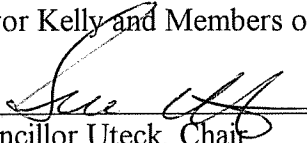# HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5  Canada

**Committee of the Whole**
**February 28, 2006**

**TO:**            Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Councillor Uteck, Chair
Members of the HRM Cultural Advisory Committee

**DATE:**         February 21st, 2006

**SUBJECT:**      **HRM Cultural Plan**

---

## ORIGIN

February 17, 2006 meeting of the Cultural Advisory Committee.

## RECOMMENDATION

**The Cultural Advisory Committee recommends that:**

1.    Regional Council approve the final Draft HRM Cultural Plan, dated February 7th, 2006.

## BACKGROUND

HRM Council is faced with increasing pressures to invest in infrastructure, programs, and services in the pursuit of healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities. Culture is a critical piece of this and without a clear strategy or focussed mandate around Culture, investment has been fragmented and benefits weakened. Over the past few years the Municipality has taken broad strides toward a more sustainable and progressive approach to growth management, community development and investment. The Cultural Plan is an important element of that policy shift.

HRM currently delivers a range of cultural programs and services including heritage property registration, cultural grants and incentives, festivals and community celebrations, cultural tourism, urban design, public art, facility development, and recognition programs for artists and designers. Although the Municipality invests in cultural development, the approach has been uncoordinated and not strategically aligned with other community and corporate goals. The Cultural Plan establishes that HRM, with its community, public and private sector partners, must continue to invest in Culture, strategically and with key linkages to key planning, investment and community development programs and policies.

The Cultural Plan responds to a number of growing issues and opportunities with respect to protecting and reinforcing HRM's cultural identity and managing and developing cultural assets. As the Region and its communities develop to accommodate an increasingly diverse and growing population, this kind of strategic approach to public policy and investment is needed. What attracts people here is opportunity, what keeps them here ultimately is Culture and quality of life. Cities can compete economically on a number of fronts, however, competing culturally requires investment and celebration of the fundamental differences between one place and another; *its cultural identity.*

## SCOPE:

The Cultural Plan began with a basic question: *What does Culture mean to HRM communities and citizens and how do we protect it?* The answer from community and a broad range of stakeholders was clear: culture is multi-layered and difficult to define narrowly. Community stakeholders identified a number of key pillars that form the foundation of HRM's Cultural identity. These cultural pillars transcend geographic, social, economic, and political boundaries.

**The Seven Pillars of Culture:**

- ❑   **Heritage**
- ❑   **Arts**
- ❑   **Community Design**
- ❑   **Life Long Learning**

---

❑ **Diversity**
❑ **Leisure & Celebration**
❑ **Economic Development**

The Cultural Plan incorporates all of HRM's cultural pillars into an overarching Plan with the understanding that all are key to HRM's cultural identity and quality of life.

Culture is recognized more and more as a key pillar of growth management and investment strategies in cities across North American and beyond. Certainly, the cultural mandate at the local government level is becoming more complex and indeed more focussed. Cultural policy, therefore, has necessarily evolved into cultural planning. **(Attachment #1)** A study prepared by cities, government partners and agencies across Canada puts the new cultural agenda into context by noting that "cultural matters cannot be set apart from other areas of municipal responsibility, nor can they be managed and understood using traditional policy and planning methods." (Baeker, 2002 pg. 3) Cultural planning is about " new ways of thinking about cultural development and capacity building at the local and regional level." (Ibid) This integrated *planning* approach defines the scope of the HRM Cultural Plan.

**THE PLANNING PROCESS:**

In February 2005 Regional Council established a multi-sector Cultural Advisory Committee (CAC) to work with Council and staff to develop the Cultural Plan. The Department of Recreation, Tourism & Culture has placed a priority on this initiative as per Council's direction and in recognition of the strategic importance of HRM's cultural development, socially and economically. The draft Cultural Plan represents an intensive ten-month planning process beginning in April 2005.

**Phase One** of the planning process included working with the community and a broad range of stakeholders to define cultural values, establish a long-term vision, and to determine the issues and opportunities that needed to be addressed in the Plan. It was also important at this stage to build on previous consultation and study such as that done through the Regional Planning process.

