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Item No. 5
Halifax Regional Council
October 27, 2009
Committee of the Whole

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dan English".

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: October 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Review of Social Heritage Programs and Services

ORIGIN

- December 18, 2008 staff report regarding use of the Dartmouth School Board offices by the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society.
- This report originates from staff as part of an ongoing review of Community Relations and Cultural Affairs' programs and services.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council:

- 1) Approve the withdrawal of \$55,000 from the Cultural Development Reserve (Q312) to retain a consultant to provide recommendations on a strategic framework for HRM's social heritage program and services, including a feasibility analysis of a regional museum and a sustainable regional collection, and directions for future social heritage interpretation opportunities;
- 2) Discontinue any further accessioning to the Dartmouth Heritage Museum collection until Council has completed its review of the Municipality's social heritage program; and
- 3) Not make any capital budget commitments regarding a regional museum/gallery until Council has completed its review of the Municipality's social heritage program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Municipality has a role in the collection, preservation, presentation and interpretation of the region's social heritage. What exactly that role should be, as well as its scope, is unclear since there has never been any discussion of the issue. This report attempts to lay the initial foundation for further discussion and review with Council and the public, and seeks a mandate from Council for staff to initiate this review.

Halifax Regional Municipality has a rich social heritage including many heritage museums and collections, most of which are owned and operated by other levels of government, non-governmental institutions or volunteer groups. The Municipality's own social heritage collection, programs and services have largely been inherited from the Region's previous municipalities. Their mandate, purpose, and scope have not been reviewed since amalgamation. As a result this municipal service is largely ad-hoc and lacks consistency and linkages to significant Council policies and strategic direction. In addition, while the Municipality has tens of thousands of artefacts, they do not have a theme and they do not reflect the region as a whole. A strategic framework is needed to set the course for the Municipality's social heritage portfolio.

This report has several purposes. Fundamentally the report provides Council with basic information which is required before engaging in a discussion or debate about the future direction of the Municipality's social heritage program. This is done by providing an overview of trends and practices in managing collections; interpreting social heritage; and providing public access to social heritage programming. The report also attempts to provide a preliminary and high level overview of the Municipality's current collection and place it in the context of more than 50 collections in the region. In essence this raises the issues of avoiding duplication and identifying what role or niche there is for the Municipality. The report also provides an overview of the Municipality's current social heritage delivery model; annual operating costs; and distribution of those funds. HRM's current funding of community museums is not equitable and does not have a strategic focus.

Imminent decisions regarding the construction of a Municipal museum/gallery (new or renovated) are premature. It is not safe to assume that HRM has a sufficient number of regional artefacts which are also of adequate quality to display in a new museum. It is also not safe to assume that there are sufficient funds and skilled staff to operate it. The preferred sequence of decision making is:

- identify the theme or purpose of the Municipality's collection and programming;
- determine what the preferred model is for public access to the Municipality's social heritage collection and programs;
- determine how to reallocate the existing budget to a new social heritage program and identify the additional amount of investment that is required and/or affordable to achieve the program's goals and objectives; and
- determine what type of storage, preservation and presentation system best achieves the outcomes Council wants for its social heritage program.

While the primary focus of this report is on long term direction, a number of urgent issues have been identified. Current facilities are inadequate for the safe storage and preservation of the collection. In addition, at the current rate of collecting assets we will exceed our current storage capacity. It is recommended that no further collecting occur until Council completes its review of the social heritage program. Staff will continue to conduct an inventory of HRM's collection and a portion of funding for the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society will be redirected towards an inventory of the Dartmouth collection.

BACKGROUND

HRM is fortunate to have a rich social heritage comprising many historic properties and sites, artefacts, artworks, customs, folklore and traditions. Social heritage, especially the act of collecting artefacts or operating a museum, is relatively unfamiliar to most members of Regional Council. This is understandable given the absence of any regional strategy that speaks to HRM's social heritage programs and services, or its role in museums, collections and social heritage interpretation.

HRM's existing social heritage program and services have largely been inherited from municipal programs that pre-date amalgamation. Most of the programs and services lack linkage to HRM's strategic policies. Moreover, the lack of a regional strategic framework has resulted in service inequities among communities throughout HRM.

Community Relations and Cultural Affairs Division

In the summer of 2007, a new division entitled Community Relations and Cultural Affairs (CRCA) was created, which includes HRM's former Culture and Heritage division. The role of Community Relations and Cultural Affairs is to provide a comprehensive community and cultural development framework for supporting the community, voluntary and cultural sectors in HRM.

