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Item No. 4
Community Planning and Economic
Development Standing Committee
October 17, 2019

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic Development
Standing Committee.

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Kelly Denty, Director, Planning & Development

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: September 25, 2019

SUBJECT: Halifax Green Network Plan Annual Progress Report

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

On August 14, 2018 the following motion of Regional Council was put forward and passed:

"6. Request that staff provide annual progress reports on the implementation of the Green Network Plan, to Regional Council through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee."

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, clauses 79(1)(k)(ai):

- 79(1) The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for:
- (k) recreational programs;
 - (ai) public grounds, squares, halls, museums, parks, tourist information centres and community centres;

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, clause 229(1)(c)(d)(g)(j)(q):

229(1) A municipal planning strategy may include statements of policy with respect to any or all of the

following...

- (c) the protection, use and development of lands within the Municipality, including the identification, protection, use and development of lands subject to flooding, steep slopes, lands susceptible to subsidence, erosion or other geological hazards, swamps, marshes or other environmentally sensitive areas;
- (d) stormwater management and erosion control;
- (g) studies to be carried out prior to undertaking specified developments or developments in specified areas;
- (j) municipal investment for public and private development and the coordination of public programs relating to the economic, social and physical development of the Municipality; and
- (q) any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic environment of the Municipality.

Administrative Order One, the *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order*, Schedule 3, Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee Terms of Reference, clauses 3 (a)(e):

- 3. The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee shall provide oversight of the Municipality's Regional Plan and Regional Planning Initiatives, as follows:
 - (a) overseeing the Municipality's Regional Plan and Regional Planning Initiatives;
 - (e) overseeing the priority setting relative to the Community Visioning Program, Functional Plan Implementation and major planning projects.

BACKGROUND

The Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) defines an interconnected open space system for the entire municipality, highlights ecosystem functions and benefits, and outlines strategies to manage open space. Specifically, the HGNP provides land management and community design direction to:

- maintain ecologically and culturally important land and aquatic systems;
- promote the sustainable use of natural resources and economically important open spaces; and
- identify, define and plan land suited for parks and corridors.

On August 14, 2018, Halifax Regional Council approved the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) and provided direction to use the HGNP as a framework for amending the existing Regional Plan and Secondary Planning Strategies. As part of its approval, Council also provided direction to carry out the actions contained in the Halifax Green Network Plan through the multi-year budgeting and business planning process. For more information, please see the HGNP webpage at the following link:

<https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/regional-community-planning/community-plans/halifax-green-network-plan>

As requested by Council, this report provides the first annual progress update on the implementation of the HGNP.

DISCUSSION

The HGNP includes direction to carry out a total of 79 actions needed to effectively support the Plan's vision, goals and objectives. Out of these 79 actions, 27 provide immediate and on-going guidance to Municipal operations and decisions, of which 24 are already in use. Out of the remaining 52 actions with identified timelines:

- 2 have not been yet started;
- 48 are in progress; and

- 2 are complete.

Detailed updates on each HGNP action are set out in Attachment A. The following sections highlight key progress updates for each of the four implementation tools outlined in Chapter 6 of the HGNP.

Land Use Planning

The Municipality has adopted a number of land use policy and regulatory documents, including the Regional Plan, the Regional Subdivision By-law, secondary plans and land use by-laws, that control development on privately-owned land. Together, these documents, among many other matters, regulate the location, shape and form of development including if and where new public roads can be constructed, the design and density of new development, parkland dedication requirements and watercourse setbacks. The HGNP recommends 27 actions that provide guidance and specific instructions on how to amend these planning documents through future project work.

As set out in the HGNP, the majority of recommended planning policy/regulatory changes will be implemented through the next Regional Plan review and Plan and By-law Simplification Program over the next 2-7 years. The following highlights the progress being made on updating our various land use planning documents:

- As part of the 2019/20 budget process, Council approved a new Planner III position in Planning and Development to coordinate the implementation of the HGNP. This staff resource will be key to ensuring that the HGNP land use planning direction is carried forward into the upcoming Regional Plan Review and on-going Plan and By-law Simplification Program. The hiring process for this position is underway.
- As directed by Council in August 2018, staff prepared a near-term amendment to the Regional Plan, prior to the next Regional Plan Review, by referencing the HGNP within the conservation design development agreement policy criteria concerning the connectivity of open space. Regional Council approved this amendment following a public hearing on September 24, 2019.
- The Centre Plan Package A, approved by Regional Council on September 17, 2019, includes new landscaping and open space policies that support the HGNP direction.
- Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019.

Park Network Management

As the Municipality moves forward, there are a number of action items specific to the management of municipal parkland that support the goals and objectives set out in the HGNP. Initiatives range from changing policies regarding parkland dedication and how recreation service is delivered to promoting parks and open space for health and wellness, and having a formalized public engagement program. The HGNP contains 22 actions related to park network management. The following highlights the progress being made on aligning HRM's park network management activities with the HGNP:

- Federal 'Quickstart' funding was acquired to help with municipal land acquisitions for the establishment of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Wilderness park. A Federal funding application to help with additional land acquisitions has been submitted.
- In partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), the Municipality acquired 379 acres of lands to establish the Shaw Wilderness Park in the Williams Lake area.
- In 2019, the Municipality acquired a property that connected existing Municipal parcels within Sir Sanford Fleming Park and was required to maintain parkland service including uses for nature walks, interpretation, and appreciation.
- The promotion of being active in outdoor green spaces for improved health has been bolstered through the expansion of programming and training offered through the Adventure Earth Centre, a pilot playbox at Aberdeen Court Park, and the development of factsheets about the health benefits of being in nature and physical literacy.
- In January 2019, Regional Council approved the direction contained in a staff report on park naturalization. A multi-business unit working group has since been established that is in the process

of choosing a pilot site and HRM's website now hosts a landing page for the initiative found at the following link: <https://www.halifax.ca/recreation/parks-trails-gardens/park-naturalization>

- There are four significant park plans underway (Halifax Common, Gorsebrook Park, Eastern Passage Common, Lake Echo District Park), which incorporate numerous HGNP actions including having versatile flexible space for all ages and abilities, year-round infrastructure, naturalized areas and green infrastructure, and the celebration of public art and cultural landscapes.

Current and Future Project Work

The Municipality is continually carrying out project work on a wide variety of items, from considering the development of new municipal business parks to reviewing corporate policies and by-laws. A number of the actions contained in this Plan guide current and future project work. Some projects may lead to strategic investments, programs, policies or regulations. The HGNP recommends 16 actions that guide current and future project work. The following highlights how the HGNP direction is being incorporated into project work:

- The review and processing of HGNP data for public use is nearly complete and is targeted to be released through HRM's Open Data portal in fall 2019.
- Several active transportation initiatives linking outdoor recreation amenities have been completed or are underway, such as the completion of the Sackville Greenway between Glendale and Sackville Drive; construction of the Bissett Greenway connection to the Rehab parkland; and, planning around a missing link in the Trans Canada Trail between Sullivan's Pond and the Dartmouth Waterfront.
- A staff report concerning a potential private tree by-law to manage the removal of trees on private property within serviced (urban) areas is being drafted and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council in fall 2019.
- The HGNP direction concerning cultural landscapes is being advanced through the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan. A draft plan is targeted to be presented to CPED in fall 2019.

Partnerships

While the Municipality is a key government body in the Region, responsibility for managing the environment is shared between multiple levels of government, including Nova Scotia Environment and the Provincial Department of Natural Resources. Universities, non-profits and community groups also bring valuable expertise, information and resources to conservation efforts. Private landowners play an integral role in stewarding natural resources and investing in sustainable development approaches. The cultivation of partnerships, therefore, is important to carrying out many of the objectives identified in this Plan. The HGNP identifies 14 partnership opportunities. The following highlights the progress being made in fostering partnerships:

- In late 2018, Regional Council, through a letter from Mayor Savage, formally requested that the Province amend *the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* to: 1) 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; and 2) enable the ability to enact parkland dedication requirements based on population density to address development that does not include the subdivision of land. A letter from Minister of Municipal Affairs Chuck Porter confirming receipt and future follow up by provincial staff was received in February 2019.
- As outlined under the land use planning section, Council recently approved a new Planner III position in Planning and Development to coordinate the implementation of the HGNP. This staff resource will be key to proactively fostering research and HGNP-related partnerships. The hiring process for this position is underway.
- A new By-law concerning storm water management that promotes the use of low-impact design approaches is being developed in close consultation with Halifax Water and Nova Scotia Environment. The By-law is targeted to be presented to Council in 2020.
- In April 2019, Municipal staff attended and presented the HGNP at the Canadian Maritimes Ecological Connectivity conference held at Dalhousie University.

- Staff are participating in the Habitat Conservation Strategy for Nova Scotia (St. Margaret's Bay to Cape Breton).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this information report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Halifax Green Network Plan was informed by three phases of extensive engagement with residents from urban, suburban and rural communities, provincial government departments and stakeholder groups. Those consultations provided valuable insight to inform the vision, principles, objectives, and actions within the HGNP. Additional public engagement will be carried out for individual HGNP action items as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A Detailed Halifax Green Network Plan Progress Update

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Ben Sivak, Principal Planner, 902.292.4563

