



Halifax Regional Municipality
Peninsula Recreation Facility & Service Review
FINAL REPORT – August 2010

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ES: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HRM Peninsula Recreation Facility & Service Review responds to several recommendations of the 2008 Community Facility Master Plan, (CFMP). Initially the study was to have assessed the long-term viability of the Municipally Owned/Municipally Operated (MODO) Category 1 recreation facilities on the Peninsula, and prepare a feasibility study for the Halifax Forum on the assumption that it (the Forum) would be redeveloped as a Category 2 Multi-District Community Centre.

The study area for the review was the HRM Peninsula [generally] east of the Halifax Harbour and west of Joseph Howe Drive. Primary facilities included in the study were: St Andrews Community Centre, Needham Recreation Centre, George Dixon Recreation Centre, Citadel Community Centre and the Halifax Forum/Civic Arena. Other Municipal facilities within the study area: Devonshire Arena, Centennial Pool, and Bloomfield Community Centre were considered with respect to overall service delivery but were not assessed with respect to structural infrastructure.

South of Quinpool Road Peninsular residents and those traveling to the Peninsula for work often use the facilities of the Dalplex (Dalhousie University), St. Mary's University, and the Halifax YMCA. The Halifax YMCA has plans for redevelopment on or in the vicinity of its current site. While these facilities are not included in this review, they do provide significant recreation opportunities for residents and were factored into the assessment.

This study was prepared over four phases. **Phase One – Planning Context:** documented information regarding the physical state of infrastructure, program supply and usage; community socio-demographics and population; and trends in program demand / direction and facility design. Background documents were reviewed including current and recent financial data, various municipal policies, planning studies, and facility specific reports. Individual interviews were held with staff, and other service providers in the area.

In **Phase Two – Consultation:** preliminary recommendations were developed and reviewed with the project steering committee, HRM staff of the study facilities, senior staff of the Community Services Department, the Halifax Forum Board of Directors, and Members of Council for Districts 11, 12, 13 & 14. Preliminary recommendations were presented at three public meetings to assess stakeholder and public support for preliminary directions. Additional consultation was facilitated by HRM staff to expand the diversity of opinions, and to initiate a community relationship building process.

In **Phase Three – Analysis:** final recommendations were prepared for facilities in the review. As a direct result of the secondary consultation process it was determined that it was premature to prepare a feasibility study for a redeveloped Forum and instead these efforts would be directed to a

“feasibility review and plan” for St. Andrews Community Centre. Recommendations were developed for the other facilities in this Review as well during this phase.

Phase Four – Final Report and Implementation: included the completion, review (with the Steering Committee) of the consultant’s report, and submission of that report in August 2010. Staff will complete this phase with presentation of the report and its recommendations to HRM Council in the fall of 2010.

ES 1: Summary of Key Considerations

Socio-Demographic and Population Considerations: The Peninsula has experienced a loss of population over the past several decades. Policies and initiatives to support repopulation (e.g., intensification, redevelopment of specific areas) are in progress to reverse this trend. On average the population on the Peninsula is younger than either HRM or the Province as a whole. There are of course pockets of older adults located throughout the Peninsula in particular in District 11: Halifax North End.

Median income levels on the Peninsula (with the exception of District 13: Northwest Arm – South End) are generally lower than those of HRM as a whole. Areas immediately surrounding the MODO Category 1 recreation facilities in this study typically have higher unemployment rates, more lone-parent families, more immigrants, and lower incomes than the Districts in which they are located.

Trend Considerations: Section 3.0 covers a wide range of societal, service and facility trends considered in the preparation of this Review. These include: the overall aging of communities, the importance of population retention and attraction, healthy active living, increasing emphasis on environmental and financial sustainability in facility design and operation, and the importance of physical, financial and cultural accessibility to public services. Activity trends were documented as were trends in facility design and development. Most if not all of these activity trends can be traced to broader societal trends of age, cultural diversity, the renewed emphasis on healthy active living, and concerns for sustainability – environmental and financial.

Facility Considerations: With the exception of Citadel Community Centre (opened 2007) all facilities in this Review are aging and reflect design and building practices of earlier years. Consequently all are less efficient to operate and in many cases less effective in their ability to respond to today’s recreation needs and interests. Projects in the Municipality’s 5-year capital budget were reviewed by the study architects and added to as required based on their assessment.

Community Consultation: Community input is presented in detail in section 6.0. Stakeholders and the community-at-large generally supported retention of St. Andrews, Needham, and George Dixon Community Centres in their current locations. Those providing input did support changes to

existing infrastructure. There were also comments related to desire for new and different program opportunities.

There was considerably less comment regarding redevelopment of the Forum as a multi-district community centre. Similarly there was limited input related to Citadel Community Centre needs.

ES 2: Recommendation Summary

Nine recommendations are noted below. Many of these recommendations are connected to prerequisites (other studies or initiatives that must first be completed). Prerequisites and associated considerations and rationale connected to these recommendations are presented in the body of the report – sections 7.0 and 8.0, and also in Table 9.1 – Implementation. To fully appreciate the intent and consequences of these recommendations the reader is referred to those sections.

- Recommendation 1:** Prepare a feasibility study for a multi-district community centre for the Halifax Peninsula, including an assessment of market need, relevant competing markets, detailed business plan and facility design options.
- Recommendation 2:** Proceed with redevelopment of St. Andrews Community Centre, including design consultation process with the community.
- Recommendation 3:** Begin the planning process for a replacement facility for Needham Community Centre including: initiation of a design consultation process with community. Until then, it is recommended that recapitalization at this facility be restricted to items required to maintain safe usage only.
- Recommendation 4:** Gather feedback and suggestions from the Needham community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.
- Recommendation 5:** Proceed with the infrastructure retrofit plans for George Dixon CC as noted in the 5-year capital plan and additional investment to create barrier free access.
- Recommendation 6:** Gather feedback and suggestions from the George Dixon community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.
- Recommendation 7:** Gather information from current users of Citadel Community Centre and the Larry O'Connell facility to confirm area facility needs.

