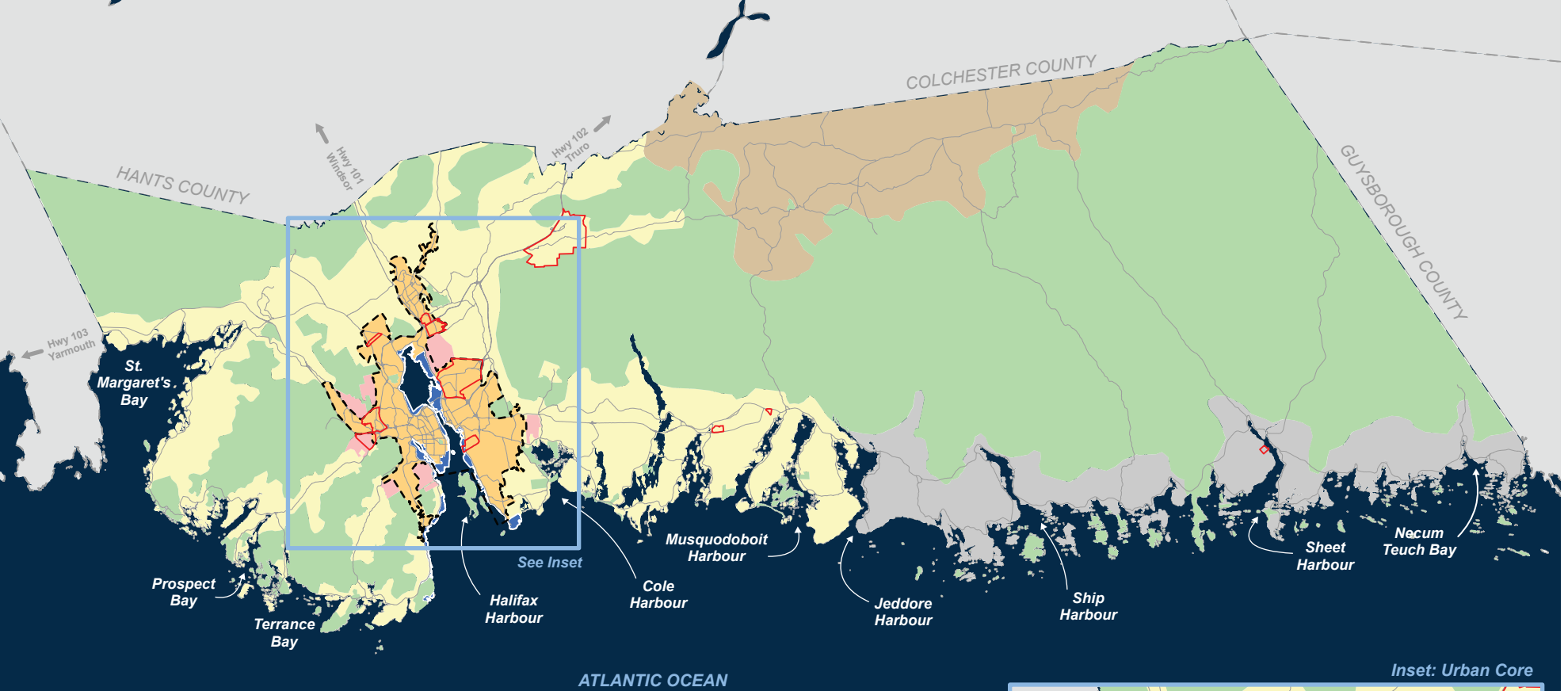


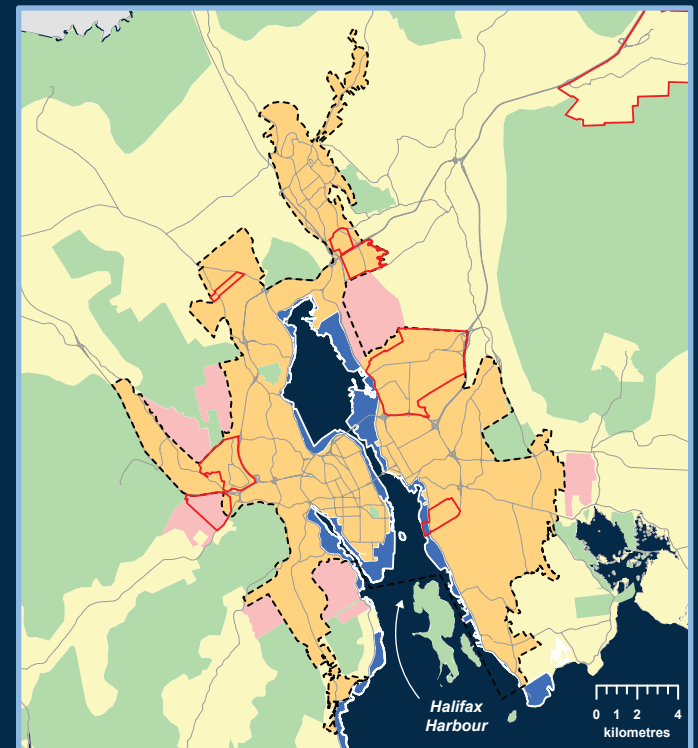
THEME 1

CONSIDERING THE REGIONAL SCALE FIRST

The Regional Plan sets out a common vision and long-range, region-wide planning policies outlining where, when, and how future growth and development should take place between now and 2031. It identifies where future housing, job opportunities, services and amenities should be located across the region as our population grows and changes, and how we should protect the natural environment, the character of our communities and the quality of life in our region. The Regional Plan directs most new development to established centres in urban, suburban and rural communities. The Municipality's physical geographic constraints, existing and planned water and wastewater infrastructure, transit boundary, as well as the location of employment and community facilities significantly impacts where and how the region grows.



Inset: Urban Core



MAP 1 Generalized Future Land Use

Designations (2014 Regional Plan)

- Urban Settlement
- Urban Reserve
- Halifax Harbour
- Rural Commuter
- Rural Resource
- Open Space and Natural Resource
- Agricultural
- Business / Industrial Park
- Urban Transit Service Boundary

0 4 8 16
kilometres



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Map Units: Metre

Map created by Halifax Regional Municipality Research & Data Group.

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kilometres

HOW THIS PLAN SHAPES OUR REGION

The Regional Plan, adopted in 2006, created the first comprehensive blueprint for growth for the entire municipality. It identified where people should live, and how development across the region should be organized and change over time. The plan had a long-range vision to locate new housing in areas that could be easily serviced with piped water and wastewater services, along with transit. Studies showed that this approach would save the Municipality and tax payers hundreds of millions of dollars when compared to previous development patterns of uncontained sprawl. These ideas were also in line with the increasingly popular concept of sustainable communities, coined “smart growth”, and simultaneously ensured the protection of rural character. This 2006 plan also focused on new environmental planning measures, like watercourse setbacks, consideration of coastal flooding, parkland dedication as part of a subdivision process, protecting open space, wetlands, and requirements for watershed studies.

By 2014, the first Regional Plan was reviewed and readopted. The Plan continued to strategically direct new housing to areas with available infrastructure and services, in particular the Regional Centre (Peninsula Halifax and Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway)

