

Development

1. HRMbyDesign is now five years old, do you feel it was successful? At this time what changes would you make moving forward?

Response from: Barry Dalrymple- Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Steve Streach- Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Laurie Cook- Dist 2

I think having a plan for the downtown core is a good idea, but I think there should also be more planning for rural areas of HRM. I would like to see an equivalent process for rural areas as whole to look at common issues (i.e. community transportation outside the core). And I would like to see the community visioning program revitalized and expanded to give individual communities a stronger voice at Council.

Response from: Will Gilligan- Dist 2

Yes, I feel that we need to revamp the current tax system. The people in District 2 feel that though they pay less tax than the urban Districts, the amount that they pay does not reflect the services that they actually receive. For example: if we are going to charge homeowners a sidewalk tax, maybe we can give them sidewalks and if we can't provide the sidewalks, remove that surcharge.

I would like to see an elimination of all user fees for outdoor facilities and a reduction of about 50% for indoor facilities. Residents should be able to enjoy what we have to offer without feeling they need a raise in their paycheck to do so.

Everyone I talk to on the doorsteps or community gatherings know that they have to pay their fair share of taxes. The word "**fair**" is the key. When people in District 2 can take their family to the local public pool, enjoy the new skate park and have the option to bus there, then I would say the tax system is fair.

Response from: David Hendsbee-Dist 2

No Response

Response from: Jason Josey- Dist 2

Everyone has a different opinion on what “successful” means. When looking at the original plan set out by HRM by design, and what has been accomplished to this point, it would certainly appear that goals are being met and progress is being made. I think that the plan is solid and moving along in a successful manner. The only changes I would suggest for the future is that, as things change economically due to current world events, HRM by design may have to review expenditures to make sure they will be feasible in the long term. As the cost of living continues to rise, it may be time to reevaluate some of the primary goals as they now exist. I believe affordable housing, transportation and sustainability should be moved to top of the list.

Response from: Keith Leahy- Dist 2

I do not believe it has been entirely successful as it has not provided consensus on development in the urban core. To this day there are still opposing groups arguing over best use, height restrictions and design resulting in unnecessary delays for the developments our city needs to remain sustainable. In addition to this I do not believe it has been communicated well to the citizens of HRM. Also, rural areas cannot afford to be confined to a certain use or development. They must be given every opportunity to maintain and grow their economies and these decisions must be left up to them as they know their communities best.

Response from: Gail McQuarrie- Dist 2

No Response

Response from: Jackie Barkhouse- Dist 3

While the idea of HRMbyDesign may be five years old, the completed policy has only been in place for little more than a year. It is still far too early either to judge the level of its success or to suggest changes.

Response from: Bill Karsten- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Jim MacDonald- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Lorelei Nicoll- Dist 4

HRMbyDesign was approved by Regional Council in June 2009. It is impossible to state whether

HRMbyDesign is successful or not – measured against what, and in what context? What is clear is that HRM does need to have clear rules that are consistently applied if we are to introduce efficiencies in our development processes. HRMbyDesign is a step in this direction. I believe that strong planning and consistent implementation are essential to the effective functioning of our municipality. The major challenge at this time is to insure that HRMbyDesign is applied fairly and consistently.

Response from: Barry A. Smith- Dist 4

No Response

Response from: Sam Austin- Dist 5

I support HRMbyDesign. It's not perfect, but I believe the creation of greater certainty and faster approvals is good for business and good for the Downtown. I'm pleased to see the certainty that HRMbyDesign offers spreading to include other parts of the core in the Centre Plan.

I think that it's a little too early to judge HRMbyDesign's success. Plans take years to bear fruit! Initial indications, however, are promising (Barrington E-Space, TD Tower, Citadel Hotel). I'm hopeful that the heritage district and HRM grants will eventually prompt more creative reuse of our heritage buildings on Barrington Street.

There are two tweaks that I think need to be made to HRMbyDesign 1. greenspace dedication and 2. define affordable. Many Downtown lots are already close to greenspace and are too small or narrow to make greenspace dedication practical. The greenspace requirement has had the unintended consequence of making the redevelopment of some lots more challenging and needs to be relaxed. HRMbyDesign allows for increased height in exchange for various community amenities, including affordable housing. HRMbyDesign's definition of "affordable," however, should be linked to real income measures such as the poverty line or average family income rather than market rates. This would ensure affordable housing is actually affordable for those most in need.

Response from: Ken Bowman- Dist 5

I feel that it was successful more so than not, but that we are still in its infancy and must remain vigilant and on guard to protect it. By putting HRMbyDesign into place it gave developers certainty, a key ingredient in a growing city. Before HRMbyDesign was in place, developers were at a loss as to which way HRM wanted to go. Developers spent a lot of money putting together proposals only to have them squashed by council without apparent good reason. With HRMbyDesign in place, developers can now put a proposal together which, if the proposal follows the guide, will be approved. It should be a win win situation.

However, some developers still want to push the limit and ask for variances to the HRMby design model. This throws more uncertainty into the system, which in turn slows down HRM's growth because developers are dealing with whims and the unknown again. My only other comment is that it is also important to be vigilant that buildings being approved really do blend into their surroundings. We don't want albatrosses to be thrown up just because they meet the technical requirements of HRMbyDesign.

