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REGIONAL PLAN THEMES & DIRECTIONS

KEY IDEAS

HALIFAX

May 2021

This document summarizes the Key Ideas outlined in the Themes & Directions Report, and provides a brief introduction to the content. The Themes and Directions Report is the first deliverable of the Regional Plan Review. The purpose of the report is to explain the scope of the Regional Plan Review to the public, stakeholders and Regional Council, and to seek feedback on the direction of the work.

To learn more, ask questions, join the project's mailing list and have your voice heard:

Visit: www.shapeyourcityhaifax.ca/regional-plan

Email: regionalplan@halifax.ca

Call: 902.233.2501

Stay updated on other events and engagement opportunities by following the Halifax Regional Municipality on social media and Shape Your City.

We can decide how we want Halifax to grow.

We can make smart decisions about housing and employment and use the Regional Plan to quickly direct growth to the right places, in a way that furthers our community goals, and builds a healthy, thriving economy.

We can create change through new partnerships.

We can use the Regional Plan Review to act on new partnerships, grow in a new way, and pursue opportunities for meaningful change together.

We can make it easier for people to move.

We can use the Regional Plan to link decisions on land use and our mobility system by focusing on the movement of people, not just vehicles, be it by walking, rolling, cycling, transit or in a vehicle.

We can protect what matters.

We can use the Regional Plan to strengthen and protect important natural and cultural places and use them to shape our region's communities.

We can transform.

We can use the Regional Plan Review to help us generate ideas about how to change and transform as a community.

The Halifax Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (the Regional Plan) sets out a common vision, guiding principles and long-range, region-wide planning policies outlining where, when, and how future settlement, balanced growth and development should take place. The Plan established policy for a 25-year horizon, from 2006-2031, with reviews expected every five years. This Regional Plan Review was initiated by Regional Council in 2020. This document summarizes the Key Ideas outlined in the Themes & Directions Report, and provides a brief introduction to the content.

WE CAN DECIDE HOW WE WANT HALIFAX TO GROW.

We can build the kind of community we want to see Halifax become. The growth we are experiencing offers us the opportunity to mould and shape Halifax. But as more people choose Halifax as a home, we must quickly adapt to accommodate this growth. Many of our citizens are vulnerable to the pressures that exist in our housing market today. We also need to be deliberate in thinking about our connections to other places in the Province. By being clear about where change will occur, we can organize municipal and provincial investments in infrastructure to support the long-term fiscal, environmental, and social health of the Municipality, Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Region.

We can make smart decisions about housing and employment and use the Regional Plan to quickly direct growth to the right places, in a way that furthers our community goals, and builds a healthy, thriving economy.



Connected Themes:

THEME 1 – Considering the Regional Scale First

THEME 2 – Building Healthier and More Complete Communities

THEME 3 - Reconsidering Employment and Industrial Lands

THEME 7 - Integrating Community Facilities and Parks

WE CAN CREATE CHANGE THROUGH NEW PARTNERSHIPS.

We must act on our commitments to change and make it a priority. We continue to educate ourselves on the legacies of colonialism, now and moving forward, with an unbiased and concrete understanding of our shared history and of the culture and traditions of the Mi'kmaw, First Peoples of the land we are operating on in Kjiptuk/Halifax. The spirit of reconciliation is in the relationships. We also need to learn from and value the past histories of our African Nova Scotian communities while acknowledging their current realities. We must work together to identify and change policies that have furthered structural racism and disproportionately impacted these communities and residents. We need to partner in action. It is now clearer than ever that population growth and development cannot be considered without a view to greater socio-economic well-being.

We can use the Regional Plan Review to act on new partnerships, grow in a new way, and pursue opportunities for meaningful change together.



Connected Themes:

THEME 5 - Social Planning for Community Well-Being

WE CAN MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO MOVE.

Congestion. Commuting. Traffic. Safety. Parking. While many North American cities have been built for cars, we know that cars are an inefficient way of transporting large numbers of people, particularly during peak hours of traffic. We need to rethink how we are building our city so that it becomes easier for citizens to move, so that we build places that are people oriented, while we grow. Where people live and how they move about for their daily activities affects their personal finances, influences their work-life balance, and helps determine their carbon footprint. These factors are important for access to physical activity, social interaction, access to nature, mental health and well-being, and connecting communities.

We can use the Regional Plan to link decisions on land use and our mobility system by focusing on the movement of people, not just vehicles, be it by walking, rolling, cycling, transit or in a vehicle.