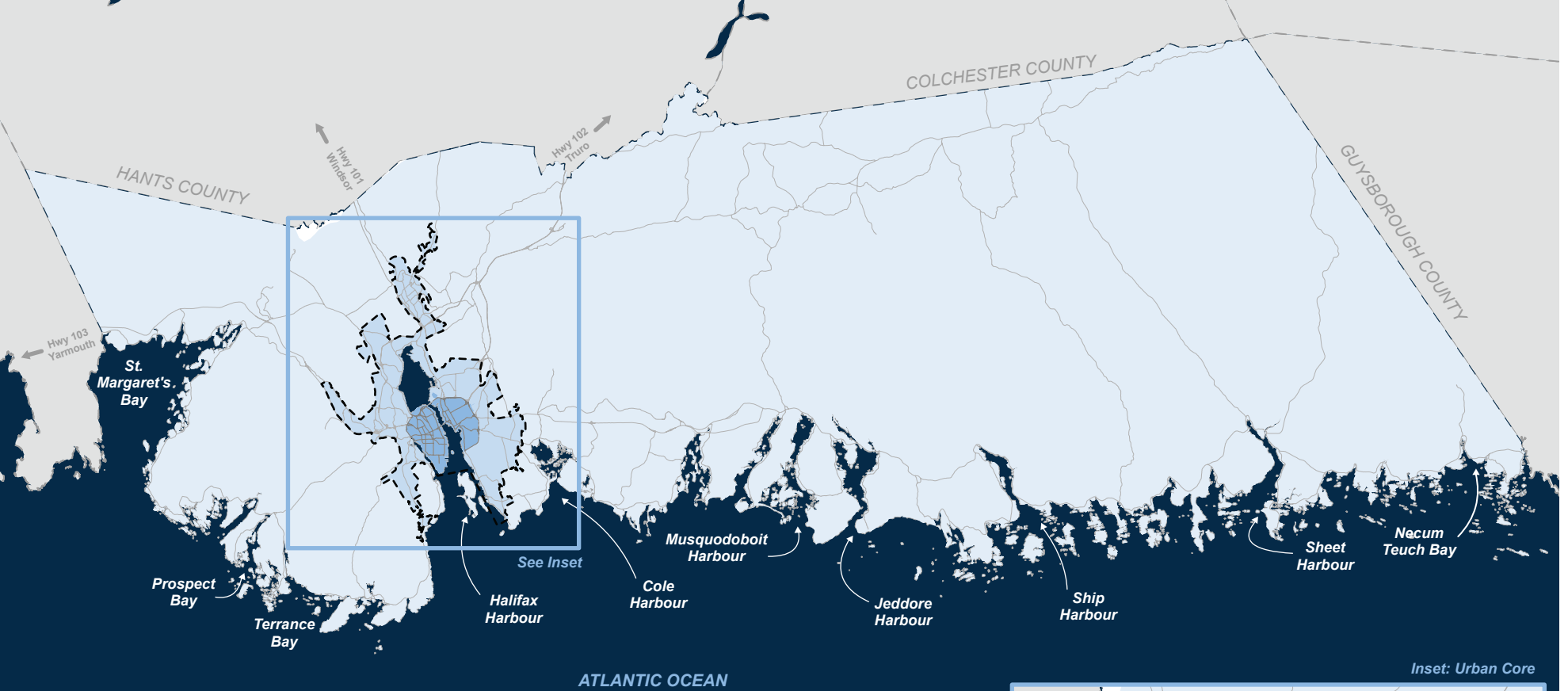
and urban communities (those serviced with publicly managed water and wastewater service outside the Regional Centre).

The Regional Plan uses a Generalized Future Land Use map to outline specific geographic areas of the municipality and provide direction on what type of development should occur in these areas. This map uses seven general land use designations to manage growth. The Urban Settlement and Urban Reserve designations are applied to areas where development serviced with municipal water and wastewater service exists or is planned. The Rural Commuter, Rural Resource, and Agricultural designations apply to areas of rural settlement. The Open Space and Natural Resource designation applies to the region's natural network of open spaces, typically on government-owned and private resource sector lands. The Halifax Harbour designation recognizes the important economic role of our working harbour.

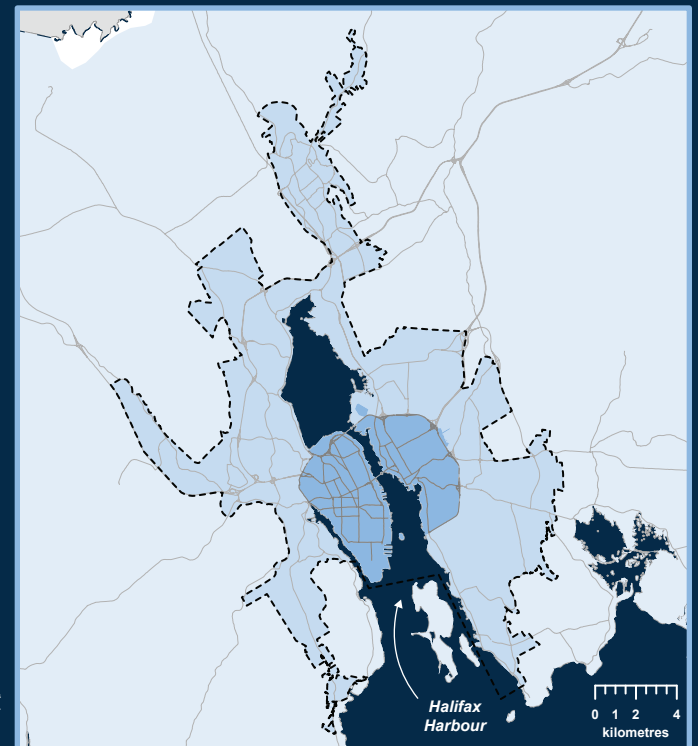
The Regional Plan also identified that additional studies were required to go deeper into policy issues, such as acting on climate change, celebrating culture and heritage, providing more transportation options, and connecting and protecting natural and open spaces. These studies have been completed since 2014 and are known as the Priorities Plans. These plans can be used to direct planning policy and work as well as Council investments and priorities.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

1.1 Review and confirm the Regional Plan's development and growth policies by considering where and how the Municipality will grow within the life of this Plan.

