



COMMENTS ON THE CENTRE PLAN

Package A - May 2018

Including Draft Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy,
Draft Land Use-By Law, and Draft Design Manual.

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Introduction

What does Sustainability Mean to Us?

The Ecology Action Centre is committed to sustainable growth for the creation of a more environmentally-friendly city in the Regional Centre of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). The Centre Plan, which aims to determine how and where the next 18,000 units will be located, is integral to the development of greater density in the Regional Centre and we applaud the work that has gone into achieving this goal thus far. Regional Council

has acknowledged that Climate Change poses a threat to the safety of Haligonians and the longevity of our City, and have begun to introduce legislation to protect us from sea level rise and extreme weather events. Without a sustainable, resilient future Plan for Halifax, we risk our collective future and that of generations to come. To create a sustainable city, we must:



Have a reliable, low-impact transportation system which prioritizes people, not cars;



Build energy-efficient buildings that can withstand the tests of time and give back more than they take away



Prioritize the retention and expansion of natural assets that aid in ecosystem and watershed protection



Protect heritage and cultural assets that make Halifax attractive to residents and tourists



Ensure that all citizens have equitable access to amenities and safe, affordable housing

The way that individuals live day-to-day in Halifax has a direct impact on the environment. Where we live, work, go to school, and how we get between those places, all play key roles in creating a sustainable city. The link between sustainable cities and density has been well established in research. The importance of increasing density in the Regional Core while protecting key ecological and recreational assets outside of the core are vital to realizing our full potential to create a city that attracts businesses, new residents, and offers an excellent quality of life. In collaboration with existing and future Municipal and Provincial policy, especially the Halifax Green Network Plan, it is crucial that we work together to make it affordable and enjoyable to live in the Regional Centre, close to everyday needs.

The Regional Centre is already the densest area of HRM by population, and we will be experiencing population growth that needs to be accommodated with progressive, sustainable practices. With aging infrastructure and low-density sprawl causing long commute times and necessitating car ownership, it is imperative that we as a municipality shift our development patterns and begin to provide options for everyone to live affordably and comfortably in higher-density neighbourhoods.

While we have been satisfied with the directives of the Centre Plan and believe that the Visions and Principles are in line with the development of a sustainable city, we are concerned that the most recent draft of the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS), the Land Use By-law (LUB), and the Design Manual (released in Package A), do not take a strong enough stance on enhancing sustainable growth in the Regional Centre, while respecting culture and heritage and protecting vulnerable communities.

Part 1 of this document, A Vision for Centre and Corridor Zones, has been divided into four subsections: Mobility, Maintaining Fabric and Character, Public Amenities, and Future Climate Scenario. Each subsection pertains to elements of visioning for a sustainable future with Complete Communities, Culture, and Heritage at the forefront. Part 2 of this document, Implementation, is comprised of five subsections: Registered Culture and Heritage, Higher Order Residential Zone, Density Bonusing, Mobility, and Complete Communities. A complete list of recommendations throughout the document can be found in *Appendix A*. A complete list of errors, inconsistencies, and concerns can be found in *Appendix B*. A model Vision for the Gottingen Street Centre can be found in *Appendix C*.



The Centre Plan policies largely recognize that the development of communities happens parcel-by-parcel, but it is integral that visioning is done for neighbourhoods at large. This is currently not included in the Policy, begging whether amenities that are needed in particular neighbourhoods will be encouraged or identified in any manner, or whether the entire process of building a Complete Community will be left up to the private market. If the Vision and Principles were fused effectively throughout the Centre Plan using performance indicators for development proposals, it likely would not require measures like prescriptive design standards, height restrictions, and incentives for good development. With these features, we risk underdevelopment and an inability to grow a substantial enough tax base to support the Complete Communities we intend to build. Ideally, the guidelines and visioning would be strong enough that those making proposals would know what is acceptable and what is not, and those making decisions would be able to easily identify proposals that support the Vision and Principles. Under the documents released through Package A, this is not the case.

In Halifax, we seem to still suffer from Nova Scotia's Provincial have-not syndrome, a mindset caused by being one of the less-wealthy provinces in Canada. This has resulted in our acceptance of, and indeed, promotion of meeting the bare minimum of success; in this case, it has allowed "Growth at all Costs". We need to combat this attitude, and HRM's Centre Plan is the perfect place to start. The Centre Plan needs a vision strong enough that it can withstand debate and out-dated arguments. We need to have the courage to believe that there are city builders with our best interests at heart, and to reject projects that do not fit into our vision. Our experience in the past several years has been that developers will come back with better plans if they are sent back to the drawing board. We need to rely on this experience and hold all city builders to a higher standard in order to confidently implement our collective vision for Halifax and Dartmouth.

