

Welcome to Today's Virtual Q&A!

Meeting will Commence at 12:00 pm

June 16, 2021

HALIFAX

Slide 1



REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW

Themes and Directions

Mobility Q & A
June 16, 2021

HALIFAX



WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

We are reviewing the Regional Plan.

We are here to provide an **overview of the proposed Themes and Directions**. This is the first major deliverable of the Regional Plan Review. We are kicking off a month-long engagement period on this work, including webinars on 6 key themes. Today's Webinar is for Mobility:

- Social Planning
- Housing
- Climate
- Environment
- **Mobility**
- Long Range planning

We are here today because we are reviewing the Regional Plan, which means we are evaluating our land use policies and making sure they represent the direction Council would like to set. We are contemplating how the municipality is physically organized and growing. We kicked off this phase of public engagement on May 20th at Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee – which is the primary advisory body for this work. This evening's session is focused on Mobility.

The Halifax Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan) is a strategic document built on a common vision and principles for the municipality to achieve balanced and sustainable growth.

Originally adopted in 2006, the Regional Plan provided the first comprehensive guide for future growth for the entire municipality following amalgamation. It outlines where, when, and how future growth and development should take place between now and 2031.

4

Now, just to step back and make sure everyone understands the Regional Plan – it is a strategic document – the first planning document adopted after amalgamation that provided a region-wide vision for land use. First adopted in 2006, it provided a comprehensive outline of how growth and development should take place until 2031.

WHAT DOES THE REGIONAL PLAN DO?

- » Provides policy direction for planning at the regional and community level
- » Sets up region-wide land use by-law regulations
- » Establishes the Municipality's intent to conduct future research programs or studies
- » Identifies programming or partnership opportunities



The Regional Plan is powerful in guiding the Municipality's planning and decision-making. As a high-level policy document, it does a few different things -

First, the Plan provides policy direction for planning at the regional and community level – the regional plan sits above the community or secondary plan level documents, and above our land use by-laws, and sets region-wide policy intent.

Where something is important enough that it should apply everywhere, the Regional Plan policy can set up land use by-law regulations that will be applied region-wide. This has been done most often for our environmental regulations, so for example, for setbacks from watercourses, those policies sit in the Regional Plan, and the regulations are rolled out in every community's land use by-law.

It can establish the Municipality's intent to do future research programs or studies. For example, the 2006 Regional Plan called for a series of transportation priorities plans, including a road network plan – which ultimately this became the Integrated Mobility Plan. With its adoption, there is ongoing work related to that plan that will get its own direction

in the regional plan.

And finally, the Regional Plan identifies where there are needs for different types of programming or opportunities to partner with community or other levels of government. Our mobility network is managed by different levels of government and can be supported through partnerships with other groups across our community. For example, the Regional Plan supports the rural transit funding program, which provides grants to community-based transit services in rural areas.

REGIONAL PLAN TIMELINE



This presents the progression of the Regional Plan over the past 15 years. In 2006, we approved the original Regional Plan, and in 2014 we conducted our first review – you might recognize the name RP+5, which was the brand for that review. You can see we are aiming to complete this review in 2022.



WHAT ARE THE THEMES & DIRECTIONS?

Key Ideas, Issues and Potential Changes.

The Themes & Directions document **shares ideas about key planning issues and provides details of the work** that will be completed during the Review. The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the scope of the Regional Plan Review to the public, stakeholders, Council, and ultimately to seek feedback on the content.

The feedback will help provide focus and direction for our work during the Review.

7

The Themes and Directions document was recently released, and it outlines the key ideas and planning issues we will address in the Review. It is chance to step back and ask everyone – do we have this right? Are we headed in the right direction? The feedback we receive will help to provide focus and direction for our work during the Review.



The Themes and Directions document includes 11 Themes. An overview of each theme is available to you on our website – shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/regional-plan.

Today we will be focusing on content from Themes 1 and 4. Theme 1 focuses on our role in enabling growth across the region, and theme 4 focuses on mobility.

The Municipality recognizes that transportation and land use planning are inseparable and the decision-making process for both must be integrated.

CENTRAL QUESTION

Regional-Scale

How do we locate housing and employment in smart (strategic) locations, so that growth can happen easily, and in a way that furthers the municipality's most important goals?

9

There are a few key questions we are trying to answer through the review. The first is: How do we locate housing and employment in smart (strategic) locations, so that growth can happen easily, and in a way that furthers the municipality's most important goals?



REGIONAL-SCALE QUESTIONS

How Are We Growing?

What is the projected demand for housing and employment over the horizon of the plan and into the future?

Where Should We Grow?

Where are the best places to locate residential and employment growth? Considerations include:

- The current land use framework and development pattern;
- The existing and future location of services and infrastructure;
- The areas we want to preserve, protect, or treat with special attention; and
- Our aspirations for a sustainable future.

10

We can break this down into two key questions –

First, how are we growing?