Attachment A

Detailed Halifax Green Network Plan Progress Update

| 6.1 LAND USE PLANNING | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---|-----------|--|
| ACTION # | THEME | ACTION | DIRECTION | UPDATE |
| 1 | Ecology | <p>Refine and incorporate the Green Network Ecology Map (Map 5 on page 35) into the <i>Regional Plan</i> and use it to guide regional planning decisions related to the location and shape of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Urban service boundaries » Rural centres » Nature parks » Conservation design developments | 2-7 Years | <p>In progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrowly focused Regional Plan amendments, prior to the next Regional Plan Review, that references the HGNP Map within the Conservation Design development agreement policy criteria was considered by Council in August, 2019. • To be further completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review. |
| 2 | Ecology | <p>Consider the following design and management guidelines when planning, maintaining and restoring essential and important corridors (Map 5 on page 35) through Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Essential corridors should ideally be greater than 1km wide and composed of intact natural habitat, wherever possible » The width of essential corridors should increase in proportion to its length (i.e. the longer the corridor, the wider it should be) » Where a 1km width is not possible for essential corridors, maintain what remains, seek opportunities to restore disturbed areas and mitigate the impacts of nearby human activity » Maintain a minimum corridor width of 100m for important corridors to connect natural habitats » Where intact important corridors are unavailable and/or not possible to restore, maintain the largest possible remnant patches and encourage best management practices in intervening areas to provide opportunities for wildlife movement between patches | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use: guidelines are being used to guide master planning background studies and reviews.</p> |
| 3 | Ecology | <p>Amend Municipal Planning Strategies to clarify and ensure that environmental sensitive areas are identified and considered during the review of all discretionary planning applications (i.e. rezoning and development agreement applications).</p> | 2-7 Years | <p>In progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressed within the proposed Centre Plan Package A Discretionary Approvals Policy 10.6. • To be completed for other areas as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review and on-going By-law Simplification Program. |

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| 4 | Ecology | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to emphasize the importance of identifying and protecting environmental sensitive areas during master neighbourhood planning exercises (secondary planning). | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 5 | Ecology | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to consolidate environmental protection zones, which prohibit most forms of development, and apply these zones to areas with significantly sized vulnerable landforms, such as ravines and bluffs. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 6 | Ecology | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to consolidate, clarify and refine the Municipality's variable approach to watercourse buffers. Specific measures to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consolidating environmental protection zones and applying these zones to sensitive riparian areas and wetlands, such as coastal marshlands, floodways and large wetland complexes, based on detailed mapping and analysis » Increasing the minimum required riparian buffer around drinking water supply sources, established under the Protected Water Supply Zone, from 30.5 to 100 m » Establishing a consistent watercourse buffer requirement for industrial zones and uses, which currently range from 20 to 100 m for some zones and specific uses » Increasing the standard watercourse buffer requirement from 20 to 30 m for watercourses that are greater than 50 cm wide » Maintaining a watercourse buffer requirement of 20 metres for watercourses that are intermittent or less than 50 cm wide » Maintaining special watercourse buffering requirements established for vulnerable areas, such as the special requirements that apply to Cow Bay » Removing the formula to increase the buffer requirements based on slope for inland watercourses (not marine coast), as the requirement is rarely applicable and adds unnecessary complexity to the permitting process | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 8 | Ecology | Update the landscaping requirements in the Land Use By-laws to support the implementation of the <i>Urban Forest Master Plan</i> by prohibiting the use of invasive species. | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed Centre Plan Package A includes landscaping requirements that prohibited the use of invasive species. • To be completed for other areas as part of the upcoming Regional Plan Review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |

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| 19 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to direct residential uses away from areas suitable for resource extraction and forestry uses. (See the Community Shaping Section for more specific direction concerning rural centres and conservation design developments). | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 20 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to provide more opportunities for uses that support primary resource industries, such as aggregate and wood processing facilities in locations with high value working landscapes (Map 7 on page 43). Specific measures to consider include providing as-of-right development opportunities (without a lengthy rezoning or development agreement process) for resource developments that locate in areas that are buffered from nearby residential areas, wildlife corridors and core areas shown on the Green Network Ecology Map (Map 5 on page 35). | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 21 | Working Landscapes | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to limit or prohibit conservation design developments in the Agricultural Designation. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 22 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land-Use By-laws to encourage agricultural developments and supportive uses to locate and expand in agricultural areas. Specific measures to consider include: » Ensuring setback and separation distance requirements are reasonable and do not unduly restrict the development or expansion of processing facilities or agricultural structures » Reducing the size and extent of non-agricultural uses in agricultural areas to limit the loss of high quality soils to non-agricultural developments » Ensuring permitted agricultural-related uses are inclusive of changing business practices and opportunities | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 24 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to encourage small-scale agriculture on private properties. Specific measures to consider include: » Removing barriers to appropriately-scaled urban agriculture and food retail on private property including, road side stands and animal husbandry » When reviewing landscaping requirements, ensure that edible landscaping, such as fruit trees and herb gardens, are permitted types of vegetation | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Centre Plan Package A includes increased opportunities for urban agriculture, including bee keeping and the keeping of chickens (hens). Landscaping provisions will permit edible plants. On July 30, 2019, Regional Council initiated a region wide planning process to consider permitting the keeping of chickens as an accessory residential use in all parts of the Municipality. To be further advanced as part of the upcoming Regional Plan Review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |

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| 26 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to ensure that rural industrial developments are adequately screened from scenic roads and trails. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 27 | Working Landscapes | Review Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to maintain and, where needed, increase lot size and frontage requirements to prevent dense “ribbon development” along scenic routes located between rural centres. | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural development patterns research completed as part of the P&D Rural team work plan. • To be completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan Review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |
| 28 | Working Landscapes | Amend Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws to encourage both small- and large-scale tourism related uses in rural areas. Specific measures to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Relaxing restrictions for home-based businesses that cater to tourists, such as bed and breakfast operations, accessory cabins, tour operations, arts and crafts, farms stays, and commercial recreation (such as kayak rentals etc.) » Where not already permitted, considering the development of large-scale resorts, campgrounds, spas and hotels by rezoning or development agreement in rural areas that balance tourism opportunities with impacts on the environment and nearby residents » Enabling the development of resource-based and eco-tourism opportunities, including fishing, wildlife viewing, hunting, agriculture and forestry focused tours and experiences | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background research is underway as part of the P&D Rural team work plan. • To be completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan Review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |
| 29 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to ensure that the Green Network map (Map 5 on page35), is considered when reviewing changes to the Urban Service Area boundary, Urban Settlement Designation, Urban Reserve Designation, and when preparing Secondary Planning Strategies. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 30 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to clarify the purpose and scope of land suitability assessments, which identify vulnerable landforms and other ecological features, as base information needed to inform the design of new mixed-use neighbourhoods and business park developments. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 31 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to prioritize the redevelopment of brownfield sites and other underdeveloped urban infill sites ahead of undisturbed greenfield sites. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. . |
| 32 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> and Municipal Planning Strategies to prioritize the preservation and creation of natural connections to the Chebucto Peninsula (Map 9) from the Mainland when reviewing development proposals and | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is |

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| | | updating planning policies and zoning in the area. Specific connections to review and prioritize are highlighted on Map 9. | | targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 35 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to better define the size, shape and location of all rural centres in relation to natural corridors and valued open spaces. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 36 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> by updating the conservation design development policies to streamline the planning process for proposed developments located within rural centres. Specific planning approaches to consider include: » Site plan approvals, which can direct development to suitable areas, without involving the lengthier development agreement process » Enabling as-of-right developments within carefully selected pre-zoned areas | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research is underway as part of the P&D Rural Team work plan. To be completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |
| 37 | Community shaping | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> conservation design development agreement policies to: » Further focus development within rural centres » Avoid conflicts with working landscapes » Direct development to the edges of the core areas shown on the Green Network Ecology Map (Map 5 on page 35) » Preserve the essential and important corridors shown on the Green Network Ecology Map (Map 5 on page 35) » Take a cautious approach to development within areas of high environmental value (Map 5 on page 35) by ensuring the underlying values are investigated and conserved and any impacts from development are mitigated | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research is underway as part of the P&D Rural Team work plan. To be completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review and on-going By-law Simplification program. |
| 62 | Outdoor Recreation | During the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review, amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> concerning Regional Parks to differentiate Regional Park types with particular regard to Nature Parks - which are specially designed to protect an area of land and/or water, support natural processes, species and habitat; and where human activities are primarily passive (e.g. hiking, nature interpretation and appreciation), and do not compromise ecological function. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 66 | Outdoor Recreation | During the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to recognize recent land acquisitions (pending) within the Purcell's Cove Backlands as Regional Park and consider open space planning for the remainder of this area. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 67 | Outdoor Recreation | During the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to recognize community land conservation initiatives as part of the 100 Wild Islands. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |

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| 73 | Cultural Landscapes | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to clarify the scope and purpose of cultural landscape studies, based on the <i>Cultural Landscape Framework Study</i> , as an integral component of master neighbourhood and business park planning initiatives and the identification, preservation and celebration of these landscapes. | 2-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP), staff are developing a guide for completing culture and heritage assessments. The draft CHPP is targeted to be presented to CPED in fall 2019. • Amendments to the Regional Plan will be completed as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review. |
| 74 | Cultural Landscapes | Amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> to include cultural landscapes as elements that must be considered when preparing conservation design development agreements. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |

| 6.2 PARK NETWORK MANAGEMENT | | | | |
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| ACTION # | THEME | ACTION | DIRECTION | UPDATE |
| 23 | Working Landscapes | Balanced with other open space uses, support community gardens and other forms of food production in public parks and other Municipally-owned properties. | Guidance | Guidance in use: HRM currently supports 23 community gardens on municipal lands with new gardens added to the program each year. |
| 25 | Working Landscapes | Consider community gardens, fruit trees, and food supportive amenities, when preparing master plans for public open spaces. | Guidance | Guidance in use: the park master plans currently underway (Halifax Common, Gorsebrook Park, Eastern Passage Common, Lake Echo District Park) consider this policy guidance. |
| 42 | Outdoor Recreation | Promote parks and open spaces for health, well-being, sense of community and overall quality of life through improved public communication, such as through HRM's website. | Guidance | Guidance in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA), HRM has created a fact sheet about the health |