Response from: Sonya Dudka- Dist 5

The process of engagement in creating HRM By Design was very positive and the final plan struck a fair balance, for the most part, between the many valid but sometimes competing interests related to growth and development. That said as a citizen and now a candidate for council I am very disappointed with council's inability and or lack of courage to actually follow the plan. The first major change I would advocate for when elected to council is to stick to the plan.

Response from: Bryn Jones-Vaillancourt- Dist 5

I feel that the policy had the potential to be successful. However, I feel that to date when a developer has asked for amendments to HRMbyDesign, council has granted it. This plan was developed at the community level involving citizens, business and city staff. Going forward, I feel that regional council needs to stand by this plan and support the vision the community presented in this document.

Response from: Gloria McCluskey-Dist 5

No Response

Response from: Kate Watson- Dist 5

I feel the goals of HRM by design are attainable and desirable, but we must adhere to the principles. The rules for development need to be predictable to be efficient, and each time the rules are broken (as in Skye Tower's case) predictability erodes.

Response from: Bill Zebedee- Dist 5

We don't know if HRMbyDesign was successful over the last five years because HRM Council has chosen to circumvent it every chance they get. For example, the Skye Halifax development was too tall under HRMbyDesign yet Council decided to go ahead with a public hearing. The Y/CBC development was too tall under HRMbyDesign and will cause an obstruction of the ramparts, yet Council decided to go ahead with it. In order for a volunteer driven initiative such as HRMbyDesign to work, Council needs

to be willing to stand by the recommendations it makes. Until we have a Council who is willing, we will not know if the concept is successful or not.

As for moving forward, I would move a motion to extend HRMbyDesign by a further 5-years, and as Councilor for Dartmouth Centre, I would take every step necessary to ensure that it is followed.

Response from: Darren Fisher- Dist 6

No Response

Response from: Jerry Pye-Dist 6

No response

Response from: Mike MacDonell- Dist 7

HRMbyDesign was originally designed with the best intentions in mind, to preserve the culture and heritage of our great city while encouraging smart development. However during the process our city and economic outlook changed, forcing us to re-evaluate what is really important to us in these tough financial times. In my opinion to reach our potential we must evaluate each development on a case-by-case basis weighing the pro's and con's it will have associated with it, instead of being weighed down by a document that is nice on paper but doesn't put shovels in the ground, money in your pocket or food on the table. With the local economy in its current economic state we cannot limit the avenues from which growth is achieved and although HRMbyDesign was created with positive intentions and still contains great reforms, it does in my opinion limit growth and does not offer up realistic expectations in terms of development. We need to have a complete overhaul of HRMbyDesign and design it in such a way that offers a set of guidelines to help streamline smaller projects but allows for bigger developments to be voted upon by council.

Response from: Wayne Mason- Dist 7

I am a strong supporter of HRMbyDesign. There is more development underway in downtown right now than any time in recent history and HRMbD has a lot to do with that. The rapid approval of developments like the Citadel Hotel replacement, the E-space (Sam's) building and the TD buildings (both the new branch on Spring Garden and the tower on Barrington) are due to this plan. The Sisters sites and the Tip Top building are also great examples of HRMbD working.

I think work needs to be done to refine the affect that HRMbD has had on development of small lots. It is troubling that the smallest lots like the old Sub Shop space on Spring Garden that burned down and My Mothers Bloomers sit empty. Revision may be required to address concerns where a larger lot cannot be consolidated.

Response from: Dawgfather PHD- Dist 7

No Response

Response from: Sue Uteck- Dist 7

Overall I believe it was successful and will continue to be with some minor changes and a more cohesive implementation. Since its adoption we have seen more development than we have in the last 30 years. This vision has unified our community with increased live-work opportunities, new mixed use infill developments and a stronger culture of walking and cycling. It has brought balance to development opportunities while respecting heritage considerations.

We are now moving forward with the Centre Plan for Peninsula Halifax which is phase two of the HRM by Design. This is the opportunity to put good density on the Peninsula without sacrificing design but we need amendments to our Charter in order to make this work. These are the same rights that every other mun. has in Nova Scotia. If we do not get these amendments then development will proceed in its current hap hazard state on the peninsula.

We need to look at the plan and build some flexibility into it. One size does not fit all. As an ex. If you have no yard and wish to enclose containers at the front within reason this should be allowed. Schmitville and Morris streets are good examples. The design manual states one standard sidewalk but this does not always work for heritage homes. Not all buildings can accommodate the plan, some are unique lots in the downtown and need some flexibility.

Response from: Gerry Walsh- Dist 7

As Councillor, all my development decisions will be guided by HRM by Design guidelines to ensure we build a healthy, sustainable and vibrant downtown. This document is a sensible, balanced, responsible blueprint for future downtown development that was five years in the making and engaged hundreds of committed citizens in the process.

I would like to see the next Council strengthen the document by reviewing clause 89 which allows exceptions based on social, cultural or economic reasons. I feel better definition should be placed on these provisions so Council has clearer guidelines to work by.

Response from: Karen Dempsey- Dist 8

No Response

Response from: Doug MacDonald-Dist 8

I think H R M by Design was / is a good tool, although it seems that at times we have veered away from it, and this has been seen as a bad thing by some and good by others.

Moving forward I feel we have to continue using it as a tool, however as with all things, it has to be revisited and tweaked, to ensure that any errors made are not repeated. Thus I would encourage following the model.

Response from: James McKay- Dist 8

HRMbyDesign was a huge undertaking and involved a lot of public consultations. I don't know 100% HRMbyDesign all entails, yet as a development plan I agree with it in principle and spirit.