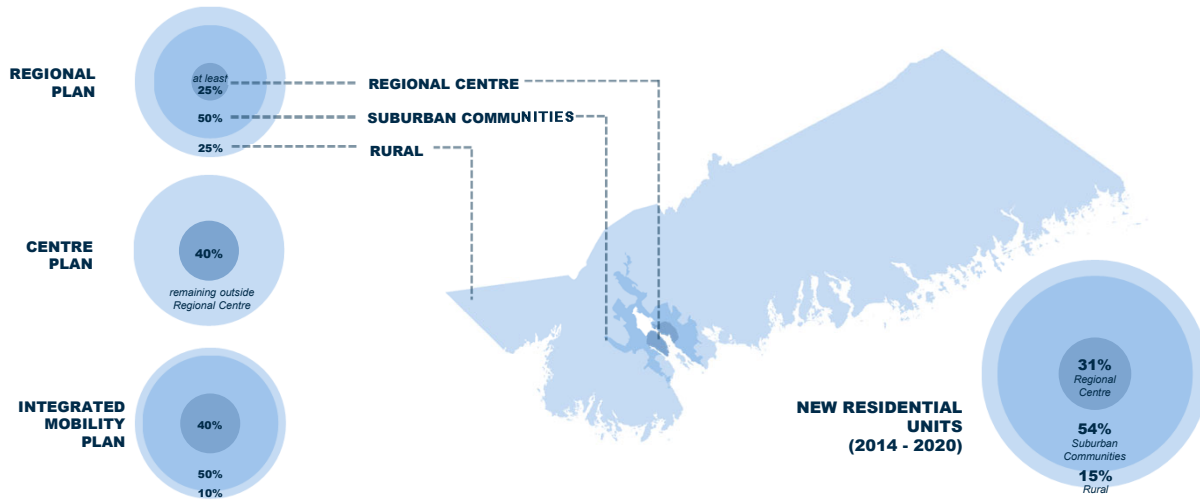
We need to evaluate the projected demand for housing and employment today and into the future. To do this, we are relying on two key pieces of information – our housing and population analysis, and our industrial and employment land analysis.

The second question we ask, is where should we grow?

Once we know how much we are going to grow, we begin to assess where new housing and jobs can be accommodated. It isn't only about where there are pieces of land that can be developed, but where that land is located, as it relates to the location of services and infrastructure.

We think about how and where we can infill, or where we should expand the city into greenfield areas – this is done with careful consideration as to how development can be serviced with water, sewer, transit, recreation – and studying how we should be preserving or protecting important pieces of ecological or cultural land. And as Regional Council has identified aspirations for a sustainable future, such as the Integrated Mobility Plan's mode share targets and the emissions reduction targets in HalifACT, we can update our modelling and assess how different land use growth scenarios might interact with these long-term objectives.

GROWTH TARGETS



11

The Regional Plan set growth targets for where new housing should be located.

The 2014 Regional Plan identified that 75% of new housing units should be located inside the Regional Centre and Suburban Communities, with at least 25% in the Regional Centre.

When we completed the foundational work for the Centre Plan, it identified that the Regional Centre could accommodate 40% of new growth.

Following that, in 2017, the Integrated Mobility Plan looked in further detail at the growth targets and assessed our ability to meet our mode share targets (which aim to increase how often residents walk, cycle, roll or take transit, and decrease our reliance on private vehicles). That plan suggested that in order to meet our mode-share targets we need to locate as much growth as possible within the service boundary. So the IMP assumed that the Centre Plan would meet its 40% target, that 50% growth would be achieved in suburban areas, inside the service boundary, with only 10% growth outside the service boundary.

On the right you can see how we have performed against these growth targets in the past 6 years – 31% of new units were built in the Regional Centre, 54% in suburban communities, and 15% in rural communities.



The Integrated Mobility Plan

The Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP), adopted by Council in December 2017, represents a region-wide vision for mobility and directs future investment in transportation demand management (TDM), transit, active transportation (AT), and the roadway network.

- The Regional Plan will be updated to reflect the IMP's approach and set policy intent for future integrated mobility planning.

12

The Integrated Mobility Plan – or IMP – contains a region-wide vision for mobility and directs future investment in transportation demand management, transit, active transportation, and the roadway network. The IMP represents a significant shift in the Municipality's approach to transportation. The movement of people, rather than vehicles, is at the heart of the plan.

Since the plan's adoption in 2017, a team of staff across municipal departments has been working to move the IMP's actions forward. Our work on the Regional Plan Review will be instrumental in making sure that our region-wide mobility policies are consistent with that plan. We will update the Transportation and Mobility chapter of the Regional Plan to reflect the policies and actions of the IMP and its regional approach to transportation planning. We'll also set policy intent in the Regional Plan for future work that we intend to do as the city grows. This will involve many different actions, and I'll talk about a few of them in more detail on the following slides.



