

ATTACHMENT F

Public Participation Program

BE IT RESOLVED by Halifax Regional Council that the Revised Public Participation Program for the Regional Plan Review is amended as follows:

1. The title page is amended by deleting the number as shown in strikeout and adding the text shown in bold:

~~DECEMBER 2021 UPDATE~~ **PHASE 4 ENGAGEMENT: DRAFT PLAN RELEASE
JUNE 2023**

2. The Introduction is amended by deleting the text as shown in strikeout and adding the text shown in bold:

~~After 5 years of directing and managing growth in the region, the first Regional Plan review (RP+5) was initiated in 2011 to ensure the Plan still reflected the Municipality's goals for growth and development. The Plan was readopted in 2014. The second five-year review was initiated in February 2020 with the Regional Council approvals process anticipated to begin in 2022.~~ **and is taking a phased approach:**

- **Phase 1: Initiation & Early Engagement - determine the scope and initial approach to the review**
- **Phase 2: Themes & Directions - gather feedback on the Municipality's approach to the Regional Plan Review**
- **Phase 3: Quick Adjustments – consideration of amendments to the Regional Plan that align with Regional Council's goals, as a rapid response to current housing conditions;**
- **Phase 4: Draft Regional Plan – return to Regional Council with remaining policy framework; and**
- **Phase 5: Future Growth Planning – create a work plan and begin analysis of additional lands to be considered for expansion in anticipation of continued growth.**

~~This review is considered a minor review as the overall policy framework and intent of the Regional Plan remains sound. The focus of the review will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the policies and programs contained in the 2014 Regional Plan, and to revise policies as necessary, based on any new policy direction contained in the Priority Plans. Public engagement will be used to identify any new or emerging issues not captured through Priority Planning. The key Priority Plans include:~~

Phase 4 will update the Regional Plan to respond to the region's population growth and housing pressures with a focus on developing complete communities,

protecting natural and cultural resources, and acting on climate. The updated Regional Plan will establish policy direction to continue guiding the Community Planning Program (Suburban and Rural Planning), will reflect the goals and objectives of the Municipality's Priority Plans, including:

- the Integrated Mobility Plan (adopted in 2017);
- the Halifax Green Network Plan (adopted in 2018);
- People, Planet, Prosperity: HRM Economic Strategy 2022-2027;
- HalifACT 2050 (Community Energy & Climate Action Plan) (adopted in 2020); and
- Sharing Our Stories (Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan) (adoption targeted for 2023).

~~Staff will also use this review period to identify any key emerging trends or planning research that might be required to establish the policy program for the next significant review period. As well, the Regional Plan will establish policy direction to continue guiding the Plan & By-law Simplification program.~~

During Phase 4, staff will also identify any key emerging trends or planning research that might be required to establish the policy program in Phase 5, expected to begin in 2024 following the adoption of the updated Regional Plan.

The Regional Plan Review engagement program will build on past engagement activities and explore opportunities to improve upon and achieve the Regional Plan's vision and objectives. Given the regional context, engagement activities must cover the entirety of the region and the engagement tactics presented in this plan to reflect the review's expansive geography, **with a special focus on suburban and rural areas where the Plan is proposing some strategic changes.** This document outlines a detailed work plan for engagement during **Phase 4** of the Regional Plan Review process.

3. The Engagement Overview is amended by deleting the text as shown in strikeout and adding the text shown in bold:

The purpose of this document is to identify opportunities and establish ways and means of seeking the opinions of the public on the Regional Plan Review. This document recommends *who* to engage and consult with, as well as *how and when* consultation should be done. A series of engagement tactics are recommended to enable Regional Plan Review staff to target a variety of stakeholders across the region. This work plan will give staff the meaningful feedback needed to bring forward amendments to the Regional Plan for Regional Council to consider.