1.0 REPORT OVERVIEW

The Community Facility Master Plan, (CFMP) completed in May of 2008, recommended that a review of community recreation facilities on the HRM Peninsula be undertaken to enhance service quality and achieve operational efficiencies. The CFMP noted that the Peninsula area was underserved with respect to Category 2 multi-district facilities. Municipally owned and operated (MODO) recreation facilities on the Peninsula are aging. In many cases facility design and components of these facilities are inconsistent with today's community recreation needs. These considerations are the basis of the 2010 Review.

The CFMP also recommended that, dependent upon the outcome of the assessment, an option to construct a new multi-district community centre on the Peninsula be investigated. This facility could be a consolidation of a number of existing facilities and serve a variety of functions including aquatic, fitness, arts and culture, and general recreation activities. Further, the new facility could connect to the Halifax Forum/Civic Arena, one of HRM's major event facilities.

Opportunities for redevelopment of the Halifax Forum / Civic Arena as a multi-district community centre were initially investigated in this study. At the midpoint in the review it was decided that the multi-district facility required a level of detail and consultation that would be better served by a separate study rather than as part of the current review.

The study area for this review was the HRM Peninsula [generally] east of the Halifax Harbour and west of Joseph Howe Drive. Primary facilities included in this study were: St Andrews Community Centre, Needham Recreation Centre, George Dixon Recreation Centre, Citadel Community Centre and the Halifax Forum/Civic Arena. Secondary facilities including: Devonshire Arena, Centennial Pool, and Bloomfield Community Centre were considered with respect to overall service delivery but were not assessed with respect to structural infrastructure. The following contextual comments are made regarding secondary facilities (to this review).

- The age and infrastructure challenges at the Devonshire arena suggest that ongoing upgrades and maintenance of the Arena may not be cost effective. Future arena requirements in HRM will be assessed in the planned municipal-wide arena assessment, at which time a more accurate decision on the future of the Devonshire Arena can be made.
- Centennial Pool has recently had considerable capital retrofit work and is anticipated to have a remaining lifespan in excess of 10 to 15 years. With that understanding this study considered options to replace Centennial pool when it reaches the end of its reasonable lifespan.
- The Bloomfield Community Centre gymnasium is currently operating at capacity for active recreation and sport and will need to be replaced when the site is redeveloped. A recent master plan for the Bloomfield site incorporates spaces for arts and culture activities programs and services.

South of Quinpool Road Peninsular residents and those traveling to the Peninsula for work often use the facilities of the Dalplex (Dalhousie University), St. Mary's University, and the Halifax YMCA. The Halifax YMCA has plans for redevelopment on or in the vicinity of its current site. While these facilities are not included in this review, they do provide significant recreation opportunities for residents and were factored into the assessment of facility requirements for the Peninsula.

1.2 Study Process

HRM Peninsula Recreation Facility Review includes four phases:

- **Phase One – Planning Context:** gathered and documented information regarding the physical state of existing infrastructure, program supply and usage. A description of community socio-demographics and population was compiled. Relevant trends in facility design and program delivery were documented. Key informant interviews were held with selected staff and elected officials of HRM, the Halifax Regional School Board, and housing representatives. Together this information was used to create a preliminary assessment of facility, service and operational gaps and requirements.
- **Phase Two A– Consultation:** preliminary information gathered and analyzed in Phase One was reviewed (and revised to ensure accuracy of data) with the project steering committee, HRM staff of the study facilities, senior staff of the Community Services Department, the Halifax Forum Board of Directors, and Members of Council for the study area (Districts 11, 12, 13 & 14). This information was presented at three public meetings held at the Needham and St. Andrew's Community Centres and the Halifax Forum to assess preliminary directions.
- **Phase Two B –** In an effort to acquire a more detailed perspective from members of the general public, staff developed and led a comprehensive, facilitated process with citizens. The engagement process allowed for a variety of consultation opportunities, diversity of opinions, in depth discussions, and community relationship building. The second phase of consultation strove to engage all participants in a thorough review of the issues. Consultations were promoted through HRM's website, the newspaper, posters, letters mailed directly to stakeholders, and through local Councillors. The mechanisms for sharing and gathering information included:
 - 28 small group facilitated sessions (maximum 15 participants);
 - 2 online surveys (one specific to community centre feedback and one specific to a multi-district facility);
 - Option to send personal comments to a project specific email address;
 - Option to make a phone call to a project specific number.

In advance of this process staff developed a FAQ sheet that was posted on the HRM website and provided to participants in the various consultations.

- **Phase Three – Facility Concept Development:** Recommendations were prepared for all facilities in the Peninsula Facilities review. As noted previously, following the second round of consultations it was determined that there was insufficient information to develop a business plan for a multi-district facility and that that should be conducted as a separate study. Study resources were then allocated to a more detailed concept and capital cost for St. Andrews Community Centre, including a general site concept, a class D¹ capital costing, operating cost implications and a preliminary implementation schedule.
- **Phase Four - Final Report and Implementation:** Implementation processes were prepared including schedule of initiatives. The full draft report was reviewed with the Committee and staff, revisions made, and a final report submitted.

1.3 Policy Context for the Review

HRM has a number of relevant planning and program policies, master plans, and other documents that provided overall guidance to the *Peninsula Recreation Facility and Service Review*. These include: the 2008 Community Facility Master Plan, the Recreation Blueprint for Community Recreation Services, the Bloomfield Master Plan, the Regional Municipality Planning Strategy, and HRMbyDESIGN. These documents provide the larger context for the operational review.

1.3.1 Community Facility Master Plan (2008)

The 2008 Community Facility Master Plan, which updated a 2004 Indoor Recreation Facility Master Plan, identifies seven facility models and adopts the guiding principles of the 2004 Community Facility Master Plan. Those guiding principles are:

- **Integrated Planning** – collaborative working with the community, other business units, Council etc., and coordinating with key other planning documents.
- **Distribution of Facilities** – facility planning and development must take into account the needs of the population and its distribution.