**This is how we create a sustainable city;
this is what sustainability means to us.**

Part One

A Vision for new Centre and Corridor Zones

Following the four Visions and Principles introduced in Chapter Two, Chapter Three of the Draft SMPS introduces three new urban structure designations: Centre Designation, Corridor Designation, and Higher Order Residential Designation. These zones are key streets and sites where greater density is encouraged following tenets of the Visions and Principles. What is lacking for these designations is individual visions that acknowledge their differences: what sorts of amenities are

required in each to create a more Complete Community, what cultural and heritage features need to be maintained, and what existing and future modes for transportation are prioritized in each individually. The “Vision for New Growth Designation Zones” will be explored through four topics: Mobility, Fabric and Character, Public Amenities, and Future Climate Scenarios. Each of these is followed by subsequent recommendations for changes or further visioning that must be completed.

Mobility

There needs to be a clear connection between the Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) and the Centre Plan. Each of the Centres and Corridors present distinct mobility advantages and challenges which are explored and planned substantially within the IMP. While the intention of Centre Plan is to encourage the growth of Complete Communities in the Regional Centre, it is unclear, due to lack of specificity and cross-referencing between Centre Plan and the IMP, what the mobility vision for each of the Centres or Corridors might be. Each of the Centres and Corridors are different in terms of the purposes served for transportation, yet they all fall within the same category in the Centre Plan. For example, the present function of transportation for Quinpool Road and Wyse Road present different deficiencies – namely that Quinpool Road largely benefits from a human-scale pedestrian realm and only a two bus routes, while Wyse Road has less of a pedestrian realm but plays host to the Bridge Terminal. The other three Centres, Gottingen Street, Robie Street/Young Street, and Spring Garden Road, likewise have unique mobility functions that are not acknowledged or accounted for in the SMPS.

ONE

Each of the Centres and Corridors needs more specific policies with regards to LINK or PLACE designation. Explicit reference to the IMP should be made where possible.

TWO

Update Policy 99 to include a “shall consider” clause, instead of “may consider”. Clarify what is meant by “Transit Priority Plan” in Policy 99.

Maintaining Fabric and Character

The objectives in *Chapter 5: Culture and Heritage* cover conservation of designated heritage assets, which is important to HRM. However, we are concerned that elements of *Chapter 5* are not found throughout the SMPS, especially where the new zones will be experiencing significant growth. If Culture and Heritage, two integral elements of liveability in Halifax, are separated in a chapter that is unrelated to the growth zones, they will consistently be sacrificed and thought of separately. The issue with separating Culture and Heritage is that the designation of historic properties and historic neighbourhoods are not the only assets at stake; it pertains equally to how a streetscape creates the feeling of culture and heritage when you are walking down it. The Centre Plan has incorrectly defined Culture and Heritage. This must be how we treat it, especially in a city like Halifax/Dartmouth, where Culture and Heritage have long been the amenities that bring new residents in and encourage existing residents to stay.



THREE
Explore introducing protections for parcel fabric of specific Centres and Corridors that have historic, social, and economic value in their neighbourhoods.

FOUR
Explore the introduction of incentive related to adaptive reuse and renovation within historically residential neighbourhoods that will be designated CORR-2 or CORR-1 zones.

The existing character, fabric, and heritage of the Centres, Corridors, and some Higher Order Residential zones stand to be lost entirely under the existing proposed Centre Plan. Unfortunately, this risk has commonly and incorrectly been conflated with allowing tall heights along Centres and Corridors. In reality, the threat is posed largely by lack of context in development and design, and lack of transparency and planning the maintenance and improvement of streetscapes and general liveability of neighbourhoods. This will be further explored in the Public Amenities section below.

Objective CH2 appears to pertain most to heritage features beyond designated heritage buildings. It states that HRM should aim to “Preserve and enhance places, sites structures, streetscapes, archaeological resources, cultural landscapes and practices which reflect the Regional Centre’s diverse evolution, built heritage, and culture.” We are concerned that far too little emphasis has been put upon preserving and enhancing places and streetscapes in the SMPS, the LUB, and the Design Manual. Preservation is especially crucial for locations where affordable housing and affordable commercial/office space is located, and where the dense parcel fabric with smaller lot sizes contributes to the overall heritage character, streetscape, and liveability of a neighbourhood. On the other hand, enhancement of these elements is especially important in terms of creating Complete Communities in existing neighbourhoods. While this is a widespread concern throughout the SMPS, LUB, and Design

Manual, a complete list of the most concerning places and streetscapes can be found in *Appendix B* of this document.