Necessary changes include shortening development times and favoring a denser peninsula/downtown Dartmouth core.

Response from: Dawn Marie Sloane- Dist 8

HRM by Design is successful. The amount of development occurring in the Downtown proves that it is working properly. The issue at hand is Regional Councils inability to stick with the parameters and guidelines of the plan by allowing developments that do not adhere to the specifications to proceed through the process. There were several aspects of HRM by Design that I personally were not in favour of, but as a compromise, I agreed to look at what would be best for the greater good of our municipality.

For future success, HRM needs to adopt the guidelines for the Centre Plan to aid with more densification on the arterial streets so that our stable mature neighbourhoods are not threatened with redevelopment. The hot spots in the peninsular and Dartmouth area (within the HRM by Design boundaries) need to be addressed immediately before inappropriate development begins to creep into the venerable areas.

One issue that must be addressed is the non-started developments approved by Regional Council. A Sunset Clause must be adopted and adhered to with no excuses for extensions or delays. Re-development and re-densification of our Urban areas allows for existing infrastructure to be utilized, thus cheaper for all businesses and residents.

Response from: Jennifer Watts- Dist 8

I think it has allowed for development to proceed faster and with clearer regulations. The financial support for heritage protection has helped as well but could be increased. I think it is really important to stick to the agreed upon rules if the plan is to work.

I also believe that plans are living documents and must be reviewed and revised over time. Whenever there is a development application that deviates from an established plan, we must ask ourselves why and whether this is an indication of a deficiency in the plan. If an exception is warranted, then it may need to become the rule.

Response from: Giovanni (John) Abati- Dist 9

I'm not very familiar with HRM by Design. I heard there was quite a large amount of Public Input when it was developed.

Unfortunately, it seems to have been all for not.

Council continually amends the plan to suit developers. (Amendments need to be brought to the communities which they affect for their input prior to making changes).

Response from: Richard MacLean-Dist 9

I do not feel it has been overly successful but it's still a work in progress. I feel development targets set out in the regional plan should be adhered to and the fact they haven't even come close is a real example of the dysfunction on current council.

Response from: Linda Mosher- Dist 9

HRMbyDesign may be five years old but we are still involved in the planning and consultation phases. HRMbyDesign was adopted and has been implemented in three phases. Phase one was the establishment of the overall Regional Centre including a vision statement and key principles. Phase two involved the creation of a Downtown Halifax Plan. We are now involved in phase three, which is the Centre Plan. Collectively, all three phases will provide us with a 25-year vision for our Regional Centre. The Centre Plan is projected to be completed in 2015 with a new Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw which will be based on the same principles as the downtown Halifax plan. We tried to respond to the development pressures by having a phase one of the Centre Plan and we requested legislative changes by the province. Unfortunately they were not approved and we are determining an alternative approach to be recommended by Planning Standing Committee. There are developments underway in downtown for the first time in a long time you can see cranes in the skyline. However, in order to meet the plan's goals of being a dense, prosperous, livable and vibrant centre, we need to have efficient processes and ensure that there are incentives to encourage more development in this area versus outlying areas. There have been recent growth opportunities and we need to focus on these opportunity sites while at the same time preserve existing neighbourhood characteristics.

Response from: John Wimberly-Dist 9

No Response

Response from: Kurt Bulger- Dist 10

No Response

Response from: John Thibeau- Dist 10

I have come to understand that HRMbyDesign was conceived to address development: how much, how often, where, what kind, what height, etc. This was a great act of foresight to ensure that our city grows in a healthy, productive and geographically sound way. From my understanding it has not been without its troubles. There are two important issues that continue to be discussed and critiqued.

The first is the rate of development in the different areas of the city: urban, suburban and rural. Often I have listened to residents who express concern about the over-development and urban sprawl occurring outside of the peninsula. Though development is necessary in these areas as well, it needs to be reeled in. Urban areas are highly dense by design; that's what makes them urban. Re-focusing on density development in our downtown commercial cores is critical to staying true to the design.

The second issue is the number of developments that exceed the height restrictions by the plan. The concern is that some of these developments were almost approved or may be approved to move forward. It is a very dangerous line to cross to even consider allowing development outside of the HRMbyDesign guidelines knowing that the citizens of HRM have supported the plan. In my opinion, an entire public engagement process would be necessary in order to make any such drastic exemptions such as the Skye Towers proposal. Height does not equate to density when it comes to development.

Response from: Russell Walker- Dist 10

HRM by Design has been successful but development within the parameters of HRM by Design has not been as easy as was expected. This should be addressed.

Response from: Steve Adams- Dist 11

No Response

Response from: Peter Grabosky-Dist 11

No Response

Response from: Jim Hoskins- Dist 11

No Response

Response from: Tom Lavers- Dist 11

No Response

Response from: P.Rano Khokar- Dist 12

No Response

Response from: Reg Rankin- Dist 12

I believe that HRM by Design is successful in as much as there are new ground rules established areas downtown, and applications going forward, and applications going forward are vetted through an appointed professional body. This new modus operandi is only on the ground less than 3 years and I look forward to a review of the procedures to see if the municipality can further applications within the policy framework.

Response from: Bruce Smith- Dist 12

HRMbyDesign was a three year process that involved more public meetings and public participation than any other HRM initiative. The outcome was the desire of the people. It Should remain in place.

