



**Regional Centre Secondary
Municipal Planning Strategy
(Package A)**

(ATTACHMENT A)

REGIONAL CENTRE SECONDARY MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY (PACKAGE A)

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that this is a true copy of the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (Package A) which was passed by a majority vote of the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality at a duly called meeting held on the __ day of _____, 20__, and reviewed by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the __ day of _____, 20__, and is in effect as of the __ day of _____, 20__.

GIVEN UNDER THE HAND of the Municipal Clerk and under the Corporate Seal of the Halifax Regional Municipality this ____ day of _____, 20__.

Kevin Arjoon
Municipal Clerk

Acknowledgements

The Halifax Regional Municipality (Municipality) recognizes the many stakeholders and residents who shared their thoughts and aspirations for the Regional Centre through the extensive community engagement process of developing the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (Package A).

The Municipality would also like to recognize the input of members of the Community Design Advisory Committee (CDAC) devoted to the development of the Plan. They include the following:

FRED MORLEY, CHAIR

COUNCILLOR SAM AUSTIN - DISTRICT 5 - DARTMOUTH CENTRE

COUNCILLOR WAYE MASON - DISTRICT 7 - HALIFAX SOUTH DOWNTOWN

COUNCILLOR LINDELL SMITH - DISTRICT 8 - HALIFAX PENINSULA NORTH

COUNCILLOR SHAWN CLEARY - DISTRICT 9 - HALIFAX WEST ARMDALE

COUNCILLOR RICHARD ZURAWSKI - DISTRICT 12 - TIMBERLEA-BEECHVILLE-CLAYTON PARK-WEDGEWOOD

WILLAM BOOK

ERIC BURCHILL

CHRISTOPHER DALY

DALE GODSOE

JENNA KHOURY-HANNA

REG MANZER

RIMA THOMEH

GAYNOR WATSON-CREED

Preface

The Regional Centre is the political, cultural and economic heart of the Halifax Regional Municipality (Municipality), and Nova Scotia's capital city. The Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (this Plan) applies to lands identified on Map 1, which are areas designated for growth within the Regional Centre (Package A). It is intended that this Plan will be amended to include all those areas of the Municipality defined as the "Centre Plan Area", and the "HRM By Design Downtown Plan Area" (Downtown Halifax) in the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter)*. It will also include Lakeshore Park Terrace and Wallace Heights, which fall outside the Regional Centre Plan Area as defined by the *HRM Charter*.

The Regional Centre offers numerous attractions associated with its history and urban form. Concentrated commercial districts are within walking distance of established neighbourhoods, and within an easy reach of parks and open spaces. Future development in the Regional Centre is key to the ongoing social and economic health of the region and the Province. The overall goal of this Plan is to provide a planning framework that enables the Regional Centre to become one of the most liveable communities in Canada

The *HRM Charter* provides Council with the power to establish policy with respect to a broad range of activities including future development, land use, public lands, transportation, municipal services, coordination of public programs, and any other matters related to the physical, social, or economic development of the Municipality. The *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS or Regional Plan)* identifies the Regional Centre as a desirable location for future growth at an appropriate density and scale. The *Regional Plan's* vision for the Regional Centre is that of a distinct urban region with a high quality of life, an economic hub and a global destination for tourism. The goal of This Plan is to accommodate growth in the right locations, to foster complete communities with access to multiple services and attractions, and place pedestrians first in a human scaled environment.

This Plan is a statutory document under the *HRM Charter* which guides decisions about the location, type, and form of future development. It was guided by the *Regional Plan*, background technical studies, and an extensive community engagement process. All policies in this Plan should be read together, and not in isolation. Any amendments to this Plan will require a public consultation process.

This Plan includes the following Parts: Vision and Core Concepts, Urban Structure, Built Form and Urban Design, Culture and Heritage, Housing, Economic Development, Mobility, Environment, and Implementation. This Plan will be chiefly implemented through the companion Regional Centre Land Use By-law (Land Use By-law), as well as through the Regional Subdivision By-law, Municipal Priority Plans, and other municipal programs and capital initiatives that may be adopted by Council over time.

This Plan also identifies development approval mechanisms for various categories of development proposals, including development permits, site-plan approval, development agreements, and more detailed neighbourhood planning processes through proposed Heritage Conservation Districts. Within the Centre Plan Area, as defined by the *HRM Charter*, this Plan enables the use of site plan approval for the external appearance of structures. For the remaining areas of this Plan, the use of site plan approval for the external appearance of structures is not enabled by provincial legislation.

Contents

List of Maps.....	1
List of Tables.....	1
Part 1: Introduction.....	2
1.0 Regional Centre Context.....	3
1.1 The Regional Centre Today.....	5
1.2 Regional Centre: Strengths and Challenges.....	6
1.2.1 Strengths.....	6
1.2.2 Challenges.....	7
1.3 Purpose of this Plan.....	9
1.4 Relationship to Other Plans.....	10
1.5 Provincial Role in Planning.....	10
1.6 Development of this Plan.....	11
1.7 How to Read this Plan.....	12
1.7.1 Interpretation.....	13
1.7.2 Key Terms, Maps and Illustrations.....	13
Part 2: Vision and Core Concepts.....	15
2.0 Introduction.....	16
2.1 Complete Communities.....	16
2.2 Human Scale Design.....	17
2.3 Pedestrians First.....	17
2.4 Strategic Growth.....	18
Part 3: Urban Structure.....	19
3.0 Introduction.....	20
3.1 Urban Structure Designations.....	22
3.2 Downtown Designation.....	23
3.2.1 Land Use.....	24
3.2.2 Downtown Dartmouth Vision and Precincts.....	24
3.3 Centre Designation.....	29
3.3.1 Land Use.....	30
3.3.2 Gottingen Street Centre.....	32
3.3.3 Highfield Park Drive Centre.....	33
3.3.4 Quinpool Road Centre.....	34
3.3.5 Robie Street /Young Street Centre.....	35
3.3.6 Spring Garden Road Centre.....	36
3.3.7 Wyse Road Centre.....	37
3.4 Corridor Designation.....	38
3.4.1 Land Use.....	45
3.5 Higher Order Residential Designation.....	46
3.5.1 Land Use.....	47
3.6 Future Growth Node Designation.....	48
3.6.1 Comprehensive Development District Design Criteria.....	50
3.6.2 General Development Agreement and Land Use By-law Amendment Requirements.....	52

3.6.3 Site Specific Comprehensive Development District (CDD) Development Agreement Requirements.....	53
Part 4: Built Form and Urban Design	63
4.0 Introduction	64
4.1 Urban Design Goals.....	66
4.1.1 Contextual Design	66
4.1.2 Civic Design	66
4.1.3 Human Scale Design.....	67
4.2 Protected Public Views and View Terminus Sites.....	68
4.2.1 Historic View Planes and Ramparts	68
4.2.2 Waterfront View Corridors	68
4.2.3 View Terminus Sites	69
4.3 Protection from Wind and Shadow	69
4.4 Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets.....	70
4.5 Site Accessibility.....	71
4.6 Site and Landscape Design.....	71
4.6.1 Landscaping.....	72
4.7 Building Design	73
4.7.1 Floor Area Ratio and Height.....	73
4.7.2 Lake Banook Canoe Course	76
4.7.3 Building Envelope.....	76
4.7.4 Streetwall Scale and Design	77
4.7.5 Above the Streetwall Design	79
4.8 Parking and Driveways.....	80
4.9 Signs	81
Part 5: Culture and Heritage	82
5.0 Introduction	83
5.1 Culture and Heritage Resources	84
5.2 Heritage Properties, Heritage Conservation Districts, and Cultural Landscapes	85
5.3 Development in Heritage Contexts.....	89
5.4 Culture	91
Part 6: Housing	93
6.0 Introduction	94
6.1 Land Use.....	95
6.2 Affordable Market Housing	96
6.3 Affordable Non-Market Housing	97
6.4 Shared Housing.....	98
6.5 Neighbourhood Planning.....	98
Part 7: Economic Development.....	100
7.0 Introduction	101
7.1 Land Use and Economic Development	102
7.2 Growth and Economic Development.....	103
Part 8: Mobility.....	104
8.0 Introduction	105
8.1 Land Use and Mobility	106
8.2 Development in Proximity to Railways.....	107
8.3 Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Comfort	108
8.4 Public Transit	108

8.5	Goods Movement	109
Part 9: Environment		110
9.0	Introduction	111
9.1	Regional Plan Environmental Policies.....	111
9.2	Urban Lakes and Watercourses	112
9.3	Urban Agriculture	113
9.4	Parks and Open Space Network	114
Part 10: Implementation		116
10.0	Introduction	117
10.1	Community Engagement	117
10.2	Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy.....	117
10.3	Regional Centre Land Use By-law	119
10.4	Discretionary Approvals.....	119
10.5	Site Plan Approval	120
10.6	Incentive or Bonus Zoning	122
10.7	Non-Conforming Structures and Uses	124
10.8	Investing for Growth.....	125
10.9	Commercial Taxation	127
10.10	Transition to this Plan.....	127
Appendices		129
Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicators.....		130
Land Use & Urban Design		130
Housing		132
Jobs & Economic Development.....		134
Mobility		134
Environment.....		135

List of Maps

Map 1: Urban Structure

Map 2: Maximum Floor Area Ratio (D, CEN-2 and CEN-1 Zones)

Map 3: Maximum Height (CEN-2, COR, HR-1 and HR-2 Zones)

Map 4: Downtown Dartmouth Precincts

Map 5: Lake Banook Canoe Course Maximum Height Precinct

Map 6: Dartmouth View Planes

Map 7: Halifax Citadel View Planes

Map 8: Halifax Citadel Ramparts

Map 9: Downtown Dartmouth View Corridors

Map 10: Proposed Heritage Conservation District Study Areas

Map 11: Future Growth Node Land Use Concept - Shannon Park

Map 12: Future Growth Node Land Use Concept – Penhorn Lands

Map 13: Future Growth Node Land Use Concept – Young Street Lands

Map 14 Future Growth Node Land Use Concept – Dartmouth Cove

Map 15: Dartmouth Cove Dundas Street Extension Transportation Reserve

The official version of these maps are adopted as a digital file format.

List of Tables

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics

Table 2: Maximum Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and Maximum Heights in Designation and Zones

Table 3: Future Potential Heritage Conservation Districts

Table 4: Cultural Landscapes

Part 1: Introduction

1.0 Regional Centre Context

The Regional Centre is the most urban and densely populated part of the Municipality. It has a rich variety of landscapes, neighbourhoods, parks and public spaces, building forms, industries, services, and activities. Given its long history, the Regional Centre offers many attractions associated with its history and architecture. Concentrated commercial districts are within a walking distance of established neighbourhoods, and within an easy reach of parks and open spaces.

The Mi'kmaq First Nations are the original inhabitants of the area, and named it K'jipuktuk. There is evidence of permanent settlements dating as far back as 10,000 years in locations such as Turtle Grove and Dartmouth Cove. The first Europeans to visit the area were likely Basque fishermen from the Bay of Biscay. The British established the first permanent European settlement in 1749, founding the Town of Halifax. The new settlement was laid out in a manner typical of British military planning of the time, with a regular grid system protected by military fortifications. In that same year, the British established a sawmill on the Dartmouth side of the harbour. In 1750, the sailing ship Alderney arrived with settlers, who took up residence in what is now downtown Dartmouth.

The evolution of the Regional Centre has been closely tied to colonial history, and war. Economic fortunes in Halifax and Dartmouth waxed and waned as conflicts such as the War of 1812, the American War of Independence, and the World Wars resulted in direct military investment, shipbuilding and repair, and business supplying various militaries. This history of growth and development is reflected in the diverse communities and neighbourhoods in the Regional Centre. As a major port, the Regional Centre has been the point of entry and often the ultimate home for waves of settlers and immigrants, including: The Loyalists, the Maroons and other Black Refugees, the Quaker whalers, Scottish and Irish stonemasons, the Lebanese, Kosovar and Syrian refugees, and many more who have left their unique mark on the Regional Centre's architecture and cultural identity. In recent years, Council passed a Statement of Reconciliation with Aboriginal People and the long presence and contributions of the Mi'kmaq are being acknowledged.

The development of the railway system in Dartmouth and Halifax in the late 1880s and early 1900s opened new lands for development, and improved connections to communities in Nova Scotia and Canada. War also shaped the Regional Centre physically. In 1917, the Halifax Explosion levelled many areas in the North End of Halifax and portions of Dartmouth. This destruction, in part, led to a realigned street grid and the historic Hydrostone District, among the first planned communities in Canada. In the booming post-World War II years, much of the Regional Centre's housing stock was built to accommodate returning servicemen and their families. Some of the other events that influenced planning and development over the past 70 years include the following:

- The opening of two Halifax Harbour Bridges, the Angus L. MacDonald Bridge in 1955, and the A. Murray MacKay Bridge in 1970, to connect the former cities of Dartmouth and Halifax;

- The preservation and gradual restoration of Halifax Citadel in 1956 by Parks Canada, followed by the adoption of selective view planes and ramparts to preserve historic setting and views from the Citadel;
- The adoption of a system of international intermodal freight transport using shipping containers in the 1960s transformed the Port of Halifax to include containerized terminals. The opening of the South End Container Terminal in 1969 opened lands for re-development, and shifted development patterns;
- Urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in large-scale developments, the acquisition of land for social housing under the *National Housing Act*, as well as the loss of heritage architecture and community fabric as large downtown developments were constructed;
- Urban renewal in the region continued into the 1960's. The African-Nova Scotian community of Africville, located on the northern tip of Halifax Peninsula and founded in the mid-18th century, was demolished and its residents displaced to clear land for industrial use and the A. Murray MacKay Bridge. These actions were followed by the location of the railway and industrial uses near the community. In 2010, Seaview Park was renamed Africville after the Mayor of the Municipality apologized for the eviction of those from Africville;
- The partial construction of the Harbour Drive Highway project along the Halifax waterfront, which included the Cogswell Interchange;
- Initial growth and development within the Regional Centre was shaped by the 1949 *Master Plan for the City of Halifax* and the 1978 *Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy* (Halifax Plan), and the 1960 and 1978 *Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy* (Dartmouth Plan);
- Suburban and commercial mall development, increased reliance on the private automobile, and changes in household size and composition impacted growth and development patterns in the Regional Centre between the 1970s and 1990s;
- The amalgamation of the Halifax Regional Municipality in 1996 resulted in the former municipalities of the Town of Bedford, County of Halifax, City of Halifax, and the City of Dartmouth to become part of the same Municipality; and
- On September 29, 2003, Hurricane Juan made landfall west of the urban core and resulted in large-scale disruptions, flooding, and the loss of substantial tree canopy.

The Regional Centre continues to be one of the more compact and densely populated urban communities in Canada¹, and its population is growing. Recent years have seen a renewed interest in living and investing within the Regional Centre. A major objective of this Plan is to provide an updated yet context-specific planning framework for the entire Regional Centre to help accommodate this growth.

¹ Gordon, D. 2018. Still Suburban? Growth in Canadian Suburbs, 2006-2016 Council for Canadian Urbanism Working Paper #2 http://www.canadiansuburbs.ca/files/Still_Suburban_Monograph_2016.pdf

1.1 The Regional Centre Today

Today, the Regional Centre is the political, cultural, and economic heart of the Municipality and the Province. The Regional Centre is home to many major features, First Nation lands, and public lands and institutions, including:

- Province House and the Nova Scotia Legislature;
- Halifax City Hall- the seat of Regional Council;
- the lands of Millbrook First Nation;
- the headquarters and dockyards for the Canadian Navy's Atlantic Fleet;
- two provincial museums- the Museum of Natural History and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic;
- one national museum- Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21;
- Twenty-nine Parks Canada National Historic Sites- Halifax Citadel National Historic Site, Georges Island National Historic Site, and Prince Wales Tower National Historic Site; and
- Eight hospitals; Halifax Infirmary, Veteran's Memorial Hospital, Dartmouth General Hospital, QEII Health Sciences Centre, Victoria General, Nova Scotia Hospital, Camp Hill Veterans Memorial Hospital, and IWK Health Centre.

The Regional Centre also includes:

- five universities- Dalhousie University, University of King's College, Saint Mary's University, Atlantic School of Theology, and Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) University;
- two Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) campuses;
- two container ports and break-bulk cargo facilities- Port of Halifax and Fairview Cove Container Terminal;
- shipbuilding yards- Her Majesty's Canadian Dockyard and Irving Shipbuilding Inc.; and
- an industrial park- the Woodside Industrial Park.

These features and institutions, together with the communities, people, history, and business environment, emphasize the significant role the Regional Centre plays in the Municipality and the Province.

1.2 Regional Centre: Strengths and Challenges

In 2016, there were 96,619 people living and 94,000 people working in the Regional Centre. There was also a total of 55,332 dwelling units in the Plan area (Statistics Canada, 2016). While the Municipality's annual population growth has typically hovered at 1%, in 2016 and in 2017 Municipality's population increased 1.9% and 1.6% respectively. However, between 2016 and 2018, the range has increased between 1.6% and 2.2%.

The 2014 *Regional Plan* sets a target for at least 25% of the Municipality's new housing units to be constructed in the Regional Centre. However, based on recent development trends and a study conducted by Stantec on the costs and benefits of various development patterns², the *Integrated Mobility Plan (2018)* now plans for up to 40% of regional growth to occur in the Regional Centre. Given the current shift in housing preferences to urban living, and the economic and environmental goals that can be attained by strategically focusing growth around existing services and amenities, this Plan is designed to accommodate at least 18,000 new residential units or approximately 33,000 new residents. This will be equivalent to approximately 40% of the Municipality's growth, which has the potential to increase the Regional Centre's population from 97,000 to 130,000 people. Planning for this growth can build on the current strengths and opportunities, and address current and foreseen challenges.

1.2.1 Strengths

This Plan identifies the following topics as strengths and opportunities:

- **People:** The population of the Municipality continues to grow, and the Regional Centre attracts people from within Nova Scotia, from Canada, and from abroad. This diversity is one of the region's greatest strengths. In addition to growing Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, and newcomer populations, student enrollment has also been on the rise. This growing and diverse population will contribute to the Regional Centre's growth and economic development in the years to come.
- **Parks and Open Spaces:** Despite being one of the most populated areas of the Municipality, the Regional Centre has access to generous parks and open spaces, and waterways including the Halifax Harbour, the Northwest Arm, and the lakes in Dartmouth which make it a very attractive place to live, work, and visit.
- **Culture and Heritage:** Rich and diverse cultural history is reflected in treasured heritage buildings and streetscapes, cultural landscapes, public art, open spaces and many cultural venues and events. In 2002 Council issued an apology for the resettlement of Africville, and in 2015 Council passed a Statement of Reconciliation with Aboriginal People. The future development of the Regional Centre provides ample opportunities to tell, celebrate, and interpret the rich history of the Municipality and its many communities.

² Stantec. 2013. *Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Scenarios*

- **Public Institutions:** The Regional Centre is home to many major public institutions of higher learning, which are the centres of innovation and decision making. The five universities and two community college campuses are a draw for young people resulting in a youthful Regional Centre population. Clustering of institutions within compact geographies multiplies the effectiveness of innovation districts, helping to create and spread innovative ideas and new industries. Supporting and growing clusters of innovation is therefore a key goal of this Plan.
- **Waterfront:** The Halifax Harbour Waterfront is a hub of culture, commerce and industry with two container ports, bulk cargo facilities, shipbuilding yards and an industrial park that connect the Municipality and the Province to global markets. The waterfront is the focus for the province’s ocean and tourism economy with its mix of year-round and seasonal businesses, museums, farmer’s markets, year-round events, and emerging urban developments. The downtown boardwalk or harbour walk and trail are a focal point for public art, placemaking pilot projects, and connection to transit. Public access and public views to the ocean are a key aspect of the Regional Centre.
- **Connectivity:** The Regional Centre’s economic success relies on the easy movement of goods and people. Passenger and freight rail, the harbour, a multi-use trail system as well as a 100-series highway system, connect the Regional Centre to the rest of the Municipality and the province. Transportation within the Regional Centre often takes forms other than the personal automobile, as approximately half of residents get to work by walking, cycling or public transit. Advancing technologies and better integration with land use can improve the choice, variety and integration of multiple transportation modes for persons of all ages and abilities, and become a defining feature of the Regional Centre.
- **Development:** Population and economic trends established in the *Regional Plan* and in Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan, along with clear planning rules introduced in the *Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy* in 2009 have seen a renewed interest in living and investing within the Regional Centre. A diverse housing stock provides opportunities for the labour force, yet increased development pressures can lead to reduced affordability for middle and lower-income households. This Plan seeks to increase the supply of diverse housing options across the Regional Centre.

1.2.2 Challenges

This Plan identifies the following topics as potential challenges:

- **Sea Level Rise:** As a coastal area, the Regional Centre is vulnerable to climate change, extreme weather events, and sea level rise. Sea level is projected to rise in the Municipality by 13 centimetres from 2010 levels by 2030³. Council has endorsed planning for sea level rise to ensure long-term community resiliency. This Plan provides measures to increase the safety of future development along the coast.

³ The Canadian Extreme Water Level Adaptation Tool (CAN-EWLAT) [accessed Nov. 2018](#)

- **Demographic Changes:** Although the Regional Centre has a relatively youthful population as compared to the rest of the Municipality and the Province, it also has an aging population with increasing mobility and other accessibility challenges. Smaller households, young households, seniors on fixed income, and lone-parent households, are also among those who are the most vulnerable to changes in housing and living costs. Urban planning for complete communities needs to consider the needs and aspirations of diverse populations.
- **Diversity, Inclusion and Equity:** The Halifax Diversity and Inclusion Framework defines diversity as more than race, ability, sexual orientation, language, gender, or any other descriptive category. Diversity means understanding and utilizing different views, ideas, life experiences, skills, and knowledge. By recognizing diversity as a core value, the Municipality aspires to represent the communities that it serves. This Plan considers the needs of diverse and under-represented communities through a greater integration of land use, housing and transportation policies. Diversity and inclusion outcomes can also be addressed through investments in community development, infrastructure, facilities and programs.
- **Health and Well-being:** In addition to providing healthier mobility choices, communities can be designed to provide access to clean air, water, and land. Access to safe and affordable housing, healthy foods, green spaces, public places, and facilities that invite community interaction are essential to both individual and population health outcomes. Communities and neighbourhoods in the Regional Centre can be designed, developed and supported to protect the wellness of residents, and help them make healthier choices.
- **Parks, Open Spaces and Recreation Facilities:** As the population of the Regional Centre increases, parks, open spaces and public recreation facilities will experience additional demands and will require further investment and possible expansion. To ensure the resiliency of the Regional Centre’s Urban Forest, its tree canopy must be maintained, diversified and expanded.
- **Infrastructure:** As one of the oldest urban areas in Canada, the Regional Centre is challenged with an aging water, wastewater, and utility infrastructure. Investment in this infrastructure is critical to supporting new growth. While new development is largely expected to pay for needed infrastructure charges, the overall cost of development fees in the Regional Centre must be comparable to the rest of the Municipality to ensure that overall regional planning goals are met.
- **Mobility:** Development patterns since the 1950s have favoured low density and segregated land uses, which continue to feed the reliance on the private automobile over other modes of transportation. However, there is a momentum towards travel options that are more sustainable, enjoyable and healthy. Enabling more people to walk, cycle, take transit and use other sustainable modes of transportation requires rethinking not only the design of our transportation system, but also the design of our communities.
- **Commercial Vacancy Rates:** In a fast-changing global marketplace, the Regional Centre needs to stay competitive and flexible to maintain its vitality. Commercial development, traditionally the mainstay of urban areas, is currently experiencing persistent vacancy rates. Two regional shopping malls, numerous smaller shopping centres and the revitalization of downtowns will benefit from the

increased density of residents, employees and tourists. As the Regional Centre develops, a balance needs to be maintained between new housing, commercial, and other employment opportunities.

1.3 Purpose of this Plan

Land use planning seeks to order and regulate land use to ensure an efficient and strategic use of land, to safeguard natural resources, to reduce land use conflicts, to integrate mobility with a wide range of land uses, and to support other social, economic, and environmental goals. Guided by a vision of future possibilities, it is also concerned with providing for the current and future needs of residents by building sustainable, vibrant, safe, and walkable communities and neighbourhoods. Today, land use plans include policies, regulations, and urban design requirements to guide growth and change in the community.

This Plan was designed to achieve the vision and guiding principles for the Regional Centre as set out in the 2014 *Regional Plan*. Based on further community engagement, the vision has been refined and supported by four key core concepts of Strategic Growth, Complete Communities, Pedestrians First, and Human Scale. Achieving a great Regional Centre requires that attention is paid to all four of these interconnected and mutually supportive core concepts.

The purpose of this Plan is to:

1. **Express a Vision:** this Plan provides a civic vision based on the input of diverse communities and stakeholders in the creation of this Plan, and provides an invitation for the public's ongoing engagement in the implementation of this Plan;
2. **Guide Municipal Decisions:** this Plan provides direction for municipal decision making on development proposals, and provides policy support for municipal initiatives related to opportunities and challenges specific to the Regional Centre. It also provides guidance for future updates that can continue to achieve the vision and key objectives, or respond to new challenges and opportunities;
3. **Provide Clarity for Strategic Growth:** this Plan provides direction with respect to growth and change, and how it can be supported. It can also provide direction and clarity for businesses, land owners, developers, organizations, community groups and residents regarding future development;
4. **Guide Urban Design:** this Plan provides a vision and Urban Design Goals to inform more specific built form regulations and design requirements for shaping public realm and building design, as well as developments in heritage contexts;
5. **Provide for Clear and Efficient Development Approval Processes:** this Plan enables a variety of planning tools available in the *HRM Charter* to both simplify and modernize land use policies and regulations, including:
 - development permit process subject to compliance with the requirements of the Regional Centre Land Use By-law;

- site plan approval process for development proposals in the Downtown, Centre, Corridor, and Higher Order Residential designations, where the built form is regulated by the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, including design requirements;
- development agreement process for Comprehensive Development Districts, registered heritage properties, and for certain matters related to non-conforming uses to be considered by development agreement; and
- providing for transition to this Plan for discretionary development proposals that were initiated prior to the Centre Plan process being completed.

1.4 Relationship to Other Plans

The *Regional Plan* is the over arching planning document guiding the growth and development of the entire Municipality. This Plan is a more detailed planning document that furthers the goals and objectives of the *Regional Plan* for the Regional Centre at the community and neighbourhood scale. This Plan can also be supported by Municipal Priority Plans such as the Economic Growth Plan, the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, and the Green Network Plan. Future updates to these Priority Plans should consider the Urban Structure and growth of the Regional Centre. The areas covered by this Plan were previously included as part of the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax (Halifax Plan), the *Municipal Planning Strategy for Dartmouth* (Dartmouth Plan), and the *Secondary Planning Strategy for Downtown Dartmouth* (Downtown Dartmouth Plan). This Plan replaces all three plans in the areas identified on Map 1.