¹ A Class "D" Estimate provides an indication of the total cost of the project, based on the user's functional requirements to the degree known at the time (e.g., the space program typical of a feasibility study). It is based on historic cost data for similar work, suitably adjusted for such factors as: effect of inflation, location, risk, quality, size, and time. All related factors affecting the cost are considered to the extent possible (e.g., design costs, site development, disbursements, permit costs, contingencies, escalations) based on a percent of overall construction costs. Such an estimate is strictly an indication (rough order of magnitude) of the project total cost and completion date. Margin of error +/- 20%.

- **Activity Coverage** – providing a range of recreation opportunities and design of facilities to promote participation.
- **Community Based Arts and Culture** – program opportunities should be built into facilities wherever feasible.
- **Communities Building through Asset Management** – Management models other than municipally operated recreation facilities are strongly encouraged.
- **Balance New Assets Against Lifecycle Obligations** – a balance must be found between investing in new assets and existing facilities. Priority should be given to maintenance, lifecycle and upgrade of current HRM assets.

The Community Facility Master Plan's seven facility models include:

- **Category 1 Facilities** – comprise the majority of facilities in HRM. Many are smaller and were not necessarily purpose built as recreation centres (e.g., former fire halls, schools or other type of facilities). All are municipally owned but not necessarily municipally managed. Those that serve communities with special needs tend to be municipally owned and municipally operated (MODO), although not in all cases. Activities typically included in these facilities are those of high local demand that can be accommodated in smaller spaces such as small gym and/or meeting rooms. Typically these facilities provide introductory programming that matches the intent of the "Recreation Blueprint". They are typically 800 – 1,500 square metres and situated on sites of 1– 4 hectares. They serve area populations within a 5-10 minute drive/15 minute transit trip. The Master Plan recommends a service ratio of 1:10,000 or 15,000, although the current ratio is closer to 1:9,000. Needham, St. Andrews, Bloomfield, George Dixon and Citadel community recreation centres are considered Category 1 facilities.
- **Category 2 Facilities:** These facilities are referred to as multi-district hubs² offering a collection of facilities in one location such as an ice pad, aquatic facility, gymnasium, art studios etc. They are designed to serve populations of 60,000 to 80,000 people and be reached within a 15-20 minute drive time. The CFMP notes that there is currently no HRM owned Category 2 facility on the Peninsula, although facilities such as Dalplex and Stadacona (Category 5) and the YMCA (Category 6) will provide some facets of this category, albeit not municipally owned. The Forum, which in the CFMP would fall within Category 4 – Event Facilities could function as a Category 2, with some adjustments.
- **Category 3 Facilities:** Indoor sport facilities such as a multi-pad arena, multi-pitch indoor soccer facility, or a 50 metre pool. No facility to population ratio is given in the Master Plan although it would be typical for these facilities to serve the entire Municipality with individual components (e.g., number of ice pads) and distribution across HRM, consistent with demand, population distribution and available resources. Examples of Category 3 facilities in the area include the St. Mary's Boat Club, Centennial Arena and the Bowles Arena.

² Halifax Regional Municipality Community Facility Master Plan, 2008, pg. 46.

- **Category 4 Facilities:** Event facilities owned by the Municipality and operated by a community board. The Halifax Forum site is a Category 4 facility.
- **Category 5 Facilities:** University and Military facilities.
- **Category 6 Facilities:** Owned and operated by not for profit organizations such as the YMCA.
- **Category 7 Facilities:** Privately owned facilities.

1.3.2 The Recreation Blueprint (Updated February 2010)

The *Recreation Blueprint* provides additional detail by describing the Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Outcomes associated with the Community Recreation Service Department's program delivery. The *Blueprint* creates a policy framework for service delivery that emphasizes youth, introductory programs, cost recovery, partnerships; a special relationship with high needs areas; and needs assessment and "gap filling". The *Blueprint*, while identifying children and youth as priority groups, does not exclude other age groups. Through assessment of needs and options outlined in the service level criteria, staff will determine appropriate community service levels.

The Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP), while generally endorsing the directions in the *Recreation Blueprint*, suggests that the implications of changing demographics be considered specifically with reference to the focus on children and youth. The Plan states, "The focus on children and youth while important may require alterations to include more servicing for new seniors³". The *Blueprint*, while identifying children and youth as priority groups, does not exclude other age groups from being considered for new or adapted levels of CRS services. Through assessment of needs and options outlined in the *Blueprint's* service level criteria, HRM's CRS staff will determine, how and when to provide a desired service. Service level gaps will be reviewed as they become known to CRS staff.

1.3.3 Bloomfield Master Plan

HRM has recently completed a master plan for the Bloomfield community that has been approved in principle by Regional Council. The master plan outlines a redevelopment plan for the entire site. The Bloomfield master plan area comprises several former education facilities, and is generally bounded by Robie, Agricola, Almon, and Fern Lane.

The Bloomfield Community Centre is currently managed by Community Recreation Services. Occupants of the building include HRM Youth Advocate Program, Community Relations and Cultural Affairs, 7 not-for-profit tenant groups and recreational user groups. The Centre currently serves the immediate neighbourhood and broader HRM community. Specific program data is documented in chapter 4.0.

³ Ibid, pg. 36.

The Bloomfield Master Plan offers a number of development options, which would include green space, as well as arts and community buildings, to establish an arts and culture district identity within HRM. Future opportunities available for the development of various facilities may include: dance/performance space, multi-purpose rooms and/or gallery space. As per the recently approved Bloomfield Master Plan, it has been determined that the existing gymnasium will be replaced.

1.3.4 Municipal Planning Documents

In 2006 HRM adopted its Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS) the first overall planning document following the Municipality's amalgamation. The RMPS provides a basis for decision-making over the next 25 years, and is reviewed regularly to ensure policies in line with HRM goals and vision. The RMPS is implemented through four broad types of policy: land use regulations, secondary planning strategies, background studies and functional plans. It aims to direct growth in a sustainable manner, foster vibrant communities, a strong and diverse economy and a sustainable environment.