Response from: Mary Wile- Dist 12

I served on HRM by Design for three years. At first we focused on the two downtown cores of Dartmouth and Halifax plus special communities within these cores including Gottingen Street, Windmill Road, Quinpool Road. Residents actively participated in these meetings and offered ideas and comments on how they would like to see their community develop. However, HRM by Design came to the conclusion that we couldn't advance all of these areas at once. To give proper attention to these special areas, it was determined that they had to be done area by area. The first was the downtown Halifax core.

Response from: Peter Lund- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Doug Poulton- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Matt Whitman- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Brad Johns-Dist 14

No Response

Response from: Laurier Sauers- Dist 14

I believe in the concept of HRM by Design, but worry that it may limit some construction. The goal of HRM by Design should be to protect the identity of Halifax, but it also needs to promote development and not stand in the way of economic growth. There has to be a compromise in building Halifax to the level of a world class city, yet maintaining the historical beauty and charm.

Response from: Steve Craig- Dist 15

The five year review is a valuable exercise. I feel HRM by Design was successful in so much as there was a plan to help HRM grow. The largest issue is that a number of growth targets were missed. Why and what are we doing about it?

I believe one must always look at planning, feedback and critical self-evaluation. Maybe a balanced scorecard approach against specific, measureable, attainable, realistic goals is necessary to make progress.

Response from: Janet Langille- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Stephen Taylor-Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Curt Wentzell- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Ian Wilson- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Tim Outhit- Dist 16

Yes, I believe that HRMbyDesign has been successful, and a similar plan must be developed within other areas of our municipality. I believe that a 5 year review of HRM similar to 5 year review of the regional plan should include incentives to stimulate greater success of the plan.

Response from: Mark Ward- Dist 16

2. What are your views on development in the downtown core?

Response from: Barry Dalrymple-Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Steve Streach-Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Laurie Cook- Dist 2

On one hand, as someone who used to teach and advise on strategic planning, I recognize no plan is written in stone – and if there are good reasons to change things to take advantage of certain opportunities – that makes sense. However, to disregard planning that so many community members had input in to without a VERY good reason is a mistake. HRM by Design is based on extensive public consultation, so I think it's important to follow the principles laid out in the plan as closely as possible.

Response from: Will Gilligan- Dist 2

If development downtown is smart, sustainable and follows suggested guidelines then I'm all for it. Anytime we can attract more business and provide affordable housing to people, that's a good thing.

Response from: David Hendsbee-Dist 2

No Response

Response from: Jason Josey- Dist 2

I believe development in the downtown core needs to continue. There should be more focus put on the improvement of existing infrastructure and using resources that are already in place. It is time to make sure the focus is also on creating opportunity for businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive.

Response from: Keith Leahy- Dist 2

I am supportive of sustainable development of the downtown core. This would include supporting appropriate commercial and residential buildings. These types of developments will ensure the sustainability of the core which is one of the key economic drivers of the region. In addition to this, it is important to upgrade infrastructure including transit, roads and recreational facilities to accommodate these developments.

Response from: Gail McQuarrie- Dist 2

Response from: Jackie Barkhouse- Dist 3

There are several exciting projects under consideration. Each will be judged on how well it balances Council's objectives of protecting our heritage while building a vibrant future.

Response from: Bill Karsten- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Jim MacDonald- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Lorelei Nicoll- Dist 4

I believe that the downtown core is the heart of our city. The rules for development must be established, communicated, and applied fairly and consistently, and the HRM By Design process is moving us in that direction. I also believe that increasing the population of the downtown core will result in a more vibrant city. Density bonusing is one example of measures taken to increase the densification of the downtown core and in-fill the hollowed out areas of the downtown that has taken place over the years. The new central library and the Nova Centre are also examples of collaborative efforts among all levels of government and the private sector to revitalize the downtown core. Innovation and partnerships must continue. But we must manage this growth carefully and our plans must address potential unintended consequences of increasing population density, such as a stressed public transit system or higher crime rates.

We must also recognize that not everyone desires the lifestyle afforded by high density development, and we must allow for a diversity and choice of lifestyle in our region if we are to have a truly vibrant and livable city. Initiatives which are complementary to HRM By Design should be created to develop plans for outlying neighbourhoods, such as the Cole Harbour Basin Open Spaces Plan.

The Regional Plan is the single most important planning document for the whole of HRM, containing the long-range, region-wide plan outlining where, when and how future growth and development should take place in HRM. The Regional Plan is currently undergoing its mandated five year review. The issues being addressed by the five year review are intended to insure that the whole of HRM remains vibrant.

Response from: Barry A. Smith- Dist 4

No Response

Response from: Sam Austin- Dist 5

We need more development in Downtown Dartmouth and Downtown Halifax. Downtown development benefits the entire city because it maximizes the tax base, it uses services more efficiently, it provides space for startup businesses, it's an attractive place to live, it nurtures culture and a vibrant core showcases our city to the world.

Unfortunately, the underlying fundamentals are stacked against our Downtowns. The Regional Plan's growth targets have all been missed and almost all of the demand for new office space over the last two decades has been met in the business parks. To compete effectively, the Downtown needs:

- A reformed tax system. The current tax system encourages sprawl because assessments are highest in the core.
- An efficient public transit system. Downtown will never be able to compete for parking with the business parks so, an efficient public transit system is needed.
- Clear planning rules. HRMbyDesign is a step in the right direction, but it is still more difficult to build in much of the urban core compared to the business parks.
- An end to subsidies. HRM effectively subsidizes sprawl by not recouping the true cost of development. If developers had to pay for the cost of servicing growth, Downtown development would become more competitive.
- HRM needs to start reinvesting in the Downtown. The new library and bridge terminal are good first steps. Cutting essentials like the ferry isn't the way forward.

