WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☐	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐

To: Committee of the Whole

Submitted by: Councillor Chrystal Remme

Date: November 10, 2026

Subject: Valley REN Proposed Governance Transition

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act, Sections 57(1)(a) and 65(1)(m), which allow municipalities to support business development and economic growth.

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

That Committee of the Whole recommend that Council support, in principle, West Hants Regional Municipality continuing as a municipal funding partner of the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (Valley REN) under its proposed transition to an independent Non-Profit Society model, subject to Council's final approval of the governance structure, funding arrangements, and service agreements.

BACKGROUND

The Valley Regional Enterprise Network (Valley REN) recently presented to Council on its proposed transition from an Intermunicipal Service Agreement (IMSA) to an independent Non-Profit Society.

The Valley REN has been looking at changes to its current structure to address ongoing funding and governance challenges. The proposed model would allow the organization to access additional funding opportunities, including private-sector partnerships, and help ensure it can continue providing regional economic development services.

Similar models are already being used in other parts of Nova Scotia, including Halifax, and were highlighted during the presentation to Council.

The Valley REN Liaison and Oversight Committee has requested that the proposed governance model, including service arrangements and funding contributions, be provided to municipal partners by December 1, 2026, with the new model proposed to begin April 1, 2027.

This report is being brought forward to ask Council to support the proposed direction in principle, with the final details coming back to Council for consideration.

Property □	Public Opinion □	Environment □	Social □	Economic □	Councillor Activity □

DISCUSSION

The proposed model would allow the Valley REN to operate more independently while continuing to work with municipalities and businesses across the region. It would also open the door to additional funding opportunities and partnerships, helping the organization continue its work in regional economic development.

The Valley REN provides important services in areas such as business development, workforce development, and supporting local businesses. These services benefit communities throughout West Hants and the Annapolis Valley.

With the proposed transition planned for April 1, 2027, the Valley REN is looking for an indication of support from municipal partners as it works through the next steps.

Supporting the transition in principle would allow this work to continue without committing the Municipality to any funding or agreements at this time. The final details would come back to Council for consideration and approval.

NEXT STEPS

If Council supports the recommendation, the Valley REN will be advised of the Municipality's support in principle. The proposed governance structure, funding arrangements, and service agreements will come back to Council for consideration before any final decisions are made.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial commitments associated with this recommendation. Any future funding contributions would be subject to Council's review and approval.

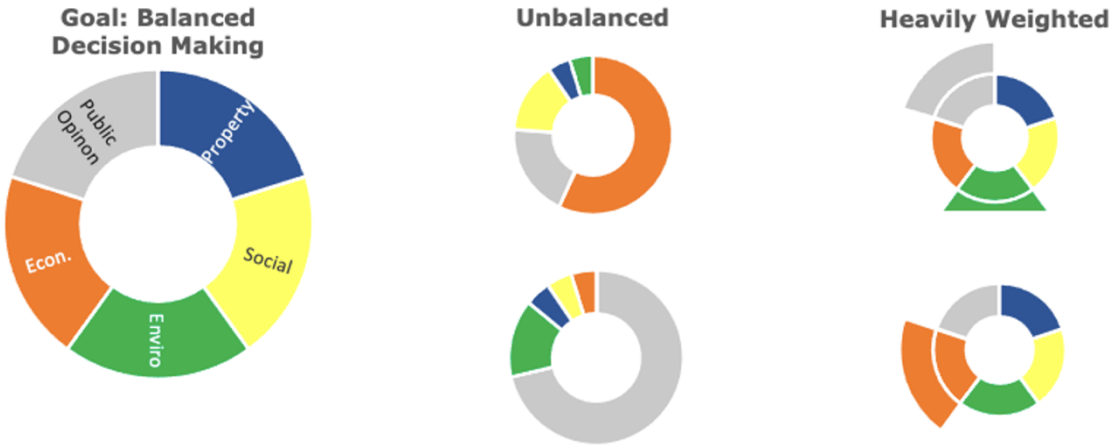
ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose not to support the proposed transition in principle or defer a decision until more information is available.

ATTACHMENTS

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

Council has been provided with a reference taken from the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy , Appendix C "Decision Making by Council and Committee of the Whole" as a reminder of the principles highlighted for good decision making.



Report Prepared by: _____
Councillor Chrystal Remme, District 3

Report Reviewed by: _____
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer

Report Approved by: _____
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer