



## Extended Ferry Service: Our HRM Alliance Letter to Council and the Mayor

Dear Mayor Savage and Regional Council,

I am writing to you in support of Downtown Halifax Business Commission and Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission, in their campaign to keep the extended ferry service for the Alderney Ferry. While both have presented excellent data in support of their campaign, including that Ferry ridership has increased 47% since the introduction of extended service, and that over twenty new businesses have been aided in opening by the increased access provided by the ferry, I wish to present the case in favour supporting a sustainable region with an excellent quality of life.

Our HRM Alliance is dedicated to promoting sustainable planning and development whilst protecting our most crucial natural areas in HRM. A key aspect of our advocacy and community building in this past year has been to support the development of the Centre Plan to determine how we'll accommodate the next 33,000 people in the Regional Centre. Given that the draft of this Plan, released earlier this year, is slating a significant proportion of that growth for neighbourhoods connected to transit and our two downtowns, it stands to reason that these new residents will benefit from extended ferry services between our two central business districts.

Furthermore, the increased service and reliability of the Alderney Ferry makes it feasible for more people to live comfortably in Downtown Halifax or Downtown Dartmouth without the use of a personal automobile. These higher density communities that rely largely on transit contribute to our ability to enhance our streets for pedestrians and businesses, to create thriving and attractive downtowns for tourists and future residents, and to support the provision of services in our lower density neighbourhoods.

The Alderney Ferry is also a crucial connection in our transit network – the connection between our two central business districts and the multiple bus routes that run along their corridors is important to connecting people to work, shopping at local stores, and entertainment. Without this ease of connection that has been substantially enhanced by the extended ferry service, the network becomes fragmented between two of our highest density locations. To add to this, the ferry provides a unique experience for tourists and encourages them to patronize business on both sides of the Halifax Harbour.

In conclusion, as a city, we cannot promise that we are investing in sustainable development and an excellent quality of life if we do not invest in one of the most important and iconic connections in our transit network. I urge you to vote in favour of the extended ferry services, which has been statistically and demonstratively proven a success.