Rather than simply throwing money at the problem, we need to adjust the underlying fundamentals to create a vibrant and prosperous urban centre.

Response from: Ken Bowman- Dist 5

Without a doubt we need to develop the downtown core, especially in the Dartmouth area. Halifax has been developing at a very steady pace, leaving Dartmouth's downtown core in its wake. It is now time for Dartmouth to thrive. Living in downtown Dartmouth I feel we have lost our identity. We have been swallowed up by Halifax. We need to break out. Please do not get me wrong by thinking I expect money to flow to Dartmouth to help growth at the expense of other areas within HRM. Rather, I feel that with the right leader and with the right council we can achieve this by collaboratively working as one for the betterment of the entire HRM. Dartmouth has its place in history and should be recognized for this history. If we can work on bring people, both residents and employees, to Dartmouth, continued development will happen organically. We are already seeing some exceptional real estate development come to Dartmouth Centre and I would like to see this

continue. All these new developments will enhance our community as a whole, in turn increasing the density of the downtown core.

Response from: Sonya Dudka- Dist 5

Smart Development is absolutely key for the long term future of our entire city, and the most important development priority for all HRM councilors should be the downtown core. Council must get serious about achieving their own density goals and respecting their own development plan, HRM By Design. Finally council must acknowledge that HRM has One Downtown Core made up of two sides of the harbour and focusing on only one side will hold back the potential of the entire city.

Response from: Bryn Jones-Vaillancourt- Dist 5

I believe to grow as a city, we need to focus development in our regional centre and other identified growth centres across our municipality. The developments, I feel should be ones designed and built to support people across all socio-economic realities. I think it should be a healthy mix of residential and commercial. Putting people first and building, healthy, livable neighbourhoods for all types of families is important – the downtown core should not be an exception.

Response from: Gloria McCluskey-Dist 5

No Response

Response from: Kate Watson- Dist 5

We need to build density through smart development in key areas of the downtown core. By focusing growth downtown, we can curb urban sprawl and the environmental and monetary costs that come with it.

Down-town development should be mixed-use, walkable/bikeable and effectively served by transit.

Response from: Bill Zebedee- Dist 5

I favour development in both downtown Dartmouth and Halifax, but there are policies (HRMbyDesign), community driven reports and plans (Community Liaison Groups), and by-laws in place that should direct that development. We must ensure that development conforms to those policies and by-laws. Above all else, however, any development that happens in downtown Dartmouth or Halifax needs to both be in character with the neighbourhood and go through full and complete public consultation. A 20-story high-rise in the middle of a residential

area where the tallest building is 5 stories may not be the ideal development for that area. For example, the Irishtown Road development in Dartmouth. Yes, aesthetically it looks nice and will help densify our downtown, but at what costs?

I believe that development should be encouraged, but not at all costs. We cannot lose our distinctiveness (ie. we are not Toronto or Vancouver).

Response from: Darren Fisher- Dist 6

No Response

Response from: Jerry Pye-Dist 6

No response

Response from: Mike MacDonell- Dist 7

The downtown core of any city must be the heart of the local economy and is a large indicator of the health of the city's financial outlook. With this in mind we must look at the state of our downtown as a indication that things are not going in the right direction and we must do all we can to change course. This starts with aggressive development to bring back jobs and capital to the city that will leave lasting effects on the economy, as the addition of new facilities will bring back the national and international communities to host various events across our city. What happened to the days when our city got excited about all the major sporting events we were hosting it seemed every year? What about our city and the abysmal Arts and Culture budget we have? By working with all aspects of our downtown community we can come up with the solution together, to bring Halifax back to regional, national and International recognition.

Response from: Dawgfather PHD- Dist 7

No Response

Response from: Sue Uteck- Dist 7

We need to recognize that Halifax is the capital city of Nova Scotia.

A healthy downtown is a healthy municipality which is a healthy province. In 2010 the downtown generated \$40 million in tax revenue, which is 8% of our property tax base. We have grown stronger each year than the tax base for HRM, yet little is invested in the downtown. If we took 10 million per year of that revenue we could achieve the target spending as advocated by our HRM Alliance.

While HRM by Design has reduced some of the "red tape" it is often our partners such as the Province, Aliant, NSP and Heritage Gas that become further obstacles. We need a coordinated work plan with our utilities so that when the street is open, all work is done at the same time. No more tearing, repaving and tearing again. We need to tear down the silos, build a community of partnerships and work together for the betterment of the downtown.

Response from: Gerry Walsh- Dist 7

As I said in my previous answer, I am strong supporter of HRM by Design and I am confident that future development in the downtown core will be led by those guidelines.

One of my key priorities is to “encourage respectful development of our downtown core.” By “respectful” I mean a development that is sympathetic to its neighbours; of human scale; one that provides access to public spaces; and creates a sense of community. Bishops Landing is an example of a development that meets this criteria, and also achieves density in that almost 500 people live there.

Some people have asked if I support the proposed Skye development and the answer is I do not.