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| | | | | <p>benefits of being active in nature that is being promoted on our website and via social media.</p> <p>www.halifax.ca/recreation/parks-trails-gardens/benefits-nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Active For Life Committee is producing an infographic called 'Pathways to Physical Literacy' about opportunities to be active in all outdoor spaces. |
| 43 | Outdoor Recreation | Through Halifax's Community Engagement Strategy, formalize a public engagement program for the planning and stewardship of parks. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use: An inter-departmental working group has been formed and is considering engagement related to the planning and stewardship of parks.</p> |
| 44 | Outdoor Recreation | Incorporate year-round recreational infrastructure, including winter-oriented activities, when planning parks. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued winter maintenance of walkways in Point Pleasant Park, Shubie Park and the Public Gardens. • The Adventure Earth Centre ran a Winter by the Sea program for new comers in 2018 and an outdoor survival and winter hikes program in 2019. • Park plans currently underway are considering winter activities. |
| 45 | Outdoor Recreation | Enhance existing standards for the design of parks with a focus on versatile and flexible space, based on the nature of different park types and situations, that encourages participation of all ages and abilities. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Playbox was installed at Aberdeen Court Park to foster free and unstructured play for all. • Park plans currently underway consider this policy guidance. |
| 46 | Outdoor Recreation | Include culture and education programs and projects, such as the inclusion of public art within parks and nature interpretation programs when planning for parks. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued growth of Adventure Earth Centre (AEC) day camp education programming including Eco-scientists, Geology Rocks and Outdoor Odyssey themes, as well as overnight programs, such as Explorers and Sunship Earth. • In 2019, HRM summer camp managers |

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| | | | | <p>took an 8-hour AEC training course on reconnecting to nature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive Halifax Explosion interpretive elements in Fort Needham Park, including iconic sculptural markers, as well as other markers located in the Ferry Terminal Park and the Dartmouth and Halifax Commons. • Park plans currently underway are considering culture and public art. • On-going support of Shakespeare By The Sea and Nocturne: Art at Night, where many installations are programmed in parks. • Providing below-market lease of the Gatekeeper's Lodge in Point Pleasant Park for the Sable Island Institute to carry out research and public programs related to Sable Island using an arts-mediated environmental lens. |
| 47 | Outdoor Recreation | Ensure there is a clear and consistent communication system related to accessibility and wayfinding to and within parks. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active transportation wayfinding strategy for HRM is being developed that includes three pilot sites within parks. • Wayfinding signage with maps have been added to the trailheads and trail system at Hemlock Ravine Park. • Signs with maps have been placed at trailheads at Shubie Park. • Park ID signs with Halifax branding that identify park amenities and rules are being added to numerous parks as an on-going initiative. |
| 48 | Outdoor Recreation | Enhance social gathering in municipal open spaces by encouraging limited private and not for profit commercial initiatives. | 1-4 Years | In progress: Park plans, such as the Halifax Common Master Plan, consider this action item. |

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| 49 | Outdoor Recreation | During the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review introduce the Park Spectrum (Figure 6), which recognizes the Municipal role in providing the full range of outdoor recreation and ecological conservation functions and experiences of public open spaces together with Federal and Provincial parks and school grounds. | 2-7 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 50 | Outdoor Recreation | Develop service level targets for the <i>Regional Plan</i> settlement types to provide public access to the spectrum of recreation experiences (e.g. sportsfields, playgrounds, nature trails), within the Halifax park system. | 1-2 Years | In progress: An inventory of outdoor recreation amenities and spatial analysis is underway. |
| 51 | Outdoor Recreation | Revise travel time/distance tolerance targets and standards to the nearest park based on the designations in the <i>Regional Plan</i> to account for HRM's varied settlement patterns and residential densities. | 1-2 Years | In progress: Preliminary spatial analysis is underway. This action is being coordinated with Action 52. |
| 52 | Outdoor Recreation | Revise public park area per capita targets and standards based on designations in the <i>Regional Plan</i> to account for HRM's varied settlement patterns. | 1-2 Years | In progress: Preliminary spatial analysis is underway. This action is being coordinated with Action 51. |
| 53 | Outdoor Recreation | With the development of new parkland targets and standards, amend the <i>Regional Plan</i> and Regional Subdivision By-law to direct the acquisition, development and management of Municipal Parkland. | 1-2 Years | In progress: Project planning for the next <i>Regional Plan</i> review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 54 | Outdoor Recreation | Determine service delivery gaps and overlap based on established travel time and park pressure targets (above objective) that considers the distribution of Municipal Parks together with Provincial and Federal Parks, and school grounds. | 1-2 Years | Not started: This action item is dependent upon actions 51 and 52, which are underway. |
| 55 | Outdoor Recreation | Use the Land Capability Analysis Tool (Appendix B) to evaluate existing and proposed parks for their land capability in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identity (sense of place) » Heritage conservation » Recreation land use » Natural systems conservation » Connectivity | 1-2 Years | In progress: The analysis tool has been used for selected land evaluations and the results factored into the decision-making process. |
| 56 | Outdoor Recreation | Develop a park performance monitoring program to regularly gather park usage data from park and recreation staff, the public, and new technology to count users. | 1-2 Years | In progress: Methods for monitoring park usage are currently under review. |
| 57 | Outdoor Recreation | Use information gathered through the park performance monitoring program and the Land Capability Analysis Tool (Appendix B) to develop an inventory of low, moderate and high performing parks. | 1-4 Years | Not started: This action is dependent on action 56, which is underway. |
| 58 | Outdoor Recreation | Prepare policies and procedures concerning parkland maintenance to incorporate naturalization and green infrastructure (ie. rain gardens and bioswales). | 1-4 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January, 2019, Regional Council approved the direction set out in a staff report on park naturalization. A working group with members from Parks & |