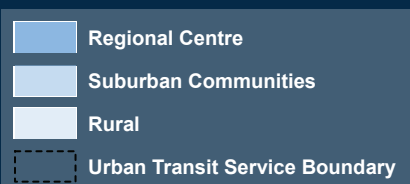


Inset: Urban Core



MAP 2 Regional Plan Geographies

GROWTH TARGETS



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Map Units: Metre

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REGIONAL GROWTH TARGETS

The Regional Plan aims to reduce the cost of constructing and operating infrastructure by maximizing development around existing services, while planning for future requirements in a coordinated manner. This allows everyone involved in community building to plan for providing services well in advance of when they will be needed. The Regional Plan's growth management and infrastructure policies must be reviewed to ensure that they continue to adequately respond to growth and change over time.

The Regional Plan emphasizes a balanced approach to development and establishes targets for directing the location of housing growth over the life of the Regional Plan (2006-2031). In 2006, policy established that 25% of household growth was to be directed to the Regional Centre (Peninsula Halifax and Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway); 50% directed to suburban communities (communities serviced with publicly managed water and wastewater services outside the Regional Centre) and the remaining 25% to the rural areas. During the first five-year review of the Plan, it was found that HRM was underperforming against these targets, and a study was commissioned to assess the public, private and social costs and benefits of various growth scenarios from 2011 to 2031.

The study by Stantec, called "[Quantifying the Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Scenarios](#)" (known as the Stantec Study) concluded that continued adherence to the Regional Plan growth targets would save the municipality \$670 million in costs and that significant additional cost savings could be achieved by increasing growth in the Regional Centre. In response, the 2014 Regional Plan adjusted the growth targets to direct at least 75% of new housing units to the Regional Centre and suburban communities, with at least 25% of new housing units within the Regional Centre.

Since 2014, Regional Council has adopted the Regional Centre Plan, which was designed to accommodate up to 40% of growth in the Regional Centre. The [Integrated Mobility Plan](#) identified that to support the Municipality's mobility goals, it will be important to locate as much as 90% of growth to the Regional Centre and suburban communities.

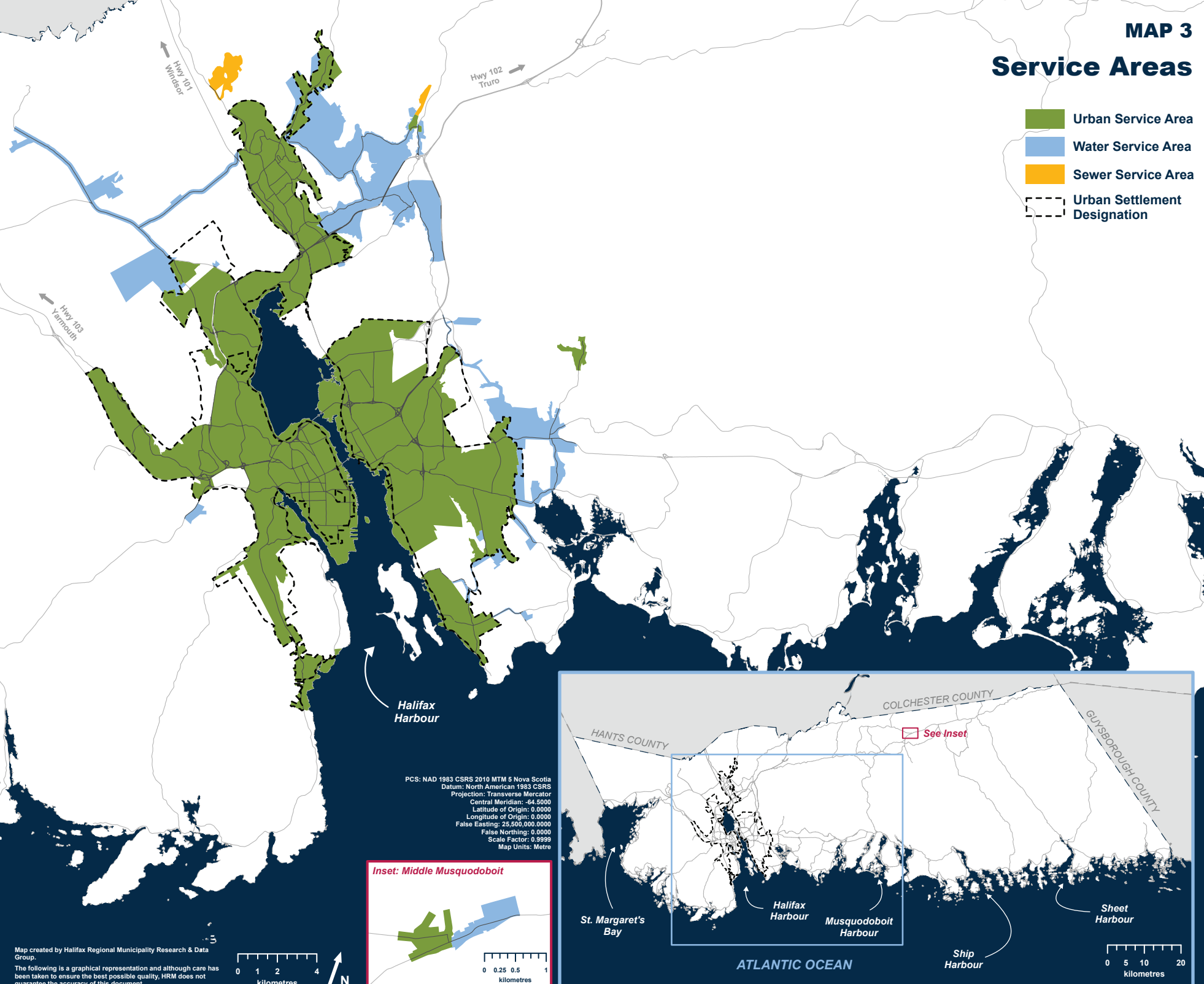
The Regional Plan Review will evaluate the supply of developable lands and growth rate, consider performance against the 2014 targets and determine if these targets should be adjusted.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