Response from: Karen Dempsey- Dist 8

No Response

Response from: Doug MacDonald- Dist 8

We need to encourage good development, and what is good development. Development that has consultation with our residents, ensuring that our downtown is thriving and moving forward. No more long term “ Holes in the Ground “.And as noted above people participation.

Response from: James McKay- Dist 8

The Halifax downtown ought to inspire grandeur and pride in our city/region. Our downtowns can be so much more, and will be when I am elected.

Response from: Dawn Marie Sloane- Dist 8

First of all I believe that we have carved out a very small area and called it downtown. I believe that the boundaries of HRM by Design should be considered our Downtown. If you visit New York, you see stable mature communities adjacent to their business areas. It would make sense for HRM to start looking into the future on this issue. By doing so, the re-densification of the peninsular and Dartmouth area would allow for amenities desired for these areas could be sought out and walkable neighbourhoods could be achieved with little angst. The development of complete neighbourhoods is not something new. In fact our peninsular area and Dartmouth area were complete neighbourhoods, but we allowed them to erode. Time to walk the walk of walkable neighbourhoods.

As Lewis Mumford stated: "In a neighbourhood, everything that is needed is there and everything that is there is needed".

The infrastructure is already in the ground within the urban centres, so we must change our tax structure and development practices as incentives to develop these areas. Toronto has done so in its urban core so why re-invent the wheel? Infilling vacant lots :

<http://www.planetizen.com/node/48208>

Furthermore, Capital Cost Contributions formula must change to reflect the real cost of new development and infrastructure outside of the serviced areas. A report was completed by Enid Slack and Harry Kitchen on this issue on a few issues such as fire and transit, which has not been discussed at the Regional Plan Review or at Regional Council. It seems that this important issue should be at the forefront of our discussions but it has been stifled. Please see the following reports by Slack and Kitchen that demonstrate the direction this municipality must follow for sustainability sake. http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_160.pdf

Response from: Jennifer Watts- Dist 8

Development in the downtown core is very important. HRM by Design was a step forward but more needs so that the urban core sees priority development - either through more incentives (reduced tax rate, etc) or disincentives in the suburban areas. Sustainable transportation is also key; if it was easier to travel downtown then it would be more attractive for employers/employees.

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No Response

Response from: Kurt Bulger- Dist 10

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Response from: Peter Grabosky-Dist 11

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Response from: Mary Wile- Dist 12

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Response from: Peter Lund- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Doug Poulton- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Matt Whitman- Dist 13

No Response

Response from: Brad Johns-Dist 14

No Response

Response from: Laurier Sauers- Dist 14

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Response from: Steve Craig- Dist 15

I believe investment and development in the downtown core is critical for the future growth of HRM. Halifax needs to be the economic centre in Atlantic Canada – and seen as being so by citizens and business.

Response from: Janet Langille- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Stephen Taylor-Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Curt Wentzell- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Ian Wilson- Dist 15

No Response

Response from: Tim Outhit- Dist 16

Development of our downtown core which is both sides of the harbour, is critical to the pride, vitality, and economic development of our entire municipality. Council must investigate implementing development, permit, and tax incentives to encourage and recognize development within our downtown core.

Response from: Mark Ward- Dist 16

No Response

3. What are your views on development in the downtown core?

Response from: Barry Dalrymple-Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Steve Streach-Dist 1

No Response

Response from: Laurie Cook- Dist 2

On one hand, as someone who used to teach and advise on strategic planning, I recognize no plan is written in stone – and if there are good reasons to change things to take advantage of certain opportunities – that makes sense. However, to disregard planning that so many community members had input in to without a VERY good reason is a mistake. HRM by Design is based on extensive public consultation, so I think it's important to follow the principles laid out in the plan as closely as possible.

Response from: Will Gilligan- Dist 2

If development downtown is smart, sustainable and follows suggested guidelines then I'm all for it. Anytime we can attract more business and provide affordable housing to people, that's a

good thing.

Response from: David Hendsbee-Dist 2

No Response

Response from: Jason Josey- Dist 2

I believe development in the downtown core needs to continue. There should be more focus put on the improvement of existing infrastructure and using resources that are already in place. It is time to make sure the focus is also on creating opportunity for businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive.

Response from: Keith Leahy- Dist 2

I am supportive of sustainable development of the downtown core. This would include supporting appropriate commercial and residential buildings. These types of developments will ensure the sustainability of the core which is one of the key economic drivers of the region. In addition to this, it is important to upgrade infrastructure including transit, roads and recreational facilities to accommodate these developments.

Response from: Gail McQuarrie- Dist 2

Response from: Jackie Barkhouse- Dist 3

There are several exciting projects under consideration. Each will be judged on how well it balances Council's objectives of protecting our heritage while building a vibrant future.

Response from: Bill Karsten- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Jim MacDonald- Dist 3

No Response

Response from: Lorelei Nicoll- Dist 4

I believe that the downtown core is the heart of our city. The rules for development must be established, communicated, and applied fairly and consistently, and the HRM By Design process is moving us in that direction. I also believe that increasing the population of the downtown core will result in a more vibrant city. Density bonusing is one example of measures taken to

increase the densification of the downtown core and in-fill the hollowed out areas of the downtown that has taken place over the years. The new central library and the Nova Centre are also examples of collaborative efforts among all levels of government and the private sector to revitalize the downtown core. Innovation and partnerships must continue. But we must manage this growth carefully and our plans must address potential unintended consequences of increasing population density, such as a stressed public transit system or higher crime rates.