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| | | | | <p>Recreation, TPW and Planning & Development has been established and there is a naturalization landing page on the HRM website: https://www.halifax.ca/recreation/parks-trails-gardens/park-naturalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park plans currently underway consider naturalization and green infrastructure. |
| 59 | Outdoor Recreation | In cases of significant service overlap and low scoring from the Land Capability Analysis Tool (Appendix B), consider the disposal of identified low performing parkland. | Guidance | Guidance in use: While formal implementation of this action is dependent on action 54, the guidance is used when considering any potential land disposals. |
| 64 | Outdoor Recreation | <p>During the next Regional Plan review assess the establishment of future Regional Parks, as identified in the Regional Plan, and their boundaries, through the Land Capability Analysis Tool (Appendix B) and other criteria that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The location of any existing conceptual park boundary Relationship to adjacent lands and community The landform, ecological attributes, and cultural features of the lands including connectivity to other lands The presence of potential for recreational features such as existing trails and their usage Existing and possible access to the lands and the ability to accommodate primary or secondary trailheads The planning, zoning and development potential of the lands The interest of competing development plans and the impact that Municipality Parkland acquisition would have on them Acquisition models such as outright purchase or other alternatives Financial and budget factors. | Guidance | Guidance in use: Project planning for the next Regional Plan review is underway and is targeted to be presented to Regional Council for formal initiation in fall 2019. |
| 76 | Cultural Landscapes | Identify, preserve and celebrate cultural landscapes and resources when preparing master plans for publicly-owned open spaces. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan, staff are developing a Cultural Landscape Program (Work Plan) that is expected to consider the cultural landscapes on municipally owned lands. • Extensive Halifax explosion interpretive elements have been included in Fort Needham Park. • Park plans currently underway consider cultural landscape assets. |

6.3 CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECT WORK

| ACTION # | THEME | ACTION | DIRECTION | UPDATE |
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| 7 | Ecology | Continue to implement the <i>Urban Forest Master Plan</i> . | Guidance | Guidance in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 7000 street and park trees have been planted since 2014 and 1500 additional trees will be planted in 2019. In 2019, Regional Council increased the budget for urban forest program from \$650,000 to \$850,000 per year. • Park plans currently underway consider the Urban Forest Mast Plan. |
| 9 | Ecology | Consider the adoption of a private trees by-law to manage the removal of trees on private property within serviced (urban) areas. Specific direction to consider includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Focusing on large properties with development potential while minimizing impacts on small properties » Prioritizing the protection of trees and vegetation within the watercourse buffer » Developing an educational campaign to promote tree stewardship on private property | 1-2 Years | In progress: In December, 2018, Regional Council requested a staff report on potentially creating new development charges and/or regulating the cutting of trees on lands that are developed for residential, commercial, and institutional purposes. The pending staff report is also considering the HGNP direction and is targeted to be circulated to Regional Council in fall 2019. |
| 10 | Ecology | When updating the <i>Municipal Design Guidelines</i> (Red Book) consider requiring developers to install street trees in front of developments located on existing streets that do not currently contain street trees. | 1-2 Years | In progress: The Red Book update is underway and is expected to be presented to Council in early 2020. The requirements noted here will be considered for both the urban and rural development requirements. |
| 14 | Ecology | Continue to update the Region's flood scenario mapping and, through individual project work, prioritize the preservation and restoration of riparian areas and shoreline vegetation as an effective method for mitigating flood impacts. | Guidance | Guidance in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sackville Rivers Floodplain study was completed in 2017 and is being used to updated related planning documents. • In 2019, the Municipal successfully applied for funding from the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) for the Sackville Rivers floodplain to review and recommend mitigation measures that reduce flood impacts. The Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in summer 2019. |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019, the Municipality also received NDMP funding to complete a floodplain study for the Shubenacadie watershed. The RFP was posted in summer 2019. |
| 15 | Ecology | Consider Municipal efforts to protect and expand the Green Network when assessing Municipal contributions to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, including protection of land-based green carbon sinks and intertidal areas (e.g., saltmarshes) that act as blue carbon sinks. | Guidance | Guidance in use: Carbon sinks are being considered as part of HalifACT, a long-term climate change plan to reduce emissions and help communities adapt. The strategic plan is targeted for completion in March, 2020. |
| 16 | Ecology | Make the Green Network Database available to all Municipal departments, as well as freely available to the public through HRM's Open Data Catalogue. | 1-2 Years | In progress: The review and processing of HGNP data for public use is nearly complete and the data targeted to be released on HRM's Open Data portal in fall 2019. |
| 17 | Ecology | Explore opportunities to develop on-going partnerships with Provincial Government departments, universities and non-profits to refine, maintain and update the key datasets needed to understand the health of the Region's ecosystems, wildlife populations and wildlife movement corridors, including the spread of invasive species. | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2019, Municipal staff attended and presented the HGNP at the Canadian Maritimes Ecological Connectivity conference held at Dalhousie University. Staff are participating in the Habitat Conservation Strategy for Nova Scotia (St. Margaret's Bay to Cape Breton). As part of the 2019/20 budget process, Council approved a new Planner III position in Planning & Development to support and coordinate the implementation of the HGNP. This staff resource will be key to fostering important partnerships with other levels of government, universities and conservation groups. |
| 33 | Community Shaping | Consider the preservation and creation of natural connections to the Chebucto Peninsula when planning the development of the Ragged Lake Business Park. | Guidance | Guidance in use: In 2018, Regional Council provided direction to undertake the background studies needed to inform the development of the Ragged Lake Business Park. The scope of work for the background studies is under review and includes consideration of natural |