1.2 Assess progress towards achieving household growth targets, including population and housing forecasts and their implications in relation to the available supply of developable land, housing supply and demand, and the provision of a range of housing choices.

MAP 3 Service Areas

- Urban Service Area
- Water Service Area
- Sewer Service Area
- Urban Settlement Designation



THE URBAN SERVICE AREA

The Urban Service Area boundary establishes the location of existing piped water and wastewater services. This is used as a growth boundary to ensure the Municipality makes the most effective use of existing infrastructure. The Regional Plan requires a careful, considered process before allowing any expansion of the boundary of the Urban Service Area. This process includes a review of expected population growth, demand for new housing and HRM's growth targets. Because these factors impact long-term decision-making for the region, the Urban Service Area boundary is generally only adjusted during the five-year reviews of the Regional Plan.

The Urban Service Area boundary will be reviewed as part of this Regional Plan Review to ensure that it adequately meets the region's requirements. In addition to the process described above, the review will also consider:

- **Infrastructure Master Plan:** Halifax Water is the municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater utility serving the Halifax region. Halifax Water prepares a long-term servicing strategy, the Infrastructure Master Plan, to address wastewater and water systems to meet growth. The Regional Plan and the Infrastructure Master Plan should work together to effectively achieve their

goals.

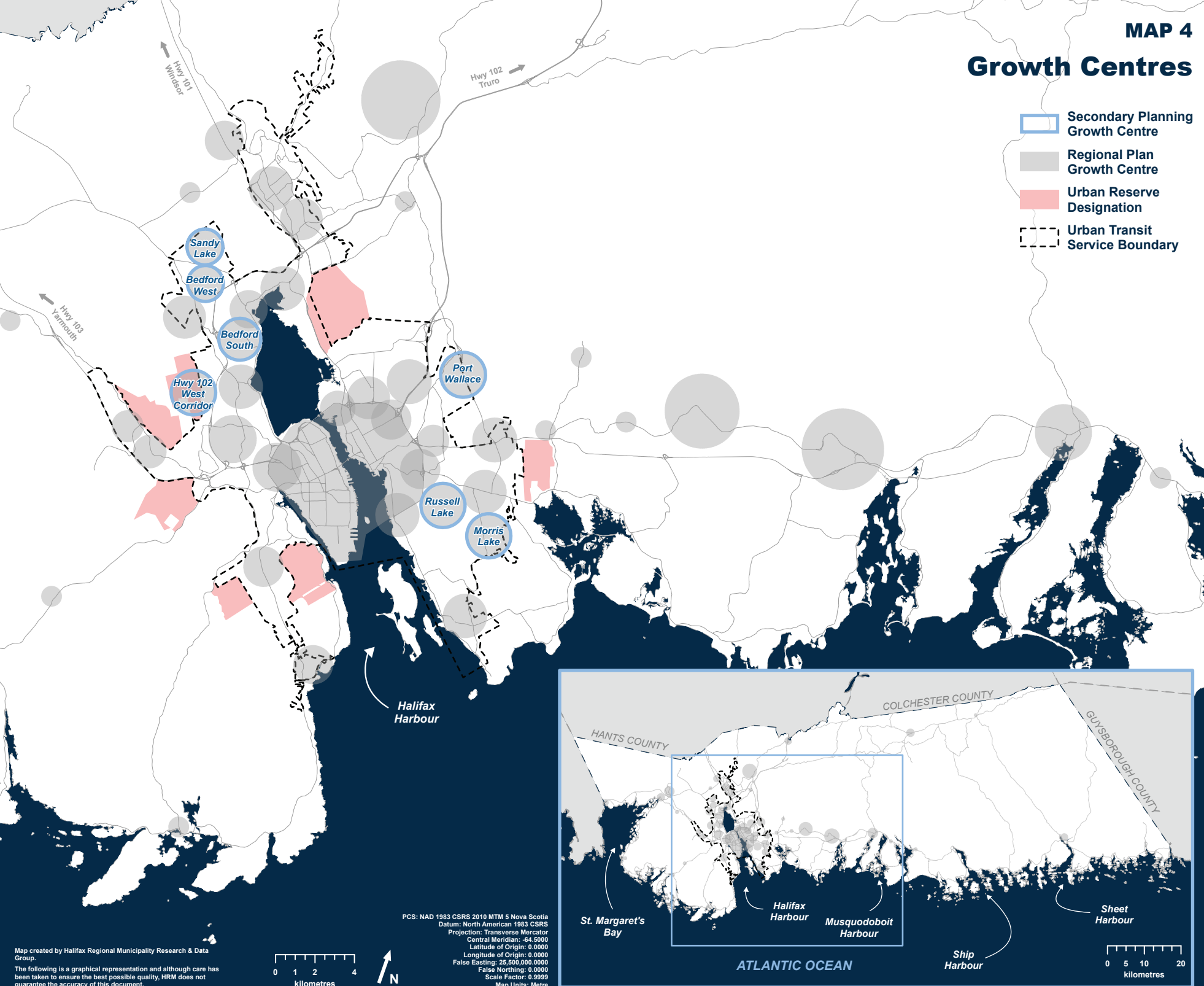
- [Halifax Green Network Plan](#) (HGPN): The HGPN highlights the importance of considering ecological connectivity when evaluating if lands are appropriate for development. The recommendations of the HGPN will be considered as part of the review of the Urban Service Area boundary.
- [Integrated Mobility Plan](#) (IMP): The IMP directs investment in active transportation, transit and the roadway network based on an integrated approach to mobility planning. The recommendations of the IMP will be considered as part of the review of the Urban Service Area boundary.
