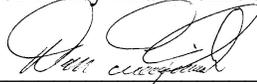


**Item No. 10.1.7**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**January 26, 2010**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**



Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer



Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

**DATE:** January 11, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Porter's Lake Community Centre / School Partnership

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**ORIGIN**

This report originates from:

- Recommendation 52 and 53 in the Community Facility Master Plan to guide the development, recapitalization and replacement of aging community and recreation facilities (Appendix A);
- an opportunity arising from an accelerated plan by the Province on the new Lakeview Elementary School project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve entering into a joint project with the Province to add a community centre component to the new Lakeview Elementary School project;
2. Direct staff to include \$1.65M in the proposed 2010/11 Operating Budget as HRM's contribution to the cost of the new facility by deferring \$1.65M for the Lacewood Transit Terminal capital project (CB200428) to 2011/12 thereby reducing Capital from Operating by this amount;
3. Direct staff to initiate public consultation process of determining the appropriate catchment area for an area rate as the community contribution to the project;
4. Direct staff to further explore the possible private donor contribution with possible naming rights and surplus land transaction with any contribution received used to reduce the amount of funding required from an area rate;
5. Authorize staff to initiate the process for the closure of the existing Porter's Lake Community Centre such that closure occurs concurrent with the opening of the new facility; and
6. Authorize staff to begin discussions with the Community Board overseeing the old facility to offer them the opportunity to oversee the new facility.
7. Declare that, on the closure of the existing Porter's Lake Community Centre, it be surplus to the needs of the municipality, and staff be authorized to arrange for its disposal.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Community Facility Master Plan**

Regional Council approved in principle the Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) in May of 2008. The CFMP covered the provision of a wide range of community, recreation, sport, event and cultural facilities in HRM. A number of recommendations and findings were provided in the Master Plan to identify and guide priority areas. Each of the findings and recommendations are to be investigated in greater detail and brought back to Regional Council for further action as required.

Section 4.3 of the CFMP discusses HRM's relationship with Capital Health and the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) and joint partnership opportunities to deliver programs and manage and operate facilities. Recommendation #53 expands on this by recommending HRM build upon the past successful relationship with the HRSB on the development and operation of the Citadel Community Centre attached to Citadel High School and expanded gymnasium facilities. The Master Plan recommends HRM explore further opportunities to do joint projects whenever new school facilities are being planned. The Porter's Lake area was one of three areas identified by the HRSB as areas of potential upcoming projects from the Imagine Our Schools exercise. Thus, these areas were singled out in the HRM Community Facility Master Plan as areas of interest. See Appendix A for further reference.

Recommendation #52 discusses the need for better long term replacement plans for community centres and to ensure when that happens they are placed in the most relevant locations and consistent with other planning documents such as the Regional Plan and Transportation Plan.

### **Timing of New Porter's Lake School (Lakeview Elementary School)**

During the writing of the CFMP it was known that major recapitalization changes were being contemplated for the school inventory around Porter's Lake, however, it was estimated to be several years away allowing adequate time for HRM to properly review and consult with the community. After the report and during a recent election, an announcement was made to consolidate two older schools in the area with a new one with a quick turn-around time line. Provincial staff quickly moved forward with the purchase of an off-the-shelf design and the HRSB gave approval so time lines could be met. HRM responded by asking the Province for time to evaluate this project as an opportunity to partner with a new school project and replace aging recreation infrastructure, consistent with the highlighted CFMP recommendations listed above. Since this partnership project was envisioned to be several years in the future, this project was not in HRM's existing budget plans. A quick response from HRM is required if the

municipality is going to take advantage of this partnership opportunity without further delaying the new school's completion date.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Existing Community Centre Capacity**

The existing Porter's Lake Community Centre is an older building owned by HRM and managed and operated by a Community Board. Both the Board and HRM offer a variety of programs from the facility. The community is outgrowing the existing facility. Demand for requests often exceed available space at prime times. Special events planning is also limited due to the capacity of the building. There are some other facilities in neighbouring communities, however, they also are old facilities which in many cases were former old small rural schools.