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| | | | | connections, with emphasis on connections to the Chebucto Peninsula. |
| 41 | Community Shaping | When updating the <i>Municipal Design Guidelines</i> (Red Book) consider and accommodate wildlife crossings when impacts on essential and important corridors cannot be avoided. | 1-2 Years | In progress: The Red Book update is underway and is expected to be presented to Council in early 2020. Wildlife crossings will be considered primarily for rural contexts. |
| 60 | Outdoor Recreation | Continue to study and consider the adoption of infrastructure charges to support the development and improvement of parks and recreation facilities that are needed to support new development | 1-2 Years | In progress: A staff report to Council on infrastructure charges is targeted for fall 2019. |
| 69 | Outdoor Recreation | Continue to implement the approved Cole Harbour Basin Open Space Plan. | 1-7 Years | In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New AT and park pathways are being developed in the Cole Harbour Commons this year. • A park plan for the former Rehab Lands will be developed as part of the 2019/20 Parks and Recreation Business Plan. |
| 70 | Outdoor Recreation | Use the HGNP and other municipal plans, including the AT Priority Plan and Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) to establish linkages between parks, Provincial Wilderness Areas, crown lands, fresh waterbodies and ocean fronts that are used for recreation purposes. | Guidance | Guidance in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sackville Greenway was completed between Glendale and Sackville Drive in 2018. • Bissett Greenway Phase 3 is under construction and connects to parkland at the Rehab property. • New AT and park pathways are being developed in the Cole Harbour Commons in 2019. • HRM supported planning of new AT corridors through Sackville Lakes Provincial Park. • Planning is underway for the Downtown Dartmouth Infrastructure Enhancements project. This project is a combination of road, stormwater management, park, and trail upgrades. Part of the envisioned work is to implement a missing link in the |

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| | | | | <p>Trans-Canada Trail between Sullivan's Pond and the Dartmouth Waterfront. The Trans-Canada Trail is expected to run along an 800 m corridor from Starr Park on Prince Albert Road through a newly designed intersection, along Martin's Park on Alderney Drive, and connect to the Dartmouth Waterfront Trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park plans currently underway consider AT connections. |
| 71 | Cultural Landscapes | Use the <i>Cultural Landscape Framework Study</i> as the guiding document for the consideration of potential cultural landscapes and the basis for a future cultural landscape program to be advanced through the <i>Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan</i> . | 2-4 Years | In progress: The final phase of the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan is underway and is using the <i>Cultural Landscape Framework Study</i> to guide the development of a cultural landscape workplan. |
| 75 | Cultural Landscapes | Maintain and enrich the inventory of potential cultural landscapes identified in the <i>Cultural Landscape Framework Study</i> through planning initiatives, community engagement and other municipal initiatives. | Guidance | Guidance in use: A work plan and approach for collecting and maintaining information is being advanced through the <i>Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan</i> . |
| 78 | Cultural Landscapes | Proactively engage and expand the inventory of cultural landscapes of interest to African Nova Scotian, Mi'kmaq, Acadian and immigrant communities | 2-4 Years | <p>In progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to develop the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan has involved targeted engagement and establishing relationships with these under-represented communities. The cultural landscape program, being advanced through CHPP, will strive to strengthen these relationships and enrich the inventory and understanding of cultural landscapes of interest. • Park plans currently underway consider this action item. • In 2018/19, HRM worked with the stakeholders of Africville to complete an Interpretive Framework for Africville Park. The result will be 5 interpretive elements with themes and content developed by those stakeholders so that those stories and the impact are told in the actual |

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| | | | | landscape. The conceptual design is a Corten steel panel with cut silhouettes of residents taken from archival images. The panels will tell the stories of the vibrant life in Africville and how important family and church were to the residents. |
| 79 | Cultural Landscapes | Engage groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in planning initiatives, including African Nova Scotian, Mi'kmaq, Acadian, and immigrant communities, when developing cultural landscape plans and policies | Guidance | <p>Guidance in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In support of the CHPP, engagement has been carried out with Acadian and African Nova Scotia community. Consultation is in process with the Mi'kmaq community. • Requirements for engagement with under-represented communities is being considered for land suitability assessments in master planning exercises. |

| 6.4 PARTNERSHIPS | | | | |
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| ACTION # | THEME | ACTION | DIRECTION | UPDATE |
| 11 | Ecology | Work with Halifax Water and Nova Scotia Environment to establish stormwater management guidelines to improve the quality of stormwater runoff. | 2-7 Years | In progress: A new by-law concerning storm water management is targeted to be presented to Council in 2020. |
| 12 | Ecology | Work with Halifax Water and Nova Scotia Environment to promote green infrastructure, such as naturalized stormwater retention ponds and bioswales, as the preferred approach to managing stormwater. | 4-7 Years | <p>In progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New standards for green infrastructure are being considered for the updated <i>Municipal Design Guidelines</i> (Red Book). • HRM worked closely with Halifax Water on the Sawmill River daylighting and stormwater management project. Trees removed from construction resulted in 75 new trees planted along the water way. A second phase of river daylighting will involve a similar partnership that will include landscape naturalization, a holding pond for storm water and opportunities for fish passage. • In Broad Street Park, within the West |