**Phase Two** resulted in the five overarching strategic directions that continued to guide the policy development. A comprehensive suite of goals (the end-state) and objectives (the outcomes) were identified which responded to key issues, opportunities and priorities. The Cultural Advisory Committee received Council, community and stakeholder endorsement of the goals and objectives before proceeding to the policy development stage.

**Phase Three** involved the development of policy statements and the actions that would form the implementation framework. This Phase involved more focused consultation and community

dialogue to reinforce and validate community and stakeholder support and understanding of the Plan. The end result of phase three was the first draft of the cultural Plan which was circulated to the public in early December 2005 for input. Since then, the CAC has been incorporating ongoing feedback into the draft Plan, filling in identified gaps and editing which has resulted in this final draft Plan.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

The public consultation program continued throughout the Planning process at varying degrees of intensity beginning with seven Culture café Workshops in June 2005.

### ii    "Culture Café" Workshops:

More than 230 residents, cultural workers, artists and government representatives attended seven "Culture Café" Workshops held across the region. The workshops validated the communities cultural values and identified the goals and objectives for the Plan.

### iii    Cultural Industry Workshop:

A cultural industry workshop was held at Pier 21 early in the planning process. Approximately 100 industry professionals including artists, cultural organizations, businesses, educators, and government officials and administrators were in attendance resulting in four hours of intense and meaningful discussion. Key themes and directions emerged identifying synergies with the results of the earlier culture café workshops.

### iv    Youth Workshops:

Five workshops were held with more than 78 youth between the ages of 11 and 17. Youth from HRM's Community Recreation's Youth Leadership program(s) were brought together to share their cultural values and issues and to identify how the Cultural Plan could address youth access to cultural opportunities and creative learning. The results of this dialogue show that youth are passionate about culture and need to be an ongoing part of how it develops.

### v    Focus Groups

In order to have more specific and focussed dialogue on a number of key issues, eight focus group sessions were held including: creative clustering, arts development, economic development, heritage, diversity, cultural awareness and celebration, aboriginal culture, and intergovernmental and community partnerships. These sessions helped to develop more detailed policy direction, actions, and priorities.

### v.    Public Opinion Surveys:

Two citizen surveys were completed. The first was an informal survey seeking opinions on the importance of key cultural assets. A statistically representative telephone survey was also conducted with 400 residents across the region to identify cultural priorities and areas for further development.

---

The result of both surveys helped to form the goals and objectives of the Plan. Surveys were used to *supplement* other forms of community consultation and dialogue and were not used as a main consultation tool.

### vi.   Communications:

The Cultural Plan has promoted through targeted community events including the Multi-Cultural festival and Canada Day Celebrations. The Multi-Cultural Festival also provided an opportunity to consult with people through one-on-one conversation and comment cards. Hundreds of people visited the Cultural Plan booth at the festival. The Cultural Plan has also been promoted through a number of media articles and interviews including two with CBC radio. A Press Conference was held in early July to generate interest and excitement. A number of newsletter articles were also used to communicate the Plan as widely as possible. Community centres, libraries, and community organizations were used to make information more accessible to the public.

### vii.   Cultural Plan Web-Site:

The Cultural Plan web-site has had several visits from citizens, artists, cultural workers, government and interested parties from a variety of disciplines. The web-site has been successful as a key portal for information throughout the planning process.

## THE POLICY FRAMEWORK:

The Plan establishes a strong and focussed cultural mandate for HRM and lays out the strategy to move it forward. The policy and investment framework focuses on buildings cultural assets, networks, and resources through an *action-oriented* and *integrated* approach to cultural development. It does this by building on five strategic directions and nineteen goals.

**Strategic Direction 1:   Focused service delivery & partnerships**

**Goal 1:**   Integrated HRM Service Delivery
**Goal 2:**   Partnership Development
**Goal 3:**   Community Development

**Strategic Direction 2:   Cultural access & equity**

**Goal 4:**   Cultural Infrastructure
**Goal 5:**   Asset & Information Management
**Goal 6:**   Promotion & Awareness
**Goal 7:**   Equity & Diversity

---

## Strategic Direction 3:    Promote & reinforce community character & heritage

**Goal 8:**    Heritage Conservation
**Goal 9:**    Community & Urban Design
**Goal 10:**  Public Art
**Goal 11:**  Building Community Identity
**Goal 12:**  Public & Civic Spaces
**Goal 13:**  Leisure & Entertainment

