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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members of North West Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Shayne Vipond, Planner III

DATE: April 7, 2021

**SUBJECT: Case 21639: Margeson Drive Master Plan - Margeson Drive and the Highway #101 Interchange, Middle Sackville**

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*Motion approved that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to:*

- 1. Initiate a process to consider amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, the Regional Subdivision By-law, the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws for Sackville and Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville to enable mixed use residential, commercial, institutional and recreational development on lands surrounding the Highway 101 Interchange at Margeson Drive, Middle Sackville as shown on Maps 1-4 of the staff report dated October 26, 2018; and*
- 2. Follow the public participation program as set out in Attachment D of the staff report dated October 26, 2018.*

### **Background:**

In Summer of 2018, planning staff met with Armco Capital Limited, the Cobequid Cultural Society and other HRM staff to discuss the possibility of undertaking a coordinated Planning program to amend the Community Plan policies for lands within a specific defined location around the Highway 101/ Margeson Drive interchange. Armco Capital, owner of the majority of the lands agreed to supply the studies required to commence the Planning program once it could be initiated at Regional Council.

On December 4, 2018, Regional Council initiated the Margeson Drive Master Plan, a planning program to include Plan policy for lands around the Highway 101 interchange at Margeson Drive that were also considered under the 2011 visioning process. Staff commenced to engage the NWPAC in Jan 2019 to outline the Master Plan process and discuss their central role in the overall project. At this time Armco's development priorities from the newly initiated Margeson Drive Master Plan shifted and the Planning process was put on hold.

In the fall of 2020, staff began discussion with Armco about the possibility of reengaging the Master Plan process. Staff indicated that the commencement point of the process was unchanged. The commencement would begin in earnest with the submission of the technical studies necessary to begin the evaluation. In January of 2021, Armco agreed to begin supplying the studies. Based on this agreement, staff are undertaking the work necessary to prepare to begin this project.

The purpose of creating a Master Plan is to create new secondary planning policies to facilitate development of commercial, residential, institutional and recreational uses on lands within the Growth Centre boundary in proximity to the interchange. This type of complete community approach cannot be considered under existing Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS) policies. Therefore, staff have sought to initiate a master planning process to amend the Regional Plan, Regional Subdivision By-law and the SMPSs and Land Use By-laws (LUB) for the Sackville and Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville plan areas.

In 2011, a community visioning exercise was completed for these lands which identified desirable attributes for the area. That exercise included significant focus on the Margeson Drive- Highway 101 interchange lands and the following specific action items were identified to provide for a complete community:

- Undertake Master Planning to ensure a comprehensive planning approach
- Protect the natural environment with particular reference to open space and water resources
- Provide recreational opportunities
- Provide an outdoor gathering place
- Establish community commercial center
- Seek to achieve sustainable development
- Provide seniors' housing
- Create a variety of housing types
- Establish a cultural centre
- Permit mixed use development as appropriate

### **Public Participation Program**

Regional Council's initiation of this process requires that a public participation program be adopted as part of the planning process. The public participation program is designed to gather feedback from residents and community groups about possible amendments to the planning documents for Sackville and Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville. Staff will work with the North West Planning Advisory Committee (NWPAC) to ensure the community in this area is engaged. The process will look at creating a full set of planning policies and land use regulations for these lands which will become known as the Margeson Drive Master Plan (MDMP). The preliminary study area is shown on the maps attached to the staff initiation report.

The NWPAC will oversee the process and will operate under the Terms of Reference for the NWPAC.

#### Role of the NWPAC

The role of the NWPAC is to host meetings, workshops and any additional forums (virtually or in person) needed to engage the Community and affected groups in the formation of the proposed Master Plan. The NWPAC will review studies, advise in the drafting of policies and regulations, provide advice to staff and consultants throughout the process as well as ensure that members of the public have opportunity to participate and express their opinion.

NWPAC will:

- advise North West Community Council (NWCC) with respect to the preparation or amendments of planning documents within or affecting (all the portions of) the designated Master Plan study area;
- advise NWCC with respect to planning matters generally within or affecting (all or portions of) the designated Master Plan study area. The term "planning matter" means any discretionary decisions of Community Council related to the use and development of land;
- hold public meetings associated with municipal planning strategy amendments as deemed necessary in accordance with the public engagement program (Attachment D of the staff initiation report) and COVID-19 administrative order; and,
- provide a recommendation to advise NWCC.