### **Regional Plan**

A watershed study and a visioning exercise are planned for next year in this area which would have afforded a better opportunity to do a more in-depth analysis of recreational and community space needs and a review of catchment areas in all surrounding communities but time is of the essence to evaluate this opportunity.

The site location selected for the new school project is adjacent to good transportation routes off a major highway and HRM plans to include a future Metro X park-and-ride transit terminal on the site. It also is adjacent to good active transportation routes. The Regional Plan lists Porter's Lake as a Rural Commuter Centre. Further information can be found in Table 3.1 on page 52 & 53 of the Regional Plan, which has been included as Appendix B. With it's prominent location, this site could serve as a showcase for integrated, mixed-use facilities that encourage the use of transit and Active Transportation in accordance with the principles underlying the Regional Plan.

### **Costs of Partnership Facility vs Stand-Alone**

- The cost to construct a new stand-alone community centre is estimated at \$6.5M
- The cost of incorporating a new community centre into the new school is approximately \$3.3M

The savings arise from reduced exterior wall construction, reduced building footprint because some classroom space becomes shared space in a reciprocal agreement; and reduced land development costs for septic field, water service, parking, etc.

HRM already has joint facilities with the HRSB at the following locations: Basinview Elementary, Tallahassee Community School, Graham Creighton Junior High and Citadel High School. HRM's operating costs are lower at these facilities than comparable stand-alone

facilities. Joint sharing of access to space for the most part has proven to be a better management model for both parties and the community as well.

### Funding

A review of several recent new community recreation facility construction projects have all relied on several funding sources. Besides HRM and other government partners, the community has provided a portion through fund raising, area rates, or a combination of both. In the case of rural facilities this contribution has mostly come from an area rate. Table 1 in Appendix C provides further details. The most relevant of recent projects is the Gordon R Snow Community Centre which replaced an older recreation community centre, and the Citadel High Community Centre which was a partnership with the Province and HRSB.

Finance calculated several area rate options on the assumption 50% of the funding comes from the community. Depending on the catchment area this resulted in an area rate of between 7.8 to 9.2 cents per \$100 of assessment over 10 years. Alternatively, if the District 3 Capital Area Rate of 2.4 cents was re-instituted across the whole District, it would require about 7 years to generate the required funding. In all scenarios, the area rate would be applied to all taxable assessment including residential, resource, commercial and business occupancy.

A second alternative for a community contribution may exist. A prominent citizen with close ties to the community has indicated a willingness to contribute a significant financial gift towards the community portion of the funding. This could possibly be as much as the full community share of construction costs. It may include possible naming rights for the community centre and a possible real estate transaction. Should Council wish to pursue this option, further discussions would be undertaken to finalize it and bring it back to Regional Council for final approval. The potential donor is aware of the sensitive time lines.

### Timing, Commitments and Next Steps

The Province requires a commitment now from HRM for the addition of a \$3.2M community centre to the school project, notwithstanding HRM is still finalizing the 2010/11 Operating and Capital Budget. With the potential donor gift and/or area rate, the estimated contribution from HRM to construct this facility could be as low as \$1.65M. HRM would also approach the Federal Government to see if it would be eligible for any further cost sharing programs.

The Province is ready to tender the school without a community centre in order to have the school open for September 2011. Construction must be awarded and begin no later than this May 2010. If HRM wishes to take the opportunity to enhance this facility with the addition of a community centre, a commitment is required immediately to allow time to make design changes

and still meet tender time lines. This means a commitment now for both HRM's contribution and an area rate. The area rate amount and catchment area can be determined later, once some further certainty is finalized around the possible donor gift.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Since the new community centre component would be owned by the Province, HRM must provide its contribution from Operating, not Capital, in order to be in compliance with Public Sector Accounting Board section 3150. To provide the Operating Budget capacity to accommodate this, Operating from Capital for 2010/11 will be reduced by \$1.65M. This will require that \$1.65M of the Lacewood Transit Terminal capital project # CB200428 be deferred until 2011/12. The balance of the cost of the community centre component (approximately 50%) will come from a combination of an area rate and/or donor gift. The Community Board would be responsible for the operating costs of the facility, funding for which would be available as a result of the closure of the existing Porter's Lake Community Centre.