Functional Plans for Multi-Modal Corridors

Some roads across the region have been identified as “strategic multi-modal corridors”. These are important connections for moving people and goods, by vehicle, transit or active transportation.

THE REGIONAL PLAN WILL:

- Update Regional Plan policy to identify strategic multi-modal corridors that connect communities
- Study opportunities for land acquisition tools to inform an acquisition strategy for these corridors

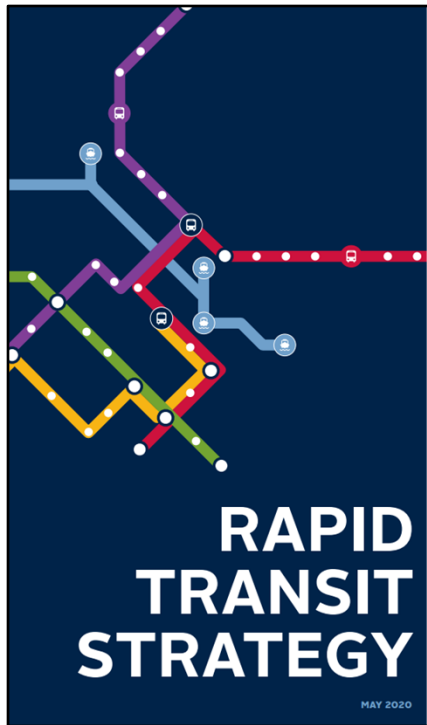
13

Some roads across the region have been identified as “strategic multi-modal corridors” - these are important transportation connections for moving people and goods, be it by vehicle, transit or active transportation (walking, using a mobility device or cycling).

These corridors have been identified in the Moving Forward Together Plan, Active Transportation Priorities Plan and the IMP and were further refined in the Rapid Transit Strategy.

We will update Regional Plan policy to identify strategic multi-modal corridors that connect communities. This means we will include policy direction to guide future functional plans for these corridors and direct land use along these corridors so that it supports our mobility objectives.

We will also set up study of land acquisition tools, which will help us in preserving and acquiring right-of-way lands for investments in these corridors and help in guiding a land acquisition strategy.

A graphic on a dark blue background showing a network of colorful lines (purple, blue, green, yellow, red) representing transit routes. Small white circles with blue outlines are placed along these lines, some containing a bus icon. The text "RAPID TRANSIT STRATEGY" is written in large, bold, white capital letters at the bottom. Below it, in smaller white capital letters, is "MAY 2020".

Implementing the Rapid Transit Strategy

Adopted in 2020, the Rapid Transit Strategy aims to build a rapid transit network by 2030. It recommended a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network and three new ferry routes connecting a new terminal to downtown Halifax.

THE REGIONAL PLAN WILL:

- Plan for higher-density mixed use development around Rapid Transit, and create policy direction for providing affordable housing, connectivity of local streets and active transportation infrastructure near stations and terminals

