

HALIFAX GREEN NETWORK PLAN

Community Planning &
Economic Development Standing Committee
June 21, 2018

Photo credit: Vlastimil Koutecky, Flickr Creative Commons



HGNP PROCESS

PHASE 1 | FOUNDATIONS PHASE 2 | PLAN DIRECTIONS PHASE 3 | FINAL PLAN



Trends & Best Practice Analysis

Public Engagement

Landscape Values Mapping

State of the Landscape Report

Cultural Landscape Framework Study

Public Engagement

Create Green Network Maps

Green Network Plan – Primer Document

Public Engagement

Develop Final Plan

Stakeholder Consultation

Finalize Plan

CPED/Regional Council

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

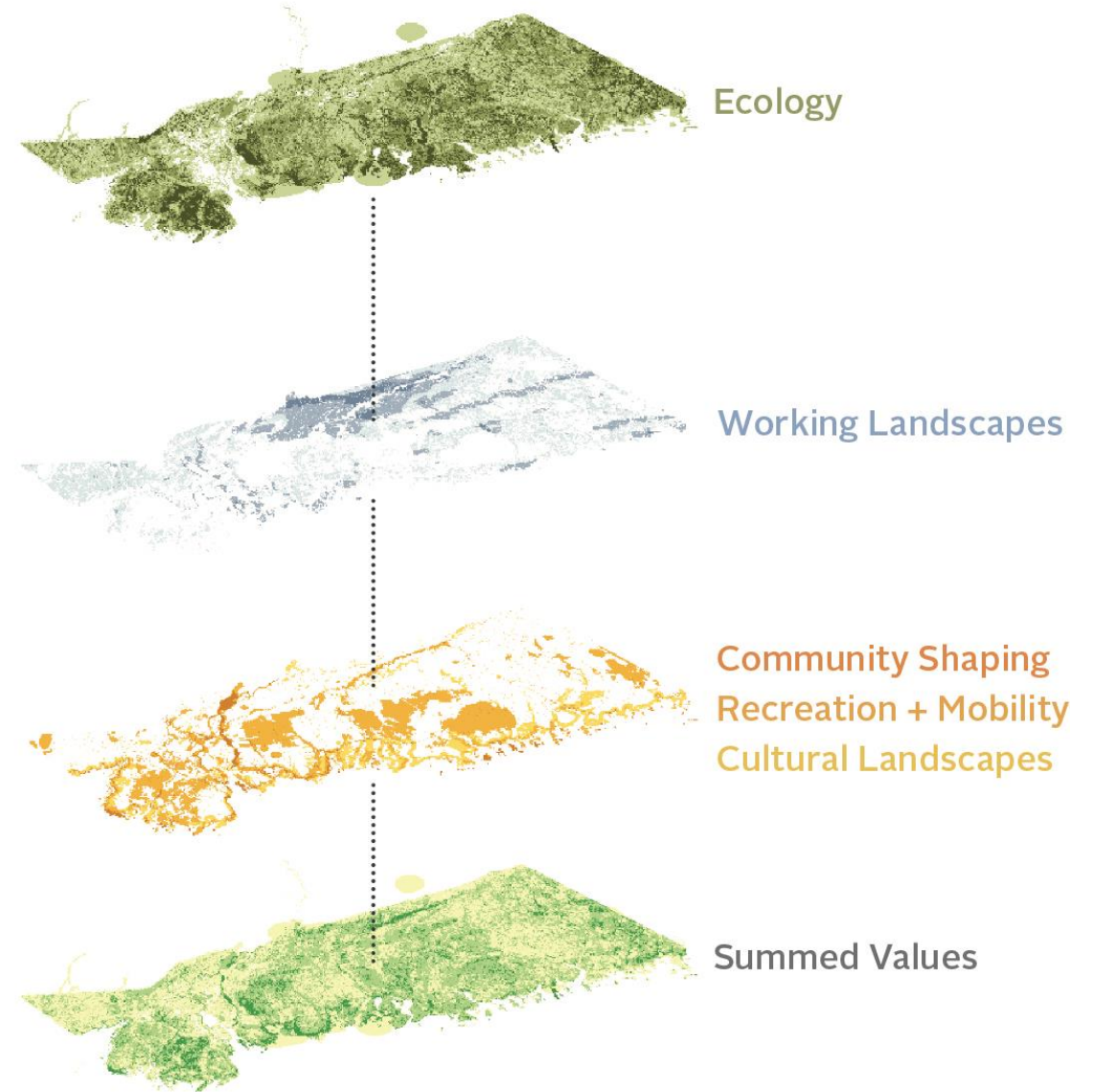


Photo credit: O2 Planning and Design





VISION

- **Interconnected and Multifunctional Open Spaces**
- **Public involvement and Multisector Collaboration**
- **Healthy, Productive and Enjoyable Spaces for Future Generations**