### **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.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council could decide not to proceed with this opportunity at this time. The Province would proceed to build the new school and HRM would likely move forward with a separate project at some point in the future to replace older facilities following a more detailed visioning exercise. However, the opportunities of a joint partnership with the School Board and the construction cost savings and operating efficiencies would be lost.
2. Council could approve proceeding with the project with a requirement that 100% of the funding must come from other sources with no contribution from HRM. This approach would be inconsistent with the past practice for most of the recent projects. It also would be inconsistent with the current tax structure which assumes the general tax rate includes contributions to new recreation facility construction. This approach has a risk in the ability to generate sufficient funds and would most likely cause construction delays for the new school to allow time to accommodate this approach.
3. Council could decide to proceed with the project with 100% of financing coming from HRM. This would have the greatest strain on the 2010/11 Operating Budget. The 50%

proposal contained in the main recommendation already will cause some difficulties because of the deferral of the Lacewood Transit Terminal to the following year, thus, a 100% option will increase the likely impact on other long range proposed work.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Extract from 2008 Community Facility Master Plan

Appendix B - Extract from Regional Plan

Appendix C- Table 1 - Comparisons of Funding Sources to New Facility Construction

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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Financial Approval by:   
Cathie O'Toole, CGA, Director of Finance, 490-6308

Report Approved by:   
Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

## **Appendix A - Extract from 2008 Community Facility Master Plan**

### **4.3 Relationships with School Board and Health System**

Throughout Canada recreation facility management functions within a mixed delivery system model and works closely with other voluntary sport, culture and recreation organizations in the delivery of services. The most significant shift is that many of these partnerships extend beyond the voluntary sector to include the health system, social services, justice, education and the corporate sector. This reflects both a broader interpretation of the mandate of recreation agencies, and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues and seize opportunities. In particular, the relationship with health is vital in promoting wellness.

The traditional relationship with education of sharing facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving to include cooperative planning and programming, as evidenced in Halifax. Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) is HRM's largest and most important recreation facility partner. The relationship between HRM and HRSB is viewed as very positive.

Access to HRSB gyms and fields represent an essential component of the municipality's recreation service map. HRM currently uses approximately 7,200 hours of HRSB school classrooms, gyms and other spaces for indoor recreation programming at no charge. CRS estimates that in 2007, 132 schools were booked for 130,469.48 hours, not including P3 schools. HRSB B and C classification fields are booked extensively. The following four joint facility use agreements are currently in place:

- Tallahassee Community School
- Citadel High School
- Graham Creighton Junior High School
- Basin View Elementary School.

Combined with the scheduled schools, this represents access to significant community resources and assets.

The HRSB *Imagine Our Schools* 10-year plan recommends important principles for the development of schools. Particularly notable are: a) enhancing opportunities for community-centred schools with a commitment to exploring partnerships and joint-use agreements and b) addressing the realities of declining enrolment and aging facilities. The possibility of moving to a shared use model at each of the HRSB's high schools and at two other schools within each family of schools is also noted. Additional key recommendations within the *Imagine Our Schools* document include equitable access to program and extracurricular opportunities for all students

through alterations, additions, new or replacement schools for all existing communities. The provision of safe, accessible play areas at all school sites has also been encouraged. The provision of optimal play areas correlates well with the development of quality playing fields on school property and maximizing the potential of community centred facility access. HRM should encourage continued development of publicly accessible arts and cultural facilities within HRSB schools.

HRSB forecasts construction or renovations to schools over three phases. Phase 1 of The *Imagine Our Schools* document has been studied to determine areas where joint development can occur. The forecasted renovations to upgrade facilities represent a huge opportunity to enhance service in each of the communities served. The projects of particular interest are slated for schools in Districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Dartmouth/Eastern Passage, Cole Harbour/Eastern Shore and Districts 11, 12, 13, 14 and 17 of the Peninsula. These areas are served by the Citadel High, Dartmouth High, Prince Andrew High, Auburn Drive High and Cole Harbour District High Families of Schools. HRM should investigate the feasibility of partnering with HRSB to provide enhanced gymnasiums and community space for the community at specific locations similar to the Citadel High School gym. There might be further opportunities to partner with other school capital investments that were funded prior to the *Imagine Our Schools* planning process as well as future projects that will result from Phases 2 and 3 of the planning process.