Over the last two years, several programs and services that fall within the responsibility of the CRCA to improve overall service delivery. Staff's effort has been on the development of strategic policy, new operating processes and systems, as well as new programs and initiatives. To date, the following have been completed or have been initiated:

- a) Community Visioning Program
- b) Community Engagement Strategy
- c) Civic Events Granting Policy Framework
- d) Civic Events Strategy (draft to be tabled in Fall)
- e) Volunteer Recruitment Strategy (draft to be tabled in Winter)
- f) Cultural Operating Strategy
- g) Public Art Policy
- h) Public Art Program and Master Plan

Last year staff began to direct much needed attention to the social heritage portfolio. This was partly in response to a request by the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society (DHMS) to use the former Dartmouth City Hall building as a museum, but more important, a stated requirement of *HRM Cultural Plan*. Specifically, the Plan identifies the development of a local heritage strategy and a museum policy as priority.

Existing museum services and programs have been assessed to determine their value, and equity, transparency, and relevancy. Because this has been an internal exercise, staff recommend that before any significant changes are advanced to HRM's program and services, a public engagement process should be implemented.

Overview of Social Heritage Programs

The following background aims to provide Regional Council with a comprehensive overview of HRM's social heritage portfolio, the means by which it is and can be communicated, and the state of museums in the region. This report is lengthy but the information contained within is important

for facilitating meaningful and informed discussion. The background is divided in the following four sections.

- Section 1: Social Heritage**
- Section 2: Museums & Collections**
- Section 3: Museums & Collections throughout the Region**
- Section 4: HRM Social Heritage - Museums, Collections, Programs and Services**

Section 1: Social Heritage

Social heritage refers to history and cultural identity of a group of people in a particular region. It includes folklore, customs, traditions, stories and cultural communities. The International Council of Museums (ICOM), a branch of the UNESCO, has identified four primary types of social heritage:

- **Intangible Heritage:** encompasses living expressions and the traditions that countless groups and communities have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, in most cases orally.
- **Movable Heritage:** includes physical assets, commonly thought of as cultural objects and the museums in which they are conserved, such as archaeological artifacts, architectural elements and artworks.
- **World Heritage:** includes assets that are not movable, such as monumental architecture and sites, which are bound to their location.
- **Underwater Heritage:** encompasses all traces of human existence that lie or were lying under water and have a cultural or historical character, such as shipwrecks, old transportation routes and sunken or flooded urban developments.

1.1 Trends in Social Heritage Interpretation

The traditional approach to communicating social heritage is through the presentation of permanent displays, exhibits, guided tours, publications, and school programs, within the museum context. However, there are several alternatives available that are increasingly used to communicate social heritage. A more contemporary approach often involves multi-sensorial experiences, mostly outside of the traditional museum walls, such as web-based exhibits, festivals, storytelling, and arts. These approaches require fewer artefacts as they focus on the more intangible aspects of heritage.

1.1.1 Festivals & Community Arts

The most recent trend in social heritage interpretation is the use of community gathering events, as well as some forms of artistic expression. These outlets provide a new base to deliver innovative and interactive programming, often in a more convivial, safe and engaging environment. The general public is able to experience first-hand narratives, ensuring accessibility, authenticity and relevance.

This technique fosters creative ideas and activities for interpreting artefacts and sites and for conveying significant stories. It focuses on placing audience and community needs at the forefront of interpretation, catering interpretation to various learning styles and utilizing multiple modes of communications. A review of provincial and federal strategies and programs suggest an increased support toward folklore-based programming through festivals, events, art, and digital-based projects.

1.1.2 Web-Based Technology

Major demographic shifts, increasing globalization, advances in communications and technology, are dictated trends for museums. The content and the way information is shared has become more important. In fact, technological advances are challenging museums to rethink interpretation and shift become more accessible and “virtual”. As more and more information becomes free and accessible, the need or desire to visit a museum may diminish, moreover, the admission costs required to access a museum will only add further barriers. Large museums will continue to draw an audience for their stature, quality and fame, but more modest community museums may struggle to maintain their audience, and will likely need to diversify.

Section 2: Museums & Collections

A museum (which sometimes includes galleries, archives, libraries and other collecting institutes) is a permanent facility, often a building, a house or a room, that has been transformed or purpose-built, for preserving and exhibiting a collection or objects of significance.

- The public portion of the facility is used to display the collected objects and to provide interpretation opportunities to visitors (exhibits, lectures, workshops, resource library, archives, etc.).
- The remainder of the building is used for storage, conservation, restoration, acquisition/de-accession processing, research, program development and administrative tasks.

2.1 The Definitions

The Canadian Museum Association defines museums as “*institutions created in the public interest to engage visitors, foster deeper understanding and promote the enjoyment and sharing of authentic cultural and natural heritage.*” Museums acquire, preserve, research, interpret and exhibit the tangible and intangible evidence of society, past and present.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) acknowledges a continued debate in respect to a preferred definition for museums. It suggests that a museum is simply a collection of objects, and that a physical space is not required. For instance, the virtual museum has a collection, therefore, for all intents and purposes it is a museum. Based on this definition, a clear shift from static museum display to more innovative interpretation is advocated.