The RMPS set the general parameters for subsequent secondary plans, one of which is HRMbyDESIGN. HRMbyDESIGN has been prepared to guide future development of the Capital Region (generally historic downtown Halifax and Dartmouth) and also referred to as the *regional centre*. HRMbyDESIGN is a forward thinking and inspiring plan designed to ensure viable urban design is in place to build healthy, livable communities in the regional centre. While its focus is not on the Peninsula as a whole it nevertheless incorporates many principles that can be used in a more general manner for community planning in HRM. The urban design vision statement for HRMbyDESIGN⁴ states:

"The Regional Centre is the symbolic, historic and functional heart of the Halifax Regional Municipality. It is distinguished by its rich past as is evident in: its historic architecture, traditional neighbourhoods and national landmarks; its natural features as shaped by its grand parks, harbour, lakes, waterways and rolling hills; and its regional importance as an economic hub, capital district, educational centre, health focus and cultural heart."

HRMbyDESIGN identifies eight guiding principles summarized here:

- Design will be sustainable, creating communities that can adapt to evolving opportunities and needs.
- New development should be of high quality.
- Heritage resources will be protected and enhanced to ensure legacies are maintained and new ones created.
- Land use planning will be integrated, incorporating convenient, safe, enjoyable transportation corridors, with strong attention to active transportation.

⁴ All references to HRMbyDESIGN, including quoted sections, have been taken from www.hrmbysdesign.ca

- Neighbourhoods will be developed to ensure they are safe, reflect diversity in housing types and income, accessible and complete with respect to services.
- Managed growth that contributes to the betterment of community life.
- Local communities will be actively involved in planning and implementation processes.
- Public views to prominent natural and built features will be protected and enhanced.

HRMbyDESIGN incorporates a number of important strategies, several of which are particularly relevant to the current review. The Regional Centre Urban Design Strategy notes that the Regional Center is "...a collection of areas, each with its own identity and, in many instances distinguishing built characteristics." The Strategy is intended to " guide change and growth in a manner that is sustainable, respects local identity and reinforces desired future built qualities and characteristics...identifies the important aspects that support complete and vibrant neighbourhoods such as public amenities."

In March 2006, HRM approved its first Cultural Plan⁵. The plan takes a progressive and inclusive approach to defining culture and cultural assets and sees them as pillars of economic and community growth. Policy 2.1 states that HRM will integrate culture into its recreation mandate. The plan suggests that actions to this regard may include integrated use of current recreation facilities and Community Recreation Staff and allocation of space in proposed new recreation facilities for cultural amenities and programs.

The allocation of cultural space in new and current recreation facilities will influence development budgets and programming allocation and was a consideration for recommendations in this study.

⁵ HRM, Cultural Plan (2006) www.halifax.ca/culturalplan/documents/CulturalPlan112007.pdf

2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 Geographic Context

The Halifax Regional Municipality is the largest urban centre within Atlantic Canada. Following the 1996 amalgamation HRM comprised the former Cities of Dartmouth and Halifax, the Town of Bedford and Halifax County. HRM holds just over 40% of the Province's population, with the current HRM population at 372,679⁶. HRM is expected to grow by 8.8% from 372,679 to 405,333 people by 2021⁷.

The Halifax Peninsula comprises some of the oldest neighbourhoods in HRM, including the Hydrostone area, largely destroyed and then rebuilt following the Halifax explosion of 1916. It also encompasses the former City of Halifax. It is the historic, civic, institutional, business, and cultural centre of the Municipality, presenting unique opportunities for redevelopment and community building. The Peninsula is divided generally into North, South and West with East being the Halifax Harbour. Robie Street acts as a rough division between West and North. Quinpool Road and Cogswell Street divide the South from the rest of the Peninsula. The area of focus for this review is roughly the northern half of the Peninsula (Roughly districts 11 and 14 and the northerly part of 12 in the map below).

The statistical data provided here comes from the Economics and Statistics division of the Nova Scotia Department of Finance's, *Community Counts website* and Statistics Canada's census tract divisions. *Community Counts* has several scales from which to assess the Peninsula. For the purposes of this analysis the Peninsula is divided according to municipal electoral districts, which will be referred to as Districts collectively and District singularly. On the Peninsula there are four municipal electoral districts:

- District 11: Halifax North End, includes St. Andrew's and Needham facilities;
- District 12: Halifax Downtown, includes George Dixon and Citadel facility;
- District 13: Northwest Arm-South End (does not include any facilities within the scope of this study);
- District 14: Connaught Quinpool, which includes the Halifax Forum.