- **Developer Requests:** The Regional Plan Review will consider requests from developers to expand the Urban Service Area boundary to allow for serviced development on their lands.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

- 1.3 Ensure coordinated and efficient planning of municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure by including Halifax Water as a key member of the Regional Plan Review Steering Committee, and assessing the projected population growth, proposed settlement pattern, and associated infrastructure requirements for the Halifax Water Infrastructure Master Plan.**
- 1.4 Use the concepts of the Halifax Green Network Plan to assess and consider ecological connectivity and value when identifying lands for future serviced development.**
- 1.5 Review and clarify the process for expanding the Urban Service Area boundary to address minor issues or unique circumstances between Regional Plan review periods.**
- 1.6 Identify any developer requests for expansions to the Urban Service Area boundary and assess whether the request should be considered, based on existing policy and the proposed future policy framework.**

Growth Centres

-  Secondary Planning Growth Centre
-  Regional Plan Growth Centre
-  Urban Reserve Designation
-  Urban Transit Service Boundary



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 kilometres



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FUTURE SERVICED COMMUNITIES

Within the Urban Settlement designation, the Regional Plan identified six areas to be considered as potential future serviced communities within the 25-year horizon of the Plan. Before any development can take place, the Regional Plan calls for the Municipality to undertake a comprehensive neighbourhood planning process, often referred to as “secondary planning” or “master planning”. This process identifies the appropriate land uses, street layout, density, open space and other community amenities needed for a new neighbourhood and is supported by a series of background studies. Community engagement and participation is a critically important part of the process. Secondary planning processes can take several years to complete before construction of a new community can begin.