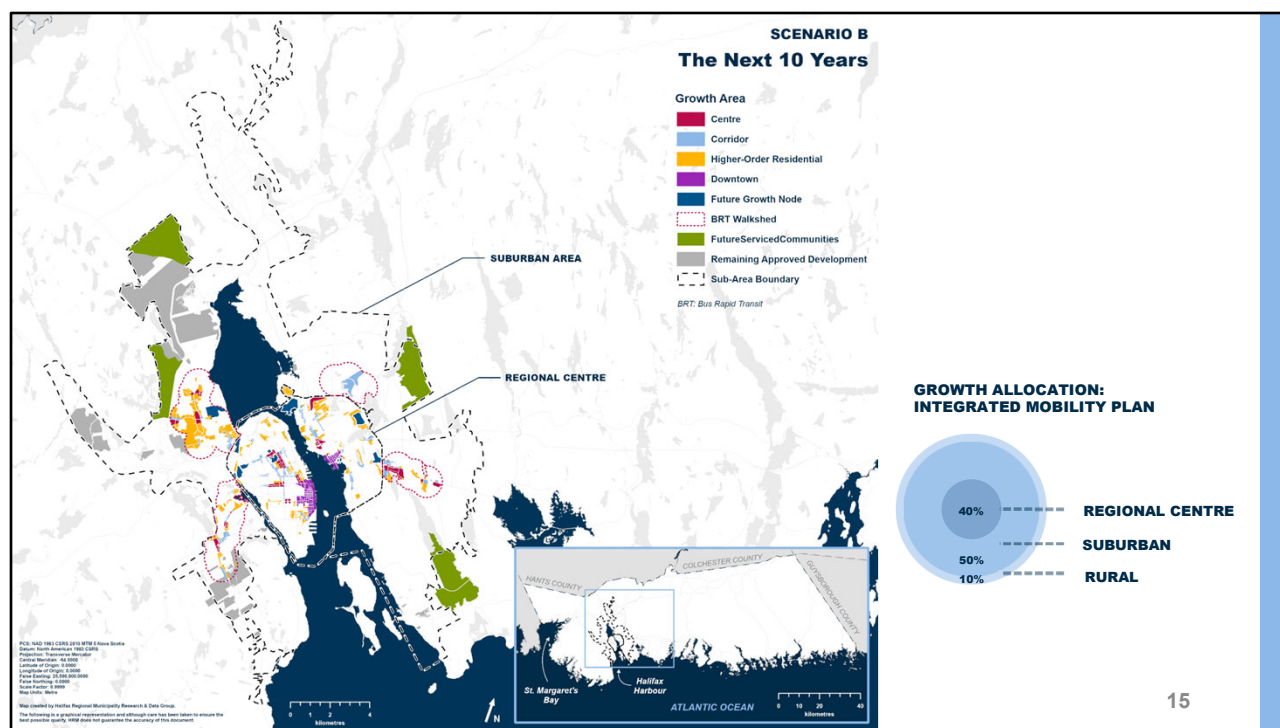
14

In May 2020, Regional Council approved the Rapid Transit Strategy, which aims to build a rapid transit network by 2030. This strategy builds on the vision of the Integrated Mobility Plan, aiming to improve sustainable transportation options and better support population growth. It directs investment in high-quality transit service and infrastructure, a key to improving residents' mobility and building more sustainable, affordable, and equitable communities.

The proposed Bus Rapid Transit (or BRT) network consists of four fixed-route bus lines which will provide all-day service, including 10-minute frequency from 6am to 10pm. BRT lines will have fewer stops than local routes to reduce travel times. BRT will improve freedom of movement around the municipality, complementing local and express bus routes and increasing access to employment for many residents. The Rapid Transit Strategy also proposes three new ferry routes, each connecting a new terminal to downtown Halifax.

To create sustainable, transit-oriented complete communities, the Municipality is aligning our land use policy and rapid transit by planning for higher-density mixed-use development around existing and planned

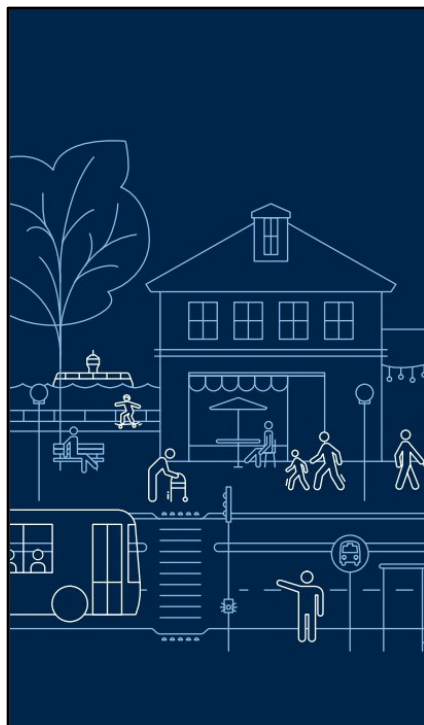
stations and terminals, working to ensure that affordable housing and amenities are available nearby, and improving local street connectivity and active transportation infrastructure.



As I mentioned earlier, the Regional Plan and Integrated Mobility Plan directs that most growth should be located where there are existing services. To achieve the IMP's mode share targets, we know that we have to locate most new housing and jobs where people can easily access the frequent transit network.

During the Rapid Transit Strategy, we looked at a so-called "walkshed" of 800 metres – with the expectation that people that live and work within 800 metres of a rapid transit stop would be able to easily access the network – and we explored how we could update our land use policy to encourage new housing and jobs to locate around the rapid transit network.

We have continued this work during the Regional Plan Review. The map on the slide is a part of our scenario planning from our population and housing analysis, and it shows the BRT walksheds and some preliminary ideas about how growth could happen in these areas. As we update our land use policies for our suburban areas – those areas outside the Regional Centre, but inside the Urban Transit Service Boundary, we will be working to make sure that most growth is aligned with the transit network.



Regional Transportation Planning

The Regional Plan review offers an opportunity to set up future study of additional Rapid Transit corridors or areas that may be suitable for Rapid Transit expansion once the proposed network is implemented.

- The Regional Plan review will establish the framework for a long-term study and visioning process for land use and transportation beyond 2031.

16

Momentous social and technological changes, from virtual work to autonomous vehicles, are transforming how people move around cities. The long-term implications of these changes for transit and land use patterns are uncertain.

In this context, it is vital that a long-term vision for transit, including Rapid Transit, be considered together with a long-term vision for land use as travel behaviour patterns continue to change.

The Regional Plan Review offers an opportunity to set up future study of additional Rapid Transit corridors or areas that may be suitable for Rapid Transit expansion once the proposed network is implemented. The Regional Plan review will establish the framework for a long-term study and visioning process for land use and transportation beyond 2031.