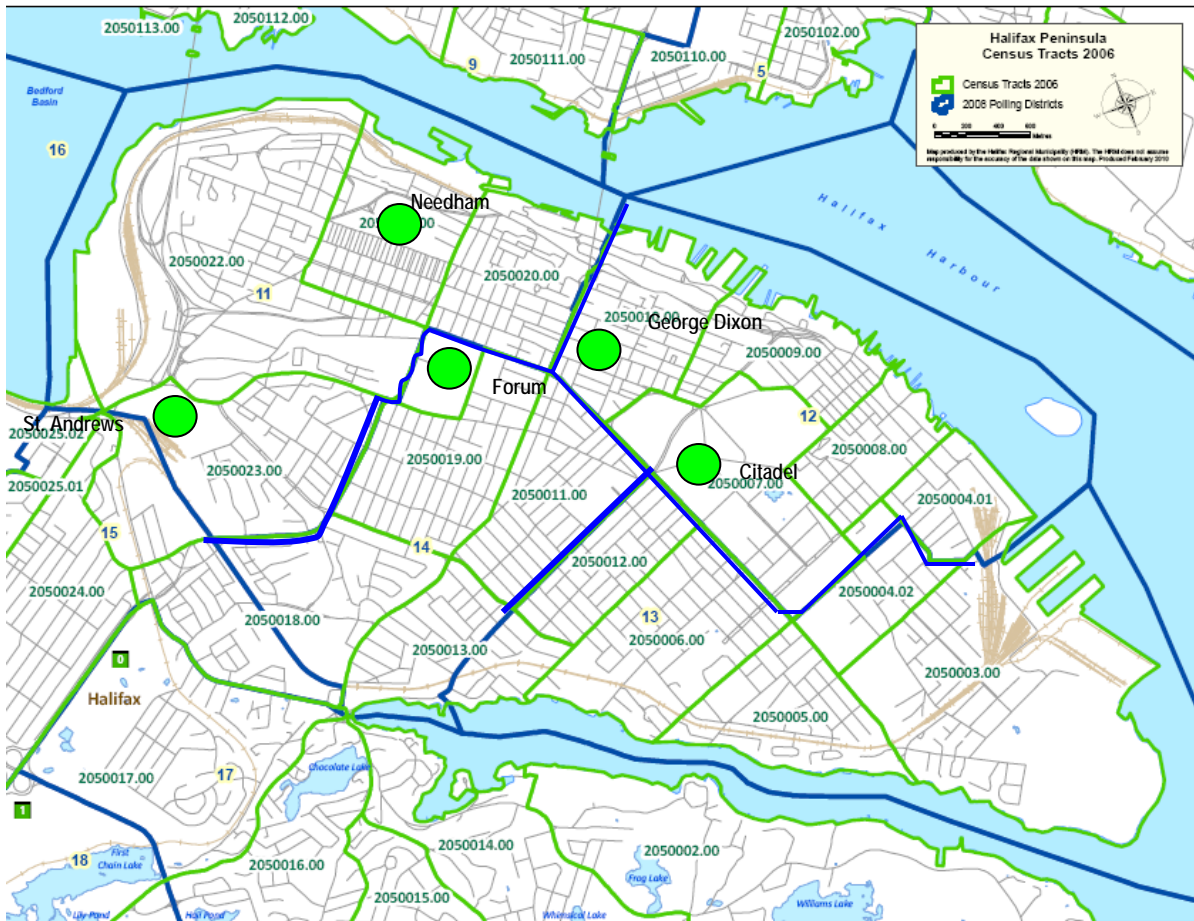


⁶ Statistics Canada, Community Profiles, 2006 Census

⁷ Clayton Research, Environmental Design and Management Limited Statistics Canada,

For each of the facilities in this study a profile of the census tract that surrounds that facility is outlined. Map 1.2 illustrates census tracts divisions for the Halifax Peninsula. Green dots indicate facilities addressed in this review.

Map 1.2 Census Tract Divisions for the Halifax Peninsula



2.2 Study Area Profile

The Halifax Peninsula has traditionally been the most densely populated area within the region. The Peninsula is expected to have the third lowest percent of population growth during the next 15 years of all HRM planning areas⁸. The Halifax Peninsula has a current estimated population of 57,445⁹ and is projected to grow by 2.8% by 2021 to 67,076¹⁰. Table 2.1 illustrates the Peninsula's population as an aggregate of electoral Districts 11, 12, 13 and 14. The population cohorts used here will be used throughout the remainder of this report.

HRMbyDESIGN suggest that the Peninsula has the potential for much larger population increase (perhaps more than 20,000 people over the next 25 years according to HRMbyDESIGN website) and more balance with respect to age diversity. There is considerable capacity for increased density on the Peninsula.

HRMbyDESIGN has identified downtown Halifax as one of the focus areas for redevelopment and intensification on the Peninsula. Areas in the Peninsula's North End such as the Bloomfield Centre and portions of Young St and the Gladstone area will also be focal points for intensification on the Peninsula. These plans will impact the recreation facility requirements on the Peninsula.

Table 2.1: Population by Age Cohort by Aggregate of Electoral Districts

Age Group	Age	Population of Peninsula	Percentage of Peninsula Population
Preschool	0-4	1,885	3%
Elementary / Secondary	5-19	6,836	12%
	20-34	20,011	35%
Labour Force Ages	35-54	14,783	26%
	55-64	5,834	10%
	65-74	3,442	6%
Older Adults	75+	4,646	8%
Total		57,437	100%

Based on projections from the Clayton Research Associates, the number of school aged children on the Peninsula is expected to decline between 2006 -2018 by 8.1%¹¹. The percent of people

⁸ Clayton Research, Environmental Design and Management Limited Statistics Canada,

⁹ Nova Scotia Community Counts

¹⁰ Clayton Research, Environmental Design and Management Limited Statistics Canada

¹¹ Ibid

between the ages of 20-34 is expected to rise to 35%, and the number of people 55+ to 28% of the total Peninsula population.¹²

The Peninsula has numerous affordable housing communities and units available for low-income individuals and families totaling 1,806 units. Several of these housing communities are surrounding or adjacent to the recreation facilities under review in this study. Approximately 18% of families living on the Peninsula are lone parent families.

Table 2.2 highlights key socio-demographic indicators for the HRM Peninsula, and compares these indicators to similar data for HRM and the Province. The Peninsula varies from the HRM and the Province in a few ways. For example, the Peninsula has a higher concentration of residents aged 20-34 than HRM or Province. The Peninsula has a larger percent of rental housing (compared to home ownership) than HRM or the Province. Median income levels on average are lower than the HRM and the Province¹³. Educational institutions, relative ease of transportation, and the availability of rental housing are all factors contributing to these differences and socio-demographic indicators must be understood in that context.

Table 2.2: Key Socio-Demographic Indicators and Comparisons

Indicators	HRM Peninsula	HRM	Nova Scotia
Population	57,432 (2006)	372,679 (2006)	913,462 (2006)
Elementary / Secondary School Age (5-19)	6,836 (12%)	66,320 (18%)	165,830 (18%)
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 (35%)	35-54 (32%)	35-54 (31%)
Population Change	NA	8.7%	0.5%
Income Characteristics			
Median family income – all households	\$47,144	\$66,881	\$55,412
Median Individual Income	\$25,841	\$28,531	\$24,030
Household Ownership			
Owned	37%	64%	72%
Rented	63%	36%	27%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	7.7%	6.3%	9.1%

Note: All above data for HRM Peninsula is based on an aggregate of data for Districts 11, 12, 13 and 14 from the 2006 Census.