Museums can be grouped into one of the three following levels:

- **Municipal:** Relates to municipal government, as evidence of the municipality's functions, policies, decisions, operations and citizen interactions. The collection is preserved to provide historical interpretation opportunities to inform, enlighten and enhance the life of citizens and visitors.
- **Community/Regional:** Relates to a specific community and/or region, era or area of interest. These artefacts tell the story of a particular era, person, group of people, place or event in relation to that community.

- **Provincial/National:** Relates to a province and/or a country. The collection can be based around a theme or era of national significance.

2.2 Museum Standards

All museums are expected to meet minimum standards regarding administration, program management, collection management and conservation. These standards are governed by internal policies and external laws and regulations. Some of these standards must be met in order for museums to be eligible for provincial and/or federal funding.

For example, collections should be protected from environmental extremes by providing ongoing building maintenance. Rapid and extreme changes in temperature and relative humidity are to be avoided. Temperature must be constant with minimum fluctuations (ideally at 20 degrees Celsius) and relative humidity is to be maintained at a set point between 35% and 65%, with daily fluctuations kept to a minimum. The Canadian Conservation Institute provides further standards regarding heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems for controlling relative humidity, temperature, and gaseous and particulate pollutants.

2.3 Collections

Museums collect objects that are relevant to their mandate and can inform their programming. Collections can widely vary, including artefacts from a special era, geographic area or a theme, to artworks (public art galleries) and buildings (designated heritage sites and properties). The curator is the person in charge of the collection.

It is important to distinguish between a “collection” and a “group of objects of historical/cultural value.”

- A collection is a group of objects of significant historical or cultural value, which is strategically assembled by a professional curator, conservator, historian or folklorist, to meet the collection’s mandate. It is often representative of a community’s geographic area, intellectual and cultural diversity, and reflective of an evolving history or changes in cultural perceptions over time.
- A “group of objects” of historical/cultural value is simply an assemblage of objects without any specific intent or focus, or professional expertise, and usually includes items such as ceremonial gifts, bequests and donations.

2.4 The Museum Collecting Framework

The act of collecting is guided by an approved collection framework.

- Acquisition is balanced with the museum’s ability to process, describe, preserve, make accessible, and make known the material being collected.
- A museum also needs to keep abreast of other collecting institutions and recognize that in some instance, materials of heritage value may be more effectively acquired, made available, used, and preserved by other museums or collecting entities. This process is usually called

“repatriation.” It is important that museums recognize when its collection is one part of a larger collection so that its development is undertaken in partnership with other heritage institutions.

2.4.1 Accessioning and De-accessioning Policy

A museum’s “accession/de-accession policy” refers to the guidelines that govern the process by which artefacts are acquired and disposed. An object is formally accessioned when a catalogue number is assigned to it and registered in a database with details about its origin, history and ownership. De-accessioning may be desirable or even necessary in order to maintain a cohesive collection or to meet operating objectives. This often includes disposal of damaged or redundant material.

The act of taking legal possession of an artefact (accessioning) such as gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, loans, and field collecting, or to dispose of it (de-accessioning) such as transfers, returns, repatriation, sale, discarding or destruction, is thoroughly governed by provincial and federal standards and laws, and by the collecting agencies’ own internal accession/de-accession policy. This rigorous process ensures the quality and focus of a collection. For example, in order to be de-accessioned, artefacts must have a clear title of ownership, and cannot be returned to the original donor as a gift (e.g. The Income Tax Act).

Section 3: Museums & Collections throughout the Region

Within HRM’s geographic boundary there are nineteen (19) community and/or regional, four (4) provincial, and four (4) federal museums, for a total of twenty seven (27) heritage museums. With the inclusion of other collecting institutions, stand-alone collections and archives, a grand total of fifty-six (56) museums and collections are located within HRM’s official boundary. (*See Attachment 1: Overview of Museums and Collections in HRM.*)

3.1 Themes & Collecting Mandates

The 27 heritage museums located within HRM cover a variety of themes representative of the region’s heritage, from highly specialized museums (rural life from 1940 to 1950) to generalist museums (life in the Maritimes). It is also important to note that the other collecting institutions, stand-alone collections and archives have various specialized themes. Table 1 provides an overview of the various thematic categories represented within HRM.