Accessibility

Many residents are affected by accessibility concerns and with an aging population, the amount of people with mobility limitations will increase. Creating an accessible city helps create barrier-free and safe journeys for everyone.

THE REGIONAL PLAN WILL:

- Review and update planning documents to ensure they support the Accessibility Strategy and work toward making HRM an inclusive

17

And finally, the Regional Plan has important role to play in our work towards making HRM a city for people of all abilities, ages and backgrounds. When we're talking about mobility across the region, accessibility is one of the most important considerations. Our planning and development regulations address a wide range of physical accessibility issues – including access to buildings, the design of the buildings themselves, how our streets and sidewalks are organized, the location of barrier-free parking, signage and wayfinding, etc. Our strategic planning can also support accessible active transportation routes, accessible taxi services and accessible transit. Our planning policies can support how we run our public engagement activities in an inclusive and accessible way, and direct that we partner with community to learn from others' experiences and help to improve the work we do and the services we deliver.

Through the Regional Plan Review we will be reviewing our planning documents to make sure that they are aligned with the goal of bringing HRM closer to being a city for people of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds. Regional Council recently approved the Accessibility Strategy, and the Regional Plan will support that ongoing work.

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

Visit: www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/regional-plan

Email: regionalplan@halifax.ca

Phone: 902.233.2501

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

HALIFAX

**Thank You
For Your
Participation!**

Regional Planning



regionalplan@halifax.ca



902-233-2501

Shape Your City: www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/regional-plan

Public feedback will be collected until July 16

Slide 19

Regional Plan Review

Transcript - Mobility Virtual Q&A (June 16, 2021)

This transcript has been edited for content and clarity.

QUESTION: Could you provide us with some additional information regarding the rural transit funding program?

Erin Blay, Supervisor, Service Design and Projects, Halifax Transit

The Rural Transit Funding Program was approved in 2014. Regional Council identified a need through the Regional Plan approval that would help the municipality to support not-for-profit organizations that were providing transportation services for members of the HRM community where Halifax Transit service isn't operating and maybe doesn't make sense. The Rural Transit Funding Program is a grants program through which rural transit operators can apply for funding to subsidize the cost of operating their service within HRM. In order to qualify, an organization has to be providing a service that's not competing with Halifax Transit generally, in the rural areas or outer urban area. It has to be available to the public and be operated by a not-for-profit. Grants are awarded to approved organizations in two ways -- One is a lump sum payment and that's either \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year. Then after that, for every in-service kilometre that they report to us, they are paid \$0.50 per kilometre. For example, last year even with the pandemic through this program, we paid out nearly a quarter of \$1,000,000 to four service providers in HRM. I think that one of the really cool parts that program is that since it is areas outside of the Halifax Transit Service area, it's likely that a large percentage of the trips that are being made on those services wouldn't have been made if these organizations weren't available.

QUESTION: How is the municipality working to design complete streets?

Tanya Davis, Program Manager, Transportation Planning

As part of the IMP, one of the foundational policies is complete streets. Over the last number of years, we've created a complete streets checklist. As our capital projects come up, we look at each project through a complete streets lens. For example, how can we adapt the street to be more user friendly for all ages and abilities? It's important as we go through that we try to adapt the streets to accommodate that. It's important to note that not all streets will be complete for all users. Some streets will have

certain priorities for different users. It's a great way to make sure that we're looking at how to accommodate people as they move through our streets.

QUESTION: Once the Rapid Transit system is completed in 2030, will the RTS lines all have dedicated bus lanes for the entire route or at least a significant portion?

Erin Blay, Supervisor, Service Design and Projects, Halifax Transit

The [Rapid Transit Strategy](#) was approved in the spring of last year and the proposed bus rapid transit network or BRT network includes four fixed route bus lines that will operate all day seven days a week with at least 10 minute frequency from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM. The Rapid Transit Strategy estimates that approximately 60% of the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) network will have dedicated lanes – that's subject to functional and detailed design. Sixty percent is a pretty good amount. That's not to say that the rest of the network won't -- the other 40% could have, for example, signal priority. This would be the starting phase. I think we would also be looking to extend beyond that 60% as well.

QUESTION: Great presentation! You mentioned how HRM will be focusing new development of homes and jobs around existing transit and BRT infrastructure. I strongly agree, but how will this be accomplished? Much of this area has already been developed. Thanks for your consideration!

Kate Greene, Program Manager, Regional Planning

When we did the Rapid Transit Strategy, we studied our suburban areas, in particular the opportunities for redevelopment along those corridors. We looked at things like the age of buildings, the size of properties that were directly adjacent to the corridors as well as underutilized sites like parking lots, where do those exist? We explored what the opportunities are to infill in such a way that we can begin to transition those corridors and the densities that are along those corridors. When we set our planning policy through the Regional Plan, one of the things we'll be working on with Council is what do we want those corridors to look like? What's the scale of buildings? How many people do we want to locate along those corridors in order to support rapid transit? There's lots of work out there around how many people you need to put in close proximity to those corridors in order to support transit and high frequency transit in particular. The idea is, as

people move to those corridors and start living in those corridors, they don't actually have to commute by car. They can use the transit system to get around in the city and make a different mode choice.

