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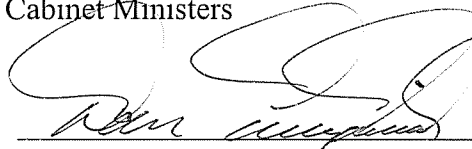
**Halifax Regional Municipality & Province of Nova Scotia  
Joint Public Lands Plans - Capital District**

**Information Report**

**July 4, 2006**

**To:** Mayor Kelly and Halifax Regional Council  
Premier MacDonald and NS Cabinet Ministers

**From:** Dan English, CAO, HRM



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David Darrow, DM, NSTPW



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**Origin**

In June 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding between HRM and the Province of Nova Scotia was executed to proceed with two joint municipal/provincial public lands plans. These plans address two important public precincts within the Capital District: Spring Garden/Queen Street area and Grand Parade/Province House area.

**Background**

Jointly over the past six to eight months, staff from HRM's Capital District and from the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Transportation and Public Works, have been working with their consultants on these two high-profile public lands plans within the Capital District. This report provides an update to Council and Cabinet on the status of these two projects, which are still underway:

*Spring Garden Road/Queen Street Public Lands Plan:*

The Spring Garden Road/Queen Street Public Lands Plan coordinates the objectives of the various land owners, stakeholders, business and residential interests; enables synergies such as shared facility opportunities to be explored, and; balances future land use objectives with the goal

of creating a livable, vibrant, attractive urban precinct. Through comprehensive urban design guidelines the Plan will give direction to the type and form of future redevelopment within the study area, ensuring that it is consistent with the vision for the Capital District, with the goals of the draft Regional Plan, and with the policies of the Spring Garden Road Secondary Plan.

*Grand Parade/Province House Joint Public Lands Plan:*

The Grand Parade/Province House Joint Public Lands Plan will provide direction for the enhancement of the Grand Parade and Province House grounds, and will present design guidelines for the redevelopment of the Birks site. The Plan also will recommend urban design improvements toward the provision of safe, convenient, attractive connections between these important sites, and examines options for the parking needs for City Hall and Province House. The study explores the potential for shared municipal and provincial public facilities in a new building on the Birks site which could further define the area as a legislative precinct, and serve as an example of high quality redevelopment within the historic fabric of downtown Halifax.

These two public lands plans are flagship projects for the Municipality's urban design initiatives and herald a renewed cooperation between HRM and the Province of Nova Scotia. While the lead consultants for each project were local firms, high profile national urban design firms were also on the project teams. They bring with them a bounty of experience in both the technical side of urban design and place-making, and in the field of public and stakeholder consultation.

**Status**

Over the past six months numerous public consultation events were hosted on these Public lands Plans attracting hundreds of participants from residential, retail, and business communities, as well as citizens throughout the region. Special sessions were hosted with representatives from a range of interest groups including community leaders, government and development industry stakeholders, and design professionals. Two well attended week long design forums were held in the Spring Garden Road area during January and March, 2006 for the Spring Garden/Queen project. Similarly two design charrettes were held for the Grand Parade Province project with sessions at both City Hall and Province House during April and June, 2006.

Public discussion has centred on:

- potential for public and institutional development of the Provincial Infirmary site,
- redevelopment of the Municipally owned Clyde Street parking lots for mixed use development,
- improvements and new public space,
- the protection and enhancement of valued heritage assets,
- new opportunities for commercial space and residential development,
- the potential for public and government uses on the former Birk's site,
- improvements to Province House, Grand Parade, and the George Street corridor,
- short and long term options for parking and transportation, and
- development phasing and design.

## **Next Steps**

Further work is needed over the summer months to refine the public consultation results into options and recommendations for consideration by HRM Council and the Province. These are expected to be brought forward jointly to the respective governments early in September of 2006. These projects have enjoyed a high level of cooperation and support from senior staff at the Province and HRM both in terms of the visions for these public precincts and the continued cooperative interest in seeing this work move to the next stage.

### **For more information please contact:**

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