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| | | | | <p>Bedford development, as an alternative to constructing a fenced serge lined stormwater detention pond, the developer constructed a bio-swale. It contains elements in the street ROW, parkland, and designated stormwater management area resulting in an open space area designed to flood in extreme events while still functioning as a park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park plans currently underway consider naturalized approaches to stormwater management. |
| 13 | Ecology | Work with Halifax Water to develop a green infrastructure specification document to guide and promote the use of low-impact design approaches to manage stormwater on private property for multi-unit residential, commercial and industrial developments. | 2-4 Years | In progress: A new by-law concerning storm water management is targeted to be presented to Council in 2020. |
| 18 | Ecology | Formally request that the Province amend the <i>Halifax Regional Municipality Charter</i> to 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. | 1-2 Years | Complete: A letter from Mayor Savage to Minister Chuck Porter, Municipal Affairs, was sent in December 2018. A letter from Minister Porter confirming receipt and future follow up by provincial staff was received in February 2019. |
| 34 | Community Shaping | Work with the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, as opportunities arise, to identify opportunities to construct wildlife crossings under Highway 103 and the planned Highway 113. | Guidance | Guidance not yet in use: The opportunity to discuss such wildlife crossings has not arisen. |
| 38 | Community Shaping | Work with the Province and utility companies when opportunities arise to locate trails within existing and planned transportation and utility corridors. | Guidance | Guidance in use: Trails are being considered as part of the Burnside Connector and potential Caldwell Road extension projects. |
| 39 | Community Shaping | Work with the Province to mitigate the impacts on essential and important corridors and valued ecological open spaces when designing new regional transportation projects. | Guidance | Guidance in use: The HGNP is informing conversations with the province concerning regional transportation projects. |
| 40 | Community Shaping | Work with the Province to reconnect fragmented landscapes with crossing structures (wildlife overpasses and underpasses) when repairing or expanding existing roads and linear infrastructure. | Guidance | Guidance not yet in use: The opportunity to discuss such wildlife crossings has not arisen. |
| 61 | Outdoor Recreation | Formally request that the Province amend the <i>Halifax Regional Municipality Charter</i> to enable a greater range of legislative abilities, such as the ability to | 1-2 Years | Complete: A letter from Mayor Savage to Minister Chuck Porter, Municipal Affairs, was sent in December 2018. A letter from |

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| | | enact parkland dedication requirements based on density to address development that does not include the subdivision of lots. | | Minister Porter that confirming receipt and future follow up by provincial staff was received in February 2019. |
| 63 | Outdoor Recreation | As opportunities arise, coordinate with Provincial and Federal governments and conservation groups to establish a nature park network. | Guidance | Guidance in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal 'Quickstart' funding was acquired, which helped with municipal land acquisitions at the end of 2018 to support the establishment of the Blue Mountain Birch Cove Wilderness Park. A Federal funding application to help with additional land acquisitions has been submitted. • In partnership with the NCC, the municipality acquired 379 acres of lands to establish the Shaw Wilderness Park in the Williams Lake area as part of the Purcells Cove Backlands. |
| 65 | Outdoor Recreation | For other future Nature Parks and other open spaces that are already largely in public ownership, continue to work with the Province and other stakeholders respecting their delineation of boundaries, planning and programming. | Guidance | Guidance in use: Staff continue to engage with provincial staff and stakeholders concerning the planning and programming of Nature Parks. |
| 68 | Outdoor Recreation | In conjunction with any Provincial initiative consider open space and parkland opportunities in the Wrights Lake area as they arise. | Guidance | Guidance not yet in use: The opportunity to discuss such open space opportunities has not arisen. |
| 72 | Cultural Landscapes | Engage with the Province as they update the <i>Heritage Property Act</i> to include policies on the registration of cultural landscapes. | 2-4 Years | In progress: The province continues to engage with First Nations and Stakeholders on potential amendments to the <i>Heritage Property Act</i> , and the creation of regulations for the designation of Cultural Landscapes. HRM Staff continue to correspond with their provincial counterparts in anticipation of these legislative changes. |
| 77 | Cultural Landscapes | Work with the Province to update the accuracy and use of the Areas of Elevated Archaeological Potential Map contained in the <i>Regional Plan</i> . | 4-7 Years | In progress: Staff have met with provincial staff from the Nova Scotia Special Places program to guide updates to the Areas of Elevated Archaeological Potential Map, and to coordinate the protection of important archaeological sites in the |

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| | | | | region. More specific direction will be included in the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan and implemented as part of the upcoming Regional Plan review. |
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