#">Active Transportation Plan</a> provides some detail on planning for pedestrians but much of this is not relevant to the regional centre pedestrian issues.</li> <li>• In general, pedestrian - vehicle accidents seem <a href="#">to occur at up to 5 to 7 times the rate of bicycle</a> – vehicle accidents in both Canada and the United States. In HRM, pedestrians make up 90% of active transportation. The regional centre has the most concentrated use of active transportation modes although at least some residents walked to work in more than half of the 40 communities listed in the <a href="#">Active Transportation Plan</a>. Only 6 of 40 communities in the Plan showed any level of commuting by bicycle. On the Halifax Peninsula, a quarter of people in the north and west end walk to work. In central Halifax, half of commuters walk to work vs, 4% of commuters using bicycles.</li> <li>• The percentage of people walking to work in the regional centre is declining, despite an objective in the Active Transportation Plan of doubling this number by 2024.</li> <li>• The level of policy development and investment in pedestrian movement in the regional centre is significantly less than its relative importance as a transportation mode.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pedestrian first theme is a powerful differentiator for the plan and is uniquely suited to the Centre Plan. Given the current and likely growing prominence of pedestrian modes of active transportation in the regional centre, this should be featured in the centre plan through specific strategies <a href="#">and best practice as it occurs in other centres</a> potentially including the development of a pedestrian master plan.</li> <li>• Service standards need to be addressed by some language in the Centre Plan. This is supported by the Regional Plan’s third objective addressing the development of a Centre Plan. <i>P76 “Prepare capital and operating expenditure programs that enhance development within the Regional Centre”.</i></li> <li>• Look to elements of <a href="#">Halifax’s current pedestrian safety strategy</a> to fill out the pedestrian section of the centre plan with more policy detail.</li> </ul>   |

13. Connection with other levels of government on social and physical infrastructure investment.

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| Issue or observation   |
| Connection with other levels of government on social and physical infrastructure investment.   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions in the document like those around coordination with health care planning p138 are very appropriate.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Recent discussions around health care capacity in another centre is instructive.</a> With consumers now favouring downtown residences, we are seeing pressures developing on basic services to regional centre residents. Clearly municipal, provincial, and federal policies on social and physical infrastructure investment should be fully aligned. However, the trends seem to be misaligned at present. We have seen many instances of senior levels of government moving services and employment outside the regional centre in opposition to the goals of the Centre Plan and the realities of population growth and related service needs.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |

- The Centre Plan should better articulate the approach to coordinating with other levels of government on social and physical infrastructure investment. The Centre Plan should articulate an intergovernmental strategy around this issue.
- This should be an identified responsibility in corporate business plans at HRM.

#### 14. Committee mandate and responsibilities

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| Issue or observation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee has not yet made a presentation to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee of Regional Council as CDAC's mandate.</li> <li>• The committee is not always certain if its ongoing recommendations and comments are reflected in Centre Plan outcomes.</li> </ul>   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <p>The CDAC is a body with a two-part mandate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It reports Project progress to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee of Regional Council at key milestones,</li> <li>2. And it makes ongoing recommendations to staff regarding areas of strategic importance to the development and implementation of the Centre Plan project.</li> </ol> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A timeline and process be established that allows CDAC to report to CPED as required by the committee mandate. Representatives of CDAC to be part of this presentation.</li> <li>• Written recommendations from the CDAC committee should be developed and approved at key times.</li> </ul>  |

#### 15. Committee acknowledgement

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| Issue or observation   |
| Acknowledgement of Community Design Advisory Committee members   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer members of the committee have committed at more than 2,000 hours of their time to the Community Design Advisory Committee over the last several years. If Councillors are included, the full commitment of time rises to more than 3,000 hours. This represents an unprecedented level of commitment from a volunteer group.</li> <li>• This level of commitment should be recognized by HRM in tangible ways.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of volunteer acknowledgement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fredericton Centre Plan <a href="http://www.fredericton.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/2015feb18-citycentreplan-web.pdf">http://www.fredericton.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/2015feb18-citycentreplan-web.pdf</a></li> <li>• Halifax Economic Strategy <a href="http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/site/media/Parent/11x8,5_HP_GrowthPlan_PRINT.pdf">http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/site/media/Parent/11x8,5_HP_GrowthPlan_PRINT.pdf</a></li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <p>It is suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of committee members, past and present, should be included in the preamble of the Centre Plan.</li> </ul>   |

- A signoff letter from the Chair and Vice Chair representing all committee members should be developed for inclusion in the final Centre Plan document.
- The Committee should be involved in and present at all presentations to the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee, and Regional Council.
- Staff continue to display a high level of preparation for all meetings of CDAC.
- Perspectives of Committee members should continue to be treated with appropriate respect and consideration.