Leah Perrin, Principal Planner, Regional Planning

The reason that we focused that work on the suburban areas is that the Regional Centre Plan process has already looked at where growth will go in the Regional Centre. With these density targets, you know what level of development you need in order to support rapid transit -- in the Regional Centre we have a lot of places already that will support that level of transit. Our future work is focused on areas where we haven't done that additional research and it will support our future regulations.

QUESTION: What are the BRT routes and ferry routes included in the Rapid Transit Strategy?

Erin Blay, Supervisor, Service Design and Projects, Halifax Transit

The Rapid Transit Strategy included four fixed route bus lines. We call those the Purple line, the Green line, the Red line and the Yellow line.

The Purple line will travel on Larry Uteck and it's a cross town route. It starts on Larry Uteck and goes all the way to Dartmouth Crossing. It travels in Clayton Park via Dunbrack through Bayers Road and Young Street where there's currently construction on transit priority lanes. Through North Street over the bridge across Wyse Rd and Commodore Drive, to terminate in Dartmouth Crossing. The purple line crosstown is a little bit like the existing Route 3 in some ways.

There's the Green line which will travel from Lacewood all the way to the south end of the peninsula, similar to the existing Corridor route 4. It will travel along Lacewood, Joseph Howe, all the way along Robie Street where we've also started to introduce transit priority, terminating at Saint Mary's University.

The Red line will be traveling in from Dartmouth, Cole Harbour, from the Portland Hills Terminal along Portland Street over the bridge, through downtown Dartmouth and into downtown Halifax over the bridge and up Spring Garden Rd to Dalhousie.

The last line is the Yellow line that's connecting Mainland South. It starts

on Greystone and travels along Herring Cove Rd and to the peninsula and downtown via Connaught, Quinpool, Spring Garden Rd and Barrington.

The three ferry routes are also part of the Rapid Transit Strategy, and all of them are planned to terminate at the Halifax Ferry Terminal. The three new routes are proposed from Larry Uteck, Mill Cove, and Shannon Park.

QUESTION: How is the Transit Service Boundary being considered through the Regional Plan Review?

Kate Greene, Program Manager, Regional Planning

The Urban Transit Service Boundary is where we run conventional bus service and it is an important way that we organize growth and consider where we're going to infill or grow. Often what the municipality does is we think about growing in areas where there are existing services -- where there are bus lines already, where there's piped water, where there's piped wastewater -- that helps us to manage infrastructure efficiently, prevent it from sprawling and keep taxes low on the whole of our citizens and residents. When we review the Regional Plan, we take a look at our infrastructure boundaries, one of which is the Urban Transit Service Boundary, and we study how our population has been growing, where we anticipate future demand to bring new land on line, check to see if there's a need to expand or adjust that boundary in order to accommodate development or our growing population. We're going to start in on that exercise. We've just finished our population projections and are about to start in on this additional work now.

QUESTION: Could you talk a little bit about some of the major active transportation projects that are either coming up or are currently underway?

David MacIsaac, Supervisor, Active Transportation, Transportation and Public Works

We've got active transportation objectives across the municipality, within the Regional Centre. We do a lot of work in suburban communities and increasingly Council has asked us to come back with an action on the IMP for active transportation in rural HRM. The Regional Centre has historically had a very good sidewalk network, so in other parts of this municipality we're playing catch up in terms of building new sidewalks, but we're lucky in the Regional Centre for the most part, that infrastructure is in place.

The focus in the Regional Centre right now is on building bicycle facilities that are safe and comfortable. We call for all ages and abilities so really, for people who don't bicycle now, who aren't comfortable riding in mixed traffic. That makes sense, the technical term for a bicyclist in the engineering profession, is a vulnerable road user because you're not protected by steel and airbags and stuff like that. What we need to do is engineer and design the facilities so that they are safer. What that means in the Regional Centre is on busier streets where we have facilities, we're putting in protected bicycle lanes and doing work at intersections to make them safer. What you will see around town right now are for example on Hollis St, we've got a curb and bollards to protect the bicyclists from the vehicles. South Park Street, we now have protected bike lanes.

One of the other facility types that has been quite successful in other places in North America and Europe are local street bikeways, sometimes called Bicycle Blvd. These are local streets that have not too much traffic, where we put in traffic calming measures and that offer that connectivity from where people live to where they're traveling.