Connected Themes:

THEME 6 – Celebrating Culture & Heritage

THEME 8 – Enhancing Environmental Protection

WE CAN PROTECT WHAT MATTERS.

Halifax is a beautiful place. We have a unique blend of city and nature that we cherish. Many of our communities are centered on their little piece of our stunning Nova Scotia coastline. Others have grown around our abundant lakes and waterways. Our rural communities showcase our rich traditional and working landscapes. Our city centre connects us with our visible history, and we continue to add beautiful public spaces. Our suburban areas have special wilderness and natural areas that we know are critical to protect. We can protect and celebrate these rich resources for the Halifax of today and tomorrow.

We can use the Regional Plan to strengthen and protect important natural and cultural places and use them to shape our region's communities.

Connected Themes:

THEME 4 – Transforming How We Move in our Region





WE CAN TRANSFORM.

We are resourceful and community minded. We know Halifax is one of the best places to live in Canada. COVID-19 has shown us that we can band together, that our social networks in Atlantic Canada are strong. We also know we need to do even more to support our most vulnerable citizens. We need to focus on housing. We need to focus on creating greater well-being for newcomers, and people of all ages and abilities. We need to see the city through the lens of the many, not just the majority. And we need to look ahead. We need to leapfrog, and plan not just for current growth, but the growth that is coming. We are at an important point in Halifax's journey, and in our global journey in fighting the pandemic, decolonizing, and acting on climate change.

We can use the Regional Plan Review to help us generate ideas about how to change and transform as a community.



Connected Themes:

THEME 9 – *Leading Through Action on Climate*

THEME 10 – *Imagining HRM into 2050 and Beyond*

THEME 11 – *Assessing the Impacts of COVID-19*

The Themes & Directions Report includes eleven Themes. Each Theme introduces an overall topic area bringing together work completed over the last five years and is accompanied by several Directions, which explain the work that will be done through the Regional Plan Review. The following outlines the key Directions associated with each Theme.



- Conducting population and housing growth analysis
- Assessing Service Boundary Expansion requests including Future Serviced Communities
- Revisiting the Urban Reserve Designation where conditions have changed
- Lifting of the Urban Reserve Designation from the Akoma properties and surrounding lands to enable master planning



- Creating Policy Direction for the Secondary Plan & By-law Simplification Program
- Directing Intensification in Suburban and Rural Areas and reclassifying Growth Centres
- Creation of policy guidance for suburban development proposals
- Review of conservation design policies



- Updating Employment Trends modelling analysis
- Monitoring the impact of COVID on employment trends
- Protecting industrial lands
- Supporting rural economic development



- Designing policy to support Transit Oriented Development
- Updating the mode share targets based on growth patterns
- Responding to requests and concerns regarding the Urban Transit Service Boundary and Rural Mobility



- Establishing a region-wide interim density bonusing program
- Aligning work with the Social Policy Committee, including affordable housing, connecting communities and food policy.
- Implementing initiatives and commitments to partner with, serve, and represent underrepresented communities
- Improving community engagement to reflect diversity and inclusion



- Implementing the recommendations of Sharing Our Stories
- Supporting Heritage Property Program initiatives
- Creating a region-wide heritage development agreement policy



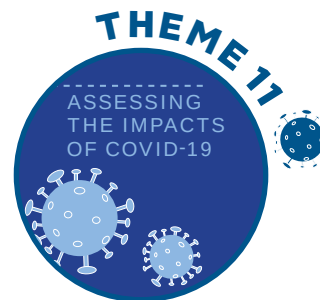
- Implementing the Parks Spectrum and Level of Service Standards
- Consideration of schools, libraries, emergency services and community facilities during the evaluation of future serviced growth centres



- Set up a program of study to develop and model several alternate future scenarios based on stable and uncertain variables
- Engage communities on what they think should be studied and considered when planning for the future of HRM to inform the 2030-2050 Regional Plan.



- Developing a program of study for the protection of wildlife corridors
- Reviewing the Municipality's ability to protect environmentally sensitive or important lands
- Improving protection for watercourses, wetlands and coastal areas



- Using an equity lens, monitor the pandemic's impacts and establish a framework to track impacts over time
- Including the public in considering the broader impacts over time



- Establishing a program of study to assess climate risks and community preparedness, including analysis of critical infrastructure.
- Adopt policy to direct consideration of alternative energy systems, such as district energy and microgrids