~~This review of the Regional Plan is positioned to include engagement from other region-wide projects and to build upon the 2006 and 2014 Plans. The engagement is intended to include a two-way flow of communication where planning staff share information about the review with the public while also identifying changing priorities through their feedback.~~

~~Engagement tactics will be divided into phases; the tactics selected for each phase will reflect the type of public input appropriate at that stage of progress in the Regional Plan Review.~~

~~The Engagement Plan was first adopted in February 2020 at the time of Regional Council's initiation of the Regional Plan Review. The plan was updated in November 2020 to reflect the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the timelines and engagement approaches for the project.~~

~~This document is the revised Engagement Plan as of December 2021.~~

Significant engagement has already taken place, helping to shape the policy directions endorsed by Council in Phase 3. Work to date has included:

- Phase 1 began when the Regional Plan Review was initiated by Regional Council on February 25, 2020 and continued into Winter 2021. Phase 1 introduced the Municipality's approach to the Regional Plan Review and received feedback.**
- Phase 2 began in May 2021, when the project team presented the Themes and Directions Report. The goal of this phase of engagement was to provide an overview of the draft policy framework highlighting the proposed major changes. This Phase concluded in December 2021.**
- Phase 3 took place over the first 6 months of 2022. The goal was to solicit feedback on the projects and smaller policy adjustments being made to allow housing development proposals to proceed in advance of the Regional Plan Draft Document. This Phase concluded in July 2022.**

The Regional Plan provides policy for the whole municipality. As a result, engagement must be broad and inclusive to all residents, particularly underrepresented communities. The Regional Plan Review will build upon the engagement that has been completed as part of the development of the Municipality's various priority plans, which each featured robust engagement strategies to reach the public, stakeholders and interest groups.

The Regional Plan Review Engagement Plan was first adopted in February 2020 at the time of Regional Council's initiation of the Regional Plan Review. The plan was updated in November 2020 to reflect the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the timelines and engagement approaches for the project. Engagement during Phases 2 and 3 was largely online due to public health restrictions. With restrictions lifted, Phase 4 engagement will utilize both in-person and virtual methods.

4. The Engagement Tactics is amended by deleting the text as shown in ~~strikeout~~ and adding the text shown in **bold**:

A State of Emergency was declared in Nova Scotia on March 22, 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, it is anticipated that some form of state of emergency or limitations on public gatherings will remain in place for much of the Regional Plan Review process. It is also likely that when formal restrictions are lifted, some residents may still be apprehensive about attending large public gatherings. As a result, staff have developed alternative engagement strategies for the Regional Plan Review that do not rely on in-person engagement.

A. Online Engagement

The main engagement tactic that will be used to gather feedback throughout the Regional Plan Review will be the project's Shape Your City page. The Regional Plan Review page will be designed to be informative and interactive. It will feature clear project updates and messaging, access to reference documents for review and a variety of engagement tools to allow residents to provide feedback and ask questions. Engagement tools that may be used include:

- Surveys
- Polls/Rankings
- Idea Boards
- Q&A Pages
- Comment Forums

Because of the large target audience for the Regional Plan Review, online engagement is an effective tool to reach residents across the municipality. However, online engagement does not allow for real time interaction between residents and staff. As a result, the Regional Plan Review Team will prioritize keeping the page updated and responding to participants in a timely manner.

B. Email/Phone Commenting

It is acknowledged that residents across the municipality will have varying degrees of access to the internet and comfort with online engagement tools. In order to ensure all residents are able to provide comments, traditional engagement options, including phone and email commenting, will be available. Advertising will clearly identify options for residents to provide comments and the relevant contact information.

C. Stakeholder Meetings

Meetings with community stakeholders will be held via video chat and teleconference throughout the Regional Plan Review. These ongoing conversations will be important to develop partnerships, inform the scope of the project and gather information and feedback.

D. Committee Review

~~Regional Council has various advisory boards and committees who hold meetings to review and provide advice to staff and Regional Council, community councils or standing committees. At the initiation of the Regional Plan Review, Regional Council established the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, the Halifax and West Community Council, the Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council, North West Community Council, Regional Centre Community Council, Design Review Committee and Heritage Advisory Committee as the only advisory bodies to the planning process for the project. However, to gain a broad range of feedback, the Regional Plan Review Team will present the Themes and Directions Report to all relevant boards and advisory committees, based on their terms of reference and availability in light of COVID-19.~~

~~As the project progresses, Staff will review gathering limitations at each phase and consider additional engagement options, including small scale in-person engagements, if viable.~~