1.5 Provincial Role in Planning

Statements of Provincial Interest contained in the Nova Scotia *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) outline the province's vision for protecting Nova Scotia's land and water resources, and growth of communities. They are adopted as regulations under the *MGA*, and apply to all municipalities. They are intended to help provincial government departments and municipalities make land use decisions that support the principles of sustainable development. Municipal planning documents must be reasonably consistent with the statements. The six statements are identified as:

- (1) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Agricultural Land
- (2) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Flood Risk Areas
- (3) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Housing
- (4) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Infrastructure
- (5) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Drinking Water
- (6) Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding the Development of the Nova Centre.

The Statement of Interest Regarding Drinking Water is addressed by the *Regional Plan*. The Statement of Interest Regarding the Development of Nova Centre is not applicable to this Plan area (Package A). This Plan considered the following Statements of Interest as described below.

Provincial Statement (1): Agricultural Lands

By enabling strategic growth in the Regional Centre, this Plan provides for a variety of housing and development opportunities in urban areas where services already exist, therefore reducing development pressure on agricultural lands in other parts of the Municipality. This Plan also provides for opportunities for urban agriculture in the Regional Centre through policies contained in Parts 3 and 9.

Provincial Statement (2): Flood Risk Areas

While some low-lying areas within the Regional Centre may experience flooding and intense weather events, this Plan includes policies and regulations on ocean storm surge protection, landscaping and green roof requirements, and watercourse setbacks to reduce and mitigate the risk of flooding through policies contained in Parts 4 and 9.

Provincial Statement (3): Housing

This Plan permits a variety of residential built forms and residential uses, including grade-related units, work-live units, shared housing, secondary and backyard suites. Policies in this Plan also support unit mix within high-density developments, and built form regulations to support accessibility. This Plan also provides support for affordable housing through incentives such as incentive or bonus zoning, minimal parking requirements, provisions for the adaptive re-use of heritage properties, and support for ongoing partnerships, through policies in Parts 3, 4 and 9.

Provincial Statement (4): Infrastructure

This Plan supports the efficient use of municipal infrastructure by enabling the densification of areas where municipal water, sewer and transit services exist, and accommodating up to 40% of regional growth. The Centre Plan also focuses growth in Downtown Dartmouth, Centres, Corridors Higher Order Residential Areas, and Future Growth Nodes located strategically along major transportation and transit corridors. A 2013 study by Stantec (*Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Scenarios*) estimated significant infrastructure cost savings if *Regional Plan* growth targets could be achieved, or exceeded. This statement is mainly addressed by policies contained in Parts 3, 8 and 10 of this Plan.

1.6 Development of this Plan

This Plan is the result of a planning process that included extensive analysis of the Regional Centre's physical, social and economic structure, and public engagement. It was first recommended in the 2006 *Regional Plan*, given the age of the existing municipal planning strategies.

During the preparation of the *Downtown Halifax Plan*, Regional Council endorsed a vision statement and guiding principles for the Regional Centre. Further, the following objectives for the Regional Centre were then included in the 2014 *Regional Plan*:

- (1) Adopt a Regional Centre Plan, which achieves the vision statement and guiding principles endorsed by Regional Council;
- (2) Adopt heritage plans and programs that further preserve and enhance the viability of heritage properties, streetscapes, and districts;
- (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
- (4) Create financial and regulatory incentives to stimulate desired growth.

The process to develop this Plan included several distinct phases of public engagement focused on the vision and key concepts, alternatives for growth, proposed urban structure, and planning policies to guide land use regulations. This included numerous presentations, open houses, pop-ups, community and stakeholder workshops, neighbourhood walking tours, a storefront location, development industry consultations, and updates to Community Councils and Standing Committees of Council. The process was also guided by the Community Design Advisory Committee (CDAC) comprised of community volunteers, and Councillors.

1.7 How to Read this Plan

This Plan establishes policies which are implemented through the land use regulations of the companion Land Use By-law. This Plan is intended to be used by residents, property owners, elected officials, municipal staff, developers, planners, architects, community organizations, and other stakeholders in the Municipality. While this Plan is organized into distinct parts, for any part to be properly understood it must be read in the context of the whole document, and the Regional Centre Land Use By-law. This Plan is divided into the following Parts:

Part 1: Introduction: explains the background of this Plan and the areas to which it applies.

Part 2: Vision and Core Concepts: articulates the vision for the future of the Regional Centre organized around four core concepts.

Part 3: Urban Structure: sets out Urban Structure Designations, and provides the policy support for the Land Use By-law with regards to zoning, permitted and prohibited uses, the planning tools that may be used, and key built form outcomes related to directing growth and managing change by integrating land use, mobility, and built form.

Part 4: Built Form and Urban Design: sets out the policy framework for site and building design, including the Urban Design Goals, and their implementation through discretionary approvals, site plan approval process, and development permit processes. This includes matters such as the density and massing of new developments, building envelopes and street walls, public realm, pedestrian-oriented commercial streets, significant public views and public view terminus sites, landscaping and other urban design elements.

Part 5: Culture and Heritage: sets out policies for engaging diverse cultural communities, considering and protecting living and built heritage, and, establishing future Heritage Conservation Districts and cultural landscapes, and related programs and incentives.

Part 6: Housing: sets out overall land use policies for increasing the variety and accessibility of housing choices throughout the Regional Centre, increasing access to housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income households, increasing options for the location of shared housing, and for other incentives and partnerships related to housing.

Part 7: Economic Development: sets out policies related to fostering an economic climate that supports growth and development, the maintenance and expansion of key institutions, supporting enclaves of innovation, removing land use barriers to entrepreneurial activities, and other actions set out in the Halifax Growth Plan.

Part 8: Mobility: sets out overall land use policies that support the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, including the priority of pedestrian and cyclist safety and comfort, public transit, movement of goods, development near railways and higher order transit, and implement Transportation Reserve zoning.

Part 9: Environment: sets out policies for the implementation of environmental directions under the Regional Plan in the Land Use By-law, as well as policies supportive of urban agriculture, and parks and open space planning consistent with the Halifax Green Network Plan.

Part 10: Implementation: sets out an approach to implementing this Plan through community engagement, future reviews and amendments to this Plan and the Land Use By-law, development approval processes, policies to guide future local planning and development agreements, incentive or bonus zoning, variations to the Land Use By-law, investments to support this Plan, and transition to this Plan.

1.7.1 Interpretation

This Plan is written in the active voice to indicate purposeful direction for future development and outcome. Under the provisions of the *HRM Charter*, a Municipality cannot regulate directly from a Municipal Planning Strategy; rather, it must regulate from a Land Use By-Law adopted by the Municipality to carry out the intent and direction of this Plan.

Implementing actions, initiatives, and programs identified in this Plan will need to be reviewed against the priorities and municipal financial capacities of current and future Municipal work plans, as well as other existing plans.

1.7.2 Key Terms, Maps and Illustrations

(a) This Plan uses the following terms:

- **Affordable housing** means housing that meets the needs of a variety of households in the low to moderate income range;

- **Diverse Communities** means individuals with shared characteristics such as Indigenous, racial, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, and persons with disabilities residing within the Municipality;
- **Green Infrastructure** includes the management of stormwater runoff at the local level using natural systems, or engineered systems that mimic natural systems, to reduce the stormwater flowing into the public stormwater system, and to improve the quality of runoff through filtration;
- **High-Density Dwelling Use** means a building containing 13 or more dwelling units on the same lot;
- **High-Rise Building** means a building that is greater than 26 metres high;
- **Low-Rise Building** means a building that is no more than 11 metres high;
- **Mid-Rise Building** means a building that is greater than 11 metres high but no more than 20 metres high;
- **Multi-Unit Dwelling Use** means a building containing five or more dwelling units;
- **Municipality** means the Halifax Regional Municipality;
- **Placemaking** means a collective and a collaborative process for creating or reinventing public spaces;
- **Public Realm** means the space around and between buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, plazas, parks and open spaces that support or facilitate public life and social interaction;
- **Tall Mid-Rise Building** means a building that is greater than 20 metres high but no more than 26 metres high; and
- **Universal Design** means the design of buildings, infrastructure, and public realm to make them accessible to all people, such as being accessible to all ages, incomes, and differing levels of abilities.

(b) In this Plan:

- **May** is permissive;
- **Shall** is imperative; and
- **Municipality** denotes the physical area of the Municipality.

(c) In this Plan, where:

- “shall” is used in policies related to land use, the policy shall be implemented through the Land Use By-law;
- “shall consider” is used in policies, the Municipality is required to consider, but not obligated to undertake any action or expend any money; and
- “may” is used in policies, the Municipality may but is not obliged to undertake future action.

The diagrams, sketches, and photos in this Plan are provided for illustrative purposes only. Maps are part of this Plan.

Part 2: Vision and Core Concepts

2.0 Introduction

The *Regional Plan* established eight guiding principles for preparing this Plan. The Vision for the Regional Centre is as follows:

The Regional Centre is the civic, cultural and economic heart of the Halifax Regional Municipality. It is a prosperous and resilient community that supports the needs, health, and well-being of a diverse and growing population. New growth is located strategically to support the creation of complete communities, human scale design, and pedestrian comfort. The Regional Centre is the core of the most liveable mid-sized municipality in Canada. It welcomes all who want to live, work, play and learn here.

In support of the vision, this Plan focuses on the following four Core Concepts which were established through the extensive public consultation:

- Complete Communities; and
- Human Scale Design; and
- Pedestrians First; and
- Strategic Growth

2.1 Complete Communities

Complete communities support people of all ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds to live, work, shop, learn, and play near one another. This diversity of people and activities helps communities to be physically, socially, and economically vibrant. This Plan provides land use and design policies to promote pedestrian supportive, mixed use developments that allow safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily lives that are located within walking distance.

The Regional Centre comprises many distinctive neighbourhoods, some of which are already complete communities, and others with some components of complete communities in place. It is the intent of this Plan to strengthen existing communities, enhance the elements that make a community complete, and bring these elements to all communities within the Regional Centre. This will be accomplished by establishing higher density mixed-use areas, and by encouraging infill and a range of housing forms. Directing growth close to established commercial community nodes can help support a variety of businesses, community centres and parks. When these amenities are located close to where people live and work, people are more likely to walk, cycle, and use public transit.

2.2 Human Scale Design

Human scale design is focused on building and streetscape design that makes people feel more at ease and allows them to relate to their surroundings. It refers to a relationship between the size, shape, and design of components in the urban environment that matches the pace of pedestrians. Buildings and streets, as well as elements like trees and street furniture, all contribute to providing a scale that is comfortable for people. This Plan provides direction for the built environment that respects the human scale.

While human scale is typically associated with low-rise and mid-rise buildings, taller buildings can also provide human scale experience through design that provides generous setbacks for the upper storeys, low streetwalls with architectural detailing, weather protection, and frequent entrances. These can work together with narrow streets, short blocks, plazas and other open spaces to create an intimate environment and comfortable experience for an average person to enjoy. Human scale design makes urban environments more interesting, encourages exploration, and draws more people to local shops and services.

2.3 Pedestrians First

Pedestrians first policies prioritize the needs and comfort of pedestrians in all seasons. The intent of this Plan is to create safe, comfortable and enjoyable environments for people of all ages and abilities. Pedestrians first design makes walking a more convenient and viable transportation choice and leads to community benefits, such as emission reductions and improved public health.

Pedestrian-oriented design elements include connected streets, short blocks, four-way intersections, hard surfaced pathways, and an extensive sidewalk network. Sidewalks, paths, and other pedestrian connections should link to key destinations such as retail and services, employment centres, schools, and public transit stops. Urban trees, parks and other open spaces, lively storefronts, and places to rest and visit make walking easier and more enjoyable. Thoughtful design can ensure that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate commercial activity and community interaction while allowing people to move unobstructed. Since everyone is a pedestrian at some point, placing pedestrians first improves the urban environment for everyone.

Placemaking is a key component of pedestrians first design, and when successful can result in quality public spaces that can contribute to people's health and well being. Placemaking strengthens the connection between people and the places they share by paying attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Placemaking is an approach for improving a neighborhood, city, or region and is a key component of site design.

2.4 Strategic Growth

To encourage socially, economically and environmentally responsible growth, this Plan is designed to accommodate at least 40% of the Municipality's growth within the Regional Centre by the year 2031. Increasing the density and diversity of people, shops and services in the Regional Centre will support appealing, resilient and safe communities.

It is the intention of this Plan to distribute growth throughout the Regional Centre in context-specific forms. Most of the growth is enabled to occur within the Downtown, Centre, Corridor, Higher Order Residential, and Future Growth Node Designations in the form of mixed-use low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings. It is the intention of this Plan to implement its overall vision through policies related to the four concepts.

Policy 2.1 **This Plan shall apply to the area identified on Map 1. The Municipality shall implement the Vision through the policies and maps contained in this Plan, the Regional Centre Land Use By-law, and the Regional Subdivision By-law. Investments in public spaces and infrastructure to support current and future growth in the Regional Centre shall be guided by this Plan.**

Part 3: Urban Structure

3.0 Introduction

Population growth is essential to the economic and social development of the Regional Centre, as well as the maintenance and renewal of services and amenities. The future growth of the Regional Centre is key to a balanced regional municipal approach to growth. In the Regional Centre, services such as transit, wastewater and water distribution services exist, or can be efficiently provided. This Plan will implement the *Regional Plan's* policies by providing further guidance on how and where the Regional Centre grows, and how to build a more liveable Regional Centre.

Growth potential within the Regional Centre was informed by population and development trends, and an urban structure analysis. This involved identifying areas which serve as community nodes of activities and land uses, and mobility links. Mobility links are public streets with existing or emerging mixed uses which connect people and places of significant activity, and where transit and active transportation infrastructure exist. Based on the Vision and Core Concepts of this Plan, the Regional Centre can be described as a system of Major Nodes, Minor Nodes, and Mobility Links as illustrated in Figure 1. This system is the framework for the Urban Structure in Package A, intended to support and strengthen elements of strategic growth, complete communities, human scaled design, and pedestrians first.

This Plan is “Package A” of the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy which is comprised of the Centre, Corridor, Higher-Order Residential and Downtown designations. Under the phased adoption approach, it is intended that this Plan will be amended to include “Package B”, comprised of all lands within the Regional Centre.

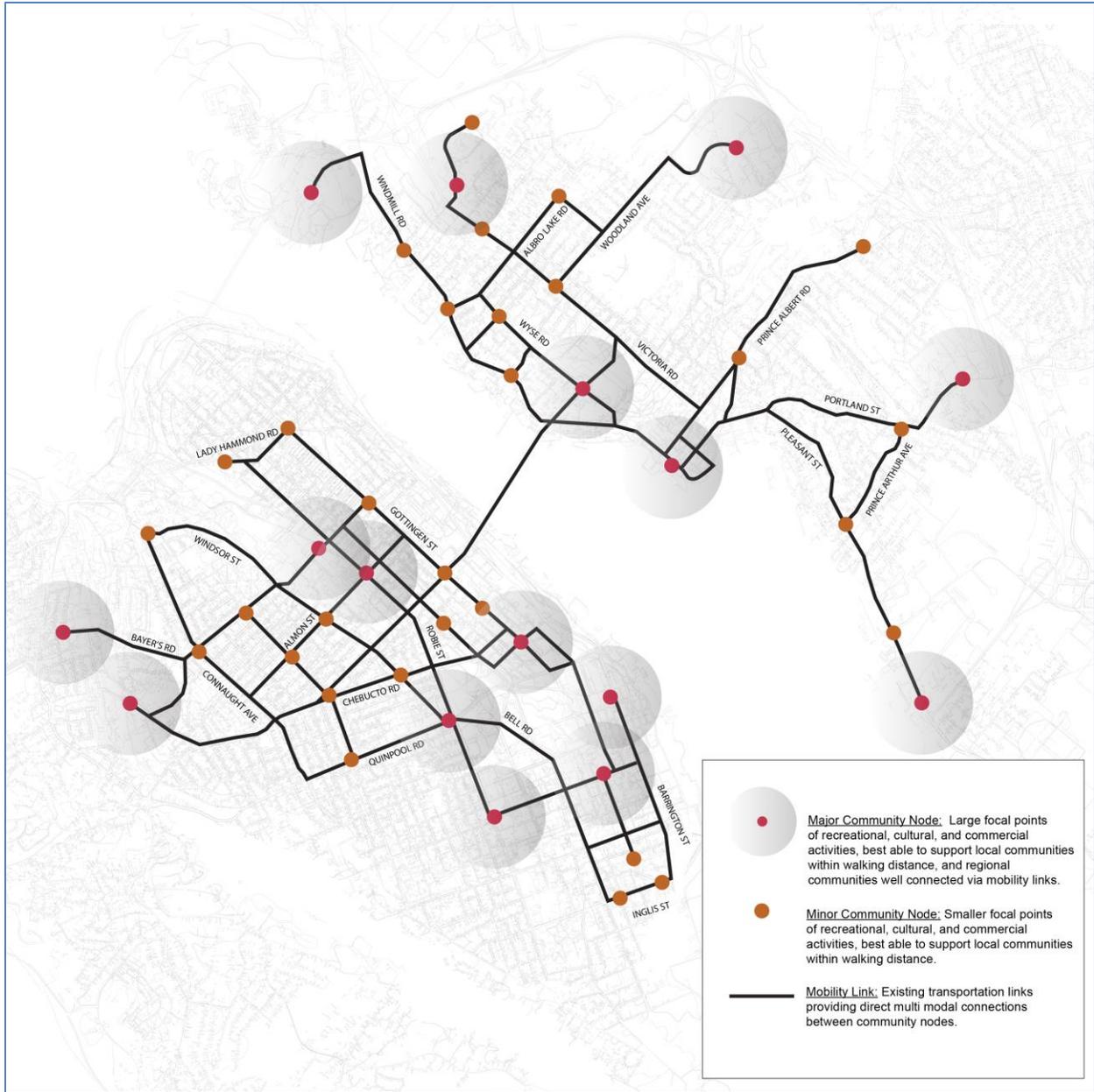


Figure 1: Regional Centre Urban System of Community Nodes and Mobility Links

3.1 Urban Structure Designations

The Urban Structure Map (Map 1) establishes five land use designations. These designations will form the framework for growth and land use management strategy of this Plan, which includes integration with transportation systems, and transitions in built form and land use within the Regional Centre. Under the phased implementation of this Plan, five of the designations are established in Package A, and additional designations may be considered in Package B. The characteristics of each designation within **Package A** are summarized as follows:

- The **Downtown Designation**: is applied to Downtown Dartmouth which is part of the cultural, commercial and civic heart of the Municipality. These lands are major growth areas within the municipality where the most intense mix of uses and larger scale developments are supported while also respecting the local heritage context and transitions to surrounding low-rise neighbourhoods.
- The **Centre Designation**: is applied to concentrated nodes of commercial and mixed-use developments along one or more transportation links, but that do not typically directly abut surrounding low-rise neighbourhoods. These lands will be major growth areas outside the Downtown Designation where new mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings will be accommodated, with transitions to low-rise areas.
- The **Corridor Designation**: is applied to lands at commercial and community nodes fronting on transportation links with established or emerging commercial uses, and that typically abut low-rise neighbourhoods in the rear yards. This designation also considers proximity to transit, jobs, and other amenities. A mix of residential and commercial uses that provide goods and services to surrounding neighbourhoods will be supported, but the permitted uses and the built form of new developments will be in the form of low-rise, mid-rise and tall mid-rise buildings that provide a transition from Centres to low-rise residential areas.
- The **Higher Order Residential Designation**: is applied to lands where low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise multi-unit residential dwellings with limited commercial opportunities are supported. The designation applies to existing multi-unit residential neighbourhoods, as well as larger sites at the periphery of Centres and Corridors, and may include underutilized lands. While lands within this designation offer opportunities to accommodate growth, the allowable scale of new development must consider the surrounding residential context.
- The **Future Growth Node Designation**: is applied to larger commercial, industrial, vacant or otherwise underutilized lands. The intent of this designation is to accommodate significant mixed-use growth in the future. While neighbourhood planning has been completed for some of the Future Growth Nodes and has been incorporated in this Plan, others will require detailed planning to develop policy for developing complete communities with sufficient infrastructure, including access to transit, active transportation routes, roads and open spaces.

Policy 3.1 The designations for the Urban Structure in Package A (Downtown, Centre, Corridor, Higher Order Residential and Future Growth Node designations) shall be established on Map 1. Regulations under the Land Use By-law shall be developed to recognize and support the distinctive characteristics and needs within each designation. It shall be Council's intent to amend this Plan to include all lands within the Regional Centre.

3.2 Downtown Designation

Downtown Dartmouth is a key part of the cultural, commercial, and civic heart of the Municipality. It will continue to accommodate new residents, mixed-use development, and support the rest of the region. Lands within the Downtown Designation are strategically located within the Regional Centre to be a major growth area within the Municipality where the most intense mix of uses and larger scale developments are supported, while also respecting the local heritage context and transitions to surrounding low-rise neighbourhoods.

Objectives:

- D1** Promote a compact, intensified and walkable downtown that features environmentally sustainable development practices.
- D2** Create a living downtown through distinct neighbourhoods while supporting residential development and new commercial uses, including a variety of housing choices that are supported by high quality community, streetscape and open space amenities that are open year-round.
- D3** Maintain a distinctive downtown by preserving and reinforcing the elements that impart a sense of history, culture, and a unique natural setting.
- D4** Support civic pride, visual appeal, and inspiring qualities in the design, improvement and construction of streets, open spaces, and buildings.
- D5** Strengthen the visual and physical connections between historical and natural assets, and civic and open space destinations in the downtown.
- D6** Create connections to surrounding districts and neighbourhoods outside the downtown, particularly along major transit nodes and corridors.
- D7** Enact policies and procedures that encourage an urban environment with a broad mix of land uses, the required infrastructure, and the necessary critical mass of people to support a creative and vibrant economic, cultural and social community.
- D8** Create a safe and human scale public realm for all ages and abilities, and increase density to supports transit services.

Policy 3.2 The Land Use By-law shall establish development and maximum Floor Area Ratio regulations in the Downtown Designation in accordance with built form policies in Part 4 of this Plan. Built form may vary in accordance with Precincts as described in Section 3.2.2 and illustrated on Map 4. The Land Use By-law shall permit low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings consistent with Floor Area Ratio values as illustrated on Map 2.

3.2.1 Land Use

The Downtown Designation can support a wide mix of land uses, including commercial, institutional, industrial, cultural, recreational, and residential activities. It also contains unique uses associated with the tourism industry and marine industries along the waterfront. Marine-oriented industrial uses that existed on the date of this Plan coming into force shall be permitted in the Downtown Designation, but new industrial uses shall not be permitted. Car-oriented land uses, such as auto repair uses, service stations, and dealerships, shall be prohibited in the Downtown Designation. These uses may be located in other parts of the Regional Centre or in other parts of the Municipality. It is also the intent of this Plan to prohibit adult entertainment uses, construction and demolition facility uses, and salvage uses in all zones as these uses are permitted in other parts of the Municipality, and they are not compatible with the residential growth targets and overall Vision and Core Principles of this Plan.

Policy 3.3 **The Land Use By-law shall establish the Downtown (D) Zone and apply it to lands within the Downtown Designation. The Zone shall permit a wide range and mix of commercial, institutional, cultural, recreational, residential, open space, and urban agricultural uses which support both local and regional needs of residents, and visitors.**

Policy 3.4 **The Land Use By-law shall prohibit most industrial uses, certain commercial uses, and car-oriented uses that do not support a human scale pedestrian environment in the Downtown Zone. The Land Use By-law shall establish a Waterfront Special Area (W) to be applied over portions of the Downtown Zone adjacent to the Harbour to permit shipping containers and kiosks to contain office, retail, restaurant or drinking establishment uses, and urban farm uses. Adult entertainment, construction and demolition facilities, and salvage uses shall be prohibited in the D zone.**

3.2.2 Downtown Dartmouth Vision and Precincts

Downtown Dartmouth is one of the oldest settled areas of the Municipality, and has retained much of its character, with a traditional street pattern and many historically-significant properties, including the Shubenacadie Canal system. Downtown Dartmouth also encompasses waterfront lands which are a valuable resource for the community and the region, and the Alderney Gate – Alderney Landing hub of services which includes a public library, performing arts centre, farmers market, and a ferry terminal. The Dartmouth Common, the Ferry Terminal Park, and the Trans Canada Trail along the water's edge connect the downtown to the regional open space network. The vibrant commercial streets are an attractive destination, offering a range of services and small retail operations to residents, visitors, and downtown workers. Marine-related businesses contribute to the working character of the waterfront in the downtown.

Downtown Dartmouth can accommodate increased density in mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings that are compatible with existing development. Higher densities can also support the downtown's function as a primary employment and cultural centre for the broader region. Subject to maximum FAR, a maximum height of 90 metres shall be established in the Downtown Designation.

Downtown Dartmouth can largely accommodate growth by infilling existing vacant and under-utilized lands. The following is the community's vision for growth and development of Downtown Dartmouth that is to guide this Plan's policies towards development, as well as public investments:

Downtown Dartmouth is an attractive and safe community with a lively business district, quiet and stable neighbourhoods, and an accessible and beautiful waterfront for all to enjoy. The community has retained a strong sense of its heritage and culture, provides a broad range of quality housing choices for all, and assures that all lifestyles can be met through an abundance of park and recreation facilities and employment opportunities.

To help achieve the above vision, four precincts are also established based on their unique characteristics and to help guide municipal land use policies, regulations and programs.

Policy 3.5 **Downtown Dartmouth is divided into four precincts, as shown on Map 4, based on their unique characteristics. These existing and desired characteristics, shall guide municipal policies and regulations regarding permitted uses, built form, heritage preservation, public realm, public investment, and future amendments to this Plan and Land Use By-law. Built form in the Downtown Zone shall be regulated by Floor Area Ratio which will reflect and support unique characteristics of Precincts. Built form shall also comply with policy directions in Part 4 of this Plan.**

Precinct 1: Historic Dartmouth

This precinct generally includes properties along Portland Street and Ochterloney Street between Victoria Road and Alderney Drive, except for some vacant lots, and properties facing Alderney Drive that have limited historic value, as shown on Map 4. This precinct is the historic and commercial heart of Downtown Dartmouth which supports a revitalized shopping area with a wide range of shops, boutiques, cafés, restaurants, and services. It also contains a concentration of registered heritage properties and other significant buildings and properties that contribute to a unique character. This area has been identified as a potential Heritage Conservation District in Part 5 and Map 10 of this Plan.

Portland Street is the traditional main street of Downtown Dartmouth, and has retained a historic and cohesive streetscape. It also serves as a major pedestrian route providing a direct link to the ferry terminal, the waterfront, and the Alderney Gate – Alderney Landing hub of services. The historic streetscape of lower Portland Street between Dundas Street and Alderney Drive is intended to be preserved, and design requirements will support the street and public spaces. The built form includes a mix of historic and modern buildings, and the challenge for future development opportunities is to integrate and complement the historic fabric of the street.

Due to the cohesive and historic nature of this precinct, a large portion of this precinct will only enable floor-area-ratios that support low-rise buildings. Maximum floor-area-ratios that support Mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings will be enabled at the north and south ends of Portland Street, within this

Precinct, the area north of Dundas Street, and on vacant lots in the vicinity of Queen Street and Alderney Drive. Low-rise streetwalls with stepbacks and weather protection that supports the pedestrian main street environment is particularly important in this precinct. Streetwall heights, setbacks, articulation, and narrow grade premises shall respect the historic nature of this precinct.