16. Heritage preservation and the limits of planning

Issue or observation

Expectations for the ability of planning guidelines to manage historic preservation may be overstated. In other jurisdictions, planning is used in conjunction with substantial financial incentives and other measures to ensure heritage can be aggressively preserved.

Background and Discussion

In [other jurisdictions](#) (Cleveland, Detroit, etc.) [federal, provincial and municipal incentives](#) focused on heritage preservation and reconstruction have been heavily utilized. Even Tax Incremental Financing and tax deferral approaches have been used in these jurisdictions. The basket of measures in these jurisdictions has made heritage preservation a win-win for developers and communities. In many cases, projects can be fully capitalized through incentive programming. Indeed historic redevelopments are actively sought out by developers because of the potential for superior return on investment.

## Cleveland: Examples of Incentive Based Financing of Historic Building Renovation

### William Taylor, Son & Co. Building

**Key Project Financing**

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|---|---------------------|
| <b>Estimated Total Development Cost:</b>            | <b>\$69,054,640</b> |
| Federal Historic Tax Credit Equity:                 | \$9,394,649         |
| State Historic Tax Credit Equity:                   | \$6,057,076         |
| New Markets Tax Credits allocation:                 | \$20,000,000        |
| Cuyahoga County Economic Development Loan:          | \$1,100,000         |
| Tax Increment Financing from the City of Cleveland: | \$5,100,000         |
| Bridge Financing/Seller Financing:                  | \$3,330,000         |
| Cleveland Civic Vision/Leverage Lender:             | \$1,500,000         |
| Developer Loan:                                     | \$1,000,000         |

### St. Luke's Hospital

**Key Project Financing for Phase I & II**

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|---|---------------------|
| <b>Estimated Total Development Cost:</b>    | <b>\$37,128,142</b> |
| Federal Historic Tax Credits:               | \$5,919,200         |
| State Historic Tax Credits:                 | \$3,028,149         |
| City HUD HOME Funds:                        | \$2,000,000         |
| City Development Block Grants—Recovery Act: | \$1,500,000         |
| Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 Funds: | \$2,000,000         |
| City Vacant Property Initiative Funds:      | \$180,000           |
| State Recovery Act Funds:                   | \$1,987,732         |
| Low Income Housing Tax Credits:             | \$19,469,800        |
| Owner Equity:                               | \$1,026,175         |

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- The Draft Plan does not include a proposed approach on Heritage preservation

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| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the limits of planning to effectively manage historic preservation objectives be addressed in the plan. Expectations need to be managed in the document.</li> <li>• An international best practice analysis of heritage preservation approaches be developed.</li> <li>• Without significant new incentives from each level of government as in the United States and other jurisdictions...it is likely that the loss of heritage resources will not be deterred by regulatory policy alone.</li> </ul> |

## 17. Harbour

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| Issue or observation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The harbour is the economic and physical focal point of the Regional Centre. This is not fully recognized in the Centre Plan.</li> <li>• Preservation of industrial waterfront should be more fully addressed.</li> </ul>   |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halifax harbour is the second largest in the world at 32 sq. km., and is easily the most prominent physical and economic feature of the regional centre. It literally is at the centre of the Regional Centre. Should it be more prominently featured in the Vision and body of the Plan? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentions of the Harbour are mostly contextual..., historical context, transportation modes, view of the harbour, boardwalks, one of many public spaces.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Working harbour supported by 9-word statement p116 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion to non-industrial uses permissible if long term intent is preserved. Conditions for change to other uses are subjective, no economic analysis is required.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conversion of harbour lands to industrial requires a comprehensive analysis including economic impact analysis. Conversion of harbour industrial lands to other uses faces less rigorous thresholds (p122).</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Harbour should be a central feature of the Centre Plan not just contextual.</li> <li>• Add the requirement of a long-term economic impact analysis to the conversion of harbour industrial lands to other purposes.</li> <li>• Add in language around the vital importance of retaining a working harbour.</li> <li>• Link to working harbour provisions of the regional plan.</li> </ul>   |