*Recommendation 52: New Community Centres and Multi District Facilities*

That HRM continue to replace and/or construct new community centres and Multi District Facilities in the most relevant locations.

*Recommendation 53: Junior High and High School Gym Access*

That building upon the successful relationship established with HRSB on the development and operation of Citadel Public Access Gymnasium, HRM continues to develop of this type of facility in partnership with HRSB.

**Table 3-1: Characteristics of Centres**

| <b>Urban Settlement Centres</b> |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Centre Type</b>              | <b>Centre Name</b>  | <b>Land Uses</b>  | <b>Transit</b>  |
| Regional                        | Regional Centre   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on opportunity sites, medium to high density residential, commercial, institutional or recreation uses</li> <li>• in established neighbourhoods, low to medium density residential uses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focal point for higher order transit</li> </ul>  |
| Urban District                  | West End Mall<br>Mic Mac Mall   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of high density residential, commercial, institutional &amp; recreation uses</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• parking structures for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>  |
| Suburban District               | Spryfield<br>Bedford West<br>Sunnyside Mall<br>Sackville<br>Russell Lake  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of low, medium and high density residential, commercial, institutional &amp; recreation uses</li> <li>• in established neighbourhoods, low to medium density residential uses</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connecting point for higher order transit to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• surface park &amp; ride or parking structures</li> <li>• street or side yard parking for pedestrian oriented retail</li> </ul> |
| Urban Local                     | Shannon Park<br>City of Lakes Business Park<br>Penhorn Mall<br>Woodside   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of medium to high density residential, commercial, institutional &amp; recreation uses</li> <li>• in established neighbourhoods, low to medium density residential uses</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all day transit to connect to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared surface parking or parking structures for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>   |
| Suburban Local                  | Herring Cove<br>Lakeside/Beechville<br>Timberlea Village<br>Clayton Park West<br>Birch Cove<br>Bedford South<br>Kearney Lake North<br>Bedford Mill Cove<br>Lower Sackville<br>Middle Sackville<br>Burnside East<br>Tacoma Drive<br>Westphal<br>Cole Harbour<br>Morris Lake<br>Eastern Passage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mix of low to medium density residential &amp; convenience commercial uses</li> <li>• in established neighbourhoods, low to medium density residential uses</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all day transit to connect to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• surface park &amp; ride or parking structures</li> <li>• street or side yard parking for pedestrian-oriented retail</li> </ul>                |

| <b>Rural Designations Centres</b> |  |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Centre Type</b>                | <b>Centre Name</b>   | <b>Land Uses</b>  | <b>Services</b>   | <b>Transit</b>  |
| Rural<br>Commuter                 | Upper Tantallon<br>Fall River<br>Lake Echo<br>Porters Lake   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low to medium density residential</li> <li>• open space design subdivisions</li> <li>• mix of commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consideration of central wastewater &amp; water for Porters Lake</li> <li>• consideration of central water for Fall River and Upper Tantallon</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• park &amp; ride, express bus to Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared parking for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>                     |
| Rural<br>Commuter<br>District     | Enfield<br>Musquodoboit<br>Harbour   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low to medium density residential</li> <li>• mix of convenience commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• possible central wastewater &amp; water for Musquodoboit Harbour</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• park &amp; ride, express bus to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared parking for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul> |
| Rural<br>Commuter<br>Local        | Hatchet Lake<br>Hubbards<br>Hubley<br>Sambro<br>Indian Harbour<br>Waverley<br>Whites Lake<br>Jeddore<br>North Preston<br>East Preston /<br>Cherry Brook /<br>Lake Loon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low to medium density residential</li> <li>• mix of convenience commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared or individual on-site sewage disposal systems (except for existing central wastewater &amp; water services in North Preston)</li> <li>• possible central wastewater &amp; water for Hubbards</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• peak transit service to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared parking for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>         |
| Rural<br>Resource<br>District     | Sheet Harbour  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low to medium density residential</li> <li>• mix of convenience commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared or individual on-site sewage disposal systems</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rural bus service to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared parking for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>            |
| Rural<br>Resource<br>Local        | Lake Charlotte<br>Moser River<br>Tangier   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low density residential</li> <li>• mix of retail, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared or individual on-site sewage disposal systems</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic bus service or shared taxi to District Centre</li> </ul>   |
| Agricultural<br>District          | Middle<br>Musquodoboit   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low to medium density residential</li> <li>• mix of convenience commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing central wastewater &amp; water</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rural bus service to other centres &amp; Regional Centre</li> <li>• shared parking for park &amp; ride and commercial uses</li> </ul>            |
| Agricultural<br>Local             | Upper<br>Musquodoboit  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low density residential</li> <li>• mix of convenience commercial, institutional &amp; recreational uses</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared or individual on-site sewage disposal systems</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic bus or shared taxi to District Centre</li> </ul>   |

