

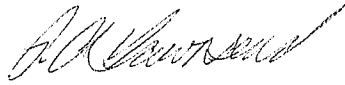


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Item No.

**Community Planning & Economic Development
October 13, 2011**

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning & Economic Development
Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Phillip Townsend, Director, Planning & Infrastructure

DATE: September 27, 2011

SUBJECT: Update on Community Engagement for the Social Heritage Strategy

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At its April 14, 2011, meeting, the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee passed a motion to approve the initiation of the HRM Social Heritage Strategy and to direct staff to commence Community Engagement.

BACKGROUND

The Social Heritage Strategy comes on the heels of the HRM Cultural Plan and the Nova Scotia Heritage Strategy. Since April, 2011, the public has been consulted on a proposed set of values, principles and implementation tools.

Social heritage affects all residents of HRM, including youth, seniors, Aboriginal peoples, and new and emerging cultural groups. The Social Heritage Strategy will be of special interest to HRM's heritage groups and community museums that manage collections and deliver programs. It will also be of interest to cultural and business communities who depend on social heritage to develop cultural and economic development opportunities. HRM wants to hear from as many groups as possible and is working with other levels of government in developing the Strategy.

The Strategy will address current issues facing social heritage and define HRM's role in the sector. It will be based on research, best practices, community feedback and other strategic documents. The Strategy will identify opportunities for strategic and innovative programs, services, and partnerships.

DISCUSSION

HRM Staff have undertaken the community engagement exercise in an effort to foster a greater appreciation for collective heritage and gather feedback on priorities for HRM in the development of the Social Heritage Strategy. Staff has used a variety of methods to engage the general public and specific stakeholder groups. These methods are described below, along with their completion status. A total of approximately 800 residents have been engaged to-date.

1.0 Completed Community Engagement Activities

1.1 Online Survey

HRM hosted an online survey on its website from April 11 to July 15.

The online survey consisted of three multiple choice questions relating to HRM's purpose and role in delivering heritage programs. It asked respondents to share a personal social heritage experience in writing. It also asked respondents to self-identify as one or more of the identified stakeholders.

1.2 Public Regional Workshops

HRM held four public workshops in different regions from June 18 to 25.

HRM held one public workshop in each HRM region: Western, Central, and Eastern. Staff also held a public meeting in downtown Dartmouth. Meeting dates and times were published in local newspapers and on the HRM website. Before and during the public workshops, HRM Staff and workshop participants conducted interviews in English with the Chronicle Herald, CBC Radio, and CBC Radio International. Staff and participants also conducted interviews in French with CBC Radio International and Radio Canada, to further publicize the workshops and project.

1.3 "Creative Tools" Workshop

A creative workshop was held on July 31, during the Natal Day Festival.

HRM engaged a consultant who used different creative tools to engage the public in providing feedback during the 2011 Natal Day Festival held in the Halifax Commons. The objective of the workshop was to quickly provoke thoughts, ideas and creativity, through visual and interactive activities that stimulate meaningful responses. The consultant used a variety of interactive displays and activities, for participants to quickly participate in the community engagement process with relative ease.

1.4 Traditions Writing & Art Contest

HRM conducted a writing and art contest for youth from August 1 to September 11.

Youth (ages 5-11) participated in a writing and art contest to illustrate their heritage and family traditions. Prizes were awarded for every age. Participants responded to one of four questions:

- 1) What activities do you enjoy doing with your parents that they did as children with your grandparents?
- 2) What is the best story your parents or grandparents ever told you about their experiences growing up?
- 3) What do you like to see and/or do when you are outside in nature?
- 4) Do you have a family object that has been passed down through generations that is meaningful to you and your family?

2.0 Ongoing Community Engagement Activities

2.1 Technical Team Meetings

HRM Staff have formed a Technical Team to assist in providing strategic direction for the Strategy and to ensure that stakeholders are appropriately engaged. It meets regularly to review the progress in developing the Strategy. The group includes HRM Staff from the Heritage Property Program, Real Property and Municipal Archives. A staff member from NS Communities, Culture and Heritage also participates in this Technical Team.

2.2 Central Region Heritage Stakeholder Group Meetings

The Central Region Heritage Group (CRHG) is an informal network of heritage organizations throughout the Halifax region. It meets on a quarterly basis throughout the year to provide updates and seek new opportunities. CRHG has formed a sub-group of stakeholder representatives to work with the Technical Team in developing the Strategy. Its main responsibilities are to advise the Technical Team on needs and priorities for heritage organizations, to provide guidance, and to ensure that Central Region Heritage Group members are appropriately engaged and informed. The Central Region Heritage Stakeholder Group includes: Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society; Eastern Shore Heritage Network; Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society; HRM Libraries; Nova Scotia Archives; Shearwater Aviation Museum; and Shubenacadie Canal Commission.

2.3 Strategic Phone Survey

Strategic phone surveys began on July 25 and will continue until September 30. The strategic phone surveys are intended to connect with stakeholders that may not have had the opportunity to participate in the Public Workshops.

2.4 Stakeholder Workshops

Stakeholder workshops are being held with the following groups from July 28 to October 31:

Central Region Heritage Group

HRM hosted the CRHG quarterly meeting on May 13, 2011, and held a special workshop to engage heritage organizations in the development of the Strategy.

Immigrant Community

HRM coordinated with Immigrant Settlement & Integration Services (ISIS) to engage immigrants and newcomers in the development of the Strategy at a workshop on August 10, 2011.

Acadian/Francophone Community

HRM coordinated with the *Conseil communautaire du Grand-Havre* to engage Acadian and francophone residents in the development of the Strategy at a workshop on August 31, 2011. HRM Staff and workshop participants conducted radio and television interviews in French with Radio Canada during this workshop.

As of this time, HRM Staff is in contact with members of the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq communities to hold a stakeholder workshop.

CONCLUSION

HRM has engaged with the majority of the identified stakeholder groups, through the community engagement process. HRM will continue to work closely with heritage organizations, through meetings with the Central Region Heritage Stakeholder Group, and conduct several more strategic phone surveys and stakeholder workshops to complete the community engagement process for Phase 1 in the development of the Strategy.

HRM will prepare a summary report after the community engagement is completed, along with a draft vision. Both the draft vision and the summary report will be presented to the public for feedback and amended, where appropriate, to accurately reflect public opinion. The proposed vision and summary report are expected to be presented to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee, for adoption in principle, in December 2011.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Budget implications were identified and approved in a report submitted to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee for its meeting held on April 14, 2011.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

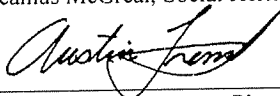
The community engagement process described above and illustrated in Attachment 1, complies with the HRM Community Engagement Strategy and is built on the values identified in the HRM Cultural Plan. The process was primarily consultative in nature but also included significant public information and public education components.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Social Heritage Strategy Community Engagement Plan

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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Report Approved by: 
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Attachment 1: Revised Social Heritage Strategy Community Engagement Plan