~~In order to raise awareness of the engagement opportunities available and reach the widest audience possible, extensive advertising through social media, websites, print and other methods will be required. Advertising will be designed to inform residents the Regional Plan Review is currently taking place and highlight the ways participants can find information and provide comments.~~

This review of the Regional Plan is positioned to include engagement from other region-wide projects and to build upon the 2006 and 2014 Plans. The engagement is intended to include a two-way flow of communication where planning staff share information about the review with the public while also identifying changing priorities through their feedback.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency in 2020, staff developed alternative engagement strategies for the Regional Plan Review that do not rely on in-person engagement. These methods have the benefit of reaching people who may not be able to attend regular in-person meetings, although often depend on strong internet access and level of comfort with online interactions. Going forward, the Review will incorporate both in-person and virtual engagement tools.

In order to raise awareness of the engagement opportunities available and reach the widest audience possible, extensive advertising through social media, websites, print and other methods will be required. Advertising will be designed to inform residents the Regional Plan Review is currently taking place and highlight the ways participants can find information and provide comments.

A) In-Person Engagement

Staff will connect with residents in multiple ways and locations, allowing the public to ask questions directly and review engagement materials designed to highlight the major policies being proposed. Engagement tools that may be used include:

- **Pop-ups**
- **Public Open Houses**

- Stakeholder Meetings
- Comment Cards

B) Virtual Engagement

The main online engagement tool will be the project's Shape Your City page. It will feature clear project updates and messaging, access to reference documents, and a variety of engagement tools that allow residents to provide feedback and answer questions. Engagement tools that may be used include:

- Webinars
- Questionnaires
- Comment Forums
- Mapping

C) Email/Telephone

It is acknowledged that residents across the municipality will have varying degrees of access to the internet, comfort with online engagement tools and levels of ability. In order to ensure all residents can provide comments, traditional engagement options, including phone and email commenting, will be available. Advertising will clearly identify residents' options for providing comments and the relevant contact information.

D) Stakeholder Meetings

Meetings with community stakeholders will be held in-person and via Microsoft Teams throughout the Regional Plan Review. These ongoing conversations will be important to develop partnerships, inform the scope of the project and gather information and feedback.

5. Section 3, Engagement Timeline, is amended by deleting the text as shown in ~~strikeout~~ and adding the text shown in **bold**:

Engagement is planned to take place in **five** distinct phases throughout the review process. ~~Some overlap of tactics will occur across the phases.~~ **General correspondence via mail, phone and email will be accepted on an ongoing basis.** ~~Some overlap of tactics will occur across the phases.~~ Originally the Regional Plan Review was expected to occur in three phases. However, since the adoption of the original engagement plan, disruptions such as COVID-19 and faster than anticipated growth and supply challenges have led to adjustments in the work plan. The revised Phasing is presented as follows:

~~Phase 1 began when the Regional Plan Review was initiated by Regional Council on February 25, 2020 and will continue into Fall 2020 Winter 2021. The focus of Phase 1 is to meet with internal and external stakeholders to develop the scope and initial approach to the Regional Plan Review introduce the Municipality's approach to the Regional Plan Review and receive feedback.~~

~~Phase 2 will begin following the release of the Themes & Directions report, anticipated for Winter 2021. This document will introduce the municipality's approach to the Regional Plan Review and public and stakeholder engagement to receive feedback will take place in weeks following. began in May 2021, when the project team presented the Themes and Directions Report. The goal of this phase of engagement was to provide an overview of the draft policy framework highlighting the proposed major changes. This Phase concluded in December 2021.~~

~~Phase 3 of engagement is anticipated to take place in Fall 2021, following the release of the first draft of amendments to the Regional Plan. The goal of this phase of engagement will be to provide an overview of the draft document, highlighting the proposed major changes, and receive feedback. will take place over the first 6 months of 2022. The goal of this engagement is to solicit feedback on the projects and smaller policy adjustments being made to advance housing projects in advance of the Regional Plan Draft Document.~~

~~Additional engagement will take place in 2022, following the release of the final draft of the Regional Plan amendments, to be considered for approval by Regional Council. The goal of these activities will be to provide an overview of the final draft of the Regional Plan amendments and highlight how public input from the previous engagement phases has been used to inform recommendations. This is intended to help residents, stakeholders and Council understand how feedback has been received and used, particularly in the absence of more traditional in-person engagement.~~