¹² Ibid

¹³ With the exception of individual median income compared to the Province..

A socio-demographic profile for each District is provided with statistics for each compared to the other Districts within the Peninsula. A cross comparison table is supplied in Appendix A. Where relevant, a profile of the communities immediately surrounding the facilities in this study (Needham, George Dixon, St. Andrew's and Citadel Community Recreation Centres and the Halifax Forum) is presented.

2.2.1 District 11: Halifax North End Profile

- There are two Category 1 facilities within District 11: Needham Community Recreation Centre and St. Andrew's Community Recreation Centre. *Needham Community Recreation Centre falls within census tract 21 and St. Andrew's Facility within census tract 23.*
- District 11 has the largest population (14,892) of the four Districts
- The population decreased by 4.5% between 1996-2006
- The District currently has the largest number of preschool aged children on the Peninsula
- The District currently has the largest number of seniors on the Peninsula
- This area has the largest number of lone parent families for the Peninsula (27% for all families compared to 16.5% for HRM as a whole)
- District 11 has the lowest average dwelling values on the Peninsula
- There is a relatively even split between rental (52%) and owner occupied (47%) dwellings
- The area has an unemployment rate of 8.0% and the second lowest median household and individual income levels on the Peninsula.

District 11: Halifax North End is one of the older areas of the Peninsula and contains the Hydrostone area and the Young St. commercial area. The area contains a mix of industrial, commercial and residential areas and has two of the three largest subsidized housing communities on the Peninsula: the Mulgrave Park community(318 units) located in the north east corner of the District, and Bayers-Westwood community (360 units) located in the south west corner of the District. Table 2.3 illustrates some key socio-demographic characteristics of the area.

The area has seen general population decline since 1996. The number of lone-parent families has however increased over this period, suggesting that the area offers affordable rental or home ownership opportunities for single parents. The immigrant population increased slightly between 1996 and 2006. This may be due to a more affordable rental/ housing market.

Median income levels in the area increased from 1996 through to 2006. However, income levels in District 11 have historically been some of the lowest on the Peninsula.

Home ownership statistics have remained relatively static from 1996 -2006, with a slight increase in the number of people who own their homes. This may be due to the relative low cost of housing in the area, which are the lowest on average on the Peninsula.

District 11: (*Halifax North End*) has four schools: St. Catherine's Elementary, St. Stephen's Elementary, St. Joseph's Alexander McKay Elementary and Highland Park Junior High, all of which have seen decreases in enrollment as of the 2007/2008 school year¹⁴. St. Catherine's had the smallest decrease overall with a loss of only three students¹⁵. The number of pre-school aged children has decreased by approximately 15% from 1996 – 2006, although the number of immigrant families has increased in the same period, which may stabilize school enrollment in the future.

Tables 2.4 & 2.5 compare census tracts 21 and 23 with that of District 11 and HRM based on 2006 census data. Both census tract areas include affordable housing communities. Census tract 21 contains the Mulgrave Park community, and census tract 23 the Bayers-Westwood community.

Table 2.3: District 11: Halifax North End Socio-Demographic Indicators

	1996	2001	2006	HRM 2006	Peninsula 2006
Population Characteristics					
Population Base	15,597	15,018	14,892	372,679	57,432
School Population	2,161	2,024	1,842	66,320	6,836
Lone Parent families	954 – 25% ¹⁶	844 – 23%	974 – 27%	17,370 – 16.5%	2,353 (18.5%)
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 & 35-54 (26.7%)	35-54 (30%)	35-54 - (29)%	35-54 (32%)	20-34 (35%)
Immigrant Population	1,036 (7%)	1,145 (8%)	1,357 (9.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)	6,017 (10.4%)
Income Characteristics					
Median Income – All Households ¹⁷	\$31,195	\$36,018	\$42,743	\$54,129	\$47,144
Median Income – Individual	\$17,474	\$20,860	\$25,370	\$28,531	\$25,841
Household Ownership					
Owned	42.4%	44.5%	47.2%	64%	37%
Rental	57.6%	55.5%	52.4%	36%	63%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	9.6%	7.5%	8.0%	6.3%	7.7%

¹⁴ Imagine Our Schools: Background Report, CS & P Architects, 2007, pg 32

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Percent of all families that are lone-parent families.

¹⁷ The income data shown is from Community Counts and is for all households:

Table 2.4: Needham Community Profile (Census Tract 21)

	Needham Community¹⁸	District 11: Halifax North End¹⁹	HRM²⁰
Population Characteristics			
Population Base	3, 090	14,892	372,679
Population Change	-3.3 %	-4.5%	8.7%
Median Age	39.1	NA	NA
School Population	445	1,842	66,320
Lone Parent Families	245 – 28.6%	974 – 27%	17, 370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort ²¹	35-54 (33%)	35-54 - (29)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	300 (9.7%)	1,357 (9.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics			
Median Income – All Households	\$39, 848	\$42,743	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$22, 066	\$25,370	\$28, 531
Home Ownership			
Owned	50.3%	47.2%	64%
Rental	49.3%	52.4%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs & over	11.7%	8.0%	6.3%

Compared to District 11 and HRM as a whole, the area immediately surrounding the Needham facility shows a few distinct characteristics

- It has a slightly higher concentration of Elementary / Secondary school aged children and youth than District 11 (14 % vs. 12%)
- There are slightly more lone parent families than that of District 11 and significantly more than HRM
- Median income is somewhat lower than that of District 11 as a whole
- Unemployment is significantly higher than that of District 11 and the HRM

¹⁸ Data from Statistics Canada, census tract data.

