

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee report to Staff

TO: Elizabeth Taylor, Manager, Culture & Events, Parks & Recreation
Peta Jane Temple, Team Lead, Grants & Contributions, Finance & Information Technology
Peter Bigelow, Manager, Policy & Planning, Parks & Recreation

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Mr. Craig Walkington, Chair, on behalf of the
Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee

DATE: November 5, 2015

SUBJECT: **Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program
Committee Recommendations**

ORIGIN

December 10, 2014 – Council approved development and implementation of a Municipal Commemorative Program for the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion.

January 14, 2015 – Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee develops the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles and forwards to staff for approval by the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee.

February 12, 2015 – Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee approval of a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles developed by the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee.

September 16 and October 21, 2015 – Meetings of the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Terms of Reference of the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee are provided in *Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV, Respecting the Special Advisory Committee on the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion*.

RECOMMENDATION

The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee puts forward for staff consideration the recommendations contained in Attachment 1 of this report.

BACKGROUND

The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee (HEAAC) was formed by Regional Council adoption of Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV on June 10, 2014. The HEAAC is mandated to advise staff on the development and implementation of the Municipal Commemoration Program in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion. As approved by Council, the Municipal Commemorative Program consists of the following three elements:

1. A civic commemorative event led by HRM that will include elected officials from the Government of Canada, the Province, and HRM, as well as community leaders and members of the general public;
2. A legacy capital project; and
3. A designated grant program to fund non-profit organizations and registered charitable organizations located in HRM to deliver local projects in their communities in recognition of the significance of the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion.

Through its deliberations, the HEAAC developed a Vision Statement (Attachment 2) and Guiding Principles (Attachment 3) with the aim to guide the work of committee members, staff, and elected officials in the design and implementation of the Municipal Commemorative Program. During the HEAAC deliberations, it was recognized that there is but one opportunity to properly commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion and that there should be series of events leading up to the civic commemorative event on December 6, 2017. The HEAAC further noted that other commemorative events may also be conducted on December 6, 2017. As such, it is recommended that Element 1 of the Municipal Commemorative Program should be comprised of the following two sub-components:

- a. December 6, 2017 Expanded Commemorative Ceremony; and
- b. 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program.

In advancing this recommendation, the HEAAC then reviewed suggestions and proposals submitted by various organizations and individuals, and ideas generated by the HEAAC members themselves resulting from a workshop meeting held on Wednesday, September 16, 2015. The HEAAC further refined its recommendations at its regular meeting held on Wednesday, October 16, 2015.

DISCUSSION

Methodology: All proposals, concepts and ideas were reviewed and categorized under one or more of the Guiding Principles and assigned a recommendation as follows:

- Proposed project is recommended for funding and management by the Municipality and should be referred for review and development by Staff. List A in Attachment 1.
- Proposed project should be referred for possible consideration under a municipal grant program or potential participation in the civic commemoration. A letter would be sent by staff to the proponent to confirm their eligibility for municipal funding, if applicable, and guidance as to the selection of program and/or timing. List B in Attachment 1.

- Proposed project is referred to staff to determine what options may exist to address the proposal. Projects in this category would unlikely be financed by the Municipality and/or be eligible under the Explosion Grants Program. List C in Attachment 1.

SUMMARY - 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM

Notwithstanding the undetermined status of ideas and concepts outlined in List C of Attachment 1, the HEACC recommends that the proposals contained in List A be incorporated in a 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program. The HEAAC has assigned a priority of High, Medium, or Low for the List A proposals. This prioritization is based on several considerations including: cost, impact, complexity in planning and execution, and Guiding Principles met. It is further recognized that the List A proposals are broad in complexity and scope and the staff capacity to develop certain proposals may not exist or is limited. Therefore, the List A proposals are further categorized into two broad areas as follows:

1. Civic Commissions: These recommended projects are considered high profile, complex in scope or technical standards and may exceed the financial and human resource capacity of a non-profit organization and/or the human resource capacity of HRM. Consideration should be given to commissioning an external organization or individual to manage a project.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Commemoration Proposal</u>
High	Temporary symbolic markers representing each fatality
Medium	Project the names of all fatalities and imagery on a building in Halifax
High	Historic Markers with Scan Codes
High	Historical Campaign
High	Interactive On-line Platform
Medium	Commemorative Bell