THEMES

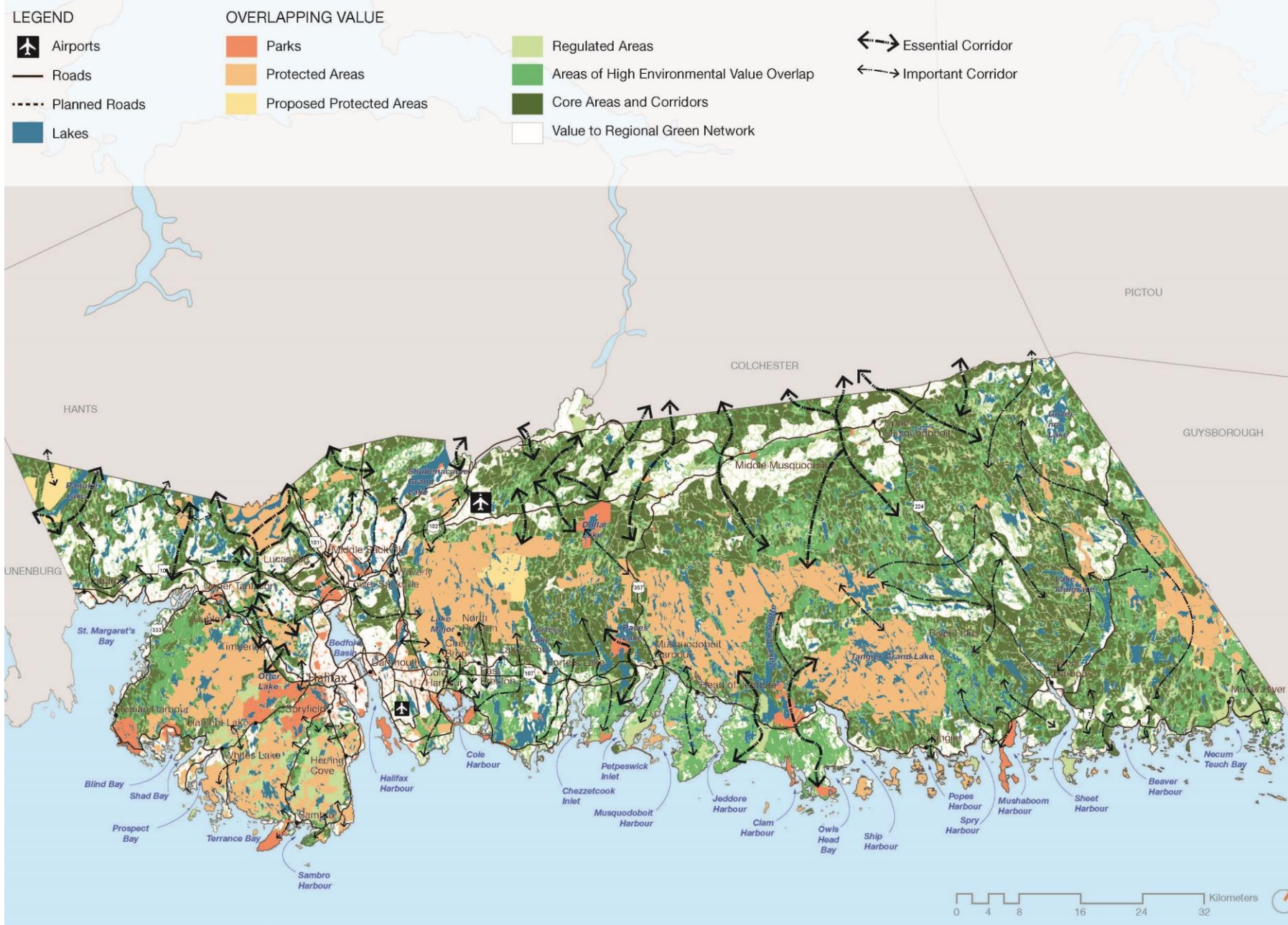




ECOLOGY

Goal: Support a healthy and sustainable natural ecosystem.