In order to encourage the growth that is necessary while retaining the cultural assets that make Halifax a great city to live in and to visit, the uniqueness of neighbourhoods on the Peninsula and in Dartmouth need to be recognized and stated within the policy. In light of this, a more in-depth description of existing uses, amenities, built environment, heritage characteristics, and other elements that contribute to neighbourhood uniqueness and turn streets into destinations is needed. *Policies 13-17*, which pertain to the individual Centres, require considerably more detail to guide landowners and developers in making proposals that are well-suited to the neighbourhood and take heed of the particularities that will maintain and enhance a Complete Community in that place. Likewise, *Policies 18-20* should include specifications pertaining to each Corridor that help to explain the parcel fabric, the transportation functions, and the existing uses, in order to better inform developers and decision-makers. Each of these requires a Visioning Statement, a mock version of which can be found in *Appendix C* of this document.

The Design Manual is a good tool to help direct the character and style of development. However, it also lacks sufficient differentiation amongst neighbourhoods. The implementation of *Objective CH2* appears to occur primarily through the Design Guidelines – Design that Reflects Community Context. Contextual Design is generally subjective and open to interpretation.

There's no "in between" guidance to indicate to creative developers what, if done remarkably well, might be acceptable, yet is non-conforming (i.e. if they go above and beyond in contributing to the Complete Community in the neighbourhood of their development). The only guidelines for this are the broad statement on "Complete Communities" and the preambles from each Centre and Corridor section, and the Design Manual that does little to differentiate between character in different Centres and Corridors. Neither of these provides actual definition of what "sustainable, Complete Community" developments might entail, despite reference to these principles throughout Centre Plan.

FIVE

Amend Centre and Corridor policies to include greater details specific to each Centre and Corridor, which will help developers and decision-makers alike to enhance the character, heritage, and amenities in each area.

SIX

Identify municipal plans for current and future projects with the use of existing municipal assets. This should include proposed future parks to accommodate new residents, streetscaping projects, community centres. Connections should be drawn between this and the Urban Forest Master Plan, to ensure that development and naturalization happen cohesively.

A Vision for New Centre and Corridor Zones

Finally, many policies as they exist will function to discourage infill development, which should be a key contribution of the already dense Corridor neighbourhoods. The identification of underutilized sites for Higher Order Residential Zones have missed key areas that should be incentivized for redevelopment and have not encouraged sufficient infill on identified lots due to lot coverage maximums. Based *Section 152* of the LUB, the majority of onus to accommodate parking is put onto smaller developments.

This is counterintuitive to encouraging new developers and creativity in shared housing and multi-unit residential buildings. Furthermore, this is contrary to the directives of the IMP, which aims to prioritize active transportation where possible. By making it easier to park, it necessarily becomes easier to own a car.



SEVEN

In the Design Manual, context should be explicitly stated for each Centre and Corridor considering culture and heritage.

Amend LUB *Section 106.1(c)* to introduce more appropriate lot coverages depending on individual situations for HR-2 and HR-1 zones. In order to accommodate sufficient density on these larger sites, maximum lot coverage should not be below 80%.

NINE

EIGHT

Introduce sufficient differentiation for each Centre and Corridor to establish existing character through policy for each. This should recognize that some non-conforming proposals might help to contribute to Complete Community development.

Amend *Section 152* of LUB to remove requirement of parking on four or less unit dwellings.

TEN



Public Amenities

A noteworthy and concerning omission from the SMPS document is policy concerning public amenities. The intent of the Centre Plan is to plan for the next 30,000 residents in the Regional Centre. While re-zoning and increased density allowances have shed light on where these new residents might live, the Plan is silent on where these residents might enjoy public outdoor space, what grocery store they will have access to, or any other countless amenities that create liveability within and equity amongst neighbourhoods.

Objectives CE1 and CE2 read as such, respectively: "Support intensification of a mix of residential and commercial uses that offer a variety of housing opportunities, a variety of goods and services needed by residents, and access to transit"; "Encourage complete main streets within Centres that prioritize pedestrian comfort through building and streetscape design for people of all ages and abilities". These goals are commendable, but it is very difficult to determine whether the SMPS, LUB and Design Manual have met these goals.

