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**Item No. 5**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**June 2, 2009**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
Sharon Bond, Acting Director, Community Development

**DATE:** May 26, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Peninsula Community Facilities and Services Review

### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

This reports originates from:

- Recommendation in 2008 Community Facility Master Plan to review existing facility operations and service delivery on the Halifax Peninsula, including working with the Halifax Forum Commission Board to develop a new site master plan and vision for the facility with the prospect to convert it into a peninsula multi-district facility.

## **BACKGROUND**

In early 2008, the Halifax Forum Community Association Board met with staff to discuss concerns and limitations to their existing operations and the possible long term implications, and proposed an option to incorporate an alternative business centre on the site for revenue generation. This proposal was not accepted by staff and instead staff proposed and the Board accepted a proposal to work with the Board to conduct a more thorough analysis of opportunities of the site, given the recent trend of new in-fill growth taking place and the existing condition and age of HRM sport and recreation facilities on the peninsula.

At the same time, the consultant completing the new 2008 Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) was arriving at a similar recommendation that proposes exploring the potential for this site to be converted and expanded into a new Hub facility for the peninsula. Further discussion can be found on page 48 of the 2008 CFMP and Recommendation #45 on page 99.

The 2008 CFMP further recommended a review of nearby community and recreation centres and their service delivery in conjunction with the above review of the Forum site. A number of these facilities are aging, the demographics may have shifted, and there is currently no master plan to consider a cost/benefit analysis of which ones should be re-capitalized, and whether the existing facilities are even meeting current community needs and should be replaced or overhauled to focus on a different program delivery to meet the current and future population.

## **DISCUSSION**

The exercise being considered is somewhat similar to the recent Bloomfield exercise, in so much as it is a planning and consultation exercise at this step. It will involve a review of existing program services being delivered, review of facility conditions, a review of the demographics and shifts, the vision from the Regional Plan for the area, and an extensive public and user group consultation. The outcome will be a resulting vision for all these sites for the future which could act as a road map to guide future capital project recommendations. It is anticipated this exercise will guide where and what changes are required for each of the sites to provide a more cost effective and beneficial service to the users in these communities on the peninsula.

Facilities to be included in this analysis are:

1. Halifax Forum Complex
2. St Andrews Community Centre
3. Needham Community Centre
4. Devonshire Arena
5. George Dixon Community Centre
6. Centennial Pool
7. Citadel Community Centre
8. \*Bloomfield Centre

\* Bloomfield will be included only as it relates to the usage of the Gymnasium.

Opportunities related to the continued operation and further development of the Halifax Forum site are significant. The existing infrastructure, although aging, has substantial value to the region and is intended to be preserved as a recreation / sport / event site well into the future. It is considered a jewel of a location, well positioned on transportation routes and centrally located between many of the surrounding recreation facilities. It could become a hub facility that links to and supports other facilities. It is with this in mind that the CFMP recommends a formal review of the Forum site in conjunction with a review of the other sites.

The RFP is being finalized and will be issued shortly. A preliminary draft Scope of Work is included as Appendix A. Following the receipt of responses to the RFP, it will be brought back to Council for award.

No decision is being sought or recommended at this time to Regional Council on any of these facilities. As noted previously, this study is simply a planning and consultation exercise at this stage. Specific facility recommendations would come back to Regional Council at a much later date following the conclusions of this planning study.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Funds were set aside in Q319 Major Events Facilities Reserve for this project. Therefore, there is no net impact on the Approved Operating and Capital Budgets.

### **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.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Preliminary Draft Scope of Work for RFP Document

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.

Report Prepared by: Doug Rafuse, Manager, Service Delivery, Community Development, 490-6205

Appendix A - Preliminary Draft Scope of Work for of RFP Document

**Preliminary Draft Scope of Work for Peninsula Community Facilities and Services Review**

Facilities to be included in the analysis:

1. Halifax Forum Complex
2. St Andrews Community Centre
3. Needham Community Centre
4. Devonshire Arena
5. George Dixon Community Centre
6. Centennial Pool
7. Citadel Community Centre
8. Bloomfield School - Gymnasium

Methodology: The following steps will be taken through careful analysis of existing relevant reports such as: Regional Plan, Community Facility Master Plan, Economic Strategy, Immigration Strategy; data collection; interviews and consultation with key stakeholders, staff steering committee; community open house consultation.

**Phase 1 - Internal**

*Step 1 Review operations of the above facilities to include:*

- facility and services users including demographics etc
- operational revenues and other revenues
- facility occupancy - who, what, where, when, how many and how often
- operating and recapitalization costs / expenditures
- facility cost recovery

*Step 2 Building Assessments and Analysis*

*Step 3 SWOT<sup>1</sup> Analysis for each facility separately*

*Step 4 Integrated / Interdependent SWOT Analysis*

- Looking at the Peninsula as a service provision area and evaluating based on all existing and required resources as listed above
- Compilation of recommendations as per each specific facility

*Step 5 Halifax Forum Site Multi District Draft Plan*

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<sup>1</sup> Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats  
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**Phase 2 - Consultation**

Presentation and discussion of analysis, options and recommendations with:

- Staff Steering Committee
- Halifax Forum Commission Board of Directors
- members of the general public
- community development staff and other business units as necessary

**Phase 3 - Report Development**

- Review and redevelopment of options and recommendations
- Financial impact report - operating and capital
- Proposed Implementation schedule
- draft 1 of final report

**Phase 4 - Complete Final Report**

- including consultation with key stakeholders listed in Phase 2.

*Total project Time line after award - approx 10 months*