~~Phase 4 will take place following the release of the Regional Plan Draft Document. The goal of this engagement will be to provide an overview of the draft of the Regional Plan amendments and highlight how public input from the previous engagement phases has been used to inform recommendations. This is intended to help residents, stakeholders and Council understand how feedback has been received and used, particularly in the absence of more traditional in-person engagement.~~

~~Phase 5 will take place once the Regional Plan has been amended and will focus on advancing lands to support the long-term growth of the municipality.~~

~~Engagement is planned to take place in five distinct phases throughout the review process. General correspondence via mail, phone and email will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Some overlap of tactics will occur across the phases.~~

Phase 1 began when the Regional Plan Review was initiated by Regional Council on February 25, 2020 and focused on meeting with internal and external stakeholders to develop the scope and initial approach to the Regional Plan Review. A "What We Heard" Report for Phase 1 is included as part of the Themes & Directions Report.

Phase 2 began with the release of the Themes & Directions Report, scheduled for Spring and early Summer 2021. The Themes & Directions Report introduces the Municipality's approach to the Regional Plan Review and engagement will be focused on receiving public and stakeholder feedback on this approach. Consultation took place during May and June 2021, as outlined in the engagement calendar. A "What We Heard" Report for Phase 2 was prepared to summarize feedback received from public, stakeholder, and committee engagement and went to Council in December 2021.

Phase 3 work took place during winter 2022. The goal of this phase of engagement was to solicit feedback on amendments that aligned with Council's existing goals, and on site-specific requests from property owners. Public feedback was received via email and phone, and comments via Shape Your City website. Public correspondence received for Phase 3 was included in a report that went to Council in July 2022.

Phase 4 of engagement will take place following the release of a revised draft of the Regional Plan, as part of the Regional Council approval process. The goal of these activities will be to provide an overview of the final draft of the Regional Plan amendments and highlight how public input from the previous engagement phases has been used to inform recommendations. This is intended to help residents, stakeholders and Council understand how feedback has been received and used. Engagement will take place throughout summer and fall 2023.

Detailed scheduling for each engagement phase will be released on the website when available.

Revised Engagement Timeline				
Regional Plan Review				
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Key Milestones	Phase 1 Winter 2020 – Initiation	Phase 2 Spring 2021 – Themes & Directions Report	Phase 3 Spring 2022 – Draft Regional Plan Amendments	Phase 4 Summer & Fall 2023 – Draft Regional Plan
Online Engagement				
Stakeholder Meetings				
Pop-Ups				
Public Open Houses				
Inquiries				

Phase 4 – Detailed Engagement Program

2023	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT
Key Milestones	Draft Plan Released June 20				Engagement Closes October 27
Online Engagement					
Stakeholder Meetings					
Pop-Ups					
Public Open Houses					
Inquiries					

6. A new section A: IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT is being inserted following section 3: Engagement Timelines adding the text shown in bold:

A: IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT

WHAT	• Create 'pop-ups' setup in different locations across HRM to provide information to the residents on the project. • Schedule public open houses for residents to learn more in a formalized set-up
WHO	Members of the Public, Industry, Community Groups, Business Communities, Advocacy Groups
WHEN	Phase 4: July – October 2023
WHERE	Various locations across HRM to ensure equitable opportunity for public engagement.
WHY	▪ Present content, answer questions and gather feedback ▪ Provide opportunities for the public to speak directly with staff ▪ Provide transparency and physical presence to the project ▪ Have print information/material available for display and hand-out;

HOW	▪ Find appropriate locations in communities across the Municipality that are visible and accessible to the public during weekdays, weekends and evenings ▪ Municipality to advertise times, dates, and locations for public events through various print, radio, and media channels ▪
MATERIALS NEEDED	▪ Fact Sheets ▪ Poster boards ▪ Comment Cards

7. The existing section A: Online Engagement is amended by deleting the text as shown in ~~strikeout~~ and adding the text shown in bold:

~~A: ONLINE ENGAGEMENT~~ **B: VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT**