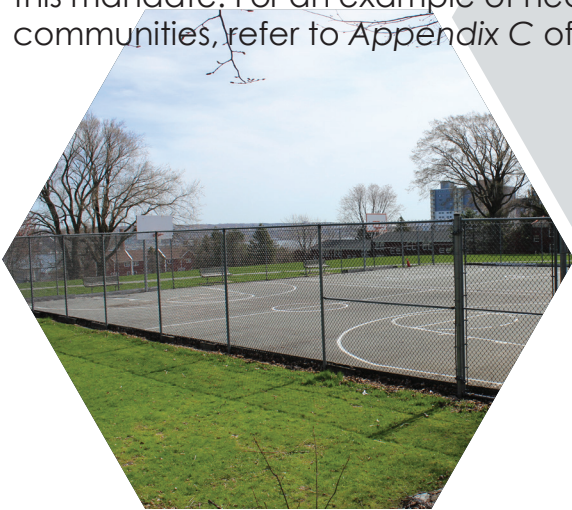
While the Design Manual and the LUB take steps towards prioritizing pedestrian comfort, like introducing new standards for step-backs, set-backs, landscaping, street walls, etc., what is missing is how amenities necessary to a growing population will be accommodated by new development. This follows from the lack of identification of amenities needed in growing communities that was explored in the Fabric and Character section of this comment. For example, the Quinpool Centre is already diverse commercially and would benefit from greater access to green space, natural features and residential density; whereas the Spring Garden Centre is primarily residential and could benefit from a new grocery store.



ELEVEN

Create and release a reference sheet that links Policies in the SMPS with the By-laws and Design Manual that enforce these Policies.

If those making development proposals do not know what sort of amenities are needed in the area, it is much more difficult to make a proposal that caters to the deficits of the community and obstruct it from becoming a Complete Community. For instance, if a Centre or Corridor is identified as a food desert, the right choice for the proposal may be to offer one or two large commercial spaces instead of several small storefronts. Similarly, if an area lacks public outdoor space, a good proposal would likely introduce easements that add to outdoor space which can be accessed by future tenants and the public. If the Centre Plan is unclear on what types of amenities are needed in each neighbourhood, it follows that development proposals will fail contextually and do little to add to the neighbourhood. On the other hand, if a strong vision, background context, and design context are given, coupled with neighbourhood-specific needs for building a Complete Community, development proposals can be written to cater to the needs of particular neighbourhoods and be allowed space for creativity within this mandate. For an example of necessary context for encouraging the growth of complete communities, refer to *Appendix C* of this document.



Conduct online surveys and forums to allow residents from individual neighbourhoods to rank their amenity needs and provide this information to developers upon their notification to the Municipality of intent to make a development proposal.

TWELVE

Future Climate Scenario

Keeping in mind that we intend to build a prosperous and liveable HRM, it is crucial that we plan for resiliency and longevity that will prepare us for and protect us from the negative impacts of Climate Change. In theory, we would like to build a city and buildings within it that will last for one hundred years or more – we cannot possibly know what the climate will be like in 100+ years, therefore we need to begin taking measures now to pre-emptively prepare. This is particularly crucial where it pertains to stormwater management and the impacts on wind and sunlight.

Furthermore, an explanation and information chart linking Centre Plan policy with other municipal environmental and sustainability policies is necessary in order to complete the vision for a sustainable city. For instance, *Objective S3* reads “Reduce the Regional

Centre’s overall impact on the environment through the advancement of sustainable building design, district energy, renewable energy sources, composting and recycling,” yet there is no guidance regarding what is currently being implemented or future plans for fulfilling this objective through Provincial and Municipal policies other than the Centre Plan.

In the Design Manual, a suggested list of “high-quality, durable, and sustainable development techniques and materials,” in order to fulfill *Urban Design Goal 3A* would be helpful in encouraging motivated developers to explore unfamiliar techniques and materials. This should translate, where possible, to requirements in the jurisdiction of the municipality, such as paved surfaces, landscaping, and green roofs.

A shadow study must be completed for all Centres and Corridors as an element of the Centre Plan. This study should include measures for prolonging sun exposure in high-density neighbourhoods and retaining a streetscape with maximum possible sun exposure.

THIRTEEN

A wind study must be completed for all Centres and Corridors as an element of the Centre Plan. This study should require stringent wind mitigation under the assumption that wind severity will increase, especially in high-density areas with tall buildings.