Table 1: Themes		
Type	#	Collecting Theme
Heritage Museums	2	Cultural Communities
	3	Daily Life
	2	Farming
	1	Immigration
	2	Industries
	2	Natural History
	3	Maritimes Life

Table 1: Themes		
	5	Military
	1	Sports
	2	Transportation
	4	Urban Settlements
	27	TOTAL
Other Museums & Collections	9	Art
	1	Broadcasting
	1	Costumes
	1	Cultural communities
	2	Daily Life
	4	Education
	1	Fire
	3	Government
	1	Hospitals
	1	Military
	1	Police
	3	Religious (Genealogy)
	1	Technology
	29	TOTAL
	56	GRAND TOTAL

Section 4: HRM Social Heritage - Museums, Collections, Programs and Services

HRM's social heritage portfolio is delivered by the Community Relations and Cultural Affairs Division of the Community Development Department and has three main initiatives:

- collections and heritage assets;
- museums in HRM buildings; and
- interactive programming.

4.1 HRM Collection

HRM owns one social heritage collection and many other heritage assets. The collection features approximately 42,000 artefacts, with the majority stored at the Joe Zatzman Drive warehouse and storage facility. The collection is not representative of the entire region and does not have a theme. It focuses on the geographic area of Dartmouth and therefore is a community collection rather than a regional collection. In 2005, HRM entered into a collection management agreement with Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society to manage this collection on behalf of HRM.

- Given the absence of a municipal collection policy, acquisitions have not been balanced with the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society's capacity to effectively manage, preserve, and provide access to the collection.

- At the current rate of collecting, the collection will soon exceed the capacity of the existing storage facility. The DHMS Collection Committee is still acquiring objects despite the real limitations of the storage facility.
- Significant emphasis needs to be placed on de-accessioning portions of the collection and/or transferring or repatriating items to other more appropriate collecting institutions or museums. An accessioning/de-accessioning policy is presently being drafted for this collection by the DHMS in collaboration with HRM. This new policy will help guide future acquisitions and de-accessions, however, it will not address heritage assets beyond the Dartmouth area.

4.2 HRM Heritage Assets

In addition to the Dartmouth collection, HRM also owns several 100s of heritage assets, including artefacts, artworks, plaques and gifts. The heritage assets have been collected independently of each other, and therefore lack any obvious thematic or regional relationship. Since these have not been collected through an official process (with an accession policy or by a curator), they do not technically qualify as a collection. The grouping includes assets acquired by HRM Fire & Emergency Services, the Halifax Regional Police, City Hall and HRM staff.

The assets are stored at different locations throughout the region including the Joe Zatzman facility, City Hall, Fire and Police headquarters, and other HRM-owned facilities. These items are in urgent need of appraisal for insurance purposes, for security and to identify conservation priorities. An annual budget is not allocated to manage these assets. Table 2 provides an overview of the collection and heritage assets owned by HRM.

TABLE 2: HRM-OWNED SOCIAL HERITAGE COLLECTION & HERITAGE ASSETS				
	DHMS (Collection)	City Hall & Other HRM Facility (Heritage Assets)	Fire (Heritage Assets)	Police (Heritage Assets)
Assets (estimate)	42,000	600	150	500
Asset Managers	Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society (DHMS)	Cultural Affairs Mayor's Office Other Business Units	Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency	Halifax Regional Police
Locations	- Joe Zatzman Storage Facility, Burnside - Evergreen House & Quaker House, Dartmouth	- Joe Zatzman Storage Facility, Burnside - Halifax City Hall (Trophy Room, Mayor's Office) - Throughout HRM offices and facilities	- Main Office, 40 Alderney Gate, Dartmouth - Stations all over HRM (trucks)	- Main Station, 1975 Gottingen Street, Halifax

4.3 Museums in HRM Buildings

HRM does not currently operate a municipal museum. However, HRM owns four properties of historical significance, from which community/regional museums are operated by local groups through management agreements. These are Evergreen House, Quaker House, MacPhee House and

Scott Manor House. HRM is responsible for the ongoing property maintenance, as well as major capital works necessary to maintain the building’s heritage integrity. Capital repairs are identified annually and carried-out on a priority basis. A fifth property, the Bicentennial Theatre, is also included in this group of buildings, however it is not used as a museum, but as a performing arts centre. The management agreements for Evergreen, Quaker and MacPhee houses are now up for renewal. Table 3 provides an overview of municipal support to museums located in HRM properties.