## Strategic Direction 4:    Life long learning & creative development

**Goal 14:**  A Learning City & Region
**Goal 15:**  Creative Community
**Goal 16:**  Arts Development
**Goal 17:**  Children & Youth

## Strategic Direction 5:    Strategic investment & promotion

**Goal 18:**  Competing Globally
**Goal 19:**  Cultural Investment

**Collectively this framework will:**

♦    define and reinforce HRM's cultural mandate as

**Programmer:** of recreation & culture programs and services, facility programming, internal process(es)

**Investor:** in cultural and community facilities, cultural infrastructure (ex: public art, streetscaping..), community & cultural organizations

**Facilitator-supporter:** of partnerships, community development & capacity building, planning & development

**Manager:** of cultural assets & information, programs & services, fiscal resources
♦    define expectations of community
♦    guide cultural program and capital investment
♦    define the needs and opportunities of community and cultural sector
♦    integrate program and service delivery

---

♦    apply a "cultural lens" to decision-making
♦    integrate culture broadly into municipal issues
♦    develop and sustain multi-sector partnerships
♦    establish mechanisms to leverage resources
♦    grow cultural economic development
♦    position HRM as a leader in cultural development

The proposed Cultural Plan fits strategically within HRM's broad policy objectives and makes key linkages to the draft Regional Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Immigration Action Plan, and Youth Engagement Strategy. Thus, the Cultural Plan will help Council implement a number of its goals and priorities.

The Plan also lays out a number of actions that will be implemented in a phased approach over the ten-year life of the Plan. These actions are in essence the blueprint that will get the job done at the ground level.

**Some of the outcomes at the ground level will include:**

❑    Community capacity-building & stewardship initiatives
❑    Incentives for heritage conservation and arts development
❑    Building on rural, urban and suburban cultural identity
❑    Creative development opportunities for children and youth
❑    Community partnership and management agreements
❑    Community engagement through governance and programming
❑    Community arts development
❑    Public art development and management
❑    Arts & culture showcasing
❑    Community and civic celebration
❑    Creative clustering of cultural activities and networks
❑    Multi-use community centres and cultural facilities

**THE IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK:**

**The implementation phases of the Plan will be delivered as:**

♦    Short-Term
Years 1 - 3 (2006-2008)
♦    Medium-Term
Years 4-6 (2009-2011)

---

♦ Long-term
Years 7-10 (2012-2014)

*The ongoing implementation of actions and priorities will occur through annual action-planning linked to Council's business planning & budgeting process.*

Given that the short-term implementation of the Plan begins in 2006, a detailed action plan has been developed, through the planning process, and as part of the Cultural Plan.

**The immediate, short-term priorities (2006-07) are:**

- Review HRM's cultural service delivery structure and establish an appropriate division and structure to implement the Plan
- Review HRM Boards and Committee mandates with respect to Culture and establish an appropriate Cultural Advisory Committee
- Establish a tiered (equitable) grants program and decision-making criteria
- Review and revise policy and procedures around special events and their investment
- Identify opportunities for incorporating cultural space into HRM's proposed recreation facilities according to the Indoor Recreation Facilities Master-Plan
- Identify cultural participation barriers and develop standards for improvement beginning with access to HRM-owned cultural facilities
- Adopt a Public Art Policy and procedures including a public art inventory
- Adopt a "cultural lens" decision-making process for infrastructure and service delivery
- Identify the resources to implement the Corporate Diversity Plan
- Review HRM's cultural funding programs and sources and develop long-term funding program for Council's consideration and approval
- Implement HRM's Sister City Twinning program
- Work with partners to develop a Major Events Hosting Strategy
- Establish an intergovernmental Cultural Committee

*The short-term implementation strategy focuses on getting our house in order and building on and promoting what we have.* In the immediate short-term 2006-07, no *new* resources will be required to achieve the immediate priority actions.

Many of the policies and deliverables in the Cultural Plan will be implemented through a rationalization of existing resources and programming and stronger collaboration internally and between partners. The Plan also recognizes and maximizes key synergies in delivering actions under the Regional Plan, the Economic Development Strategy, the Immigration Action Plan and the Corporate Diversity Plan. This integrated approach will help steer investment toward achieving multiple outcomes.