Also, for multi-use pathways, a big project for us now is to make a connection from the peninsula to the western mainland of Clayton Park, Fairview, those places. It's not very well connected now. As part of the Bayers Road transit priority project, we built a multi-use pathway and over the next year or two we're working to connect that to the Chain of Lakes Trail that will connect up into neighbourhoods and even to Lunenburg. That gives you an idea what we're doing in the Regional Centre. In more suburban communities, the focus is on a lot of multi-use pathways or trails. In rural HRM, we're looking at community centres and often on provincial roads, putting in sidewalks, multi-use pathways there. More information about active transportation is available on the HRM website [here](#).

QUESTION: Looking at recent developments, there does not seem to be effective pathways to promote walkability. Does HRM have the ability to direct or advise developers on infrastructure layout? Also could existing neighbourhoods be "retrofitted" with pathways to promote walkability?

David MacIsaac, Supervisor, Active Transportation, Transportation and Public Works

We work in the Transportation and Public Works department, and quite closely with our colleagues in Planning and Development, and they involve us as development applications come in. We work to make them as walkable and connected as possible. I would say there's a challenge. This is something that we talk about as we're doing these regional plans -- sometimes development will get built, the developer as part of that will put in the infrastructure for walking, sometimes bicycling but then there's a disconnect between that and the rest of the network. We have these gaps and we don't have a whole lot of funding and resources as a municipality to fill in those gaps. There's a lot more gaps than we have resources to fill. That's a challenge and we know where a lot of those are, and we're trying to kind of pick them off as we can, but it's certainly a challenge for us.

Leah Perrin, Principal Planner, Regional Planning

I think the question about advising developers on infrastructure layout, certainly through the subdivision process, we do have regulations around how street networks are laid out. There is an ongoing project to review what's called the municipal design guidelines or Red Book that will take more of a complete street lens. I'm not the expert on that, but just thought I would mention it.

Tanya Davis, Program Manager, Transportation Planning

Our municipal specifications are being updated and are coming back to Council on the next steps soon¹. The other thing that we've been working on is the traffic impact assessment guidelines, which is another tool in the toolbox that speaks to how development and the right-of-way interact. There's lots of work being done to continue to move that conversation forward and to make sure that we're getting good infrastructure built.

¹ Update: Regional Council will discuss this matter at their June 29, 2021 meeting – see Item 11.1.11: <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/regional-council/june-29-2021-halifax-regional-council-special-meeting>

QUESTION: Is HRM starting to think about autonomous vehicles (and their implications) in long range mobility and land use planning? We could see lots more of this in 2031++

Tanya Davis, Program Manager, Transportation Planning

We are definitely thinking about autonomous vehicles. We know at some point they will be here in Nova Scotia and I've been working with colleagues nationally on this topic. I sit on a committee through the Transportation Association of Canada to figure out what those impacts are, how we will deal with them because it's not only autonomous vehicles coming, it's how we deal with them from an infrastructure perspective, right down to something as simple as how we paint the lines on our roads in order to guide the vehicles. It's a big topic of conversation in the transportation industry, and something that we're participating in at a national and international level.

Kate Greene, Program Manager, Regional Planning

For the Regional Plan Review, we're asking citizens and residents about their ideas on how we should planning for the long range and what issues are important to begin to imagine possible future states of our community, so we can start to accommodate our rapidly growing population. Part of how we're thinking about this is that there are lots of different possible futures. How do we organize ourselves today to be able to respond to those possible futures as quickly as possible? How do we adapt? Part of that is putting our thinking caps on and thinking about what future state might be most impactful to land use and planning and how our transportation system is organized. Autonomous vehicles could be a major technological change that change how we live. We're wanting everyone's input on that, not just our own.

QUESTION: Great to hear that the priority for transit in the suburbs will be these existing areas where densification will also be prioritized. How do you expect to help prioritize active transportation in these areas to increase, say, walkability and meet community members' needs close to home in these areas, further reducing dependance on cars?

David MacIsaac, Supervisor, Active Transportation, Transportation and Public Works

In more suburban communities some of the things we're doing is working to fill in the sidewalk gaps. Some of those suburban communities are places that were built when the land use planning regulations didn't require sidewalks to go in. We are playing catch up there. The focus when we put new sidewalks or active transportation infrastructure in those suburban communities is to make those connections between where people live and where they access transit and where they shop. I think our suburban communities in Halifax have a bit of a reputation for being car centered. Often when you look at the distances between where people live and where they could shop or access services or go to school, they're not that far. It's very walkable and bikeable, so it's about the infrastructure and making those connections, playing catch up, and then going back and filling in those gaps that weren't put in place in the beginning.

One of the projects that we've started in the past two or three years that are relevant to suburban communities are the street to street walkways that exists behind people's houses. Often those facilities were put in when those communities were built and then haven't been rehabilitated since. That's 20 plus years since -- and what we see in those suburban communities is those end up being quite active for walking, for kids getting to school. We've been making steady progress over the past number of years, rehabilitating and making it possible for them to be cleared from snow in the winter just by having a better-quality surface.