TABLE 3: MUNICIPAL SUPPORT TO MUSEUMS IN HRM-OWNED PROPERTIES				
	Evergreen House & Quaker House	McPhee House	Scott Manor House	Bi-Centennial Theatre
Asset Manager	Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society (DHMS)	Sheet Harbour & Area Heritage Society	Fort Sackville Foundation	Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre Association (MVBCTA)
Location	Dartmouth	Sheet Harbour	Bedford	Middle Musquodoboit
HRM Funding	Contribution: \$50,000 /yr \$70,000/yr (storage)	Contribution: none	Contribution: none	Contribution: \$15,000/year
	Operations: \$5,000/year, variable based on priorities	Operations: \$5,000/year, variable based on priorities	Operations: \$5,000/year, variable based on priorities	Operations: \$5,000/year, variable based on priorities
	Capital: \$20,000/year, variable based on priorities	Capital: \$10,000/year, variable based on priorities	Capital: \$10,000/year, variable based on priorities	Capital: \$10,000/year, variable based on priorities
Programs & Services	Year-round	- Seasonal (June to September)	- Seasonal (June to September)	- Year-round
	Museum Permanent displays Rotating exhibits Guided tours Afternoon teas Research facility	Museum Permanent displays Tourism Office	Museum Permanent displays Guided tours Afternoon teas Research facility Meeting rooms Heritage gardening	325-seat theatre Community hall Canteen Cultural centre Tourism Office

4.3.1 HRM Support to Community Museums in HRM

HRM provides operating funding to only 3 of the 27 community museums located within its boundary. Funding was initially assigned on an ad-hoc basis at amalgamation and has since remained intact. As demonstrated in Table 3, in addition to capital and operating expenditures, the DHMS receives an annual \$50,000 contribution (to operate Evergreen House, Quaker Houses and to manage the DHMS collection), and is the only museum to have access to a storage facility, a value of \$70,000 per year. The Sheet Harbour & Area Heritage Society and the Fort Sackville Foundation do not receive any additional contributions.

4.3.2 Curatorial and Conservation Services

Over the years, HRM has provided some consulting services to community museums for curating and conservation. Advice provided ranged from collection policies (accessioning/de-accessioning), to the preparation of exhibits (displays, thematic, restoration), and research (archives, history). Although informal, access to this knowledge was extremely useful to museums that could not afford professional expertise.

4.4 Interactive Programming (interpretation)

Community Relations and Cultural Affairs delivers a number of innovative interpretation opportunities focusing on enhancing public access to social heritage interpretation activities in non-traditional settings. For example, the “Ferry Boat Tales” project was a series of theatrical productions held aboard the Halifax-Dartmouth ferry for residents and visitors alike to experience Halifax's history in a unique and exciting way, while travelling aboard the oldest salt-water ferry in North America. This program was immensely successful and received high praise from residents, visitors and the media.

Artefacts from the collection and other heritage assets are also displayed in civic properties, such as in the Trophy Room at City Hall, at the Police and Fire headquarters, at the Peace Pavilion, at Municipal Archives, and in some libraries. Cultural Affairs is now working toward renewing some of these displays, and to create new and innovative ones in non-traditional spaces (Alderney Gate, Ferry Terminals) and in existing exhibition spaces (Halifax Hall at City Hall, Fall River Community Centre).

Other innovative programs are presently being developed, such as the Grand Parade Banners Project and the Preston Storytelling Project, which focus on social heritage, and interactive public engagement opportunities. However, given the inadequacy of annual social heritage operating budget, these have been funded through HRM’s Cultural Development Reserve. The Reserve is not designed to support long term operations, and is quickly diminishing, posing real threats to continued innovative social heritage programming opportunities.

4.5 Other HRM Heritage Programs & Service

In addition to the above social heritage programs and services, the heritage portfolio is also delivered by two other HRM divisions, each with their own area of expertise and programs.

- a) Municipal Archives:** This business unit (under the division of Business Planning & Information Management) identifies, acquires, preserves and promotes access to municipal government and non-government archival records documenting the history of HRM. It is the official repository for all inactive municipal records, of enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical or informational value. These records are preserved as evidence of the Municipality's functions, policies, decisions, operations and citizen interactions. This is complemented by the archival records of individuals, businesses and organizations active in the municipal sphere. Municipal Archives promote awareness of and appreciation for our heritage, primarily by providing access to its holdings (public reference, research and copying services), and as resources permit, will also provide exhibits in-house and on-line, tours of the Archives to community groups and school groups, and presentations to conferences and

meetings.

- b) **Built Heritage:** The Planning & Development Services Division of Community Development encourages the preservation of built heritage resources, including properties, streetscapes and districts, through a formal Municipal Heritage Property Designation program. Once designated, sites are identified with a commemorative plaque. To encourage the conservation of privately-owned, municipally registered heritage properties of residential or commercial use, property owners are eligible for matching grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible exterior conservation work under the Heritage Tax Incentives Program. The Barrington Street Re-Development Heritage Tax Incentives Program is presently being developed as recommended under the HRM by Design report tabled earlier this year. This unit also informs land-use re-developments throughout the Municipality. HRM owns an additional 30 designated heritage properties and buildings of significant historical, social and architectural value, used for a variety of purposes.