FOURTEEN

Include provisions to update the Centre Plan with the adoption of the 2017 and 2022 Building Code. State intentions for implementation of these measures through the Centre Plan and build cohesion between Centre Plan sustainability practices and the Building Code.

FIFTEEN

LUB Section 149(1) requires that all parking lots (exempting low-density dwellings) must be surfaced with hard material. Amend this LUB to require permeable surfaces and sustainable materials used wherever a parking lot is surfaced with hard material.

SIXTEEN



PART TWO

Implementation

Ensuring that the Regional Centre is transformed or enhanced to become Complete Communities offering excellent amenities and an unparalleled pedestrian experience relies upon strong implementation. In some areas, the SMPS, LUB, and Design Manual are thorough; but in others, they lack clarity and do not provide a complete

vision of how implementation will be carried out. Part 2 is divided into five subsections: Registered Culture and Heritage, Higher Order Residential Zones, Density Bonusing, Mobility, and Complete Communities. Each subsection features some broad directives and some precise changes needed in order to improve implementation.

Registered Culture and Heritage

Existing and future Heritage buildings and districts require a strong commitment from the Centre Plan for ongoing protections and investments, with mind to the fact that these assets are often undervalued. If HRM continues to undervalue our Heritage assets, we risk the liveability of our city and the unique attractions we provide to tourists and potential new residents. While generally we feel that heritage and culture should be a theme throughout this Plan, it is clear that the Centre Plan Policies and Objectives pertaining to designated Heritage buildings and districts are an improvement on the existing policy.

In light of the importance of heritage to the future of our city, it is crucial that we make intentional and purposeful moves to protect all of our assets. This includes showing commitment to the preservation and restoration of heritage by ensuring that projects are sufficiently funded in such a way that encourages adaptive re-use and restoration.

SEVENTEEN

To improve and implement *Objective CH5, Chapter 5: Culture and Heritage* should clarify what types of future programs (to incentivize heritage conservation) will be explored and implemented.

The Centre Plan should make recommendations for budgetary allocation for each Centre and Corridor, in order to ensure that adequate investment is made to heritage preservation in key growth areas.

EIGHTEEN



Higher Order Residential Zones

Many Higher Order Residential sites offer excellent opportunities for densifying neighbourhoods and improving local amenities. However, there are some fine-grain neighbourhoods that are zoned HR-2 under the LUB which stand to be consolidated into large plots of land. This risks diminishing the fine-grain block structure and pedestrian experience that is important to liveability in residential areas. Particularly concerning are certain areas in the South End that have heritage value and certain plots in the North End that offer a substantial number of

affordable housing units. The HR-2 and HR-1 zones are meant to incentivize redevelopment of underutilized parcels, yet some sites were included without consideration of unique needs in the neighbourhoods in which they are located. For instance, Windmill Road and South Street should not, under any circumstance, be treated the same for redevelopment and increased density.

A complete list of all HR-2 zoned lots that require re-examination is contained in *Appendix B* of this document.



Density Bonusing

The efforts put towards Density Bonusing have been long awaited. Our primary concerns with this section of the Land Use By-Law are the regulations around Cash-in-Lieu, the location requirement for public benefit, and the lack of transparency concerning the monitoring of affordable housing.

Land Use By-Law *Section 197(f)*, pertaining to Cash-in-Lieu takes steps to discourage developers from contributing Cash-in-Lieu of a public benefit. This is a missed opportunity to build public equity in communities that will be accommodating a great deal more density. If there is a process in place, that allows choice and directs cash in lieu to somewhere specific, then the rules and opportunities are clear.

NINETEEN

Introduce a collective pot of Cash-in-Lieu contributions for each Centre to be disseminated based on public engagement and evaluation of amenity gaps, every (x) number of years. Introduce a Committee of Council to manage this procedure and allow for consistent community feedback and contribution on this topic in each neighbourhood.

TWENTY ONE

Significantly more detail is required for the Affordable Housing density bonus option. Specifically, monitoring and management processes must be determined in order to ensure that the policy is equitable and precise.

TWENTY

Amend *Section 198.3(a)* of the LUB to allow public amenities to be located within 500 metres of development site, in order to allow for maximum benefit from public amenities, (i.e. if a parkette does not fit on the development site, but a small lot could be purchased nearby for the same amount, this should not be discouraged).