¹⁹ Data from Community Counts (this data while based on Statistics Canada census tracts is organized by some but not all scales/boundaries used in census tracts).

²⁰ Data from Community Counts

²¹ Please note this age cohort includes the broadest age range. The important point is the percent difference in those within this cohort across the comparison communities.

Table 2.5: St. Andrew's Community Profile (Census Tract 23)

	St. Andrew's Community ²²	District 11: Halifax North End ²³	HRM ²⁴
Population Characteristics			
Population Base	4, 239	14,892	372,679
Population Change	-0.4 %	-4.5%	8.7%
Median Age	37.1	NA	NA
School Population	705	1,842	66,320
Lone Parent Families	355 – 33.1%	974 – 27%	17, 370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort	35-54 (27%)	35-54 - (29)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	500 (12%)	1,357 (9.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics			
Median Income – All Households	\$35, 702	\$42,743	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$24, 932	\$25,370	\$28, 531
Home Ownership			
Owned	34.5%	47.2%	64%
Rental	65.9%	52.4%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	8.9%	8.0%	6.3%

The area immediately surrounding the St. Andrew's facility has several features that distinguish it from District 11 and HRM.

- Population change has been less significant than District 11 (-0.4% vs. -4.5%)
- There is a higher concentration of lone parent families than District 11 and the HRM
- Median incomes are lower than District 11 and somewhat lower than for the Needham area for family incomes
- The concentration of Elementary / Secondary aged children and youth is higher than District 11 (17% vs. 12%)
- The area has a higher percentage of people with immigrant status than the District or HRM and a higher real number population than the Needham area
- The population is slightly younger in this Community than the Needham Community (which has a number of older adult housing developments)
- Unemployment is higher than District 11 and the HRM although not as high as in the Needham Community

²² Data from Statistics Canada, census tract data

²³ Data from Community Counts

²⁴ Ibid.

In summary, District 11's population has more older adults, and more children between the ages of 0-5, relative to other Peninsula Districts. Median incomes are the second lowest of all Peninsula Districts. The area also has the lowest average housing prices on the Peninsula.

The areas surrounding both the Needham and St. Andrew's facilities have high concentrations of lone parent families and have lower median incomes compared to District 11 suggesting they are areas of high need. The relatively low dwelling costs will be attractive to older adults on lower fixed incomes and to young families, including single parent families.

In comparing the two selected sub-communities, the Needham community would appear to have slightly more older adults, slightly higher unemployment and slightly fewer immigrants. With respect to programming indicators (using only the demographic context) there is likely to be higher demand for older adults in the local Needham Community and perhaps more demand for immigrant services – particularly those for working families – in the St. Andrews Community.

2.2.2 District 12: Halifax Downtown Profile

- HRM owned Category 1 facilities in this area are: George Dixon Community Center, Citadel Community Centre, Centennial Pool and the Commons Pavilion. *George Dixon Centre falls within census tract 10, the Citadel Community Centre falls within census tract 7*
- District 12 had a 2006 census population of 14,352 and the largest population increase since 1996 of all Peninsula Districts – 16.8%
- 47.3% of the District's population is in the 20-34 age cohort
- District 12 has the lowest number of preschool and Elementary / Secondary aged children and youth
- District 12 has the lowest household and individual median income within the study area
- This District has the second highest unemployment rate of all Peninsula Districts
- As of the 2006 census this area had the second largest number of immigrants residing on the Peninsula
- 84.1% of all dwellings in this area are rental properties and is the largest proportion of rental on the Peninsula

District 12: Halifax Downtown combines a number of quite different areas: the Uniacke Square area, which is a low-income subsidized housing area (census tract 10), the historic downtown, large areas of business offices and high priced housing along the waterfront (census tract 7). Large tracts of this District are primarily commercial, institutional or cultural in use, which influences the socio-demographics. The District therefore reflects a significant range in attributes.

Please note there are no local serving community recreation facilities in District's 13 and 14. District 14 does include the Halifax Forum – a Category 4 Events Facility, which currently serves a service area at least as broad as the Peninsula and likely broader for some activities. The population immediately surrounding the current Bloomfield Recreation Centre is included in this study. In communities where a multi-district recreation facility is located this facility will also serve as a local recreation centre for the surrounding neighbourhoods. Districts 13 and 14 population demographics are relevant to discussion of a multi-district recreation community centre for the Peninsula.

District 12: Halifax Downtown – Capital Region: This area encompasses the historic downtown and several historic and heritage properties. Portions of it have been the subject of much study through the HRM by Design process. Until recently the area had the lowest population numbers on the Peninsula. There has been increased focus on attracting more residents to the downtown by the HRM, which contributes to the areas increase in total population.

The *Capital Region* includes a number of post-secondary institutions such as Dalhousie's DalTech campus, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and Nova Scotia Community College. St. Mary's and Dalhousie Universities main campuses are located just beyond area. Consequently the area has a large post-secondary student population contributing to the high percent of those aged 20 to 34. This large student population also contributes to the high number of rental units (relative to owner units) in the District.

District 12: Halifax Downtown – Uniacke Square: includes 763 low income housing units for families. Three hundred and eighty (380) of these are family units and 383 are senior's units. There are a number of other subsidized housing units / buildings in the District many of these geared towards older adults. Median income levels are the lowest of all the areas considered in this study, unemployment levels are the highest as is the percent of lone-parent families. The number of immigrants in the census tract falls in the middle of the sub-areas considered.

District 12 area includes four schools; Joseph Howe Elementary, St. Patrick's-Alexandria Elementary & Junior High²⁵, St. Mary's Elementary and Citadel High School. All of these schools have seen a slight to moderate decline in student enrollments as of the 2007/2008 school year²⁶.

²⁵ It is understood this school is slated for closure June of 2011.