## 18. Corridors

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| Issue or observation  |
| Corridor definitions and designation  |
| Background and Discussion   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The corridor concept that was introduced 4 years ago has changed substantially. Its application in the current Draft is now very different. Corridors, as they were used in Halifax and are used in other cities, are “street oriented” main transportation corridors....main</li> </ul> |

arterial roads that serve as big transit routes. They tend to be areas of mixed use with intensified residential complemented by intensified transit, intensified civic services and maintenance.

- The draft plan indicates 15 corridors. The nature of corridors seems to have changed substantially since June...[see map in the article](#) and figure 3. Corridors, except for Robie St. have changed into areas that are no long contiguous corridors. In other words, they are no longer corridors.
- The Centre plan focus has now expanded substantially from its original identification of 11 [hotspots as the focus of the plan](#). It is now much larger development footprint. <https://www.halifax.ca/planhrm/documents/HRMbyDesignphase3.pdf>
- Corridors seem very similar to “higher order residential”. It is difficult to tell the difference. See figure 1 below.
- There have been changes to corridors presumably based on input to date. Concerns expressed with respect to the Chebucto Rd. raised by resident appear well founded with respect to neighbourhood impacts, traffic concerns etc.
- Concerns have been raised that height of 6 stories along corridors could represent norms....creating canyons (particularly where streets are narrow). There are examples in suburban Halifax of uniform canyon type development. This seems inappropriate for a smaller more confined regional centre.

Committee Recommendation(s)

- Rename “corridors” or combine corridors with higher order residential
- Where streets are narrow and flowing through low to medium density residential neighbourhoods consideration should be given lower density development than “corridors”....drop the Chebucto Rd. corridor.
- Corridors reflect the character of a city in the same way downtowns do. Some consideration should be given to the perseveration of elements with historic significance along corridors and in higher order residential neighbourhoods.

19. Uniformity of heights

Issue or observation

Uniformity of height allowances outside of downtowns may not generate appealing form and may not optimize development opportunities.

Background and Discussion

- Height precincts proposed for the various development areas are too low as a baseline and seem to lack any attempt to allow for consideration of site-specific conditions that might call for more or less height given specific circumstance to ensure that the urban design objectives are achieved.
- The heights as they are assigned could lead to 6 story canyons in high order residential and corridor locations
- Will there be flexibility in the administration of height and other development issues? Without this clarification, it is impossible to assess height issues fully at this point.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Close to three-quarters of residents surveyed in the regional centre (figure 2 below) feel that design of a building is more important than height.</b></li> </ul>  |
| Committee Recommendation(s)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide greater clarity on the administration of the plan...particularly heights.</li> <li>• Local circumstances should be a consideration in the approval process. Strict height precincts could lead to very unattractive form and considerable uniformity of development over time.</li> <li>• Building design is far more important to residents of the regional centre than height. The Centre plan should reflect this concern with design in both the plan and its implementation.</li> </ul> |

## 20. Urban Structures

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| Issue or observation   |
| Differences between different types of urban structures identified in the draft plan too nuanced in some cases...figure 1  |
| Background and Discussion  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There appears to be very little difference between “Corridors” and “Higher Order Residential” ...see figure 1</li> <li>• There appears to be little difference between “Downtowns” and “Centres” ... see figure 1</li> <li>• The nature of corridors has changed from the early days of the Centre Plan process.... figure 3. The term corridors no longer makes sense as applied to the draft plan.</li> </ul> |
| Committee Recommendation(s)  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify the language and the definitions of urban structures so that there is greater differentiation</li> </ul>   |