Mobility

We recognize that the IMP and Halifax Transit will implement new transportation policies, however we feel that the Centre Plan SMPS and LUB does not make specific enough connections between these two plans, particularly pertaining to Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The IMP defines TOD as “an approach that integrates land-use planning and transit, encouraging the development of compact, complete communities with

a transit hub or corridor.” While many of the objectives of the Centre Plan are in line with TOD (i.e. focusing high-density development in areas with good transit access), this term is not used in the Centre Plan. This contributes to the perceived lack of transparency in density decision-making that has occurred, and would help to identify and solidify the vision for each of the Centres and Corridors by better understanding their transportation functions.

TWENTY TWO

Provide clear connections between IMP and Centre and Corridor designations using the term “Transit Oriented Development”.

TWENTY THREE

Draw connections between *Figure 10: Potential Transit Oriented Communities* and *Figure 20: Proposed Transit Priority Corridors in the IMP*, and the Centre and Corridor zones.



Complete Communities

Amend
Schedule 6 to
include Wyse
Road and
Robie Street
Centres as
Pedestrian-
Oriented
Commercial
Streets.

TWENTY FOUR



Amend LUB
Section 41 to
allow ground floor
residential units
in a percentage
of each new
development
on Pedestrian-
Oriented
Commercial
Streets.

TWENTY FIVE

Implementation of Complete Communities as a theme is lacking throughout the SMPS and the LUB. New Centres are slated to accommodate the majority of growth in the Regional Centre and need to be the heart of the neighbourhoods around them in such a way that creates a Complete Community. Attempting to create new residential and economic hearts in neighbourhoods without ensuring that pedestrians are prioritized on these streets risks allowing car-oriented main streets to persist on in the Regional Centre. Yet according to *Schedule 6* in the LUB the Robie Street Centre and the Wyse Road Centre are not required to become pedestrian-oriented streets.

Furthermore, the Pedestrian-oriented commercial street requirements, under LUB *Section 41*, allow only ground floor commercial uses. This by-law will help to create walkable commercial streets, but fails to incorporate ground floor residential units with the recognition that not every successful pedestrian-oriented commercial street needs to be exclusively commercial. Additionally, this risks exacerbating the oversupply of vacant office and commercial space on the Peninsula.



While Complete Communities are one of the four Visions and Principles of the Centre Plan, the intention of the municipality to play a role in creating Complete Communities in the Centres and Corridors and surrounding the Higher Order Residential Zones is missing entirely from the SMPS. Streetscaping projects, similar to that completed on Argyle Street and that slated for Spring Garden Road, are missing not mentioned in the Centre Plan. An intention to pair streetscaping with development incentives and concentrated growth in the new zones is crucial to fashioning Complete Communities for the new and

existing residents. Likewise, intentions, goals, and objectives for future Municipal investment including allocating existing assets and future required assets, such as buildings for community centres, lots for parks, and other important elements, are not identified through the Centre Plan. This leaves the introduction of and investment in any new community assets for neighbourhoods experiencing growth entirely up to private development. If the intention is to create Complete Communities concentrated in the Centres and Corridors, then this omission is unacceptable.

Centre Plan should include recommendations for locating future streetscaping projects and timelines for their implementation.

TWENTY SIX

Include a list of existing Municipal assets, future plans (if any) for each, and how existing or future assets might be used to contribute to a Complete Community in each of the Centre zones and Corridor zones.

TWENTY SEVEN



APPENDIX A

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Each of the Centres and Corridors needs more specific Policies with regards to LINK or PLACE designation. This specificity will help to qualify each Centre or Corridor's deficiencies and/or advantages. Where this is covered by the IMP, explicit reference should be made so that the reader can draw connections between the Centre Plan and the IMP. These policies should include reference to what elements are important in maintaining the current transportation functions of differing Centres and Corridors.

Recommendation 2: Update *Policy 99* to include a "shall consider" clause, instead of "may consider". Clarify what is meant by "Transit Priority Plan" in *Policy 99*.

Recommendation 3: Explore introducing protections for parcel fabric of specific Centres and Corridors that have historic, social, and economic value in their neighbourhoods. If this is infeasible, certain key locations should be removed from Centre and Corridor zones.

Recommendation 4: Explore the introduction of incentive related to adaptive reuse and renovation within historically residential neighbourhoods that will be designated CORR-2 or CORR-1 zones.

Recommendation 5: Amend Centre and Corridor policies to include greater details specific to each Centre and Corridor, which will help developers and decision-makers alike to enhance the character, heritage, and amenities in each area.