---

*Also, key to short-term implementation will be the creation of a strong HRM Culture Division and Committee structure with the resources to deliver.* This will be done initially by refocusing existing resources (and potentially reassigning existing service delivery), and by developing an enhanced decision-making framework internally and at the Council level. For example, the Plan recommends creating a long-term Cultural Advisory Committee as an immediate priority. However, the need to undertake a review Council's other culturally-related committees will also be needed with the understanding that any new Committee must *strengthen* the decision-making framework and not create further duplication, bureaucracy, or resource limitations.

*The medium and longer-term implementation strategy will focus on building HRM as a Cultural Capital and investing in the infrastructure, partnerships and programs to sustain it.* This reflects the understanding that a stronger mandate for culture will require enhanced investment in soft and hard infrastructure. However, there is a critical message here: *investing in Culture does not need to be at the expense of other key services.* This is an outmoded approach to public policy and investment.

The message here is that by better focusing investment *and* developing linkages between policies, projects, and services, the long-term outcomes from that investment will be apparent. Whether investing in programs to build cultural identity and stewardship at the local level or working with partners to develop a world-class cultural venue the effects will spill well beyond the cultural realm. In-fact, the return on investment will manifest into stronger communities and networks, creative development in children and youth, cultural tourism, creative production and export, business development, immigration, and so-on. These areas represent many of Council's current priorities.

*The Cultural Plan recognizes that the resources and people needed to implement the Plan spans well beyond the HRM organization.* Multi-sector, and in some cases unconventional, partnerships and strategies are outlined in the Plan to leverage resources and achieve lasting results. For example, the Plan calls for the development of a multi-sector, multi-resourced Creative Community Strategy to build HRM's creative capital. Building HRM as one of Canada's primary *"Cultural Capitals"* will require this kind of collaboration and shared responsibility.

Regular progress measurement, community engagement, and internal collaboration will help ensure that HRM's cultural development is at the centre of decision-making. *The "cultural lens" approach to decision-making will be a key mechanism for implementing the Plan.*

This report and final draft Cultural Plan document **(ATTACHMENT #2)** represents the completion of a ten-month inclusive planning process and a progressive new direction for HRM as a leader and steward of Cultural Development.

---

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Refer to staff report dated February 21, 2006.


## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.


## ALTERNATIVES

1.   Approve the draft Cultural Plan with revisions


## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1:      Cultural Planning: Core Concepts
Attachment #2:      HRM Cultural Plan draft 2 dated February 7, 2006.


---

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by:      _____

                       Holly Richardson, Community Developer, Recreation, Tourism & Culture

---

---

# ATTACHMENT #1

## Cultural Planning: Core Concepts

| Issue | Cultural Policy | Cultural Planning |
|---|---|---|
| **Definition of Culture** | Arts-based - largely European "high arts" and cultural industries | Cultural resources - expanded view of local cultural assets or resources |
| **Underlying Perspective** | Discipline-based - fragmented perspective driven by disciplinary "silos" | Place-based - more "whole systems" perspectives rooted in place |
| **Rationale for Government Intervention** | Inherent importance - "arts for arts sake", plus economic impacts | Benefits driven - emphasis on contributions to urban-community development |
| **Role of Government** | Top down -old public management focus in financing, regulating, owning | Bottom-up - new public management focus on enabling, supporting (steering not rowing) combined with community development approaches |
| **Determination of Artistic or Cultural values** | Artistic value and cultural meaning are prescribed by arts producers and arts institutions/authorities | Artistic values and cultural meaning are more negotiated between art and audience or community |
| **Infrastructure Focus** | Focus on hard infrastructure of facilities (the "edifice complex") | Focus on building soft infrastructure of networks, new media distribution strategies, etc. |
| **Key Stakeholders** | Communities of professional arts/heritage/cultural industry organizations and enterprises | Cultural sector representatives, local, citizens, community organizations, local business, etc. |
| **Understanding of Cultural development** | Cultural development - seen as the development of the cultural sector. There is focus on increasing the impact, intensity and the quality of the product | Cultural development - culture understood as a resource for human development. There is a broader goal of societal improvement |

adapted from, "Beyond Garrets and Silos: Concepts, Trends and Developments in Cultural Planning", Municipal Cultural Planning Project, Dr. Greg Baker, April 2002