Portland Street will be designated as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street and no residential uses shall be permitted on the ground floor, to help foster an active pedestrian environment. Portland Street will also be established a Special Area to require all new buildings facing Portland Street to provide streetwalls that do not exceed 11 metres to support the established main street environment. Any high-rise buildings shall be required to include a minimum of 6 metre stepbacks in this Special Area.

Transition provisions for developments that abut low-rise downtown neighbourhoods, and regulations that support narrow storefronts that reinforce or create the traditional lot patterns and streetwall frontages shall also apply in this precinct.

Policy 3.6 **Map 2 shall establish the Maximum Floor Area Ratio Precincts for the Historic Dartmouth Precinct between 1.75 to 4.0 based on the local context. On a limited number of vacant or under-utilized sites the maximum FAR shall be 6.25. The Land Use By-law shall establish maximum FAR Precincts consistent with Map 2 and policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. All new development shall have regard for heritage contexts. Portland Street shall be established as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street. The Land Use By-law shall designate lands fronting on Portland Street as a Special Area requiring all new developments to provide a maximum streetwall height of 11 metres, and streetwall stepback for high-rise buildings to be a minimum of 6 metres.**

Precinct 2: Alderney and Central Waterfront

This Precinct is generally bounded by the Halifax Harbour and lands on both sides of Alderney Drive from Park Avenue to Dundas Street, except for the historic streetscape of Alderney Drive between Portland Street and Queen Street, as shown on Map 4. Alderney Drive is an important transportation corridor, a boulevard and gateway to Downtown Dartmouth. It also supports a number of larger mixed-use developments, integrated with valuable public open space. This area also includes the Alderney Gate - Alderney Landing hub of services, which includes a major transit facility, community and cultural facilities. Public access and public views to the Halifax Harbour are a key feature of this precinct, and future developments shall ensure improved physical and visual linkages with the water. To achieve this, view corridors to the Harbour shall be protected, and consideration may be given to providing additional public view corridors.

Mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings are supported in most of this precinct, but buildings shall step down to the water, to low-rise neighbourhoods, and to the Historic Dartmouth Precinct. There are opportunities for high-rise buildings along Alderney Drive. Current parking lots and vacant lands shall be encouraged to redevelop into visually attractive new development, with three-storey streetwalls, setbacks and stepbacks that support an active pedestrian environment.

To further foster a pedestrian environment, a section of Alderney Drive shall be designated as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street, and no residential uses shall be permitted on the ground floor. Narrow and articulated storefronts, and other grade related premises in new developments shall also be required. Future investments in pedestrian and bicycle friendly infrastructure can help make Alderney Drive a safer and more accessible street for pedestrians and cyclists, to support its role as a regional transportation link as envisioned in the *Integrated Mobility Plan*. Capital improvements and year-round programming will continue to animate the ferry terminal plaza and provide improved connectivity to the nearby open spaces and trails.

Policy 3.7 **Map 2 shall establish the Maximum Floor Area Ratio Precincts for the Alderney and Central Waterfront (AL) Precinct. The Land Use By-law shall establish maximum FAR Precincts of between 4.0 to 8.0 based on the local context and consistent with Map 2 and Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Buildings shall step down to the water, to low-rise residential, and to the Historic Dartmouth Precinct. The Land Use By-law shall designate Alderney Drive as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street. New developments shall have regard for heritage contexts.**

Precinct 3: Irishtown and Canal

This precinct generally includes lands generally bounded by Victoria Road, Alderney Drive, and properties along Ochterloney Street and Portland Street near Dartmouth Cove as shown on Map 4. Distinct features of this precinct include the Shubenacadie Canal System and Greenway, and Starr Park. Recent investments have been made to enhance the Shubenacadie Canal System and Greenway, including the partial daylighting of the Sawmill River and the restoration of the cultural landscape of the Shubenacadie Marine Railway.

This precinct contains architecturally significant and historic buildings, but also offers opportunities for developments that recognize, celebrate and complement the Historic Dartmouth Precinct, the Shubenacadie Canal, surrounding neighbourhoods, and connection to the Sullivan’s Pond Park.

This precinct will enable floor-area-ratios which support low-rise and mid-rise buildings. Floor-area-ratios which enable tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings shall be limited to the eastern portion of the precinct between Irishtown Road and Victoria Road to take advantage of vacant and under-utilized properties. Built form regulations shall encourage visually attractive new development, with three-storey streetwalls, setbacks, and stepbacks that support an active pedestrian environment.

Policy 3.8 **Map 2 shall establish the Maximum Floor Area Ratio Precincts for the Irishtown and Canal Precinct. The Land Use By-law shall establish maximum FAR Precincts of between 1.75 to 6.75 based on the local context and consistent with Map 2 and policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. New developments shall have regard for abutting public parks, and heritage contexts.**

Precinct 4: King's Wharf

This precinct includes lands from the Alderney Drive and King Street intersection to the Halifax Harbour. It is a large area that includes a water lot that has been developing comprehensively in accordance with policies under the *Downtown Dartmouth Secondary Planning Strategy* (2000), as shown on Map 4. It is a mixed-use pedestrian-oriented area with major residential and commercial developments, including a marina, valuable public open spaces, and public access to the Harbour. This precinct provides excellent pedestrian and bike connections to adjacent precincts, the Trans-Canada Trail, and the regional transportation network. Mid-rise and high-rise buildings shall be designed to mitigate wind impacts on pedestrians.

A development agreement for this precinct was approved under the provisions of the *Downtown Dartmouth Secondary Planning Strategy*. This development has the potential to enhance the public realm, and complement both the Historic Dartmouth Precinct and other neighbouring precincts. The terms of the development agreement are generally consistent with the objectives of this Plan. The King's Wharf Special Area shall recognize a greater time for completion of this large and multi-stage development.

Policy 3.9 **The Land Use By-law shall establish the King's Wharf Special Area (KW) where development may only be permitted in accordance with the development agreement approved for these lands prior to the adoption of this Plan.**

Development agreements or amendments to development agreements for King's Wharf that have been received by the Municipality on or before September 5, 2029, may be considered by Council in accordance with the policies in effect at the time Council provides notice of intention to adopt this Plan.

3.3 Centre Designation

The Centre Designation is established over portions of lands adjacent to the following major streets or intersections where major commercial nodes exist, as identified and shown on Map 1:

- Gottingen Street, Halifax;
- Highfield Park Drive, Dartmouth;
- Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax;
- Quinpool Road, Halifax;
- Robie Street and Young Street, Halifax;
- Spring Garden Road, Halifax; and
- Wyse Road, Dartmouth.

The streets that are the backbones of the Centres are served by public transit and have been developed with a variety of commercial and residential buildings. However, there are many sites within the Centres that are either vacant or underutilized, and offer development opportunities that could include diverse housing choices, commercial opportunities, and entertainment venues. These important nodes, which do not typically abut low-rise residential areas, will be strengthened as mixed-use areas that serve as service areas for local and regional residents, and as destinations for visitors.

Lands within Centres have the potential to accommodate much of the housing and population growth targeted for the Regional Centre. The challenge is to do so in a manner that transitions to residential neighbourhoods, and to create a built form that is safe and comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, and other active transportation users. This shall be achieved by applying a two-tiered approach to zoning within Centres.

To achieve strategic growth under this Plan, the Centre Designation shall permit a wide range of commercial, institutional and residential uses. Built form volume shall be regulated by Floor Area Ratio, which will support high-rise, tall mid-rise, and mid-rise buildings that transition to adjacent Corridor Designations and low-rise residential areas. Subject to maximum FAR, a maximum height of 90 metres shall be established in the Centre Designation.

Objectives:

- CE1** Support intensification of a mix of residential, commercial, institutional, cultural, park and open space, and urban agriculture uses that offer a variety of housing opportunities, a variety of goods and services needed by residents, and access to transit.
- CE2** Encourage complete main streets within Centres that prioritize pedestrian comfort through building and streetscape design for people of all ages and abilities.
- CE3** Develop a built form framework that manages growth, is sensitive to its current or desired character and surrounding context, and allows for an effective transition to adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhoods.
- CE4** Enhance the transportation network to prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit over personal vehicles, and improve connections to other communities.
- CE5** Create a safe, attractive and accessible public realm for people of all ages and abilities.

Policy 3.10 Map 2 shall establish the maximum floor area ratio precincts and the Land Use By-law shall establish maximum built form regulations in the Centre Designation, in accordance with Map 2 and policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Built form may vary within and between Centres to permit low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings consistent with maximum floor area ratios, as illustrated on Map 2.

3.3.1 Land Use

The Centre Designation can support a wide mix of land uses, including commercial, institutional, cultural, recreational and residential activities. However, lots within the Centres that are adjacent to low-rise residential areas shall have less permissive land uses. Land uses that are not compatible with the overall mixed-use function of Centres, and desired pedestrian and human scale environment of the Centres, shall be prohibited. This excludes recycling depots and wholesale food production which shall be permitted in the more intensive CEN-2 Zone.

Most car-oriented land uses that are not compatible with the intent of this Plan to create a safe and human scale pedestrian-oriented environment in the Centres shall not be permitted in the CEN Zones, such as auto repair uses and dealerships. It is also the intent of this Plan to prohibit adult entertainment uses, construction and demolition facility uses, and salvage uses in all zones.

Policy 3.11 **The Land Use By-law shall establish two zones within the Centre Designation and shall apply them as follows:**

- (a) **The Centre 2 (CEN-2) Zone shall generally apply to lands with frontage on designated Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets or major commercial streets within the Centre Designation, except for through lots facing on low-rise residential streets. It will permit a wide range and mix of residential, commercial, park and open space, cultural, institutional and urban agricultural uses which support both local and regional needs of residents. Except for recycling depots and wholesale food production, industrial uses shall be prohibited. Some commercial uses, and car-oriented uses that do not support a human scale pedestrian environment are also prohibited in the CEN-2 Zone except for services uses; and**
- (b) **The Centre 1 (CEN-1) Zone shall apply to all remaining lands within the Centre Designation. Due to the proximity to low-rise residential areas, limitations will be placed on development so that the type of uses and scale of development are compatible with neighbouring low-rise residential areas.**
- (c) **The CEN-1 Zone shall prohibit all industrial uses and commercial uses that are not compatible with adjacent low-rise residential contexts, including drinking establishments and service stations.**
- (d) **Adult entertainment, construction and demolition facilities, and salvage uses shall be prohibited in the CEN-1 and CEN-2 zones.**

3.3.2 Gottingen Street Centre

This Centre includes lands around Gottingen Street from Cogswell Street to Cunard Street and Prince William Street, and lands between Maitland Street and Creighton Street. The focal point of this Centre is the intersection of Cogswell Street and Gottingen Street. Historically the commercial and entertainment heart of Halifax’s North End, Gottingen Street contains both large and narrow lots and is flanked by a grid of diverse and rapidly changing residential neighbourhoods that contain registered heritage properties, and properties with heritage value. It is well served by transit and is a short walk from Downtown Halifax, and the proposed redevelopment of the Cogswell Interchange.

This Centre serves neighbourhoods that include market and non-market housing as well as many health, social support, and cultural organizations serving a diverse population. The future redevelopment of the former Saint Patrick’s Alexandra school site adjacent to this Centre represents an opportunity to increase connectivity to this Centre. Future redevelopment should consider diverse housing options and the historic value of the site and remaining building. The proposed Creighton’s Field Heritage Conservation District, as shown on Map 10, is also part of this Centre. Properties or parts of properties facing on Creighton Street and Maitland Street shall generally be zoned as CEN-1 to benefit from mixed-use permitted land uses while maintaining low-rise built form.

Gottingen Street is a relatively narrow street with narrow lots and street frontages where development regulations need to consider landscaping treatments for the public realm to ensure a comfortable pedestrian environment. View terminus sites at intersections provide opportunities to create urban design interest. New development should respect the historic character of the area and contribute towards a variety of housing types. Design requirements that require narrow and frequent grade related premises, streetwall articulations, and weather protection will help maintain and reinforce a main street pedestrian environment in this Centre.

Policy 3.12 The Land Use By-law shall, within the Gottingen Street Centre permit:

- (a) **maximum FAR of between 7.50 and 6.00 on lands zoned as CEN-2 abutting on Cogswell Street and Gottingen Street; and**
- (b) **maximum FAR of between 2.25 and 1.75 on lands zoned as CEN-1 abutting Creighton Street, Cunard Street, Falkland Street, and Maitland Street**

consistent with Map 2 and built form policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. The Land Use By-law shall support distinctive characteristics and transitions to adjacent residential areas. Parts of the Gottingen Street shall be designated as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street to support active pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor.

3.3.3 Highfield Park Drive Centre

This Centre is generally bounded by Highway 111, Highfield Park Drive, and Victoria Road. The area is near the Burnside Industrial Park, Highfield Park Transit Terminal, several schools, and a combined library and community centre. This Centre and the surrounding neighbourhood contains multi-unit housing, including market and non-market housing, which serves a diverse socio-economic community. The current road network and block pattern, however, isolates this Centre from the surrounding community. Current land use includes large car-oriented commercial uses and multi-unit dwellings. The area provides some services to the neighbouring Dartmouth North community, but additional services would contribute to a complete community.

The Pinecrest-Highfield Park Secondary Planning Strategy under the *Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategy* focused on the social and economic development of the area, while limiting development in much of the surrounding neighbourhood. This Plan recognizes the community's efforts and partnerships to continue the social, environmental and economic development of the Dartmouth North community while providing additional opportunities to re-invest in current properties, including infill on vacant and under-utilized lands. Due to the current lot fabric, this Centre may benefit from further subdivision to enable improved pedestrian and transit connections, and more diverse and human scale developments.

Future developments should consider the needs of current and future residents and the impact on overall affordability and accessibility of the area. The future vibrancy of this centre will require easy access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Additional services, amenities and housing choices will support the liveability of the surrounding neighbourhood. High-rise, tall mid-rise, mid-rise and a range of low-rise mixed-use development shall be supported in this Centre.

Improvements in pedestrian access, street grid and open space connectivity will contribute to the development of this area as a complete community. New built form requirements that allow buildings to be located closer to the streetline can improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians. New developments should consider connectivity to the surrounding context, and appropriate setbacks from Highway 111.

Policy 3.13 **The Land Use By-law shall, within the Highfield Park Road Centre, permit maximum FARs between 3.5 and 5.0 consistent with Map 2 and built form policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan.**

Policy 3.14 **The Municipality shall consider through the implementation of the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, additional street and pedestrian connections from the Highfield Centre to the surrounding community, and to the Burnside Business Park.**

3.3.4 Quinpool Road Centre

This Centre includes lands on both sides of Quinpool Road, from Oxford Street in the west to Robie Street near the Halifax Common in the east. The focal point of this Centre is the intersection of Quinpool Road and Robie Street, but it also includes secondary streets such as the north side of Pepperell Street, the south side of Yale Street, as well as Quingate Place and the former Saint Patrick’s High School site. Quinpool Road is a mixed-use commercial hub with many ground floor local businesses with residences above. The size of land parcels and the scale of buildings along Quinpool Road transition from larger parcels and taller buildings at the eastern end, to smaller parcels and low-rise buildings in the more residentially focused western end.

Future development shall maintain this pattern with floor area ratios enabling mid-rise buildings on Quinpool Road at Oxford Street, gradually rising to high-rise buildings where Quinpool Road intersects with Robie Street. Creating mobility connections through larger blocks, improving access to parks, and supporting local businesses through increased foot traffic are all priorities for this Centre.

Policy 3.15 The Land Use By-law shall, within the Quinpool Road Centre, permit:

- (a) **maximum FAR of 8.0 in the eastern part of the Centre, transitioning to a maximum FAR of 3.5 to 2.25 in the western part of the Centre based on the local context on lands zoned as CEN-2; and**
- (b) **maximum FAR of between 1.75 and 2.25 on lands zoned as CEN-1 on the north and south side of the Quinpool Road Centre to provide transition to established residential neighbourhoods**

consistent with Map 2 and the built form policies of Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Parts of Quinpool Road shall be established as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street to support active at grade pedestrian uses.

3.3.5 Robie Street /Young Street Centre

This Centre generally includes lands bordering, and in the vicinity of North Street, Agricola Street, Almon Street, Robie Street and Young Street with the exception of lands designated as the Young Street Lands Future Growth Node. There are significant development opportunities in this centre on vacant and under-utilized commercial and institutional lands. Priorities for this Centre are to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment by connecting the existing street grid and improving walkability through new and expanded mobility connections. This Centre would also benefit from additional parks, open spaces and community facilities as development proceeds.

New developments shall introduce human scale buildings and articulated streetwalls that invite pedestrians. Ground oriented units in multi-unit developments can contribute to a human scale environment. A mix of housing and unit types, services and employment opportunities will support the development of this centre as a complete community. Low densities will be maintained within the vicinity of Fern Lane. Consideration shall also be given to Robie Street as a major transit and transportation link on the Peninsula.

Policy 3.16 **The Land Use By-law shall, within the Robie Street/Young Street Centre permit:**

- (a) **maximum FAR of between 8.0 and 2.75 between St. Alban’s Street and Young Street, with higher FARs generally concentrated along Robie Street and Young Street; and**
- (b) **maximum FAR of 3.5 and 1.75 between St. Albans Street and North Street, with lower FARs generally focused along Agricola Street; and**
- (c) **maximum FAR of 1.75 along Fern Lane**

consistent with Map 2 and the built form polices of Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Parts of Robie Street and Young Street shall be designated as Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets to support active pedestrian uses at grade.

3.3.6 Spring Garden Road Centre

The Spring Garden Road Centre encompasses lands along Spring Garden Road from Robie Street to Summer Street and includes Carlton and College Streets. The area is characterized by multi-unit residential buildings set back from the street, and 2-3 storey single detached buildings with residential and commercial uses. The Centre is also adjacent to registered heritage buildings, and the Carlton Street Heritage Streetscape.

The Centre is also adjacent to two historical open spaces, the Halifax Public Gardens and Camp Hill Cemetery, and is near Dalhousie University, the Victoria General Hospital site, and the IWK Health Centre. Floor area ratios which enable high-rise buildings shall be supported in this Centre. New development will respect the existing heritage context. Redevelopment along Spring Garden Road should also include at-grade commercial storefronts to draw additional pedestrian activity and active uses into the Centre.

Policy 3.17 **The Land Use By-law shall, within the Spring Garden Road Centre, permit a maximum FAR of between 8.0 to 1.75 as shown on Map 2 and consistent with built form policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Parts of Spring Garden Road and Robie Street shall be designated as Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets to support active pedestrian uses at grade.**

3.3.7 Wyse Road Centre

This large Centre runs along Wyse Road in Dartmouth from approximately Thistle Street to Boland Road, and along Nantucket Avenue. The current development pattern favours private automobiles over pedestrian and active transportation mobility. Wyse Road transitions from a narrow two-lane street in the north, to a wide median-divided road as it intersects with Nantucket Avenue, which connects to the Bridge Terminal as well as the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge approaches. The scale of buildings varies from a tall office tower to one-storey commercial and recreation buildings. Future development in this Centre should establish it as an attractive gateway to Dartmouth, and to Downtown Dartmouth. Over time, this Centre will develop a new pedestrian-oriented character as new growth, built form regulations, new street and pedestrian connections, and streetscape changes are implemented.

Policy 3.18 **The Land Use By-law shall, within the Wyse Road Centre:**

- (a) **permit maximum FAR Precincts of between 2.25 and 8.0 based on the local context with higher FARs focused around the intersection of Nantucket and Wyse Road;**
- (b) **provide for a transition of built form, from commercial streets to low-rise residential areas in the vicinity of Pelzant Street and Green Road.**

consistent with Map 2 and built form policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan.

Policy 3.19 **Wyse Road may be considered as a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street through an amendment to the Land Use By-law when new growth and new commercial uses are established.**

3.4 Corridor Designation

The Corridor Designation is established over portions of lands, typically one lot deep, adjacent to the following key emerging commercial streets, and which are not already part of a Centre Designation:

- Agricola Street, Halifax;
- Barrington Street – Inglis Street, Halifax;
- Chebucto Road, Halifax;
- Gottingen Street – Isleville Street – Young Street, Halifax;
- Oxford Street – Bayers Road, Halifax;
- Pleasant Street, Dartmouth;
- Portland Street, Dartmouth;
- Prince Albert Road – Braemar Drive, Dartmouth;
- Queen Street, Halifax;
- Quinpool Road, Halifax;
- Robie Street – Cunard Street, Halifax;
- Victoria Road – Primrose Street, Dartmouth;
- Windmill Road, Dartmouth;
- Windsor Street, Halifax; and
- Wyse Road, Dartmouth.

Lands within the Corridor Designation have been developed along key transportation links with a mix of residential and commercial uses. They typically abut low-rise residential areas in the rear yard, and connect Centres and Higher Order Residential Areas, as well as other smaller commercial and community nodes. They also contain infill and redevelopment opportunities that can attract new residents and businesses that can serve the local neighbourhood.

The Corridor Designation is generally intended to support lower built form scale and lesser land use intensity than the Centre Designation, due to its proximity to low-rise residential areas. By generally limiting this designation to the first lot, or the depth of the majority of first lots within a block, adjacent to the commercial street, this Plan seeks to introduce mid-rise density to support transit use, while maintaining the integrity of adjacent low-rise residential areas.

The existing corridors differ with respect to lot sizes and configuration, street width, existing uses, presence of heritage resources, adjacent developments, and the frequency of transit service as described in Table 1 below. This Plan seeks to integrate new development in a manner that is respectful of the established character of each Corridor by generally limiting the scale of buildings to low-rise and mid-rise

forms, with tall mid-rise forms permitted in certain local contexts, subject to Transition Lines for low-rise residential areas.

Objectives:

- COR1** Support a mix of residential and business uses that offer a variety of housing opportunities and goods and services needed by residents.
- COR2** Support a built form that reflects the character and surrounding context and allows for transition to adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhoods.
- COR3** Create a public realm and built form environment that supports transit services.
- COR4** Create a safe, attractive, comfortable and accessible public realm for people of all ages and abilities.

Key characteristics of the Corridors inform the built form policies of this Plan and are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics	
Corridor	Corridor Characteristics
Agricola Street, Halifax	<p>This Corridor extends from Cunard Street to Young Street, but from Willow Street lands only on the east side of the street are included. It connects the Halifax North Common to the Hydrostone neighbourhood and the Young Street/Robie Street Centre.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of Agricola Street are the simple box form houses, most of which are constructed of wood, are modest in design and are generally no more than two to three storeys in height. As older buildings are restored, the street is taking on a colourful and traditional aesthetic. Buildings generally come right to the sidewalk and are characterized by small stoops or stairs, and a generally small and regular urban fabric.</p> <p>While some of the buildings have commercial uses on the ground floor, others continue to contain residential uses. South of Willow Street the street is characterized by short blocks, regular and shallow lot fabric which results in a low-rise and regularly patterned built form.</p> <p>It is desired that the different character of the street north and south of Willow Street be maintained. North of Willow Street, the east side of the Corridor maintains a small and regular lot patterns typical of traditional box form houses and small business development. Some lots are however in transition from larger scale commercial, and industrial uses to mixed use residential uses. Future development should continue the fine-grained streetwall of the historic streetscape.</p>
Barrington Street – Inglis Street, Halifax	<p>This Corridor extends from Bland Street to Green Street and includes the Inglis Street Park. The Inglis Street area includes a fine grained lot fabric, traditional wood construction, and registered heritage buildings. This Corridor includes a mix of residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings in low-rise and mid-rise forms.</p> <p>Lands abutting Barrington Street include new construction in the form of mid-rise multi-unit dwellings, low-rise commercial uses and vacant lots that abut railway lands. These large parcels do not abut low-rise residential areas and can accommodate mid-rise built and tall mid-rise buildings that are set-back from the rail line.</p>
Chebucto Road, Halifax	<p>This Corridor generally extends from Oxford Street to Connaught Avenue. It generally includes and some commercial uses which are adjacent to low-rise neighbourhoods, as well as vacant and under-utilized lots which can support infill development. A mid-rise built form and additional land can provide additional services to the surrounding neighbourhoods.</p>

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics	
Corridor	Corridor Characteristics
Gottingen Street – Isleville - Cunard Street, Halifax	This Corridor includes lands between Cunard Street and Buddy Daye Street which are adjacent to a low-rise residential area. It connects the Gottingen Street Centre to the Hydrostone Market, with some lots maintained as Higher-Order Residential. This Corridor includes low-rise and mid-rise residential and commercial uses and new developments on previously vacant lands. Registered heritage buildings are intended to be preserved.
Oxford Street-Bayers Road, Halifax	This Corridor extends from Bayers Road to Liverpool Street, including two large lots on the north-east corner of Bayers Road and Oxford which contain under-utilized properties. Along Oxford, the Corridor extends to Liverpool Street. This Corridor is characterized by regular, short blocks, regular lot pattern, and emerging commercial uses which support pedestrian movement.
Pleasant Street, Dartmouth	<p>This Corridor generally extends from Tupper Street to Acadia Street. It connects the Newcastle Street Park and Higher Order Residential Area to the Nova Scotia Community College Ivany Campus. Buildings are typically in the low-rise form, and are located close the street. Pedestrian movement is supported by short, regular blocks except for a large vacant parcel between Prince Arthur Avenue and Cuisack Street. Future development of this site provides an opportunity to introduce short blocks, pedestrian connections, and buildings located close to the streetline. Where shallow and irregular lot pattern exists, additional lots were included in the designation.</p> <p>Land uses include a mix of residential, commercial, institutional and recreation uses, including historically significant properties. The proximity to the Woodside Ferry Terminal, the Woodside Industrial Park, the Dartmouth General Hospital, and the Irving Oil Halifax Harbour Terminal make this Corridor an important and strategic connector.</p>

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics

Corridor	Corridor Characteristics
Portland Street, Dartmouth	<p>This Corridor extends from Gaston Road to Brenton Street. Noteworthy features include Maynard Lake, Maynard Lake Park, a school and several low-rise and mid-rise residential contexts.</p> <p>This Corridor is well-served by transit and experiences high pedestrian traffic. While some buildings are located close to the street, the streetwall is broken up by larger setbacks, parking lots and vacant lots. Due to the irregular lot fabric and grade changes, in some locations properties beyond the first lot fronting on Portland Street were designated as part of this Corridor.</p> <p>This Corridor can further develop into a multi-use community node with additional mid-rise housing located on a high-frequency transit corridor, and a range of services to serve the local community. Pedestrian connectivity to local green spaces and the Dartmouth South Academy are encouraged.</p>
Prince Albert Road - Braemar Drive, Dartmouth	<p>This Corridor extends from Celtic Drive to the Circumferential Highway (111). Noteworthy features include Lake Banook Regional Park, Kiwanis Park-Grahams Grove Park, and the associated canoe clubs. Current uses include low-rise, mid-rise residential and commercial uses generally located close to the street, with some under-utilized lands. Lands within this Corridor are included in the Lake Banook Special Area.</p>
Prince Albert Road – Pleasant Street, Dartmouth	<p>This Corridor extends from Pleasant Street to Eaton Avenue and connects Downtown Dartmouth to significant parks and open spaces. Noteworthy features include the Starr Park, Sullivan’s Pond Park, and the daylighted Sawmill Creek. This Corridor currently includes low-rise residential and commercial uses.</p>
Queen Street, Halifax	<p>This Corridor extends from South Street to Victoria Road in the southern part of the Halifax Peninsula. It includes a mix of commercial and residential uses, some vacant and under-utilized properties, and is surrounded by Higher Order Residential uses.</p>
Quinpool Road, Halifax	<p>This Corridor extends from the Quinpool Street Centre at Oxford Street to Beech Street, and only on the north side to Poplar Street. The corridor includes a wide range of commercial uses, with medium to small-scale retail. New mixed-use developments will transition to the adjacent residential neighbourhoods.</p>