We must also recognize that not everyone desires the lifestyle afforded by high density development, and we must allow for a diversity and choice of lifestyle in our region if we are to have a truly vibrant and livable city. Initiatives which are complementary to HRM By Design should be created to develop plans for outlying neighbourhoods, such as the Cole Harbour Basin Open Spaces Plan.

The Regional Plan is the single most important planning document for the whole of HRM, containing the long-range, region-wide plan outlining where, when and how future growth and development should take place in HRM. The Regional Plan is currently undergoing its mandated five year review. The issues being addressed by the five year review are intended to insure that the whole of HRM remains vibrant.

Response from: Barry A. Smith- Dist 4

No Response

Response from: Sam Austin- Dist 5

We need more development in Downtown Dartmouth and Downtown Halifax. Downtown development benefits the entire city because it maximizes the tax base, it uses services more efficiently, it provides space for startup businesses, it's an attractive place to live, it nurtures culture and a vibrant core showcases our city to the world.

Unfortunately, the underlying fundamentals are stacked against our Downtowns. The Regional Plan's growth targets have all been missed and almost all of the demand for new office space over the last two decades has been met in the business parks. To compete effectively, the Downtown needs:

- A reformed tax system. The current tax system encourages sprawl because assessments are highest in the core.
- An efficient public transit system. Downtown will never be able to compete for parking with the business parks so, an efficient public transit system is needed.
- Clear planning rules. HRMbyDesign is a step in the right direction, but it is still more difficult to build in much of the urban core compared to the business parks.
- An end to subsidies. HRM effectively subsidizes sprawl by not recouping the true cost of development. If developers had to pay for the cost of servicing growth, Downtown

development would become more competitive.

- HRM needs to start reinvesting in the Downtown. The new library and bridge terminal are good first steps. Cutting essentials like the ferry isn't the way forward.

Rather than simply throwing money at the problem, we need to adjust the underlying fundamentals to create a vibrant and prosperous urban centre.

Response from: Ken Bowman- Dist 5

Without a doubt we need to develop the downtown core, especially in the Dartmouth area. Halifax has been developing at a very steady pace, leaving Dartmouth's downtown core in its wake. It is now time for Dartmouth to thrive. Living in downtown Dartmouth I feel we have lost our identity. We have been swallowed up by Halifax. We need to break out. Please do not get me wrong by thinking I expect money to flow to Dartmouth to help growth at the expense of other areas within HRM. Rather, I feel that with the right leader and with the right council we can achieve this by collaboratively working as one for the betterment of the entire HRM. Dartmouth has its place in history and should be recognized for this history. If we can work on bring people, both residents and employees, to Dartmouth, continued development will happen organically. We are already seeing some exceptional real estate development come to Dartmouth Centre and I would like to see this continue. All these new developments will enhance our community as a whole, in turn increasing the density of the downtown core.

Response from: Sonya Dudka- Dist 5

Smart Development is absolutely key for the long term future of our entire city, and the most important development priority for all HRM councilors should be the downtown core. Council must get serious about achieving their own density goals and respecting their own development plan, HRM By Design. Finally council must acknowledge that HRM has One Downtown Core made up of two sides of the harbour and focusing on only one side will hold back the potential of the entire city.

Response from: Bryn Jones-Vaillancourt- Dist 5

I believe to grow as a city, we need to focus development in our regional centre and other identified growth centres across our municipality. The developments, I feel should be ones designed and built to support people across all socio-economic realities. I think it should be a healthy mix of residential and commercial. Putting people first and building, healthy, livable neighbourhoods for all types of families is important – the downtown core should not be an exception.

Response from: Gloria McCluskey-Dist 5

No Response

Response from: Kate Watson- Dist 5

We need to build density through smart development in key areas of the downtown core. By focusing growth downtown, we can curb urban sprawl and the environmental and monetary costs that come with it.

Down-town development should be mixed-use, walkable/bikeable and effectively served by transit.

Response from: Bill Zebedee- Dist 5

I favour development in both downtown Dartmouth and Halifax, but there are policies (HRMbyDesign), community driven reports and plans (Community Liaison Groups), and by-laws in place that should direct that development. We must ensure that development conforms to those policies and by-laws. Above all else, however, any development that happens in downtown Dartmouth or Halifax needs to both be in character with the neighbourhood and go through full and complete public consultation. A 20-story high-rise in the middle of a residential area where the tallest building is 5 stories may not be the ideal development for that area.

For example, the Irishtown Road development in Dartmouth. Yes, aesthetically it looks nice and will help densify our downtown, but at what costs?

I believe that development should be encouraged, but not at all costs. We cannot lose our distinctiveness (ie. we are not Toronto or Vancouver).

Response from: Darren Fisher- Dist 6

No Response

Response from: Jerry Pye-Dist 6

No response

Response from: Mike MacDonell- Dist 7

The downtown core of any city must be the heart of the local economy and is a large indicator of the health of the city's financial outlook. With this in mind we must look at the state of our downtown as a indication that things are not going in the right direction and we must do all we can to change course. This starts with aggressive development to bring back jobs and capital to the city that will leave lasting effects on the economy, as the addition of new facilities will bring

back the national and international communities to host various events across our city. What happened to the days when our city got excited about all the major sporting events we were hosting it seemed every year? What about our city and the abysmal Arts and Culture budget we have? By working with all aspects of our downtown community we can come up with the solution together, to bring Halifax back to regional, national and International recognition.