Recommendation 6: Identify municipal plans for current and future projects with the use of existing municipal assets. This should include proposed future parks to accommodate new residents, streetscaping projects, community centres, and other features of Complete Communities. Connections should be drawn between this and the Urban Forest Master Plan to ensure that development and naturalization happen cohesively.

Recommendation 7: In the Design Manual, context should be explicitly stated for each Centre and Corridor recognizing the uniqueness of their built form in order to provide guidelines that will help the design review team to determine whether a proposal is contextual for the street/neighbourhood.

Recommendation 8: Introduce sufficient differentiation through policy in terms of existing character and fabric of each Centre and Corridor that will help future decision-makers to deal with non-conforming proposals. This should recognize that some non-conforming proposals might help to contribute to Complete Community development.

Recommendation 9: Amend *Section 152* of LUB to remove requirement of parking on four or less unit dwellings.

Recommendation 10: Amend *Section 106.1(c)* of LUB to introduce more appropriate lot coverages depending on individual situations for HR-2 and HR-1 zones. In order to accommodate sufficient density on these larger sites, maximum lot coverage should not be below 80%.

Recommendation 11: Create and release a reference sheet that links Policies in the SMPS with the sections of the Land Use By-law and the Design Manual that enforce these Policies.

Recommendation 12: Conduct online surveys and forums to allow residents from individual neighbourhoods to rank their amenity needs and provide this information to developers upon their notification to the Municipality of intent to make a development proposal.

Recommendation 13: A wind study must be completed for all Centres and Corridors as an element of the Centre Plan. This study should require stringent wind mitigation under the assumption that wind severity will increase, especially in high-density areas with tall buildings.

Recommendation 14: A shadow study must be completed for all Centres and Corridors as an element of the Centre Plan. This study should include measures for prolonging sun exposure in high-density neighbourhoods and retaining a streetscape with maximum possible sun exposure.

Recommendation 15: Include provisions to update the Centre Plan with the adoption of the 2017 and 2022 Building Codes. State intentions for implementation of these measures through the Centre Plan and build cohesion between Centre Plan sustainability practices and the Building Code.

Recommendation 16: LUB *Section 149(1)* requires that all parking lots (exempting low-density dwellings) must be surfaced with hard material. Amend this LUB to require permeable surfaces and sustainable materials used wherever a parking lot is surfaced with hard material.

Recommendation 17: To improve and implement *Objective CH5*, Chapter 5: Culture and Heritage should clarify what types of future programs (to incentivize heritage conservation) will be explored, expanded and implemented.

Recommendation 18: Bearing in mind that Culture and Heritage are assets that cannot be undervalued, the Centre Plan should make recommendations for budgetary allocation for each Centre and Corridor, in order to ensure that adequate investment is made to heritage preservation in key growth areas.

Recommendation 19: Introduce a collective pot of Cash-in-Lieu contributions for each Centre to be disseminated based on public engagement and evaluation of amenity gaps, every (x) number of years. Introduce a Committee of Council to manage this procedure and allow for consistent community feedback and contribution on this topic in each neighbourhood.

Recommendation 20: Amend LUB *Section 198.3(a)* to allow public amenities to be located within 500 metres of development site, in order to allow for maximum benefit from public amenities, (i.e. if a parkette does not fit on the development site, but a small lot could be purchased nearby for the same amount, this should not be discouraged).

Recommendation 21: Significantly more detail is required for the Affordable Housing density bonus option. Specifically, monitoring and management processes must be determined in order to ensure that the policy is equitable and precise.

Recommendation 22: Provide clear connections between IMP and Centre or Corridor designations using the term “Transit Oriented Development”.

Recommendation 23: Draw connections between *Figure 10: Potential Transit Oriented Communities* and *Figure 20: Proposed Transit Priority Corridors* in the IMP, and the Centre and Corridor zones.

Recommendation 24: Amend *Schedule 6* to include Wyse Road and Robie Street Centres as Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets.

Recommendation 25: Amend LUB *Section 41* to allow ground floor residential units in a percentage of each new development on Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets.

Recommendation 26: Centre Plan should include recommendations for locating future streetscaping projects and timelines for their introduction.

Recommendation 27: Include a list of existing Municipal assets, future plans (if any) for each, and how existing or future assets might be used to contribute to a Complete Community in each of the Centre zones and Corridor zones.