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics

Corridor	Corridor Characteristics
Robie Street – Cunard Street, Halifax	<p>This Corridor extends from North Street to Coburg Road, except where it intersects with the Quinpool Road Centre. This Corridor connects the Young/Robie Centre, the Quinpool Centre and the Spring Garden Road Centre, as well as the Halifax Common, the Camp Hill Veterans Memorial Building and the Dalhousie University campus. Robie Street is one of the main arterial streets connecting the north and south ends of the Halifax Peninsula, and has been identified as a potential Transit Priority Corridor by the <i>Integrated Mobility Plan</i>.</p> <p>The street cross-section and adjacent land uses vary considerably along this Corridor. Many current buildings retain relatively small lot fabric and small building setbacks from the streetline, typical of older development forms. While mid-rise development is generally supported on lands abutting the Corridor, low-rise development has been identified as the desired form for certain blocks containing character defining buildings and heritage resources. Increased range of permitted uses will support the further development of this Corridor as a pedestrian street.</p>
Victoria Road-Primrose Street, Dartmouth	<p>This Corridor extends from the Wyse Road Centre, and Higher Order Neighbourhoods between Frances Street and Primrose Road in Dartmouth North on the east side of the street. Victoria Road is a major transit and mobility connector, with some parts characterized by small and shallow residential lots, while others taking on increasingly commercial form on larger lots. Lands on the west side of the street, and north of Moira are predominantly residential and are therefore not included in the Corridor designation.</p> <p>North of Albro Lake Road, the Corridor becomes an extension of Highway 111 and does not include adequate and safe pedestrian infrastructure or safe crossings. Due to the irregular lot parcels size and patterns more than one lot is included in parts of the Corridor. The Primrose Street and Brule Street intersection includes a fledging commercial and community node which can benefit from additional built form and land use permissions.</p>

Table 1: Corridor Characteristics	
Corridor	Corridor Characteristics
Windmill Road, Dartmouth	This Corridor generally includes lands along Windmill Road between Nivens Avenue and Fernhill Drive. It connects Higher Order Residential Neighbourhoods to employment lands in the Burnside Industrial Park and the Shannon Park Future Growth Node. Lot fabric is typically larger and less regular than other corridors. Current land uses include a range of low-rise and mid-rise residential uses, as well as commercial and auto-related uses which are set back away from the street. Some street frontages are dominated by parking lots. Infill mid-rise development will be supported in this corridor to support the current commercial uses and provide additional housing opportunities for residents along this transit corridor.
Windsor Street, Halifax	This Corridor extends along Windsor Street from Welsford Street in the vicinity of the Quinpool Centre and Halifax North Common, to the intersection of Young Street and Bayers Road close to the Young Street Lands Future Growth Node. Windsor Street is a major connector on the Halifax Peninsula, and includes a range of residential, some institutional and increasingly commercial uses.
Wyse Road, Dartmouth	This Corridor is the extension of the Wyse Road Centre, from Boland Road to Albro Lake Road. Noteworthy features include high pedestrian traffic due to its proximity to the Dartmouth Bridge Terminal, Dartmouth Common, Northbrook Park, Howe Park, two schools, and a major regional recreational facility. This corridor abuts both low-rise and mid-rise residential neighbourhoods, yet the area between Boland Street and Elmwood includes commercial uses on large lots. Buildings are set back from the streetline and the streetscape is dominated by surface parking lots. Part of the Corridor between Elmwood Avenue and Albro Lake Road includes more regular and fine-grain lot fabric with narrow blocks, buildings located close to the streetline, and low-rise streetwalls which are pedestrian-scale.

Policy 3.21 **The Land Use By-law shall establish the maximum height and built form regulations in the Corridor Designation, consistent with Map 3 and policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Built form may vary within and between Corridors to permit low-rise, mid-rise and tall mid-rise buildings based on local context.**

Policy 3.22 Maximum building heights shall not exceed 11 metres in the Agricola Corridor on lots facing Agricola Street between Harris Street and Cunard Street, and along the Robie Street Corridor between Jubilee Road and Bliss Street to maintain the current scale and character of the streetscapes. The Land Use By-law shall establish a Special Area over certain lands in the Agricola Street Corridor where the maximum streetwall height shall not exceed 8 metres.

3.4.1 Land Use

The Corridor Designation can support a moderate mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, recreational, open space, and urban agricultural activities. The Corridor Zone (COR) is intended to be more permissive than the CEN-1 Zone, but less permissive than the CEN-2 Zone as it is typically applied to areas that back on or are adjacent to low-rise residential areas. The Corridor Zone shall not support land uses that are not compatible with the overall mixed-use residential and commercial function of the Corridors, such as industrial uses except for recycling depots and wholesale food production.

Most car-oriented land uses are incompatible with the intent of this Plan to create a safe and human scale pedestrian-oriented environment and shall not be permitted in the COR Zones. Some commercial uses are also not compatible with the overall existing or desired function of the Corridors as commercial neighbourhood nodes.

Policy 3.23 A Corridor (COR) Zone shall be established under the Land Use By-law, and apply to all lands within the Corridor Designation. The zone shall permit a variety of residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, parks and open space, recreation, and urban agriculture uses that achieve the objectives of the Corridor Designation. Adult entertainment uses, construction and demolition facility uses, and salvage uses shall be prohibited. Most industrial uses, some commercial uses, and car-oriented uses such as auto repair uses, service stations, service uses, and dealerships that do not support a human scale pedestrian environment shall not be permitted in the COR Zone.

3.5 Higher Order Residential Designation

The Higher Order Residential Designation encompasses neighbourhoods as well as some individual properties characterized by a concentration of multi-unit residential buildings but sometimes mixed in with other housing forms. The application of this designation on certain individual properties recognizes the existence of these buildings while maintaining the surrounding cohesive streetscapes, low-rise residential or commercial areas. The intent of this designation is to protect existing housing and provide opportunities for additional multi-unit residential development. Opportunities will vary with the scale and character of the neighbourhood.

Many of these neighbourhoods are close to goods and services needed for daily living and places of employment, and are served by public transit. Efforts to support alternatives to private automobile use can be achieved by reducing the need for travel by increasing the stock of diverse housing close to employment areas, improving public amenities, and the walkability of neighbourhoods.

Lands in the Higher Order Residential Designation include some of the most densely populated areas of the Regional Centre, and therefore require services and amenities to serve the residents of those areas. Built form and urban design should prioritize a pedestrian and human scale environment. While some local commercial uses are supported, this Plan seeks to maintain the overall residential character of these areas.

Objectives

- HR1** Protect and increase access to housing choices through infill and development that is complementary to the surrounding neighbourhood.
- HR2** Support a built form that reflects and integrates with local character and surrounding context, and allows for transition to adjacent residential neighbourhoods as well as commercial areas.
- HR3** Allow home offices, work-live units, daycares, grocery stores and other commercial uses that are supportive of the neighbourhood.
- HR4** Improve access to pedestrian, active transportation and transit networks.
- HR5** Create a safe and comfortable public realm for people of all ages and abilities.

Policy 3.24 **The Land Use By-law shall establish the maximum height and built form regulations in the Higher Order Residential Designation in accordance with Map 3 and built form policies in Part 4 and Part 5 of this Plan. Built form may vary within and between areas to permit low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise buildings.**

3.5.1 Land Use

The Higher Order Residential Designation can support additional housing opportunities by allowing for the infilling and development of new multi-unit residential buildings at a scale that is complementary to surrounding neighbourhoods. Existing buildings that are out of scale with the overall surrounding context are not considered to be precedent setting for this designation. Provisions shall be established in the Land Use By-law to allow for commercial uses which serve local and neighbouring residents and support complete communities. To support economic development opportunities, home offices, work-live units and bed and breakfasts are also supported in Higher Order Residential Designation. Improved connectivity of areas within this designation to transit, active transportation infrastructure, parks, open spaces and amenities are key strengthening elements of a complete community in this designation.

Policy 3.25 **The Land Use By-law shall establish two zones within the Higher Order Residential Designation and shall apply them as follows:**

- (a) **The Higher Order Residential 2 (HR-2) Zone shall apply to lands that contain or can support multi-unit residential development, that are located within self-contained blocks that do not abut low-rise neighbourhoods. The zone shall permit low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise multi-unit residential uses, except for single-unit dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, two-unit dwellings and mobile homes. This zone shall permit bed and breakfast uses, home offices, home occupations and work-live units;**
- (b) **The Higher Order Residential 1 (HR-1) Zone shall apply to all remaining lands within the Higher Order Residential Designation. Due to the proximity to low-rise residential areas, this zone shall permit low-rise and mid-rise residential uses. Supporting residential uses such as bed and breakfasts, home offices, home occupations, and work-live units shall also be permitted;**
- (c) **Park, open space and recreation uses, as well as urban agricultural uses shall be permitted in the HR-1 Zone and HR-2 Zones;**
- (d) **Neighbourhood commercial and institutional uses shall be permitted in the HR-2 and HR-1 Zones with certain uses permitted on corner lots only. Within mixed-use buildings, neighbourhood commercial uses shall only be permitted where at least 75% of a building's floor area is occupied by residential uses;**
- (e) **The Land Use By-law shall establish requirements for a minimum mix of unit types in the HR-1 and HR-2 zones, including 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units;**
- (f) **The following uses shall be prohibited in the HR-1 and HR-2 zones:**
 - i. **adult entertainment uses, construction and demolition facility uses, and salvage uses;**
 - ii. **car-oriented uses such as auto repair uses, service stations, service uses, and dealerships that do not support a human scale pedestrian environment; and**
 - iii. **industrial uses.**

3.6 Future Growth Node Designation

The Future Growth Node Designation is applied to large sites that are currently largely vacant or contain predominantly single-use development such as shopping centres. These areas have the potential to accommodate significant growth due to their size, location and proximity to services. Future Growth Nodes are capable of transformative change as they have the land base to support population growth and new construction. The location of transit facilities and proximity to existing and future transit connections is a fundamental consideration for the development of each Node.

This Plan envisions these nodes developing comprehensively as complete communities with supportive transit services, pedestrian-oriented streets, a mix of uses, services, and a blend of high-rise, tall mid-rise, mid-rise, and low-rise developments largely consistent with the land use and built form regulations of the Land Use By-law. The following ten sites are identified within the Regional Centre as Comprehensive Development Districts (CDDs) within the Future Growth Node Designation:

- Dartmouth Cove, Dartmouth;
- Halifax Shopping Centre Lands, Halifax;
- Joseph Howe Rail Lands, Halifax;
- Kempt Road Lands, Halifax;
- Mic Mac Mall Lands, Dartmouth;
- Penhorn Lands, Dartmouth;
- Shannon Park Lands, Dartmouth;
- Strawberry Hill Lands, Halifax;
- West End Mall Lands, Halifax;
- Young Street Lands, Halifax.

Objectives:

- F1** Provide for diverse and inclusive opportunities for public engagement during the comprehensive planning process;
- F2** Preserve and recognize significant environmental and cultural aspects and provide for a variety of open space uses;
- F3** Comprehensively plan and develop each Future Growth Node for a mixed-use neighbourhood with a range of housing opportunities, places of employment and services where daily needs of residents can be met;

- F4** Design a transportation network that includes transit services and facilities, prioritizes pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit over auto-oriented uses, and is connected to other communities;
- F5** Effectively integrate new developments with surrounding neighbourhoods;
- F6** Design and build attractive, pedestrian-oriented healthy places, which consider human scale design, food security, urban agriculture, and the use and conservation of energy;
- F7** Design to mitigate flooding, including coastal flooding, and to manage stormwater on-site; and
- F8** Create a safe, attractive and accessible public realm for people of all ages and abilities.

Policy 3.27 Lands designated as Future Growth Nodes on Map 1 are established as Comprehensive Development Districts (CDDs) over lands where there is potential to accommodate significant growth due to the site’s size, location and proximity to services. These lands are intended to develop comprehensively into compact mixed-use communities where transit and human scale and pedestrian-oriented environment is prioritized and supported.

Policy 3.28 The Land Use By-law shall establish a Comprehensive Development District (CDD) Zone and apply it over lands within the Future Growth Node Designation. The CDD Zone shall permit the limited expansion of all existing commercial uses without a development agreement. A development agreement shall be required for the comprehensive development of lands zoned CDD in accordance with the requirements of Policy 3.32.

Policy 3.29 Amendments to the Land Use By-law may be considered to allow for the additional expansion of existing uses permitted in the CDD Zone provided such expansion, or internal conversion, would not preclude the future comprehensive subdivision and development of the lands and complies with the Land Use By-law.

3.6.1 Comprehensive Development District Design Criteria

Master neighbourhood planning will be required for each Future Growth Node Comprehensive Development District (CDD) before a development agreement will be considered to allow the comprehensive development of the site. The neighbourhood plans will be incorporated into this Plan as CDD Design Criteria for each Future Growth Node.

Policy 3.30 **The Municipality shall undertake master neighbourhood planning for each Future Growth Node prior to considering a development agreement to enable the comprehensive development of the site. New or revised CDD Design Guidelines for a Future Growth Node shall consider the following matters:**

- (a) the objectives of Section 3.6 of this Plan;
- (b) the classes of uses permitted;
- (c) the type, location and phasing of development;
- (d) the use and conservation of energy, including sustainable design;
- (e) opportunities to identify, preserve, rehabilitate and celebrate significant environmental features or cultural assets as identified through a culture and heritage assessment;
- (f) on-site stormwater management including green stormwater infrastructure to reduce the stormwater flowing into the public stormwater system, and improve the quality of runoff through filtration;
- (g) the provision of parks, open spaces and community recreation facilities that meet the objectives of this Plan;
- (h) the transportation network and the need for on-site transit facilities;
- (i) the design of streets, buildings and open spaces to respond to weather patterns, mitigate potential for flooding and accommodate seasonal conditions;
- (j) the layout of public streets with a block pattern that supports transit and connects to the surrounding community, Centres, the Downtown, and other key destination areas;
- (k) the provision of a mix of uses;
- (l) encouraging the use of buffers, building design, and landscape design to mitigate negative air quality impacts to building users and residents, particularly in areas near highways, regional truck routes, high traffic streets and other sources of air pollution;
- (m) setbacks and other measures to minimize safety risks and conflicts associated with railway operations;
- (n) setting maximum building floor areas ratios for the entire or a portion of the site;
- (o) the location and form of buildings, which shall largely comply with built form regulations under the Land Use By-law particularly with respect to streetwalls and maximum building dimensions;
- (p) provisions for incentive or bonus zoning;
- (q) urban design that supports pedestrian environments;

- (r) respect the Downtown Dartmouth View Corridors as shown on Map 9 of this Plan, and as more specifically defined in the Land Use By-law;
- (s) community food security and urban agriculture; and
- (t) applicable direction contained in the *Regional Plan* and in any approved Priority Plans.

Policy 3.31 Council may only consider development agreement applications for the development of Future Growth Nodes when site specific CDD Design Requirements are adopted in this Plan.

3.6.2 General Development Agreement and Land Use By-law Amendment Requirements

Policy 3.32 In considering development agreement for any lands zoned CDD, Council shall consider the following:

- (a) the proposal is reasonably consistent with the applicable site specific CDD requirements set out in Section 3.6.3 of this Plan;
- (b) the proposal is consistent with all applicable policies of the *Regional Plan* and of this Plan;
- (c) the subdivision of land;
- (d) the phasing of infrastructure;
- (e) the proposed road network and the location of transit facilities;
- (f) the provision of open space that meets the objectives of this Plan and the requirements of Regional Subdivision By-law;
- (g) the proposed built form and land use requirements reference the appropriate zones and sections of Land Use By-law with limited variations considered as needed to meet CDD Guidelines;
- (h) the agreement may identify Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets, View Corridors, and View Terminus Sites;
- (i) provisions to comply with the Pedestrian Wind Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards, and the Shadow Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards of the Land Use By-law;
- (j) the requirement for incentive or bonus zoning;
- (k) impacts to Municipal infrastructure and the need, if any, to concurrently approve by-laws to pay for growth related municipal infrastructure; and
- (l) the agreement to enable the agreement to be discharged when all terms and obligations are fulfilled.

Policy 3.33 Zoning identified in the development agreement pursuant to Policy 3.32 shall be applied to the Future Growth Nodes upon the fulfillment of the approved terms of the development agreement to continue to regulate land use and built-form on the site. In considering amendments to Land Use By-law to replace the CDD Zone with any other Regional Centre Plan zone, the Council shall be satisfied that the proposed zoning meets the intent of the approved CDD Development Agreement Requirements.

3.6.3 Site Specific Comprehensive Development District (CDD) Development Agreement Requirements

At the time of adoption of this Plan, community engagement had already taken place, and CDD Design Requirements were prepared for the following Future Growth Nodes:

- Shannon Park Lands, Dartmouth;
- Penhorn Mall Lands, Dartmouth;
- Young Street Lands, Dartmouth; and
- Dartmouth Cove, Dartmouth.

These requirements are incorporated into this Plan to guide future development agreements and land use by-law amendments that enable the comprehensive development of these lands.

3.6.4.1 Shannon Park Lands

Shannon Park is a former military community located on the eastern shore of the Halifax Harbour. Now vacant, the 85-acre site is intended to be developed into a compact, mixed use community of approximately 7,000 residents. As a site that is bordered by a rail line, the A. Murray Mackay Bridge and the Tufts Cove Power Generating Plant, special attention is required to connect the community to surrounding neighbourhoods and employment centres.

Policy 3.34 When considering a development agreement for Shannon Park Lands Future Growth Node, Council shall consider that the proposed development is reasonably consistent with Policy 3.32, and with the following:

- (a) **The Land Use Concept as illustrated on Map 11, including the general location of proposed land uses, road network and road connections, parks and multi-use trails;**
- (b) **Site and building design that supports a compact, mixed- use neighbourhood by providing:**
 - i. a mix of mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings, including ground oriented units;
 - ii. commercial and institutional uses located within mixed use buildings and primarily clustered along the ground floor of pedestrian-oriented commercial streets; and
 - iii. pedestrian-oriented building facades and designs.
- (c) **Parks and open spaces that provide the full range of recreation and open spaces needed to serve the dense community by including:**

- i. a waterfront park that is a destination for both residents and surrounding communities;
- ii. a centrally located multi-use park primarily designed to serve the outdoor recreation needs of the local community; and
- iii. other small park parcels that may be needed to facilitate pedestrian connections within the community and to surrounding areas.

(d) A transportation network that prioritizes walking, cycling, and transit use by considering:

- i. the location of a centrally located transit facility located close to shops and services that provides a comfortable space for people to wait and gather;
- ii. multi-use trails through the site that link to planned multi-use trail routes located on Windmill Road, Baffin Boulevard and near the Mackay Bridge; and
- iii. the location of potential future commuter rail and ferry services during the phasing and design of development blocks.

(e) The design and location of buildings and public infrastructure so as to mitigate potential climate change and storm surge risks in vulnerable areas by:

- i. requiring new buildings to be designed to be flood resistant to a storm surge/sea level rise elevation established in the *Regional Plan*;
- ii. requiring the design and location of roads, parks and other public infrastructure complies with engineering standards to minimize risks of damage caused by future sea level rise and storm surge; and
- iii. incorporating the following into the design and location of neighbourhood features: scenic views; historic connections to the harbour; past community and military use of the site; and the results of an archeological assessment.

(f) Development is designed to coordinate with adjacent lands and neighbourhoods by:

- i. coordinating road, park, servicing and trail designs with the anticipated development of the lands owned by the Millbrook First Nation;
- ii. considering development next to the railway and the FCM and RAC Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations,
- iii. ensuring land uses and buildings transition to existing and planned development located on Windmill Road;

- iv. incorporating the Shannon Park School site into the design of the community while also enabling the school lands to be readily integrated into the neighbourhood design should it be closed in the future;
- v. considering the proximity to the Tufts Cove Power Generating Plant and related infrastructure and any measures needed to mitigate potential land use conflicts; and
- vi. considering the scale and separation of buildings adjacent to the Mackay Bridge and its approaches, to mitigate noise impacts and potential land use conflicts.

3.6.4.2 Penhorn Mall Lands

A Community Vision for the Penhorn Mall site was approved in principle by Regional Council in October of 2009 as a mixed-use area clustered around the transit terminal on Portland Street. The redevelopment concept includes pedestrian and transit oriented spaces and corridors, a range of medium to high density housing choices that includes approximately 1,500 – 2,000 people. Public amenity spaces including Penhorn Lake and Brownlow Park will support the development of this community, and additional open spaces and open space connections will be provided. Protection of the water quality of Penhorn Lake is a key goal of future development on this site, and shall be considered during the development and construction of the site. While the development of this site may be phased, subdivision and development is to conform with the following:

- **Area 1:** this area abuts the Manor Park neighbourhood and Penhorn Lake Park and Brownlow Park. Future development will maintain and enhance the existing vegetative buffer. Low-rise residential development is supported in this area due to its proximity to an existing low-rise residential neighbourhood.
- **Area 2:** this area abuts Area 1 and the Penhorn Lake Park. Future development will maintain and enhance the existing vegetative buffer through landscaping. Predominantly low-rise to mid-rise residential development will be supported in this area to provide transition between the low-rise residential of Area 1, and the more dense and mixed-use Area 3. Part of this area also abuts the Circumferential Highway where a multi-use trail is to connect the transit facility to Area 3, and Penhorn Lake Park.
- **Area 3:** this area is intended to be the mixed-use centre of the Penhorn Future Growth Node. Mid-rise, tall-mid-rise and high-rise transit-oriented development is supported in this area. A main-street pedestrian-oriented development is envisioned for this area, providing a focal point for commercial activity and supporting public amenities for this dense community. A multi-modal active transportation greenway connects and provides a transition between this area, and Area 2 and connects the two key parks which exist on the site.
- **Area 4:** this area is nestled between Manor Park low-rise residential, Brownlow Park, low-rise Area 1, and the mixed-use centre of Area 1. This area is facing Portland Street and is in close

proximity to the transit facility. This area may develop into low-rise to mid-rise residential, and additional park space adjacent to Brownlow Park may also be considered for this area.

Policy 3.35 When considering a development agreement for the Penhorn Lands Future Growth Node, Council shall consider Policy 3.32, and:

- (a) **That the general location of proposed land uses, road network connections, parks, and multi-use trails is reasonably consistent with Map 12;**
- (b) **That site and building design supports a compact, mixed- use neighbourhood by:**
 - i. planning for a mix of low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise as illustrated on Map 12,
 - ii. planning for low-rise residential forms in Area 1; low-rise to mid-rise predominantly residential forms in Area 2; mixed-use mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise forms in Area 3; and low-rise to mid-rise and open space forms in Area 4,
 - iii. transitioning down to low-rise residential, and to municipal parks,
 - iv. locating commercial and institutional uses within mixed use buildings up to the third floor, and primarily along the ground floor of pedestrian-oriented commercial streets,
 - v. providing pedestrian-oriented building facades and designs;
 - vi. prohibiting new drive-through facilities,
 - vii. providing substantial landscaping around the perimeter of the site, and adjacent to all buildings, and
 - viii. providing a mix of units, including ground orientated units;
- (c) **That environmental protection, water quality and Urban Forest Master Plan objectives are supported by:**
 - i. designing on-site stormwater management that emphasizes low impact development measures as a means to maintain water quality in Penhorn Lake, with consideration given to the Analysis of Regional Lakes Water Quality Data (2006 - 2011) prepared by Stantec in 2012,
 - ii. considering a water quality monitoring program during and following development to ensure that the water quality objectives of the *Regional Plan* are satisfied;
 - iii. preparing a landscaping and vegetation plan as part of site development to support the canopy target for the Manor Park Neighbourhood as referenced in the Urban Forest Masterplan.

- (d) **Parks and open spaces provide the full range of recreation and open spaces needed to serve the dense community by:**
- i. locating public amenity spaces near the transit terminal on Portland Street,
 - ii. retaining, and where feasible, enhancing vegetative buffers around Penhorn Lake,
 - iii. establishing setbacks from municipally-owned lands around Penhorn Lake,
 - iv. providing that only pervious landscaping surfaces or materials are permitted within the setbacks from municipally-owned lands around Penhorn Lake, and
 - v. planning for a public park or parks to be aligned with, and to be visible from existing parks and the multi-modal pathway linking Penhorn Lake area and Brownlow Park; and
- (e) **That the transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling, and transit use by:**
- i. providing a minimum of two street accesses to Portland Street as illustrated on Map 12;
 - ii. planning for a multi-modal greenway that links Penhorn Lake area and Brownlow Park, is hard surfaced and no less than 3 metres wide to accommodate public spaces, trees and an off-road active transportation route;
 - iii. designing wide walkways to access the back half of the site and intersect with the greenway to give priority to pedestrians and active transportation,
 - iv. designing pedestrian walkways to connect the transit facility, existing neighbourhoods, Brownlow Park, Penhorn Park, and the proposed Penhorn Lake trails, and
 - v. planning for pedestrian walkways and open spaces.

3.6.4.3 Young Street Lands

Young Street Lands are an extensive urban block bordered by Young Street, Robie Street, Almon Street, and Windsor Street. This site has several large underutilized properties with a broad range of building types including a large Canada Post processing facility, warehouses, and big box retail stores. It is adjacent to the Halifax Forum, an important North End landmark and is also close to the Hydrostone neighbourhood.

A priority for this Centre is to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment by introducing a formalized and fine-grained block pattern, improving walkability through new and expanded mobility connections,

and creating vibrant pedestrian streets. Once developed, this area will act as an extension of the Young Street/Robie Street Centre.

Policy 3.36 When considering a development agreement for the Young Street Lands Future Growth Node, Council shall consider Policy 3.3.2, and that:

- (a) **The general location of proposed land uses, road network connections, parks, and walkways is reasonably consistent with Map 13;**
- (b) **New parks and open spaces provide the full range of recreation and open spaces needed to serve the dense community and act as a focal point for key areas, intersections, and active transportation connections; and**
- (c) **Site and building design supports a compact, mixed- use neighbourhood by:**
 - i. planning for a variety of residential forms including low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings that transition to low-rise residential;
 - ii. focusing tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings along Young St., Robie St. and Windsor St., with lower built form along Almon Street adjacent to low-rise residential areas;
 - i. requiring ground floor commercial uses on properties that front on Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets as identified in the master planning exercise,
 - ii. supporting a wide range of uses, including office, retail, service, restaurant, cultural and entertainment uses that serve both local and regional needs;
 - iii. incorporating the following into the design and location of neighbourhood features: scenic views; historic connections to the Halifax Forum and the Hydrostone neighbourhood; and
 - iv. incorporating past use of the site and the results of an site historical assessment in site and building design.