Response from: Waye Mason- Dist 7

Here is an excerpt from an article on my campaign website:

There are rules governing development everywhere. [You can't build higher than 120-150 feet in Tribeca](#) in New York on Manhattan Island, one of the most expensive and high-density cities in the world. There are viewplanes all over Vancouver (see the graphic to left), a city often held up as having the kind of development we want to see in Halifax. They have even more viewplane and viewcone restrictions than we do! Yet these cities are building and growing.

One thing that is uniquely Halifax is that we have such a narrow definition of downtown. How is it going to kill the city if Barrington Street is a heritage district and we protect its historic character? I don't think it will.

We don't have to put office towers on Barrington or Argyle streets. Other cities have a historic district AND a separate financial core. Some examples are Bay Street vs. Queen West in Toronto, Whyte Ave vs. 101 St NW in Edmonton and St Laurent vs. Rene Levesque in Montreal.

Luckily for us, there is a site right downtown that allows 25-30-story towers. It is the Cogswell interchange. We can build business and residential towers without tearing down architectural heritage, or violating viewplanes. If we did this, we could enforce the highest standards for public space and street level integration. You would be able to walk from City Hall to the North End on living, active city streets.

We can and should protect heritage through designated heritage districts with strong development controls and through tax and grant incentives for qualifying buildings inside and outside of those districts. Barrington Street was a good start, but [Schmidtville](#) must be protected next.

For residents of District 7, the most important tool to managing development over the next 25 years is the Centre Plan. This plan is going to focus development on corridors - main streets like Quinpool and the north end of Robie.

Actually, I think the Centre Plan should go farther. There are areas along Kempt Road, Bayne Street, and along Barrington between the bridges that are crying for development. A mix of well-designed medium and high rise buildings could replace car dealerships and fast food establishments along Kempt Rd. We should use Centre Plan as a visioning tool to start long-

term urban renewal rather than just responding to current developer interest.

F article go here: <http://www.wayemason.ca/development>

Response from: Dawgfather PHD- Dist 7

No Response

Response from: Sue Uteck- Dist 7

We need to recognize that Halifax is the capital city of Nova Scotia.

A healthy downtown is a healthy municipality which is a healthy province. In 2010 the downtown generated \$40 million in tax revenue, which is 8% of our property tax base. We have grown stronger each year than the tax base for HRM, yet little is invested in the downtown. If we took 10 million per year of that revenue we could achieve the target spending as advocated by our HRM Alliance.

While HRM by Design has reduced some of the “red tape” it is often our partners such as the Province, Aliant, NSP and Heritage Gas that become further obstacles. We need a coordinated work plan with our utilities so that when the street is open, all work is done at the same time. No more tearing, repaving and tearing again. We need to tear down the silos, build a community of partnerships and work together for the betterment of the downtown.

Response from: Gerry Walsh- Dist 7

As I said in my previous answer, I am strong supporter of HRM by Design and I am confident that future development in the downtown core will be led by those guidelines.

One of my key priorities is to “encourage respectful development of our downtown core.” By “respectful” I mean a development that is sympathetic to its neighbours; of human scale; one that provides access to public spaces; and creates a sense of community. Bishops Landing is an example of a development that meets this criteria, and also achieves density in that almost 500 people live there.

Some people have asked if I support the proposed Skye development and the answer is I do not.

Response from: Karen Dempsey- Dist 8

No Response

Response from: Doug MacDonald- Dist 8

We need to encourage good development, and what is good development. Development that

has consultation with our residents, ensuring that our downtown is thriving and moving forward. No more long term “ Holes in the Ground “.And as noted above people participation.

Response from: James McKay- Dist 8

The Halifax downtown ought to inspire grandeur and pride in our city/region. Our downtowns can be so much more, and will be when I am elected.

Response from: Dawn Marie Sloane- Dist 8

First of all I believe that we have carved out a very small area and called it downtown. I believe that the boundaries of HRM by Design should be considered our Downtown. If you visit New York, you see stable mature communities adjacent to their business areas. It would make sense for HRM to start looking into the future on this issue. By doing so, the re-densification of the peninsular and Dartmouth area would allow for amenities desired for these areas could be sought out and walkable neighbourhoods could be achieved with little angst. The development of complete neighbourhoods is not something new. In fact our peninsular area and Dartmouth area were complete neighbourhoods, but we allowed them to erode. Time to walk the walk of walkable neighbourhoods.

As Lewis Mumford stated: "In a neighbourhood, everything that is needed is there and everything that is there is needed".

The infrastructure is already in the ground within the urban centres, so we must change our tax structure and development practices as incentives to develop these areas. Toronto has done so in its urban core so why re-invent the wheel? Infilling vacant lots :

<http://www.planetizen.com/node/48208>

Furthermore, Capital Cost Contributions formula must change to reflect the real cost of new development and infrastructure outside of the serviced areas. A report was completed by Enid Slack and Harry Kitchen on this issue on a few issues such as fire and transit, which has not been discussed at the Regional Plan Review or at Regional Council. It seems that this important issue should be at the forefront of our discussions but it has been stifled. Please see the following reports by Slack and Kitchen that demonstrate the direction this municipality must follow for sustainability sake. http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_160.pdf

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