As we enter the final 10 years of the Regional Plan, there are three remaining potential growth areas identified for serviced development that have not been initiated: Lands to the west of Sandy Lake; the Highway 102 West Corridor adjacent to Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area; and lands southeast of Morris Lake. Each of the property owners of these lands have requested to begin the secondary planning process, so that serviced development can be achieved within the life of the Regional Plan as envisioned. The Regional Plan Review

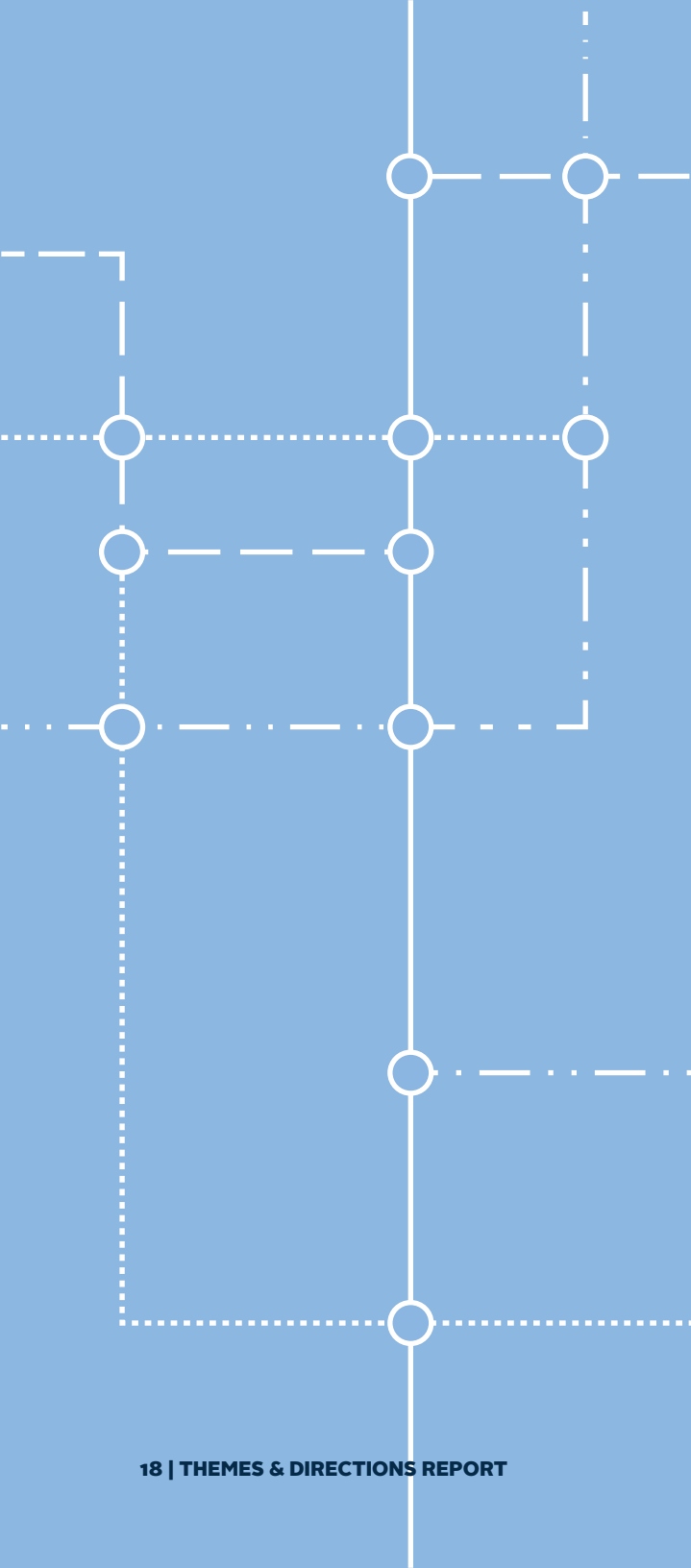
has identified there is a need for additional serviced lands to provide housing and services based on an initial analysis of the region’s projected population growth and demand for housing. Additional information regarding this work is included in the issue paper titled “[Preliminary Population & Housing Analysis](#)”.