3.6.4.4 Dartmouth Cove Lands

Dartmouth Cove includes the lands between Alderney Drive and Maitland Street, and between Portland Street and Halifax Harbour except for some lands immediately abutting Portland Street. The following requirements are based on the Dartmouth Cove Comprehensive Plan (2012) which anticipated a community of approximately 2,000 residents on this site. Given the multiple property ownership of these lands, more than one development agreement may be considered on this site.

The vision for Dartmouth Cove is to create a new and appealing mixed-use neighbourhood with strong relationships to the waterfront, and to open spaces, streetscapes, trails, Downtown Dartmouth and adjacent neighbourhoods. Dartmouth Cove will become an extension of the Downtown and provide a variety of housing, employment, shopping, and recreational opportunities to accommodate and appeal to diverse demographics. It also has the potential to develop into an “Innovation District” as an extension of the neighbouring Cove lands. It will be a transit supportive and pedestrian-oriented community, setting a new benchmark in sustainability and design excellence for Halifax Regional Municipality and beyond.

Future development should maintain, protect and reinforce the distinct sense of place, which is defined by the marine industrial history, the Shubenacadie Canal, and the human-scale character of Portland Street and adjacent historic neighbourhoods. Four precincts are identified for this Future Growth Node:

- **Canal Street:** this precinct is framed by Dartmouth Cove, and the vision includes the Canal Street Greenway, a central, a linear street and greenway linking the Halifax Harbour to Portland Street and aligned on a view axis pointing to St. James’s Church. The Canal Street Greenway is to serve as an open space accommodating broad walkways, seating, street trees, patios, a bikeway and environmental functions such as bio-swales or rain gardens. This corridor is a key organizing element of the Future Growth Node, that serves to provide a strong visual and physical connection through the entire neighbourhood, while providing a central focus area for the development of Dartmouth Cove.
- **Canal Side:** this precinct defines the areas fronting onto Martin’s Park and the Shubenacadie Canal. This precinct is an important interface between Dartmouth Cove, King’s Wharf and the rest of the Downtown, strengthening visual and physical connectivity between these areas.
- **Maitland Street:** this precinct provides a view corridor to the mouth of the Harbour and the most direct public link to the waterfront, and is the interface between Dartmouth Cove and adjacent established low-rise neighbourhoods. Ensuring connections to the neighbourhood and reinforcing the view corridor and the connection to the water’s edge must underpin future design and development.
- **Harbourside:** this precinct provides connection and interface between the Dartmouth Cove Future Growth Node and the waterfront. This must include careful design and grading near the rail line, especially where streets or paths cross the rail line. It is anticipated that the Harbourfront lands will continue to accommodate marine industrial functions, but through redevelopment they may also accommodate a range of commercial, retail and cultural uses. Residential uses may also be considered, but only if conflicts with industrial uses are minimal and provisions are made for storm surge protection.

Policy 3.37 **When considering a development agreement for the Dartmouth Cove Future Growth Node, Council shall consider Policy 3.32, and that:**

- (a) **The proposed layout of streets, precincts, pedestrian paths, view corridors, and open spaces is generally consistent with the Future Growth Node Land Use Concept - Dartmouth Cove Map (Map 14);**
- (b) **The transportation network prioritizes walking, cycling, and transit use by:**

- i. planning for a street network generally consistent with Map 14 and that supports a grid network and pedestrian movement;
 - ii. establishing a multi-modal greenway along Canal Street; and
 - iii. creating pedestrian walkways as generally illustrated on Map 14.

- (c) **Buildings and public infrastructure are located to mitigate potential sea level rise and storm surge risks in vulnerable areas by:**
 - i. designing and locating roads, parks and other public infrastructure to minimize risks of damage caused by future sea level rise and storm surges;
 - ii. improving geotechnical conditions, providing development sites, and raising the elevation of developments in response to sea level rise,
 - iii. providing gentle slopes wherever possible; and
 - iv. minimizing the use of retaining walls and the view of retaining walls from public parks and streets.

- (d) **Site and building design that supports a compact, mixed- use neighbourhood by generally conforming with built form as illustrated on Map 14 by:**
 - i. generally meeting the built form regulations as set out in the Land Use By-law;
 - ii. providing wider setbacks along the length of Canal Street to create a Canal Street Greenway,
 - iii. preserving or creating views of St. James’s Church View Terminus Site and of the Harbour, and any waterfront view corridors identified in this Plan;
 - iv. providing appropriate setbacks from Martin’s Park; and
 - v. providing wider setbacks along the length of Maitland Street to preserve or create views of the Harbour.

- (e) **New parks and recreation spaces provide a focal point for the community, providing a diverse range of activities and spaces and connections to existing active transportation networks will be a central consideration for any new parks and recreation development;**

- (f) **Green stormwater infrastructure is incorporated in site design by:**
 - i. providing porous paving, roof gardens and street level rain gardens; and

- ii. landscaping and tree planting to achieve Urban Forest Master Plan tree canopy objectives;
- (g) **The development supports establishing an active, pedestrian-oriented public realm that supports distinct precinct characteristics, and includes streets, squares, parks and open spaces;**
- (h) **For the planning and design the Canal Street Corridor Precinct, the development:**
- i. incorporates a design for a Canal Street Greenway, a broad, green linear park or greenway with wide walkways next to an enhanced Canal Street that terminates at multi-use squares at the waterfront and at Portland Street,
 - ii. provides for a pedestrian walkway along the precinct border shared with the Maitland Street Corridor, as shown on Map 14,
 - iii. creates continuous retail, and cafés with patios and restaurants along the ground floors facing Canal Street and the Canal Street Greenway, to animate the greenway and stimulate pedestrian movement between the waterfront and Portland Street,
 - iv. allocates opportunities for public art sites,
 - v. protects space for a potential transit station where Canal Street intersects with the rail line,
 - vi. locates mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings to provide a sense of enclosure and to encourage optimal use of the greenway, and
 - vii. steps building heights down to the waterfront, and to Portland Street;
- (i) **For the design the Canal Side Precinct, the development:**
- i. provides a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street lined on one side by buildings that frame the street and increase access to the Canal;
 - ii. provides grading that minimizes steep slopes and enables further development on nearby parcels;
 - iii. enhances Martin’s Park including a new trail link, new public art sites, and an opportunity for a restaurant overlooking the Canal;
 - iv. provides retail uses along the pathway abutting Martin’s Park, including retail, restaurants, with cafés and with patios, as well as work/live units; and
 - v. provides access to the Canal.

(j) For the Maitland Street Corridor Precinct, the development

- i. provides trees, to reinforce the view corridor and to provide a safe and appealing path to the waterfront;
- ii. retains the landscaped hillside to the east of Maitland Street;
- iii. provides a pier and waterfront park at the end of Maitland Street that may include a boat launch, beach, open green, and interpretive signage;
- iv. creates a pedestrian walkway along the precinct border shared with the Canal Street Greenway Corridor, as shown on Map 14;
- v. permits low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings but steps in building height towards the water and adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhoods.

(k) For the Harbourfront Precinct, the development:

- i. provides for light industrial, commercial and some residential uses in low-rise to mid-rise forms with building heights that step down to the waterfront,
- ii. maintains views of the Harbour, by providing a multi-use square at the terminus of Maitland Street that may be used as an event space, a market, or other similar uses,
- iii. retains and enhances the two existing, private rail crossings, and addresses safety and access for the development through the rail line,
- iv. creates a continuous boardwalk or trail in conjunction with a sea wall that reinforces the area's protection in the event of sea level rise and storm surges, and
- v. provides a pedestrian-oriented commercial street along the north side of the rail line, which integrates the Harbourwalk Trail with other parts of Dartmouth Cove.

Part 4: Built Form and Urban Design

4.0 Introduction

The urban environment significantly affects the way we live in our neighborhoods, communities and the Municipality. Quality urban design is the key to creating engaging and inviting places that have a valuable contribution to the natural and built environment, and the economy. At its core, urban design is about considering the context, and putting people first when making design decisions. This approach has an influence on social, cultural and physical well-being. It also encourages a compact and human scale design that promotes a wide range of mobility choices, enables better use of municipal infrastructure, and maintains the viability of neighborhood businesses. A “people first” urban design supports and fosters distinct neighbourhood and community character.

The Urban Design Goals presented in this Part are intended to further refine and implement the Vision and Core Concepts of this Plan. This Part follows the progression of the design process on a site, starting with an understanding of the broader Regional Centre context, followed by the site context, and ending with the detailed design of structures on the site.

Regional Centre Context: this includes elements such as the site’s connection to transportation networks, neighbourhoods, cultural landscapes, and the Halifax Harbour. The protected views from the Halifax Citadel Hill and Dartmouth Common can influence built form. They include several view planes, rampart protections and view corridors established in previous planning documents to preserve iconic views of Halifax Harbour, or to preserve certain cultural and heritage contexts. These continue to be highly valued, and will continue to exist and shape and provide a framework for the built form of the Regional Centre. Public views to the Harbour cannot be obstructed, and view terminus sites are also identified to enhance the prominence of these sites through design. Performance standards are also used in this Plan to offer protection from wind in the public realm, and to minimize shadow in prominent parks. The location of a site on a Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street requires consideration of the design of the ground floor and of future uses.

Site Context and Characteristics: aspects of site context that can inform site organization and design include site history, abutting uses and heritage properties, proximity to watercourses, sloping conditions, streetline location, vegetation, and public realm such as open spaces. This can influence the location of a building on a lot, the distribution of massing, location and design of open spaces, landscaping, surface parking, pedestrian access, and the incorporation of utilities into the design. This is shaped through land use requirements which include site design regulations and design requirements, which are separate from built form regulations.

Built Form: This Plan also places emphasis on built form regulations. Built form regulations pertain to the design of buildings, including the overall height or massing, streetwall height, streetwall stepbacks, maximum dimension of the building envelope, and the appearance of the building. The design of buildings

is mainly regulated through site plan approval design requirements and can include elements such as the design and articulation of a streetwall and the ground floor.

In this Plan, the desired built form will be shaped largely through built form regulations, design requirements to be used in the site plan approval process as described Section 10.5 of this Plan, and Design Requirements adopted under the Land Use By-law. In certain situations, the built form policies of this Plan will guide the approval for development agreements.

Guidance for developments within heritage contexts is a key component of urban design and site plan approval, and is included in Part 5 of this Plan.

Objectives:

- BF1 Design new developments and public realm spaces that support human scale, pedestrian-oriented environments that are designed in sympathy with the surrounding context including use, form, and relationship to the public realm;**
- BF2 Implement the Urban Design Goals of this Plan;**
- BF3 Implement Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets and human-scale design requirements for new development;**
- BF4 Ensure that new development incorporates all-season design strategies that maximize human comfort in all weather conditions;**
- BF5 Protect key public views and view corridors, and enhance view terminus sites; and**
- BF6 Create a safe, attractive and accessible public realm for people of all ages and abilities.**

The Urban Design Goals of this Part are:

- Contextual Design;
- Civic Design; and
- Human Scale Design.

The Urban Design Goals are achieved through the following built form and design requirements:

- Protected Public Views and View Terminus Sites
- Protection from Wind and Shadow
- Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets
- Accessibility
- Site and Landscape Design
- Building Design
- Parking and Driveways, and
- Signs.

4.1 Urban Design Goals

The Vision and Core Concepts of this Plan, and the following Urban Design Goals are implemented through the Land Use By-law, including site plan approval requirements, and discretionary approvals. They can also be considered in municipal projects.

4.1.1 Contextual Design

Urban Design creates and reinforces elements of a complete community and community character by:

- incorporating and celebrating a neighbourhood's history, culture, and sense of place;
- incorporating the natural systems that underlie and surround the site;
- recognizing and complementing the natural, built, and cultural character of the area around the development project;
- establishing or reinforcing a sense of place by highlighting distinctive elements of a site and emphasizing the values of its communities;
- striving to create distinctive buildings, vibrant public spaces, and natural areas that can generate a meaningful and unique sense of place;
- using both modern development techniques and materials, as well as traditional best practices that blend with a development's context; and
- ensuring that built heritage in the Regional Centre continues to be a vital part of existing streetscapes, and that new construction will be sensitive to the design context set by existing heritage buildings.

4.1.2 Civic Design

Urban Design inspires civic pride and creates public realm that encourages openness, equity and diversity by:

- improving universal accessibility and openness by designing places that encourage public use;
- designing parks, open spaces, streetscapes and waterfronts to be both visible and welcoming to pedestrians;
- designing and programming parks, open spaces, waterfronts and other public realm spaces to encourage people of all ages and abilities to use them and to gather;
- enhancing the quality of the built environment through high-quality, durable, and sustainable development techniques and materials;
- supporting the creation of vital street-life by promoting diverse and active ground floor uses;
- creating a sense of security and comfort walking through a vibrant fabric of buildings and open spaces;
- reflecting a diversity of ways of living, promoting inclusivity and comfort as the foundation of a successful place; and

- encouraging civic engagement and an overall positive view of the Regional Centre.

4.1.3 Human Scale Design

Urban Design pays attention to design details and focuses on human scale by:

- reflecting and complementing the scale and walking pace of pedestrians in the design of streetwalls and the ground floor of buildings;
- prioritizing the relationship between buildings, open spaces, and the public realm;
- offering positive pedestrian experiences by creating safe, comfortable, interesting and welcoming environments;
- designing buildings, public and private open spaces that encourage walking, gathering and social interaction;
- prioritizing public views of the Harbour; and
- prioritizing safe and accessible pedestrian connections.

Policy 4.1 The Land Use By-law shall establish regulations, and site plan approval design requirements, to implement the overall objectives and Urban Design Goals of this Plan. The Urban Design Goals shall also be considered in discretionary approvals, and any proposed amendments to this Plan and Land Use By-law.

4.2 Protected Public Views and View Terminus Sites

4.2.1 Historic View Planes and Ramparts

A series of view planes, ramparts and public views have been established in previous planning documents to preserve iconic views of Halifax Harbour, and they continue to be highly valued. View planes and ramparts are meant to ensure that residents and visitors to our region can continue to enjoy unobstructed views of the Halifax Harbour from important public vantage points, and maintain or recreate a sensitive and complementary setting for the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site by controlling the height of new development in its vicinity to reflect the historic and traditional scale of development. Some of the view planes originating from the Halifax Citadel were identified to preserve important historic military visual connections, such as views to George's Island. There are five view planes originating on the Dartmouth Common, and ten originating from the Halifax Citadel.

Policy 4.2 **The Municipality shall through the Land Use By-law, protect designated views from the Citadel including the Halifax Citadel View Planes as shown on Map 7 and the Halifax Citadel Ramparts views as shown on Map 8.**

Policy 4.3 **The Municipality shall through the Land Use By-law protect designated views from the Dartmouth Common identified as the Dartmouth View Planes on Map 6 to provide visual access to the Halifax Harbour.**

4.2.2 Waterfront View Corridors

View corridors preserve key public views of the Harbour from public streets, maintaining long-standing opportunities for pedestrians to visually connect with the water and historic resources falling within those views. Views to the Halifax Harbour waterfront will be protected in This Plan.

Policy 4.4 **The Land Use By-law shall prohibit all structures from protruding into Dartmouth View Corridors identified on Map 9, and as detailed in the Land Use By-law.**

4.2.3 View Terminus Sites

View Terminus sites preserve interesting and engaging views at the ends of streets. Terminating vistas are considered an important method of adding aesthetic appeal to an urban environment, and to emphasize important structures or monuments. View terminus points shall be identified in the Land Use By-law and site plan approval design requirements will address the treatment these sites.

Policy 4.5 **The Land Use By-law shall identify view terminus sites and view lines, and shall establish site plan approval design requirements to emphasize and enhance views of these sites.**

4.3 Protection from Wind and Shadow

To support human scale design and a pedestrian first experience, it is important that new buildings do not cause excessive wind discomfort or safety issues at the street level and minimize the impact of shadow on prominent public parks. Built form regulations described in Section 4.6 that mandate low-rise streetwalls, streetwall setbacks and stepbacks, and maximum area and dimensions for buildings above the streetwall are intended to mitigate wind and shadow on streets and the public realm, but in some cases additional testing of the building's wind and shadow impacts on the public realm is needed.

Minimizing shadow is key to the enjoyment and usability of parks and open spaces. The orientation, mass and elevation of a building directly affects the area cast by a shadow, as well as its duration. Direct sunlight improves the enjoyment and usability of open spaces. To further minimize shadow in key public parks located in proximity to the Downtown, Centres, and Corridors the Land Use By-law shall require a shadow impact study for mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings, and will specify limitations for allowable shadowing on important public parks.

Policy 4.6 **The Land Use By-law shall establish a Pedestrian Wind Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards for new development in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2, and HR-1 Zones. The Land Use By-law shall require a wind impact assessment or study for any new building over 20 metres high or any addition to a building exceeds a height of 20 metres.**

Policy 4.7 **The Land Use By-law shall establish a Shadow Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards to ensure that any new building or addition to a building located within 100 metres of any area identified on Schedule 27, or any new building or addition to a building higher than 26 metres does not result in less than 6 hours of sunlight within an identified area boundary, and does not result in any point within that property being in shade for more than 4 continuous hours between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm on September 21.**

Policy 4.8 Identified Areas in Policy 4.7 shall include key public parks located in proximity to areas that enable mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise developments, including the following: Dartmouth Common, Green Road Park, Halifax Common, Halifax Public Gardens, Kiwanis Grahams Grove Park, Maynard Lake Park, Newcastle Street Park, Starr Park, Sullivan’s Pond Park, Northbrook Park, Victoria Park, Cogswell Park, Brownlow Park, Penhorn Lake Park, and Gorsebrook Park.

4.4 Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets

Pedestrian-oriented commercial streets are characterized by a concentration of ground level retail and service street walls in close placement to the sidewalk with narrow shop fronts, and extensive clear glazing at sidewalk level. They may include or evolve into specialized commercial or entertainment areas. This pedestrian-oriented urban environment is to be supported and encouraged.

The quality of the public realm is key to an enjoyable and safe pedestrian experience. This can be achieved by setting buildings back far enough from the street to create opportunities for landscaping and active uses, but close enough to create a feeling of continuity and enclosure. The ground floor uses and appearance of the building façade are also fundamental to the experience.

Policy 4.9 The Land Use By-law shall identify pedestrian oriented commercial streets and shall establish land use and built form regulations on lands abutting Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Street by:

- (a) identifying permitted active uses on the ground floor;
- (b) restricting access to solid waste management areas;
- (c) requiring minimum and maximum ground floor transparent glass glazing;
- (d) setting the maximum width of any grade-oriented premises to support multiple pedestrian-oriented storefronts;
- (e) requiring landscaping, including hard landscaping requirements for front or flanking yards that is complementary to the abutting sidewalk;
- (f) setting minimum and maximum building setbacks that support pedestrian activity; and
- (g) requiring canopies, awnings or other weather protection measures for pedestrians at the street level.

4.5 Site Accessibility

This Plan supports the design of buildings, private open spaces and streetscapes to support accessibility for people of all ages and abilities. Supportive measures shall be incorporated into the Land Use By-law.

Policy 4.10 To encourage the provision of sites and buildings accessible to all individuals, the Land Use By-law shall:

- (a) permit accessibility ramps in required building setbacks;
- (b) establish site plan approval requirements for barrier free at grade private open space, and parking areas where provided;
- (c) establish site plan approval requirements for lighting for common entrances, walkways, publicly accessible open spaces and parking lots, and;
- (d) establish site plan approval requirements for barrier free pedestrian walkways for direct connections to buildings from the street, and through accessory surface parking lots.

4.6 Site and Landscape Design

Urban design begins with an understanding of the development site, and its context. This includes aspects of natural and human environment, and its cultural identity. The understanding of site context should determine the organization of urban design elements such as open space, pedestrian connections, surface parking and the treatment of view terminus sites prior to moving to building design. The importance of site and landscape design elements in urban design includes open space planning, pedestrian connections, placement of building on a lot, and the location of parking and driveways.

Site and landscape design will be implemented in the Land Use By-law through the following four requirements:

- **Open Spaces:** The Regional Centre has a range of public and private open spaces that contribute to a network of open spaces. This includes public and private parks, plazas, and commercial patios that are oriented to the street, but can also exist in the side and rear yards. Well-designed open spaces are welcoming and accessible to pedestrians, provide opportunities to sit alone or gather in groups in all weather conditions. Open space shall use functional, durable and quality materials, can provide privacy for residential units, or can frame commercial uses. Human scale elements such as tables, chairs, trees and public art can establish the space as a notable destination. New open spaces that extend existing block patterns or create new opportunities for pedestrian movement through a site, contribute to the overall connectivity of the open space network. They can also create or reinforce fine-grained block pattern, and support complete communities.
- **Pedestrian connections:** The Regional Centre has an extensive network of pedestrian connections into open spaces or through blocks to other streets. Pedestrian connections are key in creating pedestrian-oriented communities because they can break up large building blocks into human

scale blocks, promote walkability, connectivity and social interaction. New pedestrian connections that extend existing block patterns or create new opportunities for pedestrian movement through a site, contribute to the overall connectivity and utility of the network and support the complete and pedestrian-oriented communities.

- **Utilities** - Elements necessary to the function of a building can be unsightly and negatively impact not only the overall design of the building from the public realm. Utility and building uses need to be designed in a way that minimizes their impact on the public experience. Limiting impact is achieved when utilities such as mechanical equipment, parking areas, service accesses, garbage collection areas, and storage areas are either completely concealed or designed to blend into, and become part of the overall design theme.

Policy 4.11 **The Land Use By-law shall establish a site plan approval area consistent with the *HRM Charter*, and shall establish site and landscape design requirements, including open spaces, pedestrian connections and weather protection, lighting, and utilities.**

4.6.1 Landscaping

Landscaping is a key component of the overall natural and built environment. Landscaping can support successful densification by creating a human scale and pedestrian-oriented public realm, preserving or contributing to local biodiversity, and incorporating green stormwater infrastructure. Landscaping around buildings, in surface parking lots and on building rooftops can provide valuable private amenity space, complement the public realm, provide shade, reduce stormwater entering the public stormwater system, and improve the indoor and outdoor micro-climate. To be successful, landscaping must be properly planned, implemented, and maintained.

Policy 4.12 **The Land Use By-law shall establish landscaping requirements to regulate:**

- (a) the locations on a lot where landscaping or retention of trees is required;**
- (b) the location and types of buffers required to support transition between different land uses and built forms;**
- (c) where trees are to be planted and the number and types required;**
- (d) where fences are required or permitted, the height and character of the fences, subject to the requirements of other by-laws;**
- (e) the screening of accessory surface parking areas;**
- (f) reduction of stormwater run-off from the site and improve filtration of runoff;**
- (g) rooftop landscaping, and exempting the required amount of landscaping by using solar energy systems;**
- (h) sustainable landscaping practices through selection of drought and salt resistant species; and**
- (i) the prevention of invasive species.**

4.7 Building Design

Built form refers to the scale, shape, appearance, pattern, and configuration of buildings and structures that frame streets and open spaces. Built form carries cultural meaning, and is a key factor in shaping communities where more people choose to walk, bike and take transit. Built form is essential to the Urban Structure as it provides for transition from the most to least intense land use, and complements the surrounding context.

In this Plan the most intense built form and land uses are envisioned for the Downtowns and Centres, followed by Higher Order Residential Areas and Corridors. High-rise forms are supported for Downtowns, Centres and Higher Order Residential areas that do not abut low-rise residential areas. Mid-rise and low-rise forms are supported within all designations and areas abutting or adjacent to low-rise residential areas as represented by Transition Lines in the Land Use By-law. Transition requirements in those circumstances may include rear yard setbacks, buffering and fencing.

Built form is shaped by quantitative regulations under the Land Use By-law which determine the overall massing and shape of buildings, and site plan approval requirements which shape qualitative elements associated with the appearance of buildings. Building design from an urban design perspective considers how each design decision will impact people in the public realm.

This Plan supports regulations and site plan approval requirements that support positive experiences between people and buildings, and the creation of a human scale form of development, throughout the Regional Centre. This includes building scale and transitions to lower scale buildings, streetwalls, portions of the building above the streetwall, materials, lighting, parking, and signs.

4.7.1 Floor Area Ratio and Height

A key component of land use planning and urban design is to provide certainty and predictability with respect to the density and scale of development in relation to the surrounding context. This also includes transitions in the scale of buildings, and the consideration of availability of services to support new developments. The overall scale of development can be regulated using maximum floor area ratio, or maximum height.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is generally defined in this Plan as the allowable floor area of a building divided by the area of the lot on which it is located. Building Height is defined as the vertical distance between a structure's average finished grade and the structure's highest point.

When combined with other built form requirements, such as streetwall heights, setbacks, stepbacks and maximum building dimensions, a maximum FAR establishes an allowable building scale that is clear and predictable while allowing for flexibility in how a building floor area is distributed over a lot. It is a tool

that is particularly well-suited for application within the Downtown and Centre designations where the context affords greater opportunity to vary the height and shape of buildings. This will be implemented by allocating FAR precincts in this Plan, and under the Land Use By-law. Where a lot has been assigned more than one FAR, the transfer of the higher allowable FAR to the portion of the lot with a lower FAR will not be permitted. To encourage the distribution of density and more predictable built form on large sites, an overall maximum height will be imposed in the D, CEN-1 and CEN-2 Zones.

Outside the Downtown and Centre designations, building scale will be regulated through allowable maximum building height in conjunction with other built form regulations to provide adjacent residents with a greater predictability of the maximum built form. The permitted maximum building height will vary in accordance with the surrounding height, and be presented as maximum heights in the Land Use By-law. While minor exemptions may be allowed to the calculation of maximum height, in cases where a lot has been assigned more than one height precinct, the transfer of the higher allowable height to the portion of the lot with a lower height will not be permitted.

Maximum allowable FAR and Building Heights for each Urban Structure Designation and Zone, and subject to meeting all other requirements, are summarized as follows:

Designation	Zone	Maximum FAR Range	Maximum Height Range (metres)
Downtown	D	1.75 - 8.0	Maximum FAR, subject to maximum height of 90 metres
Centre	CEN-2	1.75 - 8.0	Maximum FAR, subject to maximum height of 90 metres
	CEN-1	1.75 - 3.5	N/A
Corridor	COR	N/A	Maximum of 11 – 20 metres (typically 3-6 storeys), where sites abut Transition Lines of low-rise residential developments of the rear yard.
			Maximum of 26 metres (typically 8 storeys) in locations that abut Transition Lines of low rise residential development, or are located within a self-contained block that does not abut another designation.
Higher Order Residential	HR-2	N/A	Maximum of 11 – 26 metres (typically 4-8 storeys)
			Maximum of 38 metres (typically 12 storeys) in location that do not abut Transition Lines of low rise residential developments of the rear yard.
	HR-1	N/A	Maximum of 11 – 20 metres (typically 3-6 storeys), and up to 26 metres where sites do not abut low-rise residential developments of the rear yard.