APPENDIX B

Centres, Corridors, and Higher Order Residential Zones that require Review

Centres

The primary Centre that poses concern is Gottingen Street. Unless recommendations in Appendix C are explored, alongside better protections for affordable housing, existing character, and affordable commercial and office space, and the pedestrian scale of the neighbourhood are taken into account, Gottingen Street should be removed from the “Centre” Zone.

Areas of the other Centres, especially Quinpool Road and Robie Street, need to be re-evaluated based on protecting the parcel fabric of the neighbourhood in order to limit lot consolidation, encourage infill development, and protect the existing pedestrian realm.

Corridors

Our concern with the Corridor zone has been explored already in this document, but pertains largely to lack of differentiation between the corridors that each have extremely unique fabric, character, heritage, road right-of-ways, transportation functions, and other things that should affect the style and scale of development on a street. Those of particular concern are as follows:

Agricola Street-Cunard Street
Gottingen Street-Kaye Street
Prince Albert Road
Robie Street
Windsor Street

Higher Order Residential

The Higher Order Residential Zone is intended to encourage additional housing opportunities in existing residential neighbourhoods. Some specific locations that need review are:

Gottingen-Charles-Creighton (affordable housing)
Gottingen-North-Northwood (seniors housing, affordable housing)
Gottingen-Heron Walk (affordable housing, open space)
Gottingen-Prince William
Maitland-Cornwallis-Brunswick (affordable housing, heritage value, mature tree canopy)
Coburg Street (cultural value, heritage value)
Wellington-Tower Terrace-Tower Rd (heritage value)
South Street (heritage value)
Tobin-Kent-Green (heritage value, affordable housing)

APPENDIX C

Centres, Corridors, and Higher Order Residential Zones that require Review

This Centre includes Gottingen Street from Cogswell Street to Buddy Daye Street, as well as larger parcels of land northwest of the Cogswell Interchange. Historically, the commercial and entertainment heart of Halifax's North End, Gottingen Street is an important site for African Nova Scotian heritage as it was historically the African Nova Scotian business community that initiated the neighbourhood's commercial growth. It also hosts a number of affordable commercial/office units and storefronts and houses a number of non-profit organizations which are crucial to the wellbeing of the existing community.

Gottingen Street is flanked by a grid of diverse and rapidly changing residential neighbourhoods that contain registered heritage properties, as well as properties with heritage value. There is a mixture of small and large lots that collectively contribute to the fine-grain block structure of the neighbourhood. Historic buildings, which, collectively as a neighbourhood network, characterize Halifax's North End, are not currently protected but are important to the culture and heritage of the street and contribute significantly to the pedestrian realm and the complete community. Gottingen Street is an important pedestrian-oriented commercial street and has been identified through the Integrated Mobility Plan as an existing complete, multi-modal community. Any increases to existing vehicular and transit traffic should be discouraged, as these would threaten the unique balance that has been struck.

Gottingen Street benefits from culturally diverse public art on public and private lots and has wide sidewalks that are ideal for streetscaping projects in the coming years. It is well served by transit and is a short walk from Downtown Halifax and the future redevelopment of the Cogswell Interchange. A significant portion of existing affordable housing in the North End is concentrated on Gottingen Street and in the neighbourhood. It is crucial for this Centre, and for HR-2 and CORR-2 zones in this neighbourhood, that a 1-for-1 policy be introduced with respect to affordable housing to ensure that this stock is not lost as redevelopment and infill occurs.

Gottingen Street is a relatively narrow street where development standards need to consider solar access, protection from wind and landscaping treatments for the public realm to ensure a comfortable pedestrian environment. Prominent sites at intersections provide opportunities to create urban design interest. New development will respect the historic character of the area and contribute towards a variety of housing types. Building materials used should complement existing natural wood shingle finishes, brick siding, earth tones on larger buildings, colourful row housing on smaller buildings, and other contextual design. Good examples of existing (recent) infill projects include 2157 Gottingen Street (Commercial/Residential), 2169 Gottingen Street, 2300 Gottingen Street (brownfield remediation infill), and (if lot previously consolidated) 2128 Gottingen Street.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ecology Action Centre would like to thank our volunteers who helped us to develop this report, including Alice Ortman, David Stonham, Emilie Pothier, and Paul Bowlby.

For further information, please contact:

Jenny Lugar
Sustainable Cities Coordinator
Ecology Action Centre
jlugar@ecologyaction.ca

Image Credit:
Stephen Thomas (Page 11, aerial shot)