Photo credit: Mike Dembeck



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- adopt the HGNP Ecology Map (Map 5) in the Regional Plan;
- consolidate and apply environmental protection zones to large wetland complexes and vulnerable land forms;
- refine and strengthen existing variable watercourse buffering requirements;
- support naturalized approaches to storm water management; and
- request an amendment to the *HRM Charter* to enable the Municipality to acquire environmental reserves through the subdivision and development process, in addition to parkland dedication requirements.



WORKING LANDSCAPES

Goal: Support the sustainable use and management of the Region's natural resources.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- provide greater as-of-right opportunities for primary resource industries;
- limit or prohibit conservation design developments in the Regional Plan's Agricultural Designation; and
- relax restrictions on tourism related home-based businesses in rural areas and consider large scale rural based tourism proposals by rezoning or development agreement.



COMMUNITY SHAPING

Goal: Use the Green Network to guide the growth and development of communities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- consider the Green Network when reviewing and considering changes to the Urban Service Area, the Urban Settlement Designation and Urban Reserve Designation;
- prioritize the development of brownfield and infill sites over greenfield development areas;
- prioritize the preservation and creation of natural connections to the Chebucto Peninsula; and
- streamline development approval processes within clearly defined rural centres, while carefully controlling the scale and design of conservation design development proposals in areas located between these rural centres.

OUTDOOR RECREATION



Goal: Manage a municipal park network that meets the outdoor recreation needs of residents and visitors, supports ecological and cultural conservation, and shapes community form and identity.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- promote the importance of parks for community health and well-being;
- establish a Park Spectrum that captures the range of user experiences, supports both recreation and natural systems and includes Federal and Provincial parks and school grounds;
- evaluate service delivery gaps and overlap;
- use the land capability tool, included in the HGNP, to evaluate existing and proposed parks;
- establish an Open Space Network in cooperation with provincial and federal governments and conservation groups;
- continue to place emphasis on establishing the Regional Parks identified in the Regional Plan, while recognizing new nature parks and open space areas; and
- request an amendment to the *HRM Charter* to enable the Municipality to establish parkland dedication requirements based on density.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Goal: Identify, preserve and celebrate cultural landscapes and their value in connecting people to the land and telling their stories.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- develop a cultural landscape program through the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP);
- clarify the scope and role of cultural landscapes studies as part of master planning exercises; and
- proactively engage underrepresented groups to identify valued cultural landscapes.

MONITORING

- Regional Plan Key Performance Indicators
- Develop partnerships with federal and provincial departments, universities and non-profit groups
 - Wildlife movements & biodiversity
 - Water quality & quantity
 - Green cover

IMPLEMENTATION

- 79 actions
- Four types of implementation tools
 - Land Use Planning
 - Park Network Management
 - Current and Future Project Work
 - Partnerships
- Immediate and on-going guidance to activities and decisions
- Short (1-2 year), medium (2-4 year) or long (4-7 year) timeframes

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

- Formal request for amendments to the *HRM Charter* concerning new environmental conservation and parkland planning tools (Actions 18 and 61)
- Initiate narrowly focused amendment to the Regional Plan to ensure that the important and essential wildlife corridors identified in the HGNP are considered through the conservation design development agreement process.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Authorize the direction contained in the Halifax Green Network Plan, as contained in Attachment A, as a framework for amending the existing Regional Plan and Secondary Planning Strategies, and developing new planning documents as may be necessary to implement the Halifax Green Network Plan direction;
2. Direct staff to carry out the actions contained in the Halifax Green Network Plan as part of the multi-year budgeting and business planning process.
3. Request that the Province amend the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, as set out in Actions 18 and 61 of the Halifax Green Network Plan, to:
 - (a) enable the Municipality to acquire sensitive environmental lands (e.g. riparian areas, wetlands, steep slopes, etc.) as an environmental reserve through the land development and subdivision process, in addition to existing parkland dedication provisions; and
 - (b) enable a greater range of legislative abilities, such as the ability to enact parkland dedication requirements based on density to address development that does not include the subdivision of lots.
4. Initiate the process to consider amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS) to support the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) by referencing the HGNP within the conservation design development agreement policy criteria concerning the connectivity of open space; and
5. Adopt, by policy, the Public Participation Program outlined in the Community Engagement section of this report.