The Land Use By-law will establish regulations for transitioning building heights to adjacent lower scale developments in all zones within the Downtown, Centre, Corridor and Higher Order Residential Designations, and will also establish requirements to enter into incentive or bonus zoning agreements to achieve maximum allowable FAR or building height as described in Section 10.6.

Policy 4.13 **Maximum Floor Area Ratios (FARs) shall be established on Map 2 of this Plan and in the Land Use By-law for the D, CEN-2 and CEN-1 zones. The Land Use By-law may exclude certain portions of a building from the calculation of floor area. In cases where a lot has been assigned more than one FAR, the transfer of the higher allowable FAR to the portion of the lot with a lower FAR shall not be permitted. The Land Use By-law shall also establish an overall maximum height limit of 90 metres on Map 3 over the D zone CEN-2, and CEN-1 Zones, where new developments shall not exceed the Floor Area Ratio, and the maximum height.**

- Policy 4.14** Maximum Heights shall be established on Map 3 of this Plan, and in the Land Use By-law for the Corridor (COR), Higher-Order Residential (HR), and Comprehensive Development District (CDD) Zones. The Land Use By-law shall establish height exemptions for building components, such as certain architectural features, solar collectors, other energy-related alternative technologies, and mechanical equipment.
- Policy 4.15** The Land Use By-law shall establish Transition Lines between mid-rise and high-rise developments to adjacent low-rise residential areas. Transition Lines shall establish regulations for transitions to lower heights, including rear yard setbacks, side and rear streetwall setbacks, and landscaped buffers. Tall mid-rise buildings on lots abutting Transition Lines, shall require greater rear and side yard setbacks above the streetwall height.

4.7.2 Lake Banook Canoe Course

A wind impact study on the Lake Banook Canoe Course (RWDI, 2008) concluded that larger scale developments may prevent the course from holding national and international regattas. Height restrictions shall be adopted to protect the canoe course.

- Policy 4.16** The Land Use By-law shall restrict the maximum building height to 11 metres around the Lake Banook Canoe Course Special Area as identified on Map 5. Any amendment to Map 5 shall require an amendment to this Plan.

4.7.3 Building Envelope

The building envelope defines the limits of where a building can be located relative to the lot boundary, the surrounding built environment and the public realm, and the maximum dimensions of buildings.

In the Regional Centre, the placement of the building relative to the front property line generally reinforces the fine-grained and regular lot pattern which supports pedestrian traffic. Pedestrian activity is supported when buildings are close enough to the public realm to allow for immediate enjoyment of building features, identification of main entrances, weather protection, and shorter routes to main entrances. Streetline setbacks of between 1.5 metres and 3 metres are generally supported in this Plan, with some variation allowed based on the local context. Where maximum setbacks are not provided, buildings are encouraged to be located close to the streetline. Smaller or wider setbacks may be established to address unique area characteristics or strategic mobility requirements.

Maximum building dimensions and yard requirements at the street level will encourage mid-block connections and diversity in design. For mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings, interior setbacks,

streetwall setbacks and stepbacks, above podium tower dimensions and tower separation distances are key to protection from wind and shadow at the street level.

Other design considerations that impact the pedestrian and public realm include matters such as cladding materials, lighting, screening of solid waste management areas, utilities and rooftop features, outdoor storage as well as the location and built form of accessory structures, backyard suites and shipping containers. Pedways and drive-throughs shall not be permitted as a built form in mixed-use areas due to their impact on pedestrians, and the public realm.

Special Areas may be established to address unique existing or desired area characteristics. Regulations under Policy 4.16 may be amended through an amendment to the Land Use By-law without an amendment to this Plan, except that the maximum floor plate and maximum dimensions for high-rise buildings shall not exceed a floor area of 750 square metres and a width or depth of 35 metres.

Policy 4.17 **The Land Use By-law shall establish regulations and site plan approval requirements, including building design requirements, for building envelopes to support context specific, human scaled and pedestrian-oriented environments, and to mitigate wind and shadow on public open spaces, including by:**

- (a) establishing minimum separation distances for any building on the same lot above the streetwall height;
- (b) establishing maximum building dimensions below and above the streetwall;
- (c) establishing maximum floor plate and maximum dimensions for high-rise buildings that shall not exceed a floor area of 750 square metres and a width or depth of 35 metres;
- (d) establishing requirements for Special Areas to implement policies of this Plan;
- (e) prohibiting certain cladding materials;
- (f) regulating fences;
- (g) establishing siting and screening requirements for solid waste management areas;
- (h) establishing requirements for outdoor storage;
- (i) prohibiting pedways and drive-throughs as a built form in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2 and HR-1 Zones; and
- (j) establishing requirements for accessory structures, backyard suites, and shipping containers.

4.7.4 Streetwall Scale and Design

In the public realm, the streetwall is the most prominent and visible portion of a building, and is created by the continuity of adjacent buildings facing a street. In an individual building, it is the distinct vertical plane containing the ground floor and any upper elevations. In stepped buildings, the streetwall is considered the building podium upon which a tower or successive elevations above the streetwall sit or

land. Because of its location and impact on pedestrians, the key components that support and impact the pedestrian realm are overall streetwall height, ground floor height, articulation, materials and human scale elements:

- **Streetwall height:** traditional streetwalls in the Regional Centre typically range from two to four storeys along commercial street frontages, with taller buildings stepping their upper elevations back from the top of the streetwall. Establishing a specific streetwall height is important because height is directly linked to human scale and what pedestrians can comfortably observe and enjoy from the sidewalk. Streetwall heights within the Plan and Land Use By-law have been selected to reinforce or create the desired pedestrian scale;
- **Ground Floor Height:** a street is welcoming to pedestrians when it includes commercial spaces that allow pedestrians to easily access building interiors. A minimum ground floor height is established under this Plan and the Land Use By-law to allow for commercial uses to locate in mixed-use areas without the need for future conversions;
- **Articulation:** many of the Regional Centre's commercial streets are known for and defined by streetwalls with fine-grained built form and inherent rhythm and variety. This is achieved through building articulation that reflects the walking pace of pedestrians. Fine-grain articulation includes a clear and legible rhythm of frequent, narrow and diverse shopfronts or at-grade units, where each section is taller than wide. Articulation of the ground floor and entrances are particularly important, and is therefore required under the Land Use By-law.
- **Materials:** the detail and quality of materials selected can either make a streetwall interesting and inviting or, uninteresting and deterring. The location, order, texture and extent of materials can also draw the attention of pedestrians to the building or inversely, have no noticeable impact and diminish the streetwall completely. Materials arranged in a specific order and over limited expanses can break up the façade of a building, promoting a more articulated and human scale form. Materials with texture and fine details can provide interest for pedestrians walking by.
- **Human Scaled elements:** elements such as signs, lighting, canopies, and other exterior building elements can contribute to the overall quality of individual buildings, animate the public realm, provide weather protection and enhance the unique characteristics of the area. Designing the entire streetwall, including the ground floor, to be fine-grained, respects and reinforces the historic built form of those streetscapes and realizes a desired form that creates a walkable, human-scale environment. The goal is to have the entire streetwall articulated both horizontally and vertically with an organized fine-grained rhythm, and where present, reflect the rhythm of abutting or adjacent existing fine-grain streetwalls in the area.

Policy 4.18 The Land Use By-law shall establish streetwall regulations for:

- (a) minimum and maximum streetwall heights between 8 metres and 11 metres;
- (b) streetwall heights for registered heritage properties and Special Areas as described in Part 3 of this Plan to recognize unique area characteristics;
- (c) minimum setbacks for mid-rise, tall-mid rise and high-rise buildings;
- (d) minimum height for the ground floor;
- (e) requirements for ground floor glazing;
- (f) ground oriented units, and
- (g) ground oriented premises.

Policy 4.19 The Land Use By-law shall establish building design requirements for streetwalls, including:

- (a) streetwall articulation;
- (b) pedestrian entrances;
- (c) ground floor transparency;
- (d) accessibility, and;
- (e) weather protection

4.7.5 Above the Streetwall Design

In this Plan, the importance of the streetwall is emphasized in supporting and enhancing the pedestrian realm. However, the upper portion of a building also has an impact on the public realm. The upper portion of a building is highly visible from certain public vantage points, and therefore needs to be visually engaging. This plan encourages distinct building tops by requiring changes in colours, materials, recesses or projections, and the height of the upper portion of a building.

Policy 4.20 The Land Use By-law shall establish building design requirements for the upper portion of buildings, including:

- (a) changes in:
 - i. colour;
 - ii. materials, and;
 - iii. projections and recesses
- (b) the minimum height of the upper portion of a building;
- (c) the visual integration of penthouses, and;
- (d) the siting and screening of rooftop mechanical features.

4.8 Parking and Driveways

While an adequate supply of parking is an important amenity for many developments, this Plan emphasizes pedestrian-oriented streetscapes that are interesting and safe. It also encourages alternative transportation modes to the private automobile, and measures that are supportive of sustainable development. Parking regulations adopted under the Land Use By-law shall reflect these objectives by reducing parking requirements. The built-form of car-oriented uses such as drive-throughs and parking structures shall be regulated to further support pedestrians first streetscapes.

Surface parking and driveways can break-up the block and building pattern which is important to pedestrian movement. They can also impact the safety of pedestrian movement. Internalizing parking areas within the site, using fencing or buffering to limit visibility of surface parking from the street, and incorporating pedestrian infrastructure into the design can make pedestrians visible to drivers, safe, and welcome within the site. Material selection and soft landscaping in parking lot design can alleviate urban heat island effect, and stormwater runoff.

Policy 4.21 The Land Use By-law shall:

- (a) **establish general parking requirements, including the location and configuration of parking spaces, driveways, off-street loading, landscaping, access points, and delineated pedestrian walkways;**
- (b) **require parking to be located on the same lot as the use it is intended to serve;**
- (c) **provide for surface materials, and permit porous surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff into public stormwater infrastructure, and improve filtration of runoff;**
- (d) **establish parking requirements for uses within all zones;;**
- (e) **allow for a reduction in the required number of motor vehicle parking spaces where additional or enhanced bicycle parking is provided;**
- (f) **establish requirements and regulations for bicycle parking;**
- (g) **prohibit standalone surface parking lots and commercial surface lots in all zones;**
- (h) **prohibit drive-through developments in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2, and HR-1 Zones;**
- (i) **regulate the location, size and design of accessory surface parking lots, including the maximum number of parking spaces that may be provided in accessory surface parking lots in all zones; and**
- (j) **regulate the built form of parking structures, including screening of parking above ground.**

Policy 4.22 The Land Use By-law may regulate the maximum number of parking spaces that may be provided for motor vehicles in any development.

4.9 Signs

Signs advertise businesses but also serve important public functions such as directing pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle movements, identifying civic buildings and public places, wayfinding and alerting people to potential hazards. The size, placement, and design of signs contribute to the quality of buildings, can support the architecture of a building and the public realm, and can affect public safety. The Land Use By-law shall regulate permanent signs, as temporary signs are regulated by the provisions of a general application by-law established under the *HRM Charter*.

Policy 4.23 **The Land Use By-law may establish sign regulations to support the core concepts and Urban Design Goals of this Plan, which may vary for different zones enabled in this Plan. Sign regulations in the Land Use By-law may:**

- (a) **identify signs that do not require a municipal development permit;**
- (b) **identify signs which are prohibited;**
- (c) **regulate sign size, height, number, orientation and location of signs on a building or a lot;**
- (d) **regulate materials used and illumination by type of sign and type of development;**
- (e) **establish required sign setbacks for abutting zones; and**
- (f) **regulate signs in heritage contexts.**

Part 5: Culture and Heritage

5.0 Introduction

The Regional Centre is composed of distinctive communities that evolved over thousands of years of use and settlement. A range of economic, environmental and social influences have shaped the evolution of the Region and continue to be reflected today in the physical form and character of communities and neighbourhoods. Culture and heritage policies balance the need to accommodate growth with the preservation of significant cultural and heritage assets. These include heritage buildings, properties and cultural landscapes that reflect the community character and cultural diversity. Cultural policies must also promote living heritage which includes the traditions, memories, experiences, objects and places recognized for creating a sense of community and belonging. This is essential to the Regional Centre's sense of place, identity and future development.

The *Regional Plan* establishes seven objectives for culture and heritage and various policies that apply throughout the Municipality. It also adopts the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd edition, as a framework for managing and regulating heritage and cultural resources. This Plan supports the *Regional Plan*, the heritage policies and by-laws established under the *Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act*, and provides further direction for the Regional Centre.

Objectives:

- CH1** Consider built heritage and the impacts of land use and built form regulations on community character.
- CH2** Preserve and enhance the built and living heritage including places, sites, structures, streetscapes, archaeological resources, cultural landscapes, traditions and practices which reflect the Regional Centre's diverse evolution, built heritage and culture.
- CH3** Inventory potential cultural landscapes, built and living heritage, including heritage sites, landmark buildings, and Heritage Conservation Districts to inform land use and development decisions.
- CH4** Identify and protect a wide range of cultural resources that reflect the heritage and culture of diverse communities.
- CH5** Establish incentives to encourage public and private sector investments in heritage conservation and stewardship of cultural resources.
- CH6** Evaluate heritage and cultural policies, programs, interventions, and building regulations to ensure consistency with evolving community values and new guiding documents.

5.1 Culture and Heritage Resources

The Municipality may identify, designate, preserve, conserve, and rehabilitate buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, and encourage their continued use under the Nova Scotia *Heritage Property Act*.

Identification is a key and ongoing component of protecting, restoring and interpreting cultural and heritage resources. Once identified and researched, appropriate tools can be applied to the various resources. Alterations and changes to heritage properties may be needed to maintain their economic viability. The challenge is to do so in a manner that maintains the heritage value of the property. Incentives and regulations under the Land Use By-law will enhance provisions for adaptive re-use under the *Regional Plan*, and other heritage policies and regulations.

Policy 5.1 **The Municipality shall consider creating and maintaining a broad range of programs that provide financial or other incentives for the identification, registration, conservation, and continued use of buildings, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value.**

Policy 5.2 **The Municipality shall seek to conserve and maintain registered heritage properties owned by the Municipality in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd edition, and shall seek to register additional significant heritage properties owned by the Municipality. The Municipality may consider registered heritage properties in the purchase or lease of space for its own use.**

Policy 5.3 **The Land Use By-law shall adopt measures to protect and where opportunities arise restore and enhance heritage places, sites, buildings, structures, streetscapes, and cultural landscapes by:**

- (a) **identifying significant public view planes and view corridors and prohibiting development within them;**
- (b) **identifying and conserving registered heritage properties;**
- (c) **adopting land use regulations and site plan approval requirements that support the conservation, preservation and continued use of registered heritage properties;**
- (d) **subject to Policy 5.5 and 5.6, establishing maximum heights and floor area ratios over registered heritage properties and proposed Heritage Conservation Districts to encourage development that is sensitive to heritage contexts;**
- (e) **requiring conformity to regulations established for Heritage Conservation Districts;**
- (f) **creating incentives to preserve and restore registered heritage buildings through incentive or bonus zoning and development agreements;**

- (g) **addressing cultural values on municipal properties through conservation management plans and parks and facility management plans.**

5.2 Heritage Properties, Heritage Conservation Districts, and Cultural Landscapes

Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) are areas identified by the Municipality as having significant heritage value, and subsequently established through a conservation plan and by-law adopted by Regional Council, as enabled under the *Heritage Property Act*.

Areas identified in Table 3 and on Map 10 composed of areas of high heritage value within the Plan area based on an analysis of the age, history, cultural associations and architectural styles of the properties which make these areas likely candidates for future Heritage Conservation Districts. Table 3 and the associated Map 10 are to be used to support the identification, prioritization and establishment of future HCDs, but are not meant as a complete or definitive list. Priorities for the identification, and establishment of HCDs are to be determined by Regional Council, and may include areas not identified on table 3 or on Map 10. Until such time as conservation measures are approved by Regional Council for the areas identified here, the current land use policies and regulations shall apply to those areas and the built form framework will encourage development that is sensitive to the architectural character and heritage value of these areas.

Policy 5.4 The Municipality may collaborate with community partners, residents, property owners and educational institutions to:

- (a) **create an inventory and assess potential cultural and heritage resources and consider their protection through registration under the *Heritage Property Act*;**
- (b) **consider registering Heritage Conservation Districts, including those identified in Table 3, and Map 10;**
- (c) **consider regulating developments adjacent to Heritage Conservation Districts to complement the existing heritage character; and**
- (d) **consider adopting conservation measures for identified heritage resources and cultural landscapes as part of municipal facility and parks master planning and management plans.**

Policy 5.5 To support development that is sensitive to the architectural character and heritage value of registered heritage properties and properties in proposed Heritage Conservation Districts, the Land Use By-law shall apply built form regulations for these properties that do not exceed:

- (a) **a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 1.75, within D, CEN-1, and CEN-2 zones; and**

(b) a maximum height of 11 m, within HR-1, HR-2, and COR zones.

Policy 5.6 To support development that is sensitive to the architectural character and heritage value of proposed Heritage Conservation Districts, the Land Use By-law shall apply built form regulations for properties within Proposed Heritage Conservation Districts identified on Map 10 that do not exceed:

- (a) a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 1.75, within CEN-1, and CEN-2 zones;
- (b) a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 2.25, within the D zone; and
- (c) a maximum height of between 11 metres to 14 meters with some sites at up to 20 metres based on local context and recognizing underutilized sites, within COR, HR-1, and HR-2 zones.

Table 3 – Future Potential Heritage Conservation Districts	
Area: Dartmouth	
(1) Harbourview Area	The area is generally bounded to the south by Shore Road and to the north by Windmill Road and has notable harbour views from side streets and lanes. It was developed in the late 19 th and early 20 th century as a compact, early working-class residential district that supported the surrounding industry and commerce of Downtown Dartmouth.
(2) Downtown Dartmouth	The sections of Downtown Dartmouth to the southeast of the Dartmouth Common contain a mix of 18th and 19th century residential and commercial buildings where the architecture of the buildings tell the story of the evolution of the community.
(3) Five Corners	The area where Portland and Pleasant Streets intersect contains a nearly contiguous collection of 19th and early 20th century residences within one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Dartmouth.
Area: Halifax	
(4) Hydrostone District	The Hydrostone area is an early example of town planning, that was built to house workers displaced by the Halifax Explosion of 1917. Richmond is the historic neighbourhood adjacent to Needham Hill that was destroyed by the Explosion and reconstructed in a variety of early 20th century architectural styles.
(5) Bloomfield District	The largely intact and contiguous tree-lined streetscapes of the Bloomfield District, west of Gottingen in Halifax's North End, contains an important collection of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian grand residences representing the merchant class of the 19th century.

(6) Brunswick Street District (north of Cogswell Street)	In the Brunswick Street area development dates to the earliest period of colonial British and German settlement beginning in 1756, spanning the Georgian period through to late 19th century residences of merchants and business owners.
(7) Creighton's Field	This North End neighbourhood adjacent to the Halifax Common is characterized by intact and contiguous streetscapes of small-scale workers houses dating from the Georgian and Victorian periods of the 19th Century.
(8) Westmount	Developed post WWII, Westmount is one of two similar communities built by the federal government to house returning servicemen and their families.
(9) Victoria Road	This area is generally south of what was once the Freshwater Brook, which flowed along Victoria Park from the Commons to the Halifax Harbour near the foot of Inglis Street. Tower Road, Victoria Road and South Park Street were fashionable streets in the late 19th Century that were at that time at the southern fringe of the City. This area includes two registered heritage streetscapes and dozens of mid-to-late Victorian homes, mainly in very good condition. Today, many of these old residences have been converted to multi-unit dwellings, but many have also been restored as single unit dwellings.

Table 4 identifies cultural landscapes within the Plan area identified through the *Cultural Landscape Framework Study* (2016), and the process to develop this Plan. These cultural landscapes are considered in the Urban Structure and policies of this Plan. Any future amendments to this Plan and applications for new development agreements shall consider the key defining features of these cultural landscapes.

Policy 5.7 **Any future amendments to this plan or applications for new development agreements shall consider any impact on key defining features of the Regional Centre Cultural Landscapes identified in Table 4. The Municipality may consider working with the Government of Canada and communities including First Nations to recognize and commemorate the cultural landscapes, including Point Pleasant Park, Tufts Cove, and the Halifax Citadel.**

Table 4 – Regional Centre Cultural Landscapes	
Area: Dartmouth	
(1) Dartmouth Central Common	The Dartmouth Central Common is a remnant of the traditional British land use practice of establishing communal grazing land, and has evolved to serve a variety of community needs.
(2) Shubenacadie Canal Waterway	Graham’s Grove and Lake Banook (Panuk) are major recreational features for the Regional Centre and the broader region. They are also two links in the chain of water and land resources that make up the cherished Shubenacadie Canal Waterway, integral to inland travel for both the Mi’kmaq and 19 th century commerce. Archaeological evidence found along the canal indicates over 4,000 years of human use and activity along this water highway that connects the Bay of Fundy to Halifax Harbour.
(3) The Avenue	The Avenue was a small African Nova Scotian community near Lake Banook at the end of what is now Crichton Avenue. This community was centred around a church founded by Reverend Richard Preston, and can date its earliest settlement to the Black Refugees who came to Nova Scotia following the war of 1812.
(4) Tufts Cove	Tufts Cove is the site of a Mi’kmaw community dating to the 19 th and early 20 th century that was destroyed during the Halifax Explosion.
Area: Halifax	
(5) Halifax Citadel and Halifax Common	The Citadel, the primary emblem of British military and colonial settlement in the Halifax region, lies at the highest point and centre of a town plan that was laid out in 1750. A grid pattern formed the basis for the evolution of the historic commercial, industrial and residential core area and includes the Halifax Public Gardens. The Halifax Common was established in 1749 for pasturage and military purposes, and today serves a wide range of cultural and recreation uses.
(6) Africville	Africville Park, the site of the former community of Africville, is nationally recognized for its important links to the 250-year history of Afro-Canadian settlement in Nova Scotia, and the social effects of urban renewal strategies in the 1960s, and the struggle for civil rights in Canada.

(7) Point Pleasant Park and Young Avenue	Point Pleasant Park is an area of rich cultural and ecological importance dating back to its seasonal use by the Mi'kmaq as the location of a yearly feast signalling the arrival of Spring. Two centuries of military history continue to dominate the park landscape through fortifications from different eras. The park provided recreation and enjoyment of nature through the 20th Century. Young Avenue forms a gateway to Point Pleasant Park and contains a significant Victorian-era residential streetscape fronting on the historic treed boulevard.
(8) Connaught Avenue and Fairview Cemetery	Fairview Cemetery was designed in the late 19th century on the rural park model, established in North America in 1830 at Mt. Auburn, Massachusetts. Designed with curvilinear roadways, the cemetery contains 121 graves from the Titanic disaster laid out to face the rising sun. Connaught Avenue directly abuts the site and was designed with input from Andrew Cobb as a major green boulevard entrance to Halifax lined with Linden trees.

5.3 Development in Heritage Contexts

Heritage buildings illustrate the evolution of local architecture in terms of their form, setting, assemblies, systems and materials. Buildings can express cultural, regional, local or individual uses or construction practices and embody meanings that have evolved over time. They can represent identifiable expressions of the region’s diverse population, or the practical durability required by business or industry. The heritage value of a building or group of buildings illustrates a phase or various phases in the development of a building type, style or aesthetic.

Heritage buildings play an important role in defining the character and identity of communities in the Regional Centre. They provide a human scale built form and unique architectural detail that should be preserved, and exude a quality of materials and craftsmanship that benefits our streetscapes.

Site plan approval requirements related to heritage conservation design will ensure that built the heritage in the Regional Centre continues to be a vital part of existing streetscapes, and that new construction will be sensitive to the design context set by existing heritage buildings.

Each heritage building is unique in terms of its history and architecture, therefore consultation with municipal Heritage Staff at an early stage of a development proposal is necessary to ensure any alterations or new development on a registered heritage property or abutting a registered heritage property are appropriate, and to ensure the development proposal complies with the *Heritage Property Act* and Heritage Conservation Design Requirements established under the Land Use By-law. New Development in a Heritage Context refers to the construction of any additions to a heritage building, any new

construction of a building on a registered heritage property, as well as any new development on a property abutting a registered heritage property.

Key components of Heritage Conservation Design Requirements include:

- Character Defining Elements which consist of a heritage building's form, massing, materials, fenestration, articulation, location and details that contribute to the building's heritage value and must be maintained in order to preserve that value; and
- Conserving Character Defining Elements which refers to preserving those elements that define the character of the heritage building through the repair of those elements or the replacement of those elements with like appearance and materials where appropriate. In some cases, conservation means allowing alterations to improve the function and viability of a heritage building while preserving the character defining elements.

Policy 5.8 Within the site plan approval area where site plan is required, the Land Use By-law shall establish Heritage Conservation Design Requirements for all development on municipally registered heritage properties and provincially registered heritage properties that are not owned by Her Majesty, for properties abutting municipally and provincially registered heritage properties and for properties located within a Heritage Conservation District. The Land Use By-law may exempt properties where the property is located within a Heritage Conservation District that has its own Heritage Conservation Design Requirements.

Rather than site plan approval, Council may consider a development agreement option to provide greater development opportunities as an incentive to preserve the integrity and support the viability of registered heritage properties. This option also ensures that the resulting development is sensitive to the registered heritage buildings and surrounding context.

Policy 5.9 Outside of a Heritage Conservation District, on any property containing a registered heritage building, Council may consider a development agreement for any development or change in use not otherwise permitted by the Land Use-By-law, including a development that exceeds the maximum heights or maximums floor area ratios on Maps 2 and 3 of this Plan, to support the integrity, conservation and adaptive re-use of registered heritage buildings. For a development agreement in accordance with this Policy, Council shall consider that:

- (a) any development shall maintain the integrity of any registered heritage property, or streetscape of which it is part;
- (b) the impact on adjacent uses, particularly residential uses, is minimized in terms of intensity of use, scale, traffic generation, noise, hours of operation, and such other land use impacts as may be required as part of a development;

- (c) the development is reasonably consistent with the policies of this Plan, in particular the objectives and policies as they relate to heritage resources;
- (d) any new construction, additions, or renovations on the property meets the design requirements in the Land Use By-law, and *the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd edition*;
- (e) any new construction, additions, or renovations fronting on a street substantially maintains the predominant streetwall height, setbacks, scale and rhythm of the surrounding properties;
- (f) the transition for any new construction, addition or renovation with respect to the scale, form and intensity of abutting uses;
- (g) the development complies with Pedestrian Wind Impact and Shadow Impact Assessment Performance Standards of the Land Use By-law; and
- (h) the quality and extent of the restoration or preservation of the registered heritage property when evaluating proposals for integrated development and adaptive re-use.