2. Departmental Projects: These proposed activities likely fall within the scope of specific municipal department(s):

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Commemoration Proposal</u>
Medium	Install the names of the fatalities on the Fort Needham Bell Tower
Medium	Candlelight Procession on December 6, 2017
Medium	Commemorative Flower Beds – Public Gardens and Grand Parade
High	Time Capsule Opening
Medium	Install a New Time Capsule
Medium	Encourage Fire Department participation in the Explosion Commemorative Program

Medium	Designate the Hydrostone Area as a Heritage District
High	Banner and Panels

ATTACHMENTS

1. Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Recommendations
 - List A – Recommended for Funding and Management by HRM
 - List B – Referred to Staff for Confirmation of Funding Eligibility: Grants
 - List C – Referred to Staff for Options
2. Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Vision Statement
3. Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Guiding Principles

Report Prepared by: Craig Walkington, Chair, Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special
Advisory Committee
Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant, 902-490-6517

ATTACHMENT 1

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Recommendations

List A – Recommended for Funding and Management by HRM

Civic Commissions

Civic Commissions: These recommended projects are considered high profile, complex in scope or technical standards and may exceed the financial and human resource capacity of a non-profit organization and/or the human resource capacity of HRM. Consideration should be given to commissioning an external organization or individual to manage a project.

Priority	Commemoration Proposal	Proposal Origin	Meets Guiding Principle(s)	Description/Notes
High	Temporary symbolic markers representing each fatality	HEAAC	1, 2, 4, 5, 6,	Markers representing the fatalities would be developed and displayed to illustrate the enormity of the event. The markers could be displayed in several locations at various times in 2017 such as the Grand Parade and Fort Needham. An artist may have to be engaged to design the marker. The Tower of London installation of ceramic poppies in 2014 entitled, "Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red" could serve as a model for this proposal.
Medium	Project the names of all fatalities and imagery on a building in Halifax	HEAAC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,	The names of fatalities would be projected at night onto the side of a structure in Halifax. The display would include images of the devastation and the response. This display could be projected several times leading up to 6 December 2017. It could also be retained for inclusion in a permanent exhibit. The Names Project where the names of Canadian fatalities in the Great War were projected onto the façade of several buildings in Canada in 2008 could serve as a model for this concept.

High	Historical Campaign	HEAAC	1, 4, 6	Street and bus banners installed in the period leading up to the 100 th Anniversary This proposal requires research and graphic design and could form part of the overall Explosion Communications Strategy. This campaign could expose how Halifax rebounded from the devastation and also encourage citizens to strive towards creating a “better” Halifax.
High	Historical Markers with Scan Codes	HEAAC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	Place markers at historically significant sites around the Municipality. Each marker could have a scan code link to historical information that could be read using a smart phone. Alternatively, visitors could dial a number to hear a recorded message explaining the significance. Additionally, each marker could display a link to that historical information. This proposal requires a significant amount of research to develop each marker site and its contents. There may be a possibility to create some sort of incentive plan that rewards users if they visit all sites
High	Interactive Online Platform	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9	Establish an online platform, containing the commemorative program details and schedule, which allows citizens to interact in the context of the Explosion Commemoration. Through this platform, citizens could create and post their own artistic commemorative pieces. This platform would provide a coordinating function for all commemorative activities.
High	Commemorative Bell	HEAAC	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10	<i>Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Bell</i> would be commissioned and citizens would be encouraged to donate small objects such as

				<p>letters, metal artefacts, etc that are connected to the explosion. They would then be committed to the blast furnace when the bell is cast. The bell could be dedicated on 6 December 2017 and displayed in a prominent location with a descriptive plaque explaining its significance. Citizens who contribute materials would be encouraged to write a description of the artefact and its significance. The <i>Canadian Navy Centennial Bell</i> project could serve as a model for this proposal. The Navy could be contacted to determine if they would participate as a co-sponsor of this project.</p>
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ATTACHMENT 1

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Recommendations

List A – Recommended for Funding and Management by HRM

Departmental Projects

Departmental Projects: These proposed activities likely fall within the scope of specific municipal department(s)