**Appendix C**

**Table 1 -Comparisons of Funding Sources to New Facility Construction**

|                                       | Prospect Road<br>Community Centre   | Gordon R Snow<br>Community Centre                           | Beaver Bank<br>Community Centre | Canada Games Centre   | Citadel High<br>Community Centre |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|                                       | Neighbourhood facility  | Neighbourhood Facility                                      | Neighbourhood<br>Facility       | Regional Facility   | Neighbourhood                    |
| Facility Size                         | 22,721 sq ft  | 26,000 sq ft  |                                 | 176,000 sq ft   | 18,800 sq ft                     |
| Total<br>Construction<br>Cost         | \$8.547 M   | \$8.3 M   | \$1.7 M                         | \$40.57 M   | \$1.85M                          |
| Cost/sq ft                            | \$299   | \$215   |                                 |   | \$135                            |
| HRM<br>Contribution                   | Cap fr Op: \$0.075 M<br>SOL: \$0.040 M<br>S Growth: \$0.050 M<br>Debt: \$3.351 M<br><b>TOTAL: \$3.516 M</b> | Cap fr Op: \$0.7 M<br>SOL: \$1.0 M<br><b>TOTAL: \$1.7 M</b> | \$0                             | Debt/Cap fr Op: \$3.12M<br>SOL: \$1.95 M<br>S Growth: \$2.65 M<br>Major Events: \$5.65M<br><b>TOTAL: \$13.37M</b> | Cap fr Op: \$1.85M               |
| Federal<br>Contribution<br>MRIF/CNSIP | \$1.0 M   | \$1.0M  | \$0                             | \$ 0.42 M   |                                  |
| Federal<br>"Building<br>Canada" Fund  | \$0   | \$0   | \$0                             | \$ 12.0 M   |                                  |

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|   | Prospect Road<br>Community Centre | Gordon R Snow<br>Community Centre | Beaver Bank<br>Community Centre | Canada Games Centre | Citadel High<br>Community Centre |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
|   | Neighbourhood facility            | Neighbourhood Facility            | Neighbourhood<br>Facility       | Regional Facility   | Neighbourhood                    |
| Provincial<br>Contribution<br>MRIF/CNSIP    | \$1.0 M                           | \$1.0M                            | \$0                             | \$ 0.78 M           |                                  |
| Provincial<br>Contribution<br>Other Sources | \$0.25 M                          | \$0                               | \$0                             | \$ 12.0 M           |                                  |
| Community<br>Fund Raising                   | \$0.343 M                         | \$0                               | \$0                             | \$ 2.0 M            |                                  |
| Existing<br>Community<br>Funds              | \$0.266 M                         | \$0                               | \$0                             | \$0                 |                                  |
| New<br>Community<br>Area Rate               | \$2.172 M                         | \$4.6 M                           | \$1.7 M                         | \$0                 |                                  |
| New Area Rate<br>per 100                    | \$0.038                           | \$0.063                           | \$0.070                         | N/A                 |                                  |