Policy 5.10 Any development agreement considered in accordance with Policy 5.9, shall require incentive or bonus zoning for the property and the requirements of the Land Use By-law respecting incentive or bonus zoning shall apply, including that a development permit shall not be issued unless a waiver under Section 18 of the *Heritage Property Act* has been registered on the property. Any development that proposes to demolish registered heritage building or buildings shall not be eligible for a heritage development agreement. Council may only consider a development agreement in accordance with this policy or policy 5.9 if:

- (a) site plan approval has not been granted for the development; and
- (b) any addition is not located within the existing front yard of the registered heritage building.

5.4 Culture

The Regional Centre has an active and diverse community, which is key to building a healthy, vibrant and liveable municipality. It also has the largest concentration of cultural workers and cultural places. Cultural planning can offer incentives and opportunities to foster the creative economy, increase access and exposure to culture, and preserve and celebrate built and living heritage.

A diversity of voices is critical to ensuring that the Regional Centre responds to diverse communities, heritages, experiences and needs. Recent municipal efforts to engage with and build positive relationships with Mi'kmaq First Nations, other urban Indigenous people and groups, African Nova Scotian, Acadian and other cultural and diverse groups will be extended to cultural policies and planning efforts.

Policy 5.11 To support and encourage vibrant, diverse and inclusive cultural assets and ways to celebrate culture in the Regional Centre, the Municipality may:

- (a) continue to build and broaden the inventory of cultural assets in the Regional Centre to be more inclusive of Mi'kmaq First Nations, Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Acadian and other diverse cultures;
- (b) use the Inventory of Cultural Assets to further research and engage the community when planning for Future Growth Nodes, and when Plan amendments and development agreements are considered; and
- (c) continue to explore incentives and opportunities to encourage the preservation and expansion of built heritage, and the development of cultural spaces.

Part 6: Housing

6.0 Introduction

Access to suitable and affordable housing is fundamental to the health, dignity and quality of life of all people. This can be partially achieved by providing opportunities for growth, enabling current residents to age within their neighbourhoods, and accommodating a variety of housing needs in locations close to transit in walkable neighbourhoods.

The Regional Centre's population is shifting with an increase in senior, one-person, renter, recent immigrant and youth-led households, which affects housing needs. It also includes a large student population that relies on and impacts the local housing market. This affects housing needs with respect to the size, form and desired location of housing units. Residential development is also changing with a move towards more multi-unit housing in urban areas. At the same time, an aging housing stock, and a limited supply of modestly priced, accessible and supportive housing affects the needs of Regional Centre households. Emergency and supportive housing is also important to addressing the needs of those who experience housing vulnerability and homelessness⁴.

If the Regional Centre is to remain economically competitive and support a high quality of life, a diversity of housing types, sizes and tenures need to be available across the housing continuum. This includes various tenure and built form options including, but not limited to, secondary units, backyard suites, grade-oriented units, work-live units, and a range of multi-unit types. Shared housing options are also supported broadly under this Plan as residential and institutional uses.

Streamlined development approval processes, a strong focus on affordable housing in incentive or bonus zoning, and continued community partnerships to solve pressing housing issues can all contribute to a more sustainable housing system. Leveraging funding for affordable housing from other levels of government can also be considered to support a full range of solutions to the issue of affordable housing.

Objectives:

⁴ SHS. [Halifax Housing Needs Assessment, 2016](#).

- H1** Increase access to housing choices that meet diverse needs and have access to transit, services, amenities and support aging in place;
- H2** Enable a range of housing options for people of all ages, abilities and income levels including emergency housing, shared housing, multi-unit housing, and ownership housing;
- H3** Increase the number of housing units affordable in the low-income to moderate income range throughout the Regional Centre;
- H4** Enable neighborhood planning through community and stakeholder partnerships to support housing and community development goals of this Plan; and
- H5** Create regulatory and financial incentives and partnerships to maintain and increase the stock of quality housing which is affordable to a wide range of households, including low to moderate-income range households.

6.1 Land Use

Policy 6.1 To create quality residential environments and increased housing options for diverse households, the Land Use By-law shall:

- (a) permit a variety of housing forms and types in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2 and HR-1 zones to enable residents to live near commercial areas, employment, active transportation, and transit;
- (b) enable a mix of housing options to meet the range of needs in the local market, including secondary suites and backyard suites in low-density developments, single and two-unit dwellings, townhouses, row housing, grade oriented units, mid-rise, tall mid-rise and high-rise buildings;
- (c) permit shared housing and emergency shelters in residential and mixed-use zones at a scale compatible with the local context;
- (d) require new and redeveloped high-density dwelling uses to provide a range of units to accommodate different household sizes, including two-bedroom units in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1 and COR zones, and two-bedroom and three-bedroom units in HR-2 and HR-1 zones, and;
- (e) require new and redeveloped high-density dwelling uses to include both indoor and outdoor amenity spaces.

6.2 Affordable Market Housing

The Municipality encourages affordable housing to be provided by the private, public, and non-profit sector. Affordable housing is defined by the *HRM Charter* as “housing that meets the needs of a variety of households in the low to moderate income range.”

Based on the 2015 Halifax Housing Needs Assessment, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) affordable housing standard, the Municipality considers a variety of factors in calculating affordability, including:

- if the dwelling costs a household 30% or more of gross income;
- if the dwelling is priced at or below average market housing rents or average prices for housing within the Regional Centre;
- the number of persons living in the household; and
- if the dwelling is modest in terms of floor area and amenities.

The considerations for affordability can be different for rental and owner households.

In 2016 Council endorsed affordable housing targets, recognizing the need to maintain and expand a wide range of low to moderate cost housing options. The Municipality is supporting federal and provincial government efforts to address a range of housing issues by removing policy and regulatory barriers and considering a variety of financial incentives, such as the use of surplus lands and reduced development fees among other items.

There are communities in the Regional Centre which have been experiencing a lack of reinvestment in their housing stock, and others where the pace of development is affecting affordable housing. Improvements in street grid connectivity, public facilities and public open spaces can improve the sense of safety and livability, and may encourage new housing stock. Incentive or bonus zoning will provide money-in-lieu for affordable housing and may form part of a combined municipal, provincial and federal response to the Regional Centre’s housing needs.

Policy 6.2 **The Land Use By-law shall enable and prioritize incentive or bonus zoning for affordable housing which shall be in the form of money-in-lieu of a contribution of affordable housing units in the Regional Centre as outlined in Section 10.6 of this Plan.**

Policy 6.3 **The Municipality may, from time to time, monitor the rate of housing stock change in neighbourhoods across the Regional Centre, including the extent and impact on residential areas and rental markets of short-term housing rentals and desired affordability levels.**

6.3 Affordable Non-Market Housing

The Regional Centre has the greatest concentration of affordable non-market housing in the Municipality. Affordable non-market housing is housing that is built or operated by public agencies including the Federal and Provincial governments, and not-for profit organizations. Public subsidies enable lower than average market rents, and serve low-income and vulnerable populations. Affordable non-market housing includes a continuum of housing options including emergency housing, public housing, non-profit housing, some co-operative housing, and publicly funded supportive living facilities. While affordable non-market housing continues to be primarily the mandate of the Federal and Provincial governments, policies in this Plan are intended to remove barriers to the creation of affordable non-market housing throughout the Regional Centre.

Policy 6.4 **To support the maintenance and expansion of affordable non-market housing, the Municipality may:**

- (a) continue to work with a wide range of community and private sector stakeholders to monitor and support housing needs in the Regional Centre;
- (b) encourage new and existing co-operative housing developments throughout the Regional Centre as a housing model that encourages community building and local ownership of housing;
- (c) explore ways to integrate co-operative housing into a comprehensive affordable housing program;
- (d) consider ways to increase the number of affordable non-market housing units;
- (e) consider the use of surplus municipal land for affordable non-market housing; and
- (f) encourage the renewal, repair, and upgrade of affordable non-market housing units.

6.4 Shared Housing

Most Regional Centre residents live in independent living arrangements that include independent units. A growing portion of the population, however requires shared accommodation and housing with on-site support or supervisory services. This type of housing is required as part of a complete community.

Shared housing may include specialized on-site services that are provided to tenants, and may include special care facilities, supervised housing and emergency housing in many cases licensed by the Provincial or Federal government. Shared housing may also include living arrangement where the tenants have private or semi-private bedrooms, but share facilities such as kitchens, bathrooms and common areas with other tenants.

Shared housing serves a broad range of residents including aging populations, students and persons with disabilities. When integrated into established communities, these housing forms promote social inclusion by providing assistance to those in need of support. When located close to transit, shopping and other services, these facilities can enable people to age close to home, and can keep existing community social supports intact.

Policy 6.5 **The Land Use By-law shall permit shared housing at a scale compatible with the surrounding context in all residential and mixed-use zones.**

6.5 Neighbourhood Planning

There are neighbourhoods in the Regional Centre where residents are faced with mobility challenges, social vulnerability or difficulty with accessing essentials such as healthy foods, child care, safe and affordable housing, and jobs. Although various community based efforts have been able to achieve positive results, there may be persistent gaps in community-based infrastructure, mobility connections, facilities and services that can benefit from municipal leadership and place-based planning. This may include data collection, community consultation, and the development of a local vision and an action plan to tailor land use and urban design, as well as champion social and economic community development.

Policy 6.6 **To support community and social development, the Municipality may partner with specific communities and neighbourhoods to support greater access to municipal and other services, including:**

- (a) **preparing a neighbourhood vision;**
- (b) **improving local parks, transit, community facilities, and services;**
- (c) **improving the public realm, such as street grid connections, streets and sidewalks;**
- (d) **encouraging improvements to food and energy security;**

- (e) monitoring the existing housing stock or building a range of new housing;
- (f) improving landscaping and tree planting;
- (g) identifying areas for investment;
- (h) identifying opportunities for the use of municipal lands;
- (i) identifying opportunities and partnerships to increase community engagement; and
- (j) identifying other matters raised through community engagement.

Policy 6.7 **The following neighbourhoods are identified for further engagement, and others may be identified in the future:**

- (a) Peninsula North as generally bordered by Robie Street, Cunard Street, North Park Street, Cornwallis Street, Barrington Street and North Street; and
- (b) Dartmouth North as generally bordered by Albro Lake Road, Victoria Road, Highway 111 (Circumferential Highway), and Windmill Road.

Part 7: Economic Development

7.0 Introduction

The Regional Centre is the principal economic centre of Atlantic Canada and home to numerous sectors and industries including government, military, financial, logistics, education, health care, and tourism. The Regional Centre currently has a nearly equal balance of residents to jobs. The policies of this Plan support economic development by providing increased opportunities for employment, housing services, and encouraging development that will build a livable and attractive Regional Centre.

Although several large employers and industries provide significant employment within the Regional Centre, small businesses and entrepreneurs are also key to economic diversification and growth. One of the best ways to protect existing employment is to continue to develop and attract talent by investing in high quality education, housing and complete communities in the Regional Centre, and in the rest of the Municipality.

As indicated in Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan, the Municipality can support business and innovation within the Regional Centre by ensuring adequate lands for office, retail, institutional and industrial development are available in strategic and accessible locations. The Municipality can also help support emerging “innovation districts”, generally defined as dense enclaves of research-oriented anchor institutions, high-growth firms and, technology and creative start-ups in well-designed, amenity-rich residential and commercial environments. Permitting home offices, home occupations and work-live units can also provide affordable office and work spaces for individuals and start-up businesses that would otherwise be difficult to service in the commercial real estate market.

Strategic public investments, supportive partnerships with businesses, other levels of government and private institutions, and streamlined regulatory processes can act as catalysts for further economic growth and job creation.

Objectives:

- EC1** Collaborate with institutions, businesses, and other levels of government to support the continued success of employers in the Regional Centre.
- EC2** Support businesses and entrepreneurial activities through land use regulations, programs and municipal initiatives.
- EC3** Improve the quality of life for the Regional Centre’s residents by improving access to community and social services.
- EC4** Promote the Regional Centre as the place to do business within the Municipality, and as a regional, national and global tourism destination.
- EC5** Maintain a balance between jobs and residents by accommodating both employment and residential lands.

7.1 Land Use and Economic Development

Land use policies that encourage a concentration of employment and retail uses integrated with residential areas can position the Regional Centre as a hub of economic development, services and innovation. The preservation, restoration and continued use of heritage and cultural assets contribute to the development of the Regional Centre as a preferred location for large and small employers and a destination for tourism and cultural events.

Policy 7.1 To encourage and maintain a concentration of jobs and services in the Regional Centre, the Land Use By-law shall:

- (a) permit a concentration of office space in the Downtown, Centres, and Corridors where frequent transit service is either present, or planned;
- (b) permit a wide range of commercial and institutional uses in the Downtown, Centres and Corridors, and local commercial uses in residential areas subject to applicable Urban Structure and Built Form policies;
- (c) permit and require, where appropriate, that new at-grade space designed for retail use be built to be flexible by enabling units to be expanded or made smaller over time to facilitate a diverse range of businesses;
- (d) establish Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets that can support specialized shopping and entertainment districts;
- (e) permit home offices, home occupations and work-live units compatible with the surrounding community in residential and mixed-use zones;
- (f) permit workshop uses in commercial and mixed-use areas;
- (g) permit existing marine industrial uses on Downtown waterfront areas; and
- (h) support the preservation and continued use of buildings, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, which contribute to the distinct character of the Regional Centre.

7.2 Growth and Economic Development

The Halifax Economic Growth Plan aligns with the strategic growth and economic development objectives of this Plan. Policies of this Plan support the Economic Growth Plan by simplifying and modernizing land use regulations which support additional opportunities for mixed-use and strategic growth. It also provides additional support for ongoing partnerships with other levels of government, institutions, and the business community.

Policy 7.2 Council may consider strategic growth targets and economic development objectives of this Plan when amending the Land Use By-law.

Policy 7.3 The Municipality may consider supporting areas within the Regional Centre for businesses and institutions, including health and education institutions, research-oriented anchor institutions, high-growth firms, technology and creative start-ups, by prioritizing improvements to the public realm, and developing strategies to strengthen connectivity between the businesses and institutions with the adjoining neighborhoods and the rest of the Municipality.

Policy 7.4 The Municipality shall consider working with other levels of government and large public and private institutions to maintain and expand employment in the Regional Centre, and to create synergies between key services and economic sectors.

Part 8: Mobility

8.0 Introduction

The goal of this Plan is to develop the Regional Centre as a place where pedestrian movement, comfort and safety is the priority, and where mobility and land use decisions are integrated. The Regional Centre offers opportunities to live within walking or bicycling distance to work, shops and transit, and it is also the most popular destination for commuters in the Municipality.

The integration between transportation and land development has been a key regional priority since the 2006 *Regional Plan* and several functional plans were approved by Council to support these principles⁵, and to guide decisions regarding transportation in the Municipality.

The 2014 *Regional Plan* review further underscored the importance of directing growth to the Regional Centre to achieve regional planning objectives. A study⁶ prepared in support of the first five-year *Regional Plan* review concluded that significant cost savings could be achieved by increasing growth in the Regional Centre above the targets established by the 2006 *Regional Plan*. Given that the Regional Centre already has the greatest share of trips made by walking, cycling and public transit, additional growth would further support and provide access to sustainable mobility options.

To promote the use of active transportation and public transit the Regional Centre Plan will align with the recommendations of *The Integrated Mobility Plan* (IMP; 2017). The IMP has the goal to provide “a choice of affordable, healthy, sustainable, and connected travel options for moving people and goods through integrated transportation and land use planning”. The IMP includes detailed recommendations on how transportation and land use planning initiatives should be coordinated, including priority projects which support the movement of people as well as goods within the Region and across the Harbour. The concepts “complete streets” and “streets as places” are closely aligned with this Plan.

Policies in this Plan will direct growth to clustered complete communities that support diverse transportation options, integrate land use and transportation decisions and promote a connected grid of streets, sidewalks and bicycle routes. This Plan draws from IMP policies which support future growth and ensure that projects and services consider the unique context of the Regional Centre.

⁵ The Active Transportation Plan (2006), the Regional Parking Strategy Functional Plan (2008), the Transit Moving Forward Together Plan (2017), and the Transportation Demand Functional Plan (2010).

⁶ Stantec. [Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Scenarios](#) (2013).

Objectives:

- M1** Prioritize the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and car sharing users.
- M2** Align with the recommendations of the *Integrated Mobility Plan*.
- M3** Ensure that transit and active transportation infrastructure is planned to support mixed-use areas that will accommodate growth.
- M4** Enhance and extend pedestrian corridors and pathways to provide safe and convenient connectivity within, to, and from the Regional Centre.
- M5** Optimize parking requirements and parking lot design to balance parking demand and supply with the needs of other modes and land uses, while reducing the number, size and effect of surface parking lots.

8.1 Land Use and Mobility

Land use policies and regulations will support and enable greater transportation choices in the Regional Centre by clustering development near transit services, reserving lands for strategic expansion of the transportation network and requiring setbacks that can support the implementation of strategic investments in bus lanes, sidewalks and cycling lanes.

A Transportation Reserve Zone is established under the Land Use By-law to allow for future potential implementation of new mobility connections. This Plan provides for a Transportation Reserve to be established for an extension of Dundas Street in Dartmouth between Alderney Drive and Maitland Street. Other connections may be identified through an amendment to this Plan.

- Policy 8.1** **The Land Use By-law shall permit growth around current and planned key transportation and transit service nodes and corridors. Where required to implement the recommendations of the *Integrated Mobility Plan*, Council may consider amendments to the Regional Centre Plan and Land Use By-law.**
- Policy 8.2** **The Municipality may require transportation impact studies for site plan approval applications and discretionary approvals. Studies provided by the applicant shall prioritize pedestrian access, safety and comfort.**
- Policy 8.3** **A Transportation Reserve shall be established over lands within the Dartmouth Cove Future Growth Node as illustrated on Map 15 to allow for an extension of Dundas Street from Alderney Drive to Maitland Street.**

8.2 Development in Proximity to Railways

Railways have played a fundamental role in the settlement and growth of the Regional Centre. The *Moving Forward Together Plan*⁷ and the *Integrated Mobility Plan*⁸ have considered the addition of commuter rail in the municipality. Existing rail lines offer potential for Transit Oriented Development, although they pose challenges for minimizing nuisance and safety risk. In May of 2013 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Railway Association of Canada coordinated to develop a common approach to the prevention and resolution of issues that may arise when people live and work near railway operations. Guidelines were developed to assist municipal governments and railways in reviewing and determining general planning policies when developing on lands in proximity to railway operations.

Policy 8.4 **The Land Use By-law shall require minimum setbacks for any new high-density residential development and for buildings in CDD zones on lands located near railway operations to reduce health and safety risks. Where the required setback distance cannot be provided, the land use by-law shall require the submission of a report by a qualified Professional Engineer identifying the measures necessary to mitigate the crash risk, noise, and vibration of trains, and require those measures to be implemented as a condition of issuing a development permit.**

Policy 8.5 **When considering any development agreements and land use by-law amendments for high-density residential developments located in proximity to railway operations, Council:**

- (a) shall consider the required setbacks from railway operations under the Land Use By-law;
- (b) where the required setback cannot be met, shall consider requiring the submission of a report from a qualified Professional Engineer identifying measures to mitigate the crash risk, noise, and vibration of trains and require those measures be implemented prior to the issuance a development permit; and
- (c) may consider the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Railway Association of Canada (RAC) Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations (Guidelines), as may be updated from time to time.

⁷ Moving Forward Together Plan. Halifax Transit, 2016.

⁸ Integrated Mobility Plan. Halifax Regional Municipality, 2018.

8.3 Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Comfort

People of all ages and abilities who want to walk, or use other forms of active transportation such as cycling and skateboarding, need to feel safe and be safe. Infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bike lanes and multi-use trails, needs to be in place to support active transportation. Active transportation routes that are connected to destinations for recreation, school, work, transit nodes and shopping, make getting around without a vehicle easier. Priority connections identified in the *Integrated Mobility Plan* will help fill in the gaps in the current system.

Policy 8.6 **The Municipality shall consider ongoing improvements to the safety and convenience of pedestrians, other active transportation options within the Regional Centre through measures such as site plan approval requirements, street design standards, street improvements, street and sidewalk maintenance operations, capital improvements and amendments to the Municipal Design Guidelines of the *Regional Subdivision By-law*.**

Policy 8.7 **The Municipality shall consider establishing new public street connections to achieve the strategic growth objectives of this Plan, to complete street grid connections, and to improve pedestrian access to transit facilities and other destinations.**

8.4 Public Transit

Public transit is an integral part of the Regional Centre's transportation system. Halifax Transit buses move people to, through, and within the Regional Centre, and since 1816 ferries have provided an important link across the Halifax Harbour between Downtown Dartmouth and Downtown Halifax. Land use planning can support public transit by directing growth to where transit already exists, and by advising on redirecting transit to underserved areas, especially where these have potential for significant growth. The more convenient and accessible public transit becomes, the more people choose to use it, which in turn helps justify higher frequency and other service improvements.

Policy 8.8 **Council has adopted the Moving Forward Together Transit Priority Plan to guide planning and investment in transit services and facilities. When updating the Transit Priority Plan, Council shall consider the Urban Structure Map 1, the objectives of this Plan, regional growth patterns and the unique needs of the Regional Centre.**

8.5 Goods Movement

As a municipality with a port, the safe and efficient movement of goods is of strategic importance to the regional economy. However, the movement of truck traffic through municipal streets can be disruptive and cause safety concerns for other road users – particularly on Peninsular Halifax due to the South End container terminal. With two of the guiding principles of this Plan being complete communities and pedestrians first, measures should be considered to balance economic and community needs.

The Province of Nova Scotia and The Halifax Port Authority (HRA) both play a vital role in goods movement. In 2013 the Province published its “*Choose How You Move Sustainable Transportation Strategy*”, and HPA has been preparing a master plan for its future needs – including exploring the possibility of relocating existing container terminals and increasing the use of rail to reduce truck traffic through Downtown Halifax. The Municipality will want to work cooperatively with federal and provincial stakeholders both to protect and further its interests.

Policy 8.9 The Municipality shall support improvements to the transportation system to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and services in the Regional Centre, to increase transportation efficiencies and safety, and to mitigate any negative effects on pedestrians, other transportation modes, neighbouring businesses and communities.

Policy 8.10 The need for movement of trucks and commercial vehicles shall be considered in the planning and design of the transportation network. The Municipality shall:

- (a) develop strategic working relationships with other stakeholders in the transportation sector to collaborate and communicate on mutual transportation objectives; and
- (b) work with the Halifax Port Authority, CN Rail and other stakeholders to develop and implement an alternative for trucking through the Halifax Peninsula.

Part 9: Environment

9.0 Introduction

This Plan seeks to ensure that residents in the Regional Centre benefit from clean air, water, land, and access to diverse and interconnected green spaces. The Plan considers issues such as tree cover loss and stormwater run-off to minimize the effects of development. In addition to implementing policies of the *Regional Plan* and related Priority Plans, the Land Use By-law will implement policies of this Plan related to strategic growth, efficient use of land, food and energy security, parks and open spaces, and low impact development practices.

Objectives:

- E1** Implement environmental and open space objectives and policies of the *Regional Plan*, and support the implementation of the *Green Network Plan* and the *Community Energy Plan*;
- E2** Support climate change adaptation and flood prevention in the Regional Centre, the stewardship of fresh water resources and the health of the Halifax Harbour and the Bedford Basin;
- E3** Improve air and water quality, stormwater management, and water and sewer capacity;
- E4** Reduce the Regional Centre's overall impact on the environment through the advancement of sustainable building design, district energy, renewable energy sources, composting and recycling;
- E5** Increase tree canopy coverage within the Regional Centre;
- E6** Support food security by increasing opportunities for urban food production and harvesting; and
- E7** Support biodiversity through the conservation and restoration of natural areas, and through site design and landscaping.

9.1 Regional Plan Environmental Policies

The *Regional Plan* contains environmental protection policies which apply to the Municipality. These will be supported by this Plan and the Land Use By-law.

Policy 9.1 **The Land Use By-law shall implement Regional Plan policy directions relative to:**

- (a) **coastal area elevations;**
- (b) **watercourse buffers;**
- (c) **wind energy facilities;**
- (d) **stormwater management;**
- (e) **naturalizing public and open spaces;**
- (f) **food security;**
- (g) **urban forest management;**
- (h) **solid waste management; and**
- (i) **any other environmental policies.**

Policy 9.2 Subject to *Regional Plan* Policy E-17, where a development may be considered by development agreement, the Municipality shall consider the acquisition of riparian buffers as public open space.

Policy 9.3 To support renewable energy sources and reduced reliance on fossil fuels, the Municipality may:

- (a) encourage district energy facilities in areas of high growth and density, such as Centres and Future Growth Nodes within development sites;
- (b) encourage new development located within an area served by a district energy system to connect to such a system;
- (c) identify opportunities to capture and redistribute waste energy, and encourage combined heat and power systems;
- (d) design and construct new municipal facilities within the Regional Centre require sustainable building design; and
- (e) develop, promote and incentivize sustainable design practices.

Policy 9.4 To support climate change adaptation, the Municipality may adopt additional policies and programs related to managing the impacts of sea level rise.

9.2 Urban Lakes and Watercourses

The Regional Centre has an extensive marine shoreline, as well as rivers, creeks, lakes, and wetlands. Development and urban growth changes the natural flow of water. It can also increase runoff from precipitation, reduce groundwater recharge, raise water temperatures, increase water pollution and acidity. Communities in the Regional Centre rely on the health and safety of urban lakes for passive and active recreation. This Plan supports the use of low impact development. The Municipality owns and manages land around many lakes, and is an important stakeholder among many in lake and watershed management.

Policy 9.5 To support the sustainability and quality of water resources in the Regional Centre, the Municipality may:

- (a) include Low Impact Development (LID) technologies for storm water management in municipal capital projects, and in the planning and maintenance of parks and open spaces;
- (b) increase tree canopy cover to help manage storm water in highly impervious areas;
- (c) encourage the naturalizing and daylighting of watercourses as Low Impact Development initiatives whenever possible;

- (d) **consider monitoring water quality in all lakes and developing recommendations to maintain water quality, water based recreational opportunities, and aquatic habitat; and**
- (e) **consider pilot projects, and community and government partnerships to support the management of urban lakes;**
- (f) **work with the provincial government and other stakeholders to maintain and restore water quality in lakes and watersheds.**

9.3 Urban Agriculture

The *Regional Plan* states that “community food security exists when community residents can obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice”. A range of urban agriculture and food production uses will be permitted throughout the Regional Centre, including the processing and sale of food at a scale appropriate to the local context.