One of the things that we do have in our suburban communities for active transportation is a lot of community groups. Lower Sackville, Cole Harbour, and Spryfield have community trails associations, who are great advocates for active transportation in their communities and have really done some of the work of planning, building, and maintaining some of those facilities. Active transportation is important in suburban HRM and there's some good projects happening. From a mobility perspective it's really one of those

great integrated mobility stories where getting people from their front door to the transit stop requires that active transportation infrastructure in the middle. Working with our colleagues in Transit we are picking those off and making it more accessible and more possible to make those connections.

QUESTION: Are there any plans to install bike paths on Quinpool Road? As indicated there is not much connection in the east-west direction.

David MacIsaac, Supervisor, Active Transportation, Transportation and Public Works

Right now, the plan for bike facilities East-West and that part of the peninsula is to use those local street bikeway facilities. One block north of Quinpool, we've got a segment of local street bikeway on Allen Street. This construction season we're going to build a safer crossing of Oxford to get over to Oak Street and continue further west and eventually across Connaught. Then on the south side of Quinpool we've got a local street bikeway candidate route on Norwood and Shirley. We are looking at the first block of Quinpool from Robie up to Vernon and Quingate that is part of our midtown bikeway planning process. I think that if there were to be bicycle facilities on Quinpool itself in the future, it would have to be a part of a larger planning project. Probably, a complete streets planning project looking at the overall functions, what we need to have on Quinpool from all those modes. But for now, what we're working on is those local street bikeway routes on either side of Quinpool.

QUESTION: Transit infrastructure and plans seem to be focused on transporting people to and from the urban core, especially Downtown Halifax. There are lots of gaps in outer areas like Dartmouth, which will grow exponentially in the near future, yet lacks the plans to support transit in and between non-peninsula communities. Will there be any shift in focus towards inter-community transportation?

Erin Blay, Supervisor, Service Design and Projects, Halifax Transit

There are two things here. First, transit by the nature of the service and the fact that it's not cheap to run, we typically focus our service on the highest trip demand first, providing that with the highest level of service. Right now, our service is very weighted towards those large employment destinations like Downtown Halifax, Burnside, Dartmouth Crossing. These areas also have the highest potential for increased demand. What you would have

seen in the Rapid Transit Strategy routes, that's what those routes were trying to address, those huge demand pockets. All that said, that doesn't include all of the other service that will be on the map, including local service corridor routes, level of service, which can still be 10-15 minute level of service. Other types of routes in the network, many of which will also be able to take advantage of a transit priority measures like those planned or in the works for Portland Street in Dartmouth or Dunbrack. While they're not the same as bus rapid transit, they have always the potential to be upgraded to that in the future. The purpose of those routes is to bring people to locations where they can transfer to other route types and then make those really important connections and they bring people to other locations where they can eat, shop, play, go to school and work near their own community so that they don't have to travel into the peninsula. This describes the hub and spoke style of network that Regional Council approved in the [Moving Forward Together Plan](#).

QUESTION: Many cities are reducing their default speed limits on residential streets to 30km and 40km for safety purposes. Is this something that could be considered in the Regional Plan Review?

Tanya Davis, Program Manager, Transportation Planning

We've had lots of questions around speed limits, over the last little bit around road safety. The way our provincial government is set up we have a NS Motor Vehicle Act and in that, it outlines the default speed limits. The lowest speed limit that we can set currently is 50 kilometers an hour. However, our road safety team in Transportation & Public Works has been working closely with our colleagues at the Provincial Government through the Traffic Authority to work on lowering the default speed limit in neighbourhoods. We as a municipality had to put in an application to say, we think this is a really good idea, we should lower these speeds, these speeds are higher than we would like to see on our residential streets. Can we work together and come up with a new default? I don't know how many neighbourhoods have had lower speed limits put in, but there's been quite a few recently. We're hoping to see more as we go through the process because we know it's one tool in the toolbox to get slower speeds on our streets.

Other tools that we've been looking at though through the [road safety team](#) is around traffic calming, bump outs, speed tables, and speed humps. The complete streets lens and guidelines also help when we're designing new

streets, or retrofits, that we're designing them for the speed in which it's intended. Reducing speed limits is only one piece. There are other pieces in the toolkit to do.

David MacIsaac, Supervisor, Active Transportation, Transportation and Public Works

A lot of what we do with mobility in the municipality has to happen in the context of the Provincial legislation. The municipality owns a certain number of roads, but we've got a provincial highway system that surrounds us. That really impacts modal choice in the municipality. Looking at the Regional Plan, there are tools, policies, and programs that Council can approve and help shape how we're going forward from a mobility perspective. A lot of the factors that will influence how people travel will depend on provincial legislation and provincial policy decisions. We have mechanisms to coordinate for that, but it's something to keep in mind, as we're looking at the future and looking at if we're going to change how we move in the municipality, it has to involve all those jurisdictions, coordinating and collaborating on things like speed limits, road safety and some of the decisions that are made about how we use the infrastructure that we've got.