Figure 1

| <b>Urban Structures</b>  | <b>Height (built form)</b>             | <b>Residential Use</b>   | <b>Commercial Use</b>   | <b>Public Space Requirement</b>              |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Downtowns                | 11-66 meters                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-unit</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Service and rest</li> </ul>  | Density bonus policy                         |
| Centres                  | 1-20 stories                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-detached</li> <li>• Town houses</li> <li>• Duplexes/tri</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Service and rest.</li> </ul>   | Density bonus policy                         |
| Corridors                | 4 - 6 stories<br>Depending on lot size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-unit</li> <li>• Semi-detached</li> <li>• Town houses</li> <li>• Duplexes/tri</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail - office</li> <li>• Service and rest.</li> </ul>  | Private outdoor amenity space for multi-unit |
| Higher order residential | 4-6 stories depending on lot size      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-unit, three or more bedrooms</li> <li>• Semi-detached</li> <li>• Town houses</li> <li>• Duplexes/tri</li> <li>• Ground-oriented units</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small scale local serving retail</li> <li>• Small scale commercial</li> <li>• Live-work units</li> <li>• Grocery stores</li> </ul> | Private outdoor amenity space for multi-unit |
| Established Res.         | 1-4 stories                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-unit...low scale apartments</li> <li>• Semi-detached</li> <li>• Town houses</li> <li>• Duplexes/tri</li> <li>• Conversions</li> <li>• Garden Suites</li> <li>• Secondary units</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small scale commercial and retail</li> <li>• Live-work units</li> <li>• Noise prevention considerations</li> </ul>                 |  |
| Employment Areas         | Open space                             | Not permitted without study  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Service and rest.</li> </ul>   | Public space requirements                    |
| Future Growth Notes      | Plan dependent                         | Plan dependent   | Plan dependent  | Parks by design                              |

Figure 2

## The Design Of A Building Is More Important Than The Height Of A Building

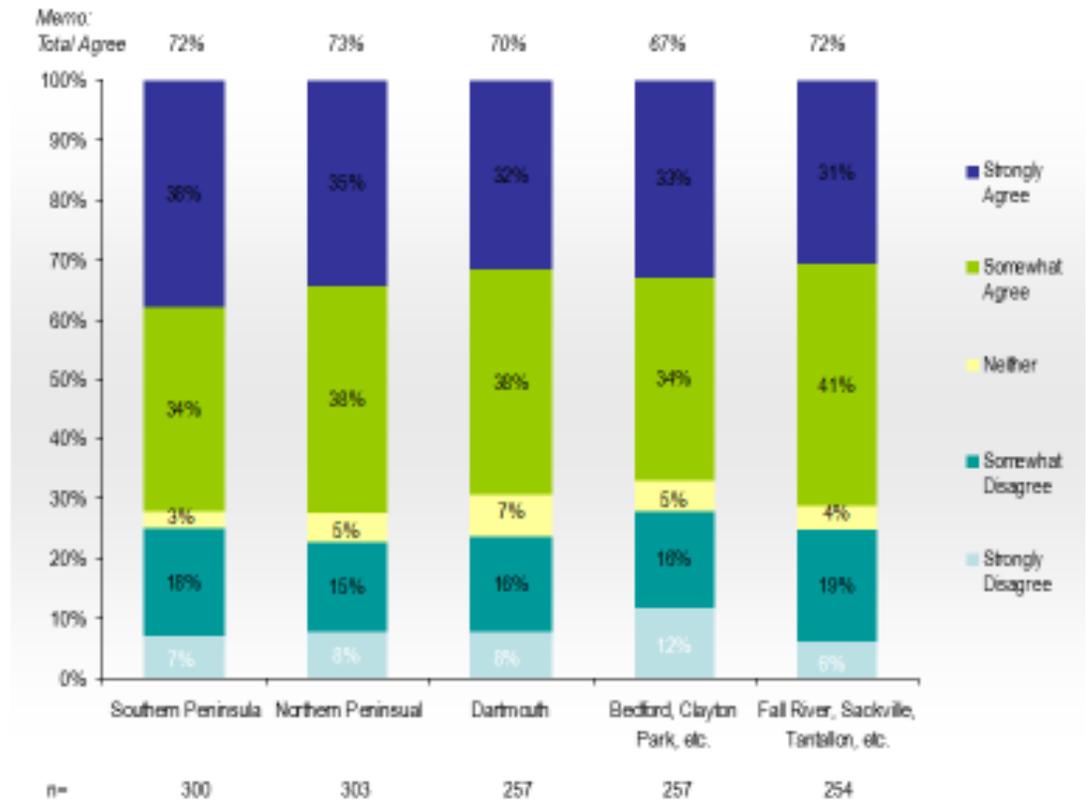


Figure 3  
June 2016 map