The Regional Plan identifies several areas for future growth that are directly connected to important natural areas. In particular, since the Regional Plan Review began in 2020, a significant amount of public correspondence has been received regarding the ecological, cultural and recreational importance of the Sandy Lake Regional Park and Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness areas. When places are identified for potential new development, careful consideration must be given to designing these new neighbourhoods in a way that protects the health of the valuable natural features of these areas. The planning process can define the edge between development and the natural area and incorporate natural open spaces into the development itself. The relationship between these areas must be reviewed carefully to determine an appropriate approach and should align with the objectives and actions in the [Halifax Green Network Plan](#) related to preserving natural corridors and connections. For additional information see Theme 8: Enhancing Environmental Protection.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

1.7 Recommend a process for the development of the Sandy Lake, Highway 102 West Corridor Lands and Morris Lake future serviced communities by assessing the relationship to:

- **Achieving household growth targets, including population and housing forecasts and their implications in available supply of developable land, housing supply and demand, and the provision of affordable housing;**
- **Incorporating the policies and actions of HRM’s priorities plans (including the Halifax Green Network Plan, Integrated Mobility Plan, HalifACT and Sharing Our Stories); and**
- **Planning for existing and future parkland and wilderness areas.**



FINANCING GROWTH

To help facilitate growth without imposing excessive financial burden on taxpayers, the Municipality is permitted by the HRM Charter to recover infrastructure-related costs associated with new growth using “Capital Cost Contributions” or “CCCs”. CCCs allow HRM to pass the cost of new infrastructure to developers and subdividers whose lands receive the benefits of the new services. These charges fund the capital cost of providing infrastructure but do not fund operating or maintenance costs.

The [Integrated Mobility Plan](#) and the [Halifax Green Network Plan](#) recommend adopting regional CCCs to cover growth-related costs for transportation, parks and recreation facilities. The Municipality has hired a consultant to undertake a major study to determine the basis, methodology and implications of adopting regional infrastructure charges. The results of this study are expected to be brought forward to Council in 2021 and outline how the Infrastructure Charge Program should be structured, what the initial charges should be, how the charge program should be implemented, and how to administer it over time.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

1.8 Use the results of the Capital Cost Infrastructure Charges study to determine the basis, methodology and implications of adopting infrastructure charges.

RESERVING LANDS FOR LONG TERM GROWTH

The Regional Plan applied the Urban Reserve designation to lands that were identified as potentially suitable for serviced urban development beyond the 25-year horizon of the plan (after 2031). These lands must be studied to determine if they are required for development in the near future and if they are still appropriate places for serviced development. Some lands may no longer be considered appropriate places for serviced development, such as the Shaw Wilderness Park in the Purcell's Cove Backlands area. As part of the Regional Plan Review, we will review the lands currently within the Urban Reserve designation and consider making adjustments where circumstances may have changed. We will also include policy intent in the Regional Plan to study scenarios for future settlement. This will guide the next iteration of the Regional Plan, which we expect will be adopted by 2031.

One Urban Reserve area has been identified as a land holding that requires special consideration because of its relationship to other council priorities and the objectives of African Nova Scotian Communities. In September 2020, Regional Council endorsed [The African Nova Scotian Road to Economic Prosperity Action Plan](#) which is a collaborative plan developed and owned by the African Nova Scotian community

to advance economic development and community priorities. Action 15 is for Regional Council to “Support the Akoma-led master plan for the restoration of the historic Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children”. On May 4, 2021, Regional Council approved changes to the Regional Plan, Regional Subdivision By-Law, Cole Harbour/Westphal Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law to allow for adaptive reuse of the former Home and a mix of uses adjacent to Highway 7 and Giberson Drive. Comprehensive, long-term planning for the entire site will be considered through the Regional Plan Review process. At the present time, it is recommended that study begin on the lands owned by Akoma, in recognition of Council's objective to support development on the site. Analysis should occur to determine the designation that would best support the site, and what overall density is appropriate for the site based on the relationship to services.

THE REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW WILL:

1.9 Review the lands designated Urban Reserve where circumstances have changed and make appropriate amendments, such as the Purcell's Cove Backlands area.

1.10 Remove the Urban Reserve designation from the Akoma lands as directed in The Road to Economic Prosperity Action Plan and assess the future development of the entire Urban Reserve in relation to:

- **Achieving household growth targets, including population and housing forecasts and their implications in available supply of developable land, housing supply and demand, and the provision of affordable housing; and**
- **Incorporating the policies and actions of HRM's priorities plans (including the Halifax Green Network Plan, Integrated Mobility Plan, HalifACT and Sharing Our Stories).**

1.11 Adopt a policy to require future study of population growth and settlement patterns, including an assessment of Urban Reserve lands (other than the Akoma lands) and the need for new serviced development beyond 2031.