DISCUSSION

The background section provides a comprehensive overview of social heritage, museums and collections, and the local facilities and programs through which HRM's social heritage is communicated. Staff have reviewed existing services and programs to gain a better understanding of their overall impact and effectiveness.

Based on staff's preliminary review, it is clear that HRM's existing social heritage programs and services:

- currently focus primarily on movable heritage (museums, archaeological artifacts, artworks, architectural elements);
- do not have a significant focus on intangible heritage (folk customs, folklore and orally transmitted traditions that may not have a physical instantiation);
- do not have sufficient budget and resources are clearly inadequate to meet the basic needs of the social heritage program (collections, management and interpretation); and
- it appears that many of HRM's existing programs and services, and the manner in which they are delivered are facilitating dramatic inequities among the communities HRM serves.

Given these preliminary conclusions, several questions have emerged that will serve as the foundation for the following discussion. Specifically, HRM must ask itself if social heritage is a priority for service delivery and, if so, what is an appropriate role and niche.

Should HRM have a role in Social Heritage?

Yes. Access to social heritage experiences has a definite impact on a community and its people, such as a sense of identity and place, which in turns creates ownership, pride, quality of life, more engaged citizens and more successful communities. These benefits, as a public good, are fostered through social heritage opportunities provided in large part by the municipality. This support is often

focused on non-traditional interpretation methods, like community arts, that may not be funded by other levels of government.

What should HRM's role be in Social Heritage?

The Cultural Plan's "Cultural Access and Equity" policy stresses the importance of "*creating opportunities for all residents to experience culture through an equitably balanced approach to cultural service delivery.*" The emphasis on access is critical in any social heritage strategy recognizing that if residents do not have ready access to relevant artefacts, historic sites and buildings, activities and festivals, then the intrinsic social value of heritage is minimized. This sentiment places a significant emphasis on interpretation services and the means through which the municipality communicates social heritage (ie. museum exhibits, touring displays, festivals, art, and virtual web).

Upon further investigation, an effective municipal social heritage program should comprise the following core services:

- Collections Services (policy, accessioning/deaccessioning, curatorial services);
- Management Services (storage, conservation, preservation); and
- Interpretation Services (curating, museums, exhibits, displays, festivals, virtual).

Is HRM's Meeting Core Service Expectations?

The approach to social heritage as it currently exist in HRM is limited by a lack of strategic focus, resources and budget. Consequently, HRM's approach to social heritage services is ad hoc and reactionary and, for the most part, is under funded and under resources, so that HRM is not meeting the basic service expectations typically associated with a municipal social heritage program.

Clearly, in order to facilitate improved access to social heritage, both at the intangible and movable social heritage levels, greater resources need to be directed at collecting, managing, and interpreting. Policy 3.4 of the Cultural Plan specifically states that "*HRM will manage the collection, display, conservation, and interpretation of museum, archival and arts collections.*"

What are the Immediate Collecting and Management Challenges in HRM?

The DHMS collection is mostly stored at a warehouse facility in Burnside. This facility is inadequate for storing artefacts and does not meet museum standards. In addition, the collection is not representative of the whole region, many items are redundant or are in urgent need of restoration, or could be transferred or repatriated to other more appropriate collecting agencies. There is also a significant mold problem at that location, and the collection is rapidly outgrowing the space.

The state of the other collections (City Hall, Fire, Police) is mostly unknown as there has been no professional assessment of these items. These artefacts and gifts need to be inventoried, accessioned and properly stored and/or displayed. Items from the Fire collection are presently being transferred to HRM's Municipal Archives for these reasons. City Hall is also transferring some of the artefacts and artworks to the Burnside facility for future assessment.

What are the Immediate Interpretation Challenges in HRM?

HRM appears to be adequately serviced in the range of museums and collections. As noted in the background, HRM has 56 museums, collecting institutions and collections within its regional boundary. Twenty seven of these are actual heritage museums and a variety of themes that cover most aspects of HRM's social history are interpreted.

HRM's support to the community museum network is not equitable. Based on staff's analysis, among the 19 community-based museums, it is clear that serious discrepancies exist in the manner in which HRM serves these, and the communities they benefit. As noted in the background, only the DHMS receives annual core operating grant from HRM, and is provided unrestricted access to storage. In addition, HRM provides basic operating/maintenance services and capital repairs to three groups (DHMS, Fort Sackville Foundation, and Sheet Harbour & Area Heritage Society) to operate their museum. The remaining museums and collecting institutions do not receive any annual support.

While a number of innovative heritage interpretive programming has been provided this year by HRM (ie. Ferry Boat Tales) in the absence of an annual operating budget these can not be sustained.

How can HRM improve collection and management services?