Priority	Commemoration Proposal	Proposal Origin	Meets Guiding Principle(s)	Description/Notes
Medium	Install the names of the fatalities on the Fort Needham Bell Tower	HEAAC	1, 2, 4, 9, 10	Create plaques that list the names of all fatalities and install the plaques on the side of the Bell Tower.
Medium	Candlelight Procession on December 6, 2017	HEAAC	1, 4, 5, 6,	Community groups and individual would participate in a candlelight procession. Citizens would gather in one or several locations and proceed to the designated sites. Potential sites are Fairview Cemetery, Fort Needham, Grand Parade, and other locations with an Explosion connection.
Medium	Commemorative Flower Beds – Public Gardens and Grand Parade	HEAAC	1, 6	The Explosion emblem would be displayed in the Public Gardens flower bed. If there is space, a flower bed could be created in the Grand Parade.
High	Time Capsule Opening	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	Open the current time capsule. In accordance with a news clipping from around 6 December 1985 describing the installation of the first time capsule, it is to be opened on 6 December 2017
Medium	Install a New Time Capsule	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10	Install a new Time Capsule containing artefacts and items from the 100 th Anniversary. The new Time Capsule could be the project of the HEAAC itself and would be planned and managed as their own

				legacy. Coordination with the Fort Needham Legacy project is required in order to plan where and when the new Time Capsule would be installed.
Medium	Encourage Fire Department participation in the Explosion Commemorative Program	HEAAC	4, 7, 8	The Fire Department should be encouraged to support other groups' commemorative activities and create their own activities. Municipal staff should engage with the Fire Department to encourage its members to engage in the official activities and to generate their own activities as appropriate
Medium	Designate the Hydrostone Area as a Heritage District	Janet Morris. Proposal submitted August 27, 2014	4, 9	Proposal forwarded to the Heritage Planning Staff. In progress.
High	Historic Banners and Panels	Michael Dupuis. Proposals submitted October 1, 2014 and December 10, 2014	1, 4, 6	Proposal is also outlined in HEAAC Workshop submission – Historical Campaign.

ATTACHMENT 1

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Recommendations

List B – Referred to Staff for Confirmation of Funding Eligibility: Grants

Note – Projects noted in List B below have not been prioritized by the HEAAC and are numbered simply for reference purposes.

Recommendation: Proposed project is referred to staff to confirm funding eligibility or opportunities in the Municipal Commemoration Program				
#	Commemoration Proposal	Proposal Origin	Meets Guiding Principle(s)	Description/Notes
B-1	Exhibits of artwork by Arthur Lismer and Alan Syliboy	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 6,	The exhibit would contain artwork concerning the Explosion. This exhibit could be expanded to include all imagery (old and newly created) concerning the Explosion by any artist. Proposal requires an external supporting organization.
B-2	Academic Conference	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8,	The academic community would develop, fund and convene a conference to explore various themes of the Halifax Explosion. The 75 th Explosion Anniversary Academic Conference could serve as a model. The public could be encouraged to attend the conference.
B-3	Animated Walking Tours explaining the Halifax Explosion	HEAAC	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8,	Create walking tours that takes citizens and visitors to various site of historical significance. Proposal requires an external supporting organization
B-4	Interview the descendents of Explosion casualties	HEAAC	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10	Generate historical records that capture the experiences of those who were casualties of the explosion through interviews of the descendants. Proposal requires an external supporting organization.
B-5	Local church engagement in the Explosion	Representative s of local churches in	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8,	Local churches have indicated that they intend to participate and will also generate their