Policy 9.6 **The Land Use By-law shall permit and regulate land use impacts related to the production, processing and distribution of food at a scale appropriate to the surrounding land uses, including:**

- (a) **accessory keeping of bees and hens in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2 and HR-1 zones;**
- (b) **farmers’ markets and urban farms in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2 and HR-1 zones;**
- (c) **the processing of urban agricultural products as an accessory use to an urban agriculture use;**
- (d) **the sale of urban agricultural products grown or produced on-site as an accessory use in conjunction with an urban farm; and**
- (e) **permit urban farm uses in shipping containers in the Waterfront Special Area.**

9.4 Parks and Open Space Network

The *Regional Plan* identifies the diverse ways that open spaces contribute to a healthy, sustainable and desirable region. The Green Network Plan further defines the importance of open spaces within the themes of ecology, working landscapes, community shaping, outdoor recreation, and cultural landscapes. The Green Network Plan identifies core planning concepts to guide future open space planning and decision making, and identifies specific goals and actions under each theme. These actions provide a comprehensive approach to parks planning in the Municipality, and this Plan supports many of the goals by:

- enabling and encouraging more growth in the Regional Centre, to help reduce development pressure on key ecological landscapes;
- requiring coastal elevations and watercourse buffers,
- identifying key cultural landscapes within the Regional Centre;
- introducing a Shadow Impact Assessment Protocol and Performance Standards to minimize shadow impact on key public parks;
- enabling urban agricultural uses;
- providing landscaping requirements to support the implementation of the *Urban Forest Master Plan* by establishing landscaping regulations, and prohibiting the use of invasive species; and
- establishing site design requirements through the site plan approval process in the Land Use By-law relative to open space design and pedestrian connections in new developments.

Accessible parks, open spaces, and community and recreation facilities are key components of complete communities. Improvements to these spaces will enhance the quality of life of residents, and help ensure that residents benefit from additional growth.

Regionally significant parks, such as the Halifax Common and the Dartmouth Common, may be governed by their own Master Plans. Future parks planning should consider the Urban Structure of the Regional Centre, the socio-economic make up of the growing Municipality, and the importance of green spaces for biodiversity, food security, local climate, and stormwater management.

Policy 9.7 **During priority plan review and master planning exercises pertaining to parks, opens spaces, trails, facilities and amenities within parks in the Regional Centre, the Municipality shall consider:**

- (a) **Urban Structure Map 1;**
- (b) **the objectives of this Plan;**
- (c) **the growth patterns within the Regional Centre;**
- (d) **formalizing a public engagement program for the planning and stewardship of parks and recreation facilities;**

- (e) developing an Open Space Plan for the Regional Centre to support the objectives of this Plan and the goals of the Green Network Plan;**
- (f) connections between parks, fresh water bodies and the Atlantic Ocean used for recreational purposes;**
- (g) improving accessibility, quality and the diversity of public activities in parks, open spaces, and community and recreation centres;**
- (h) preparing policies and procedures to incorporate cultural and heritage values in park and facility management plans;**
- (i) preparing policies and procedures to incorporate naturalization and green infrastructure in parkland maintenance;**
- (j) supporting community gardens and other forms of food production in public parks and other Municipally-owned properties, balanced with other open space uses;**
- (k) promoting and designing parks and open spaces for health, well-being, sense of community and overall quality of life;**
- (l) incorporating year-round recreation infrastructure when planning parks; and**
- (m) parkland acquisitions to achieve the Green Network Plan service standard of residents having access to a local park within 500 m; and**
- (n) using edible landscaping as part of soft landscaping requirements.**

Part 10: Implementation

10.0 Introduction

This Plan is a Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, which implements the *Regional Plan* at a community and neighbourhood scale. This Plan will be implemented through the adoption of the *Regional Centre Land Use By-law*, the *Regional Subdivision By-law*, other by-laws of Council, and through Council's annual capital and operating budgets. Development approval processes and planning tools will include development permits, site-plan approval, development agreements, incentive or bonus zoning agreements, variance processes, and limited variations under the Land Use By-law which may be considered through the site plan approval process. This section outlines the implementation tools and strategies necessary to support the goals and objectives of this Plan, as well as transition to this Plan.

10.1 Community Engagement

This Plan was developed through extensive public and stakeholder consultation, including diverse community and cultural organizations. The HRM Community Engagement Strategy will guide how the Municipality informs, consults with, and engages the public in developing and implementing its programs and services. Engagement will take a consistent, strategic and inclusive approach.

Policy 10.1 **The HRM Community Engagement Strategy, as updated from time-to-time, shall guide how the Municipality will inform, consult with, and engage the public in developing, amending, and implementing this Plan. Community engagement shall provide opportunities for a diverse range of stakeholders and communities to be consulted on future updates and amendments to this Plan.**

10.2 Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy

This Plan is the detailed policy document used to guide decision-making for development and investment within the Regional Centre. It provides a vision for land use, built form, design, heritage preservation and public investment in public realm improvements such as streets and parks, and sets out strategies and actions to be taken by the Municipality, its citizens and partners to achieve that vision.

It is also recognized that this Plan is a strategic document that responds to opportunities and challenges in an evolving social, political and economic environment. Its policies should be monitored to evaluate their effectiveness in achieving the objectives of this Plan.

Amendments to this Plan may be brought forward periodically to address matters or amendments which are consistent with, or further the vision and objectives of this Plan. A more comprehensive review may be undertaken on a ten-year basis to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs in achieving the vision and objectives of this Plan.

Policy 10.2 This Plan is the Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy for the area shown on Map 1. Any changes to Map 1 shall require an amendment to this Plan.

Policy 10.3 This Plan and the Land Use By-law may be reviewed periodically, and Council shall consider a comprehensive review every ten years from the date of adoption, or from the date that the most recent ten-year review has come into effect. The review may include those items directed by Council, such as:

- (a) evaluating the effectiveness of policies and programs adopted pursuant to this Plan in achieving its vision and objectives, and the Plan Indicators presented in Appendix 1;
- (b) reviewing the consistency of this Plan and Land Use By-law with the *Regional Plan*, the Statements of Provincial Interest, provincial regulations, or a recommendation of a Priority Plan that has been approved by Council;
- (c) considering whether amendments could significantly advance municipal objectives under statutes or regulations enacted by the Provincial or Federal Government;
- (d) considering whether amendments could support new provincial or federal programs that can benefit the Municipality;
- (e) considering whether amendments could address an economic, cultural or social opportunity or challenge;
- (f) adopting new CDD Design Guidelines in the plan;
- (g) considering the impacts of lands that have been acquired by the Municipality, Provincial or Federal governments for public parkland or a cultural landscape;
- (h) considering amendments where a public or institutional land use is no longer required or viable; and
- (i) the impacts of proposed amendments on disadvantaged persons or groups.

10.3 Regional Centre Land Use By-law

The Land Use By-Law is the principal tool for implementing the land development policies of this Plan. Permitted uses and development regulations are established under regulations. A degree of flexibility is provided in the Land Use By-law through the site plan approval process, including the provisions of the Land Use By-law that may be varied by site plan approval, incentive or bonus zoning, and through provisions in the *HRM Charter* relative to variances to the Land Use By-law, and non-conforming uses and structures. This Plan also provides guidance on when amendments to the Land Use By-law may be considered.

Policy 10.4 Concurrent with the adoption of this Plan, the Regional Centre Land Use By law is adopted for the lands shown on Map 1. The Land Use By-law shall prescribe:

- (a) developments for which a municipal development permit is required;
- (b) information required with an application for a municipal development permit;
- (c) conditions for the approval, expiry and revocation of a development permit;
- (d) permitted uses and development regulations that are consistent with the policies of this Plan;
- (e) developments which will be subject to site plan approval, and the approval requirements;
- (f) developments which are subject to development agreement;
- (g) where incentive or bonus zoning agreements may be considered, and the approval requirements;
- (h) relaxation of the restrictions for non-conforming uses and structures; and
- (i) other regulations necessary to implement this Plan.

10.4 Discretionary Approvals

Policy 10.5 Council may consider amendments to the Land Use By-law that are consistent with or further the objectives and policies of this Plan.

Policy 10.6 In considering applications for land use by-law amendments and development agreements, in addition to other policies contained in this Plan, Council shall consider the following:

- (a) the proposal is consistent with all applicable objectives and policies set out in the *Regional Plan* and this Plan;
- (b) that the proposal is not premature or inappropriate by reason of:
 - i. the financial capacity of the Municipality to absorb any costs relating to the development,

- ii. **the adequacy of municipal wastewater facilities, stormwater systems or water distribution systems,**
- iii. **the proximity of the proposed development to schools, recreation or other community facilities and the capability of these services to absorb any additional demands, and**
- iv. **the adequacy of transportation infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, public transit and vehicles for travel to and within the development;**
- (c) **the potential for damage to or for destruction of designated heritage buildings and sites; and**
- (d) **that development regulations in the proposed zone or controls in the proposed development agreement will adequately mitigate potential conflict between the proposed development and nearby land uses, by reason of:**
 - i. **type of use(s),**
 - ii. **built form of the proposed building(s),**
 - iii. **traffic generation, safe access to and egress from the site, and parking,**
 - iv. **open storage and signage,**
 - v. **impacts of lighting, noise, fumes and other emissions, and**
 - vi. **that the subject lands are suitable for development in terms of the steepness of grades, soil and geological conditions, locations of watercourses, marshes or bogs and susceptibility to flooding.**

10.5 Site Plan Approval

Site plan approval is a development tool enabled under the *HRM Charter* which can regulate site and building design, including the location of structures on a lot, the external appearance of structures as well as matters such as pedestrian access, outdoor lighting, and the location of facilities for the storage of solid waste. The purpose of site plan approval is to ensure that development achieves the Urban Design goals of this Plan. Under this Plan, site plan approval for developments will occur in two parts:

- (a) the quantitative elements of an application are subject to approval based on those requirements of the Land Use By-law that are not set out in Part VI of the Land Use By-law - site plan approval Design and Requirements and Variation Criteria; and
- (b) the qualitative elements of an application are subject to review in accordance with those requirements that are set out in Part VI of the Land Use By-law - site plan Approval Design and Variation Criteria.

Policy 10.7 The Land Use By-Law shall enable site plan approval for certain developments on lands zoned D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2 and HR-1, to ensure high quality design for development. The Land Use By-law shall:

- (a) identify developments that are not subject to site plan approval, including low-density residential development, changes of use, and interior and minor exterior building additions and renovations that do not impact a streetwall;
- (b) specify the form and content of an application for site plan approval, and establish three types of site plan approval applications based on the size of the proposed development:
 - i) Level I site plan approval shall be required for new construction of small buildings, minor building additions and changes to the external appearance of structures. These minor developments shall not require public consultation;
 - ii) Level II site plan approval shall be required for new construction of medium-sized buildings that exceed Level I site plan approval, and moderate additions to existing buildings. Applicants for these moderate developments shall be required to provide information to the public about the project before an application for site plan approval is made;
 - iii) Level III site plan approval shall be required for large projects that exceed the thresholds established for Level II site plan approval. These are expected to be significant new developments that may generate a high level of public interest and will require a high degree of design review. Applicants for these projects will be required to provide information to the public and gather feedback through a public consultation process, to be submitted with the application for Level III site plan approval; and
- (c) Set out that the notification area shall be within 30 m from the applicant's property as per the requirements of the *HRM Charter*.

Policy 10.8 A site plan approval may provide a variation of the requirements of the Land Use By-law for the following matters:

- (a) roof edge setbacks of height-exempted rooftop features;
- (b) location of a structure on a lot respecting maximum front and flanking yards where the variation results in an open space associated with a public building;
- (c) minimum streetwall height to address excessive slope and achieve the required streetwall along all other streetlines;

- (d) side and rear setbacks for a high-rise portion of a building above the streetwall if the abutting property is restricted by view planes which would not permit a high-rise form;
- (e) side and rear setbacks for portions of tall mid-rise building above the streetwall where:
 - i. a proposal covers multiple parcels of land and will be developed under a single site plan approval and development permit,
 - ii. the applicant can demonstrate that the building could be achieved without the need for a variation if the parcels were consolidated, and
 - iii. the cumulative depth or width of the structure above the streetwall shall not exceed 52 metres; and
- (f) side yard setback for pedestrian access for the purpose of creating a single access driveway and a grade-separated walkway connecting a public sidewalk to accessory surface parking at the rear of the building, or to uses only accessed from the rear of the building.

Policy 10.9 The Land Use By-law shall include site plan approval design requirements and variation criteria to implement the Urban Design Goals of this Plan as stated in Section 4.1 and Section 5.3 of this Plan.

Policy 10.10 The Municipality may establish an advisory committee for the Regional Centre to provide advice to the Development Officer respecting the design requirements of site plan approval applications, and to perform such other duties set by Council.

10.6 Incentive or Bonus Zoning

Incentive or bonus zoning is a planning tool which allows the Municipality to require developments to provide public benefits in exchange for greater development rights. The intent of this tool is to supplement other municipal investments so that the density enabled under this Plan is accompanied by the amenities and public benefits that support complete and inclusive communities. This Plan seeks to ensure that any incentive or bonus zoning public benefits support the goals and objectives of this Plan, are long-lasting, are related to the development site, and are implemented in accordance with the *HRM Charter*.

Proposals that seek to demolish any portion of a registered heritage property shall be excluded from incentive or bonus zoning. Public benefits for the Regional Centre Plan Area shall include affordable housing, heritage conservation, public art, improvements to municipal parks, affordable community cultural indoor spaces, and such other public benefits that may be set out in the Land Use By-law. The Land Use By-law shall establish the public benefits for which only money-in-lieu shall be accepted.

To support and facilitate a streamlined development approval process for infill development, small and moderate sized developments shall not be required to participate in incentive or bonus zoning. Incentive or bonus zoning shall apply to any development which exceeds a total floor area of 2,000 square metres.

The calculation to determine public benefit shall apply to 20% of total floor area above 2,000 square metres. The Land Use Bylaw shall establish density bonus rates and districts based on average market land values within each district, multiplied by a coefficient of 0.6⁹. The average market land values shall be updated periodically by a qualified person. The Land Use By-law shall establish a method of calculating the value of incentive or bonus zoning, the value of proposed public benefits, and any other requirements related to the acceptance of public benefits.

Policy 10.11 The Land Use By-law shall require incentive or bonus zoning in any development that exceeds a floor area of 2,000 square metres in the D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2, HR-1 zone, up to a maximum Floor Area Ratio and maximum height permitted as illustrated on Map 2 and Map 3. The public benefit value shall be calculated by multiplying new floor area that exceeds 2,000 square metres by a coefficient of 0.2, and multiplied by a bonus rate in dollars per square metre. The Land Use By-law shall identify:

- (a) the area or areas where the developments may be located;
- (b) the matters that the Development Officer may consider before approving an incentive or bonus zoning agreement;
- (c) the method to be used to determine the contribution for incentive or bonus zoning;
- (d) density bonus rates and districts based on average market land values in specified areas multiplied by a coefficient of 0.6;
- (e) the method used to annually update local area incentive or bonus zoning rates;
- (f) the method to determine, evaluate, accept and monitor the value of the public benefits; and
- (g) the means of administering an incentive or bonus zoning agreement.

Policy 10.12 The Land Use By-law shall set out the public benefits that are eligible for incentive or bonus zoning, including when money-in-lieu shall be accepted in lieu of the public benefit. The public benefit may be in the form of:

- (a) affordable housing in the Regional Centre;
- (b) conservation of a registered heritage property or a property located within a Heritage Conservation District on the site as part of development;
- (c) improvements to municipal parks;
- (d) affordable community or cultural indoor space;
- (e) public art; or

⁹ Turner Drake and Partners Ltd. Letter of Opinion Report: Updating Market Land Values by Value Area for Proposed Density Bonus Program in the Regional Centre of HRM. December, 2018.

(f) any other public benefit that may be set out in the Land Use By-law.

Policy 10.13 Subject to Policy 10.12 and as required by the *HRM Charter*, where affordable housing is a required public benefit in the Centre Plan Area, a majority of the calculated value of the public benefit shall be dedicated toward affordable housing.

Policy 10.14 The Municipality shall establish a program to administer public benefits provided as money-in-lieu to ensure that the money-in-lieu is used for the purposes for which it was collected. Required housing affordability levels may be established through municipal housing needs assessments that may be published from time to time. Where opportunities arise, the funds may be leveraged through other contributions and partnerships to meet affordable housing needs, including housing agreements pursuant to the *HRM Charter*.

10.7 Non-Conforming Structures and Uses

Many buildings in the Regional Centre were constructed in accordance with former land use by-law provisions that may not conform to the new Land Use By-law. As this Plan focuses growth in the Downtown, Centre, Corridor and Higher Order Residential Designations where a substantial built environment exists, special provisions shall be made to allow for the relaxation of the restrictions for the extension, enlargement, and alteration of non-conforming structures.

Policy 10.15 The Land Use By-law shall relax the restrictions in the *HRM Charter* respecting the non-conforming structures in any D, CEN-2, CEN-1, COR, HR-2, or HR-1 zone to allow them to be extended, enlarged, or altered, if the extension, enlargement, or alteration does not further worsen any non-conformity with this By-law.

With the adoption of this Plan and associated Land Use By-Law, some existing uses will become non-conforming. To support the affected uses, this Plan provides for the relaxation of the restrictions non-conforming uses in a structure pursuant to the requirements of the *HRM Charter* through a development agreement process.

Policy 10.16 Council may consider a development agreement on a lot that existed on the coming into force date of this Plan to provide for:

- (a) the expansion of a non-conforming use into an addition of the structure; or
- (b) the change of a non-conforming use in a structure to another less-intensive non-conforming use.

Policy 10.17 In considering a development agreement enabled by Policy 10.16, Council shall consider Policy 10.15, and the following:

- (a) that controls are placed on the development to reduce conflict with and impacts on adjacent land uses;
- (b) when adjacent to residential uses, that existing conditions resulting in noise, dust, vibration, odour, and emissions are mitigated;
- (c) the adequacy of the exterior design, height, bulk and scale of the development with respect to its compatibility with the existing neighbourhood;
- (d) facilities for parking, loading, vehicular access, outdoor display and outdoor storage shall be designed to avoid significant adverse effects on adjacent properties and to mitigate existing problems, through attention to factors including:
 - (e) the layout and number of parking spaces and loading areas;
 - (f) location of the use on the site;
 - (g) the surface treatment and storm drainage;
 - (h) the access from the street.
 - (i) the landscaping, screening and buffering, especially to reduce impacts on adjacent residential uses;
 - (j) the controls on signage; and
 - (k) the hours of operation.

10.8 Investing for Growth

The Municipality's focus is on maintaining its assets in a state of good repair, as well as aligning future investments with *Regional Plan* growth targets, population growth and key social environmental and economic objectives. The Municipality has invested significant capital resources in upgrading recreation facilities, transit facilities, trails, streetscapes, active transportation routes, municipally-owned registered heritage properties and other Regional Centre infrastructure.

This Plan emphasizes the importance of the public realm in creating an environment that attracts and supports growth. Municipal investments in public water, wastewater and stormwater systems, streets, streetscapes, transportation links, public transit, public parks, and other public facilities may be needed to both accommodate and attract new residents and private investments. Incentives to support the preservation of cultural and heritage resources may also be required, as well as other community partnerships that support social, cultural and economic development and create a greater sense of place and belonging. The *HRM Charter* and the *Regional Plan* enable the Municipality to impose infrastructure charges to recover capital costs of infrastructure needed to service new development.

Policy 10.18 **The Municipality shall consider conducting needs assessments for parks, recreation, and cultural facilities to determine changing needs of the Regional Centre's population, and anticipated growth pressures.**

- Policy 10.19** The Municipality may prepare a street and streetscaping program for consideration in capital budget deliberations that establishes project priorities based on current and desired growth and pedestrian activity, with a priority placed on improvements identified by *Regional Plan* Priority Plans, and improvements to Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets, and Corridors.
- Policy 10.20** Master plans may be prepared for municipal parks and facilities to guide decisions for improvements to existing, new or expanded facilities.
- Policy 10.21** The Municipality may establish heritage incentive programs in conjunction with new Heritage Conservation Districts.
- Policy 10.22** The Municipality may support the economic and social development of neighbourhoods identified in this Plan through local urban design plans, capital investments, placemaking programs, pilot projects, urban design awards, support for affordable housing initiatives and other means.
- Policy 10.23** Consistent with *Regional Plan* Policy SU-1, the Municipality, in conjunction with Halifax Regional Water Commission (Halifax Water), may fund studies needed to determine the adequacy of public water, wastewater or stormwater systems needed to accommodate growth projected by this Plan and, if upgrading is needed, may pay the costs in whole or in part.

Council may consider imposing infrastructure charges in accordance with policies EC-18 and EC-19 of the *Regional Plan*, and Part 3.32 of this Plan.

10.9 Commercial Taxation

New growth may impact commercial assessments and levels of taxation. A Commercial Development District enables the Municipality to phase in or average commercial taxes from assessment increases within each district. This will provide commercial businesses with greater predictability on their taxes, leading to a more stable and competitive investment environment.

Policy 10.24 Council may establish, by by-law, one or more commercial development districts in the Regional Centre, provided the district is serviced by wastewater and water infrastructure.

10.10 Transition to this Plan

During the preparation of this Plan, development has continued to occur in the Regional Centre according to the previous policies and land use by-law requirements. At the time of adoption of the Plan, discretionary development applications in various stages of review and approval remained in progress. Recognizing these projects were designed within the parameters of the previous policies, that substantial investment was made in the preparation of such applications and that they were submitted in advance of this Plan being given first reading by Council, it is reasonable that provision be made to allow Council to consider them under the previous policies after the effective date of this Plan. Similarly, amendments to approved development agreements should be enabled under the non-substantive amendment provision of the respective agreements.

It is not, however, appropriate that development that is not in conformity with this Plan be afforded longstanding rights relative to time frames for project approval and completion. Developments that are not constructed and completed within a reasonable time period after Plan adoption should be required to comply with the requirements of this Plan, and Land Use By-law.

10.10.1 Policy Enabled Development Agreements

Policy 10.25 Subject to Policy 10.27, complete applications for development agreements on file with the Municipality on or before Council's first notice of intention to adopt this Plan shall be considered under the policies in effect at the time the complete application was received. Where any such application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or refused by Council, any new development applications shall be subject to all applicable requirements of this Plan and the Land Use By-law. Applications that have not proceeded to First Reading within 24 months of the adoption of this Plan shall be subject to all applicable requirements of this Plan and the Land Use By-Law.

Policy 10.26 Applications approved pursuant to Policy 10.26 shall include project commencement dates not exceeding three years, and project completion dates not exceeding:

- (a) for the King's Wharf Special Area, twenty years from the date the agreement is filed at the Land Registry Office; and
- (b) for all other areas of this Plan, six years from the date the agreement is filed at the Land Registry Office.

Policy 10.27 Subject to Policy 3.9, applications for amendments to existing development agreements shall be considered under the policies in effect at the time the agreement was approved.

Policy 10.28 Applications for amendments to existing development agreements to extend the project commencement and completion dates shall only consider project commencement dates not exceeding one year and project completion dates not exceeding two years.

10.10.2 Active Plan Amendment Applications

Regional Council authorized the direction contained in the June 2017 Centre Plan Document as a framework for amending existing planning documents and developing new planning documents for a number of site specific plan amendment applications. Regional Council directed that five planning principles be used to evaluate these site-specific requests for new Municipal Planning Strategy policy. As part of the adoption process for this Plan, Council may consider those plan amendment applications which have not been brought to Council for a decision prior to Council's first notice of intention to adopt this Plan. Council may consider the plan amendment applications as contained in the staff report dated July 26, 2017¹⁰ and the supplementary report dated January 5, 2018¹¹.

¹⁰ HRM Staff Report. [July 26, 2017](#)

¹¹ HRM Staff Report. [Jan. 5, 2018](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicators

The following Indicators will guide the Centre Plan monitoring and review process. Additional indicators may be used as data becomes available. Reporting times may vary based on data availability, Plan reviews and as requested by Council.

Land Use & Urban Design

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.1	Population of the Regional Centre	People
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.2	New Housing Units Starts in Regional Centre	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.3	New Housing Units Starts in Centres	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.4	New Housing Units Starts in Corridors	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.5	New Housing Units Starts in Future Growth Nodes	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.6	New Housing Units Starts in Residential Areas	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.7	New Housing Units Starts in Downtowns	Dwelling Units
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.8	New Commercial Floor Area in Corridors	Square Metres
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.9	New Commercial Floor Area in Future Growth Nodes	Square Metres
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.10	New Commercial Floor Area in in Residential Areas	Square Metres
STRATEGIC GROWTH	1.11	New Commercial Floor Area in in Downtowns	Square Metres
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	1.12	Housing Units within 500 m of a Municipal Park	Dwelling Units

Culture & Heritage

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
HUMAN SCALE	2.1	Dollars Invested in Public Art	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.2	Number of Heritage Conservation Districts	Approved HCDs
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.3	Number of Registered Heritage Properties in the Regional Centre	Number
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.4	Number of Heritage DAs	Number of Approved DAs
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.5	Value of Public Benefit Contributions for Heritage from Incentive or Bonus Zoning	CAD \$ Value
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.6	Value of Public Benefit Contributions for Community and Cultural Spaces from Incentive or Bonus Zoning	CAD \$ Value
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	2.7	Value of Investments in Municipal Heritage Buildings	CAD \$ Value

Housing

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.1	Average Rent, Two-Bedroom Apartment, October	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.2	Vacancy Rate, Two-Bedroom Apartment, October	% Vacant
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.3	Number of Households in Core Housing Need, Owners	Households
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.4	Number of Households in Core Housing Need, Renters	Households
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.5	Housing Units that are Detached Single Unit Dwellings	Dwelling Units
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.6	Housing Units that are Multi-Unit (+3)	Dwelling Units
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.7	Housing Units that are Two Unit Dwellings	Dwelling Units
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.8	Average Single Detached Unit Price (Dartmouth)	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.9	Average Single Detached Unit Price (Halifax)	\$ CAD
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.10	Median Single Detached Unit Price (Dartmouth)	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.11	Median Single Detached Unit Price (Halifax)	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.12	Value of Public Benefit Contributions for Affordable Housing from Incentive or Bonus Zoning	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.13	% of Renter Households (Dartmouth)	%
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.14	% of Owner Households (Dartmouth)	%

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.15	% of Renter Households (Halifax)	%
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.16	% of Owner Households (Halifax)	%
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	3.17	New Affordable Housing Units	Units

Jobs & Economic Development

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
STRATEGIC GROWTH	4.1	Estimate of Jobs in Regional Centre	Number of Jobs
STRATEGIC GROWTH	4.2	Total Value of Construction Permits (Renovations) in Regional Centre	CAD \$
STRATEGIC GROWTH	4.3	Vacancy Rate, Commercial Office Space in the Regional Centre	% Vacant

Mobility

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.1	Metres of New Sidewalks Added	Metres
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.2	Metres of Repaired Sidewalks	Metres
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.3	Modal Split in Regional Centre – Commute Method	Pedestrian
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.4	Modal Split in Regional Centre – Commute Method	Private Car
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.5	Modal Split in Regional Centre – Commute Method	Transit
PEDESTRIANS FIRST	5.6	Modal Split in Regional Centre – Commute Method	Bicycle

Environment

Core Concept		Indicator	Unit
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	6.1	Land Area Attributed to Parks	Hectares
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	6.2	Land Area Attributed to Municipal Recreation Facility	Hectares
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	6.3	Value of Public Benefit Contributions for Municipal Park Improvements from Incentive or Bonus Zoning	CAD \$
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	6.4	The number of active community gardens on HRM land	Number