In terms of collection and management services, the Cultural Plan recommends the completion of a feasibility study to determine suitable sites within the Capital Region for Municipal Archives and Museum services facilities (storage, interpretation) and the development of a local museum policy (collection framework, management, service delivery). Clearly, the most significant question emerging from this recommendation is whether or not Regional Council believes a regional heritage collection and a regional museum facility for the Capital Region is indeed a priority?

At present, HRM does not have a regional heritage collection, and to build and properly manage a regional heritage collection, many years and several millions of dollars would be required. Alternatively, HRM has a series of community-based and/or thematic museums and collections that could be better served. The community museums that exist throughout the region have done a remarkable job at collecting and managing their individual collections. Unfortunately, HRM has not provided an equitable grant and contribution program to support these museums. A more equitable grant program is required. Moreover, HRM could show leadership by facilitating improved collection and management coordination among these museums and collecting institutions, which currently is not occurring.

How can HRM improve interpretation services?

With respect to interpretation, the Cultural Plan places less emphasis on a central museum and more on a decentralize approach. It recommends using community facilities as hubs for cultural program delivery, including heritage interpretation. The rationale is that this would facilitate improved access to heritage and cultural assets and information.

The HRM Community Facility Master Plan reinforces this goal and highlights several opportunities for incorporating arts and culture in community facilities, including secure exhibit and display spaces to showcase local heritage. The new Public Art Policy also supports the decentralized approach. Policy 3.5 states that "*HRM will fund Public Art at new or renovated municipally-owned publicly*

accessible facilities through allocation of 1% of the total construction costs in excess of the first 25,000 square feet for a specific project.” The public art definition includes heritage artifacts. Therefore, as HRM builds new facilities, the provision of interpretive display cases or stations for public artefacts would qualify.

Additionally, in terms of alternative interpretation, both the Cultural Plan and draft Event Strategy recognizes the value of HRM’s history and places significant emphasis on events that reflects cultural heritage. Despite HRM’s rich social history and folklore, however, major heritage-theme events are not provided in HRM. The Strategy recommends that more resources be directed to events that celebrate HRM’s history. An emphasis on cultural presentation is also highlighted, which facilitate innovative heritage interpretation through cultural presentation and arts (dance, theatre, music etc.)

What would a social heritage program cost?

Understanding that HRM has a vested interest and role in promoting and protecting its social heritage, the question of cost and value needs to be at the forefront of Council’s deliberations. Table 4 provides an overview of the Cultural Affairs annual budget for social heritage services. Excluded from this are capital expenditures, as these vary from year to year.

TABLE 4: MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL HERITAGE	
Existing Services	Existing Operating Budget
Collections Includes: accessioning/deaccessioning	\$25,000(approx 50% of grant to DHMS directed toward collection accessioning)
Management Includes : storage, conservation, preservation	\$70,000 annual for storage \$25,000 annually for inventorying/assessment
Interpretation Includes: curating, museums, exhibits, displays, festivals, virtual	\$25,000 (approx 50% of grant to DHMS directed toward interpretation) \$32,000 (4 museum building utilities) \$11,000 (innovative museum interpretation) \$40,000 (annual repairs to 4 museum building)
Total Annual Social Heritage Budget:	\$228,000

If HRM was to pursue an effective social heritage program based on the opportunities described above, a much more significant budget would be required than currently exists. Using informed estimates, Table 5 provides an overview of potential budget implications associated with various aspects of social heritage services.

TABLE 5: COSTS ESTIMATES	
Proposed Enhanced Services	Proposed Operating Budget
Collections Includes: new accessioning/de-accessioning program to create regional heritage collection	\$500,000/year for accessioning, de-accessioning and curating

TABLE 5: COSTS ESTIMATES	
Proposed Enhanced Services	Proposed Operating Budget
Management Includes: new storage facility, new or re-habilitated museum/archival facility, and annual conservation, preservation programs	\$20 million capital investment (initial investment and then \$1 million annual building operating) \$75,000 annual assessment and conservation
Interpretation Includes: museum programs, new folklore program, community museum grant program, and virtual museum	\$100,000/year for interpretation services \$50,000/year to a new Community Museum Assistance Funding Program (for accessioning, curating, storage, conservation and interpretation). \$100,000/year from the operating budget to Municipal Archives (for accessioning, curating, storage and conservation services.
Initial Investment	\$20,000,000
Annual Investment	\$1,825,000
Total Social Heritage Budget	\$21,825,000

Conclusions and Next Steps

As noted in the background section, HRM is fortunate to have a rich social heritage comprising many heritage properties and sites, artefacts, artworks, customs, folklore and traditions. HRM's existing social heritage programs and services are essentially a by-product of amalgamation. Therefore, most of the programs and services provided lack strategic linkages to policy, and have proven to be inconsistent in both the delivery and support mechanism (ie. grants and contributions).