	Commemorative Program	attendance at the HEAAC Workshop on September 16, 2015		own activities. Concepts are being developed, but there are no specific proposals.
B-6	Plaque commemorating Hugh John MacLennan	Member of the public in attendance at the HEAAC Workshop on September 16, 2015	4, 5	Erect a commemorative plaque recognizing Hugh MacLennan, author of <i>Barometer Rising</i> . Proposal requires an external supporting organization
B-7	Interview Survivors' Descendants	Marc Grazaidei. Proposal submitted August 27, 2014	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10	Proposal is also outlined in HEAAC Workshop submission noted above.
B-8	<i>Hope and Survival</i> , The Halifax Explosion Memorial Quilt and Scroll of Remembrance	Laurie Swim. Information submitted at HEAAC meeting on October 1, 2014	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9	Project is underway.
B-9	Interest by The Mary Baker Eddy Library participating in the 2017 commemoration in some form.	Michael Hamilton, Executive Director, The Mary Baker Eddy Library submitted an inquiry November 12, 2014	Will be determined by the scope of their participation	Referred to staff to contact and determine level of interest and participation options.
B-10	Original composition song, <i>Fire in the Harbour</i>	Chris Godwin, Homegrown. Proposal submitted January 14, 2015 and February 18, 2015	1, 2, 4, 5, 6,	Referred to Staff
B-11	Possibility of creating a statue memorial at Fort Needham Park representing the nurses of Halifax who assisted with the victims of the Explosion	Gloria Stephens, Nursing History Nova Scotia. Proposal submitted January 14, 2015	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9	Referred to staff/confer with Parks regarding Fort Needham location
B-12	Inclusion of novel, <i>Tides of Honour</i> in	Genevieve Graham.	2, 4, 5	Commercial publication (fiction). Referred to staff for

	Explosion Commemorative Program	Proposal submitted January 14, 2015		possible inclusion in program guide listing.
B-13	Indication from Veith House that they plan to honour the children who were lost in the Explosion with a memorial	Tamsyn Brennan, Interim Executive Director Veith House. Proposal submitted February 18, 2015	1, 2, 4	Referred to staff.
B-14	Creation of a musical composition	Sandy Moore, Composer and Sound Designer. Proposal submitted April 15, 2015	2, 4, 5	Referred to staff.
B-15	Presentation on commemoration plans and a request to be included in the Commemorative Program	École St. Joseph's Alexander McKay School, Home & School Association. Presentation by Bridget Quigley at HEAAC meeting on April 15, 2015	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Referred to staff.
B-16	Symphonic composition and commemorative performance	Symphony Nova Scotia. Presentation by Chris Wilkinson, CEO Symphony Nova Scotia, at HEAAC meeting on April 15, 2015	2, 4, 5	Referred to staff. The HEAAC encouraged the project in principle and encouraged Mr. Wilkinson to submit something more substantive for a future meeting. No submission has been received so far.
B-17	Use of pre-1917 model railroad slideshow and model in Commemorative Program	Gordon Wayhay. Proposal submitted June 17, 2015 and acknowledged by email. Due to the extensive HEAAC agenda, the	4, 5,	Referred to staff.

		slideshow was shown at HEAAC meeting on September 16, 2015		
B-18	Use of picture book, <i>Explosion News</i> in children's programming events	Jackie Halsey, Author. Proposal submitted June 17, 2015	4, 5	Referred to staff.

ATTACHMENT 1

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Recommendations

List C – Referred to Staff for Options

Note – Projects noted in List C below have not been prioritized by the HEAAC and are numbered simply for reference purposes.

Recommendation: Proposed project is referred to staff to determine what options may exist to address the proposal.				
#	Commemoration Proposal	Proposal Origin	Meets Guiding Principle(s)	Description/Notes
C-1	Commemorative Fire Caldrons	HEAAC	1, 4, 5, 6,	Communities would light cauldrons at various locations around the Municipality on the night of 6 December 2017. The cauldrons would represent two themes: the devastation of the fires created by the explosion; and the warm needed by those impacted in the extreme wintery conditions that followed immediately after the explosion. Proposal requires an external supporting organization. Other cities, towns and villages could light cauldrons to demonstrate sympathy and solidarity. Ottawa and the Provincial Capitals could also light their own cauldrons. Boston could be requested to participate. Groups outside of Halifax would be responsible for their own funding.
C-2	Commemorative Flower Bed – Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission	HEAAC	1, 6	The Explosion emblem would be displayed in the flower bed at the Halifax side of the Mackay Bridge. Responsibility of the Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission
C-3	Campaign of Kindness	HEAAC	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10	Following the example of humanitarian aid in the aftermath of the explosion,