~~PHASES ONE, TWO, THREE,~~ **FOUR, FIVE**

WHAT	Update Shape Your City page with project messaging, background materials and engagement and comment tools ~~for each phase of the project.~~
WHO	Members of the Public, Industry, Community Groups, Business Communities, Advocacy Groups
WHEN	Ongoing (All Phases)
WHERE	www.halifax.ca , www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/regional-plan
WHY	▪ Share project information (project status, calendar of events) ▪ Share documents (~~previous and related studies, releases of project materials~~ draft Regional Plan, fact sheets, maps, etc.) ▪ Post webinars on key Regional Plan themes ▪ Gather feedback from the public (~~surveys, questionnaires, polls, comment forums~~ boxes, Q&As, etc.)
HOW	▪ Municipality to ensure project website remains active & up to date. ▪ Municipality to design engagement tools and analyse feedback.
MATERIALS NEEDED	▪ Engagement materials ▪ Project documents

8. The existing section B. Email/Telephone Commenting is amended by deleting the text as shown in strikeout and adding the text shown in bold:

~~B:~~ **C: EMAIL/TELEPHONE**

~~PHASES ONE, TWO, THREE,~~ **FOUR, FIVE**

WHAT	Respond to email and telephone enquiries on project-related matters and log comments
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WHO	Industry, Community Groups, Business Communities, Advocacy Groups, Members of the Public
WHEN	Ongoing (All Phases)
WHERE	N/A
WHY	To respond to enquiries on project-related matters and direct those contacting staff to available online material
HOW	Email and telephone
MATERIALS NEEDED	Designated Regional Plan Review email address (regionalplan@halifax.ca) and telephone number

9. The existing section C: Stakeholder Meetings is amended by deleting the text as shown in ~~strikeout~~ and adding the text shown in **bold**:

CD: STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

~~PHASE ONE, TWO, THREE, FIVE~~ **FOUR, FIVE**

WHAT	Municipal staff to engage with key stakeholders as requested/required to develop partnerships, inform on the scope and status of the project and gather feedback.
WHO	External and internal stakeholders, including: Municipal, Provincial, Federal and Indigenous governments, Non-Profit and Community Groups (residents' associations and advocacy groups for housing, transportation, environmental, culture & heritage issues), business and economic development groups, development industry and design community.
WHEN	Ongoing (All Phases)
WHERE	In-person and Online
WHY	To develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders To increase awareness of the Regional Plan Review and the role of the Regional Plan To gather feedback from residents and special interest groups
HOW	~~Teleconference line, Skype for Business~~ In-person , Microsoft Teams

MATERIALS NEEDED	Engagement materials
	Project documents
	PowerPoint presentations

10. Section D: Committee Review is deleted in its entirety.

11. Section 4: Evaluation Tools is amended by deleting the text in ~~strikeout~~ and adding the text shown in **bold**:

1. Web Page Analytics
Use web analytics to determine the number of unique visitors, access and the amount of time spent on the webpage.
2. Comment Summaries
The project team will record and measure input from stakeholders and residents. ~~through phone and email comments and Shape Your City survey responses.~~
3. Stakeholder Meeting Summaries
Count **number of** stakeholders ~~attending virtual information~~ sessions. Record attendee questions and comments.
4. **Attendance & Recording Input**
Tracking the number of attendees in all meeting sessions, and recording questions or comments received will enable the Regional Planning team to evaluate, address and respond to the issues highlighted.

12. The table in section 5 Engagement Tactics and Materials Matrix is deleted and replaced with the following table:

Engage ment Material s	A	B	C	D
	In-Person Engagement	Online Engagement	Email & Telephone Commenting	Stakeholder Meetings
1. Fact Sheets	•	•		•
2. Poster Boards	•			
3. Comment Cards	•			
4. Sign-In Sheet	•			
5. Online Questionnaire s/ Comment		•		

Boxes				
6. Online Q&A/ Discussion Forum		•		
7. Maps	•	•		•
8. Calendar of Events		•		•
9. PowerPoint Presentations	•	•		•
10. Website Updates		•		
11. Social Media Posts		•	•	
12. Advertising		•	•	
13. Contact Email & Telephone Number		•	•	•
14. Recorded Webinars		•		

13. Section 6: Phase 4 Key Messages is deleted in its entirety.

14. Section 7: Phase 4 Proposed Calendar of Events is deleted in its entirety.