All meetings of the NWPAC will be open to the public.

### Master Plan Study Area and Study Scope

The recommended study area for the proposed Master Plan shown on page 5 lies within an Urban Local Growth Centre as identified by the Regional Plan. The study area includes properties north of the Hwy 101 interchange that terminate at the northern most point of Parcel 1 which is the remainder of the Sunset Ridge Comprehensive Development District (CDD) that is not within the Urban Service Boundary.

South of the Hwy 101 interchange, the Master Plan boundary terminates at the easternmost edge of Parcel 4. The termination of this boundary is based on the Sackville River floodplain mapping as identified at Regional Council on August 14, 2018 (Case 21402).

Redesigning water and road infrastructure in this area will require study by the proponents, the Municipality, Halifax Water and the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. The Master Planning process approach is recommended to carry out the Community Vision and create a comprehensive plan that will also allocate capital costs for potential infrastructure upgrades for transportation and municipal water service as necessary.

### Proposal Details

The Margeson Drive Master Plan Study Area (page 5) shows the lands around the interchange at Margeson Drive and Highway 101 to be included in the proposed master plan. This comprises an area of approximately 59 ha (146 acres) that lies on either side of the Highway 101 south of the serviced area of Sunset Ridge. The lands that lie within the Rural Commuter Designation under the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy are the areas where central water may be extended through an amendment to the Water Service Area boundary.

Three Key Objectives:

- 1) Growth Management Policies for McCabe North (Indigo Shores),  
Currently growth management policies limit the remainder Indigo Shores from developing more than 25 lots per year. The first objective is to review these policies to determine if it is appropriate to request that Council remove these restrictions.
- 2) Cobequid Cultural Society (CCS) lands -- planning approval  
The CCS plans to develop a cultural centre on a portion of lands near the Hwy 101 interchange. Without planning approval, they are unable to fund raise. Staff wish to review their plans with the committee to discuss options.
- 3) Completion of the remainder of the Master Plan.  
The Master Plan will be evaluated on a Block by Block basis for lands uses. However, matters of cohesion between all blocks will include consideration of the following:
  - density and intensity of land uses,
  - considerations in design,
  - relationship to buildings,
  - functional elements,
  - livability,
  - land use compatibility, and
  - accessibility within the context of suburban developments.

### Duration

The Margeson Drive Master Plan project has a duration of 36 months.

### Year 2021

- Initially, it is anticipated that the MDMP sub-committee would meet to discuss Objective #1 twice within the first 6 months. Regular monthly NWPAC meetings would begin at the 6 month point to discuss preliminary design and to hear from stakeholders. More detailed design will follow over the course of the year as each block is considered. It is anticipated that fall months of 2021 will see a more intensive meeting schedule for the NWPAC.
- There is commitment to hold two public meetings during 2021 once milestones have been reached and the design program is ready for additional community input. The format of the community meetings will be dependent on the COVID-19 protocol.

#### Year 2022

- In the year 2022, the NWPAC will also meet monthly to review completion of detailed design, land use policies and land use by-laws that will serve to implement the Master Plan until monthly meetings are no longer required.
- In 2022, there will also be a requirement to undertake a minimum of one additional public engagement session to receive additional community input.

#### **Attachments:**

The [staff initiation report](#) is here. The website for this project can be found at the link below:

<https://www.halifax.ca/business/planning-development/applications/case-21639-middle-sackville-master-plan>

### Margeson Drive Master Plan Study Area



**Map 4 - Proposed Margeson Drive and Highway 101 Master Plan Study Area**

**HALIFAX**

Subject Area

- ① Halifax Regional Municipality
- ② Armco Capital Inc.
- ③ Armco Capital Inc.
- ④ Armco Capital Inc.
- ⑤ Halifax Regional Municipality
- ⑧ Armco Capital Inc.
- ⑦ Armco Capital Inc. Indigo Shores  
(Potential Removal of Interim  
Growth Control on all Lands  
Subject to Policies)

- Urban Service Area
- Water Service Area
- Served (Sewer Only)



The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.