				various groups and individuals would be encourage to develop and implement their own campaigns to help the less fortunate. This campaign would be implemented leading up to Christmas 2016 and Christmas 2017. If successful, it may be carried forward to future years. Proposal requires external supporting organization(s)
C-4	Re-enactment of the arrival of the train carry humanitarian assistance	HEAAC	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,	This re-enactment would have to take into account that various railway lines no longer exist
C-5	Encourage military participation in the Explosion Commemorative Program	HEAAC	4, 7, 8	The military, in particular the Royal Canadian Navy, should be encouraged to support other groups' commemorative activities and create their own activities. The Explosion Commemorative Stakeholder Committee should encourage the Canadian Armed Forces to engage in the official activities and to generate their own activities as appropriate. Liaison has been established through staff member Elizabeth Taylor and Mike Bonin at CFB Halifax.
C-6	Place-making Projects in Fort Needham Park	Andrea Puszkas. Proposal submitted November 12, 2015	2, 3, 4, 6, 9	Submission forwarded to Parks Planning Staff for consideration under the Legacy Capital Project component of the overall program
C-7	Suggestion for creating ships' hulls containing the names of casualties and artefacts from the explosion on Fort Needham Park	Shirley Trites. Proposal submitted November 12, 2014	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Submission forwarded to Parks Planning Staff for consideration under the Legacy Capital Project component of the overall program
C-8	Idea for an excerpt from Barometer Rising on a "Bookmark" to be installed at Fort Needham Park for the anniversary. www.projectbookmarkcanada.ca	Janet Brush. Email submitted January 10, 2015	4, 5, 9, 10	Submission forwarded to Parks Planning Staff for consideration under the Legacy Capital Project component of the overall program

C-9	Multiple Ideas for Commemoration	Glenn Taylor. Proposal submitted January 14, 2015	Ideas meet many of the Guiding Principles	Many of the ideas have been considered by the HEAAC and are largely incorporated in submissions outlined in this report. Staff could send Mr. Taylor a letter asking him to submit a proposal if he wishes to pursue a specific idea.
C-10	Write and publish novel about Halifax Explosion based on historical research and family stories	Annie MacInnis. Proposal submitted February 18, 2015	2, 4, 5	Referred to staff to determine how the proposal should be handled.
C-11	Rename the Hydrostone District "Richmond Heights"	Barry Cahill. Proposal submitted February 18, 2015	4, 9	A response was sent to Mr. Cahill suggesting he start a petition to gauge community interest. There is some indication that there was a previous submission many years ago
C-12	Lasting memorial to Vincent Coleman on the Halifax Waterfront	Gerry Meade. Proposal submitted September 16, 2015	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9	A legacy project that would commemorate Vincent Coleman may already be under consideration

ATTACHMENT 2

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Vision Statement

The most destructive, human-made explosion of the pre-atomic era occurred in Halifax Nova Scotia on the morning of December 6, 1917. It resulted from a collision and fire on board a munitions-laden freighter attempting to pass through the Narrows into Bedford Basin. Ignition of the vessel's lethal cargo sent a wave of destruction across the city. Worst hit were the northern sections of Halifax and the town of Dartmouth; thousands were killed, maimed, and left homeless.

The disaster became a pivotal moment in this city's history, prompting a massive mobilization of human and material resources to engage in a multi-faceted program of rescue, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Halifax, the nation, and indeed all those across the world who became involved with the explosion, now stand at the threshold of the explosion's centennial.

Vision Statement:

The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemoration will honour the memory of those who died and suffered as a result of the explosion, will educate current and future generations about the significance of the event, and will celebrate the resilience of Halifax in rising from destruction to restore the full potential of the city and its people.

ATTACHMENT 3

Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Guiding Principles

1. It will be a solemn, respectful and reflective commemoration honouring the victims of the Halifax Explosion, the response, and the legacy.
2. It will acknowledge and tell the diverse personal, national and international story, which had a lasting legacy.
3. It will reflect diversity of all the communities impacted such as relatives of survivors, African NS and Mi'kmaq communities.
4. It will educate and connect people, particularly youth, to the history and meaning of the Halifax explosion in different ways.
5. It will encourage community members participate through a variety of cultural and creative modes.
6. It will capture the local and National imagination and attention.
7. It will acknowledge and explore the scope of the compassionate response.
8. It will explore institutional responses to the impact of disaster, including within the context of war.
9. It will have a perpetual meaning for future generations.
10. Its legacy projects will strive to be compelling, meaningful, evocative and an enduring commemoration.