In order for HRM to be effective, and to ensure its programs and services are providing good value for investment, the priority must be placed on developing a regional social heritage strategic framework. A strategic framework will set the course for HRM's social heritage program and enable Council to make informed and strategic decisions.

While much of the background and research for the strategic planning process has begun, this is a significant exercise and will take time to complete. In the absence of a strategic framework, staff would suggest that it is not prudent for Council to make any major decisions or changes to HRM's social heritage program until such time as a strategic framework is in place.

Over the course of the next year, staff will continue to deliver its existing program and services. Staff will also continue to develop and implement innovative heritage interpretive programs, festivals and art project, where the existing budget allows. However, given the immediate pressure of storage space at Joe Zatzman Drive facility, staff recommend that a moratorium on accessioning into the Dartmouth Heritage Museum Society Collection be implemented. This moratorium should remain in place until Council has completed its review of the Municipality's social heritage program. This includes continuing to inventory the Dartmouth collection and developing a deaccessioning policy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

A review of HRM's social heritage program will require \$80,000. \$25,000 has already been committed from the Cultural Development Reserve (Q312) for a Social Heritage and Museum Strategy Initiative. Therefore, an additional \$55,000 is required from this reserve to implement the Recommendation contained in this report. The availability of funds has been confirmed by Financial Services.

Budget Summary: Cultural Development Reserve (Q312)

Uncommitted Balance	\$111,881
Cost for consultant to prepare a social heritage strategic framework: (\$80,000 - \$25,000 previously approved)	<u>(\$ 55,000)</u>
Projected balance March 31, 2010.	\$ 56,881

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating and Capital budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation. However, by approving the Recommendation contained in this report, the Reserve budget will be increased by \$55,000.

ALTERNATIVES

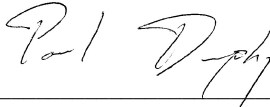
Alternative One: Regional Council may chose to amend the proposed scope of effort described in recommendation (a).


ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Overview of Museums and Collections in HRM

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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ATTACHMENT 1
Overview of Museums and Collections in HRM

Civic Museums	Community/Regional Museums	Provincial/National Museums
(none)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acadian House Museum 2. Army Museum 3. Atlantic Canadian Aviation Museum 4. Black Cultural Centre 5. Cole Harbour Farm Museum 6. Fultz House Museum 7. Memory Lane Heritage Village 8. Moose River Gold Mine Museum 9. Musquodoboit Railway Museum 10. Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame 11. Shubenacadie Canal & Fairbank's Interpretive Centre 12. Somme Branch No. 31, Royal Canadian Legion Military Museum 13. Spryfield Urban Farm 14. Thomas McCulloch Museum 15. Waverley Heritage Museum <u>HRM heritage properties sublet for museum-purposes*</u> 16. Evergreen House Museum 17. McPhee House Museum 18. Quaker House Museum 19. Scott Manor House Museum <u>Other</u> 20. Eye Level Gallery 	<p><u>Provincial</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fisherman's Life Museum 2. Maritime Museum of the Atlantic 3. Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History 4. Uniacke Estate Museum park <p><u>Federal</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Citadel Hill & Halifax Defence Complex (Point Pleasant, York Redoubt, MacNab Island) 6. Maritime Command Museum 7. Pier 21 Immigration Museum 8. Shearwater Aviation Museum <p><u>Other</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Art Gallery of Nova Scotia 10. Anna Leonowan Gallery 11. Dalhousie Art Gallery 12. Discovery Centre 13. Mary E. Black Gallery 14. Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery 15. Saint Mary's Art Gallery
Civic Collections	Community/Regional Collections	Provincial/National Collections
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HRM Municipal Archives & Records Management 2. HRM Civic Collection (managed by DHMS) 3. HRM Public Art Collection (includes World Peace Pavilion) <p><u>Group of Objects</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. HRM City Hall Collection 5. Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Collection 6. Halifax Regional Police Collection 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archdiocese of Halifax Archives, Roman Catholic 2. Victoria General Hospital School of Nursing Museum & Archives 	<p>Provincial:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archives of the Diocese of NS and PEI 2. Centre for Art Tapes 3. Costume Society of Nova Scotia 4. Dalhousie University Archives & Special Collections 5. Girl Guides of Nova Scotia Archives 6. Mount Saint Vincent University Archives 7. Nova Scotia Archives 8. Saint Mary's University Archives 9. Saint Paul's Church Archives 10. Shambhala Archives 11. University of King's College Archives <p>Federal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Cambridge Military Library 13. CBC/Radio-Canada, Broadcast Material Archive