²⁶ Imagine Our Schools: Background Report, CS & P Architects, 2007, pg 32

Table 2.6 District 12: Halifax Downtown Socio-Demographic Indicators

	1996	2001	2006	HRM 2006
Population Characteristics				
Population Base	12,289	13,979	14,352	372,679
School Population	997	1,123	1,080	66,320
Lone Parent Families	550 – 26%	570 – 23%	483 – 19%	17,370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 (41.7%)	20 – 34 (46.2%)	20-34 - (47.3)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	1,497 (12.5%)	1,466 (10.8%)	1,381 (10.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics				
Median Income – All Households	\$23,376	\$29,678	\$33,072	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$15,668	\$19,223	\$22,152	\$28,531
Home Ownership				
Owned	14.3%	14.1 %	15.5%	64%
Rental	85.5%	85.9%	84.1%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs & over	10.9%	8.8%	8.3%	6.3%

District 12: *Halifax Downtown* includes two, Category 1 facilities - George Dixon Community Recreation Centre and the Citadel Community Recreation Centre. Tables 2.7 & 2.8 compare census tracts 10 and 7 that surround the George Dixon and Citadel facilities respectively with that of District 12 and HRM based on 2006 census data. Census tract 10 encompasses the Halifax Centre affordable housing community. Data for the all facility communities is based on data from Statistics Canada's census tracts division.

Table 2.7: George Dixon Community Profile (Census Tract 10)

	George Dixon Community	District 12: Halifax Downtown	HRM
Population Characteristics			
Population Base	4, 699	14,353	372,679
Population Change	-4.9 %	16.8%	8.7%
Median Age	32.7	NA	NA
School Population	585	1,080	66,320
Lone Parent Families	335 – 36.6%	483 – 19%	17, 370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 – (37%)	20-34 - (47.3)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	400 (8.5%)	1,381 (10.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics			
Median Income – All Households	\$24, 800	\$33, 072	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$17,038	\$22,152	\$28, 531
Home Ownership			
Owned	14.2%	15.5%	64%
Rental	85.9%	84.1%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs & over	12.2%	8.3%	6.3%

Compared to District 12 and HRM as a whole, the area immediately surrounding the George Dixon facility shows a few distinct characteristics:

- The area has seen a decline in population while the District as a whole has seen a significant population increase
- The area has a higher percentage of school aged children than the District (12% vs. 7.5%)
- The area has a slightly higher percentage of rental housing than District 12
- The median income levels are significantly lower than District 12.
- Unemployment is significantly higher than District 12 and is almost double that of HRM
- The area has a high percentage of lone parent families, 17% more than the District and just over 20% more than the HRM.

Table 2.8: Citadel Community Profile (Census Tract 7)

	Citadel Community	District 12: Halifax Downtown	HRM
Population Characteristics			
Population Base	1,780	14,353	372,679
Population Change	8.3%	16.8%	8.7%
Median Age	53.9	NA	NA
School Population	50	1,080	66,320
Lone Parent Families	20 – (1%)	483 – (19%)	17, 370 – (16.5%)
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 – (34%)	20-34 - (47.3)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	205 (11.5%)	1,381 (10.4%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics			
Median Income – All Households	\$39, 431	\$33, 072	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$31, 743	\$22,152	\$28, 531
Home Ownership			
Owned	24.2%	15.5%	64%
Rental	76%	84.1%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	6.3%	8.3%	6.3%

The Citadel community area's distinctive features are listed below:

- This area is the only census tract area under study that has seen positive growth
- The median age for this area is the oldest at approximately 54 years
- This area has the lowest percent of Elementary / Secondary aged children and youth at just under 3%
- The area has higher median income levels compared to District 12
- Unemployment is lower than District 12 and is the same as HRM as a whole.

2.2.3 District 13: North-West Arm –South End Profile

District 13 has a population of 14,376, and is the second largest of the four Peninsula Districts

The District has seen the largest decrease in population of all the Peninsula Districts over 1996-2006 (-5.9%)

The largest age cohort is the 20-34 (34.6%) group.

District 13 has the largest number of Elementary / Secondary aged children and youth (14% of the area population)

This area has the largest household and individual median income on the Peninsula but a slightly higher level of unemployment suggesting a significantly mixed income community

District 13 has the highest average dwelling value of all Peninsula Districts

The area also has the least number of lone parent families out of the Peninsula Districts (12%)

The area has the highest percentage of immigrants (14.3%) of all the areas in this study

District 13: Northwest Arm – South End: has some of the most expensive housing on the Peninsula and is home to the main campuses of both Dalhousie and St. Mary's University. Table 2.9 illustrates some key socio-demographic characteristics of the area. The area population has decreased the most of all Peninsula Districts since 1996, with a loss of almost 1,000 people between 2001 and 2006.

The area due to its proximity to the Universities also has a large percentage of people in the younger age cohorts in particular the 5-19 and the 20-34. Immigrant population numbers while larger in 1996 have remained higher than all other Peninsula Districts. This characteristic may be due to the draw of both Dalhousie and St. Mary's Universities for international students, who may continue to reside in the area after their studies.

District 13 contains five schools: Sir Charles Tupper Elementary, Le Marchant-St. Thomas Elementary, Inglis Street Elementary and Gorsebrook Junior High and Cornwallis Junior High. With the exception of Cornwallis Jr. High and Le Marchant-St. Thomas Elementary, which maintained stable enrollment figures, all other schools in this area saw slight declines in enrollment as of the 2007/2008 school year.²⁷.

Overall, District 13 can be characterized by a population that has a large proportion of Elementary/ Secondary school aged children, a large number of immigrant residents, a lower number of lone parent families, and higher median income levels than other Peninsula Districts.

²⁷ Imagine Our Schools: Background Report, CS & P Architects, 2007, pg 32

Table 2.9 District 13: North West Arm – South End Socio-Demographic Indicators

	1996	2001	2006	HRM 2006
Population Characteristics				
Population Base	15,281	15,349	14, 376	372,679
School Population	2,381	2,474	2,071	66,320
Lone Parent Families	421 – (12%)	379 – (11%)	400 – (12%)	17, 370 – (16.5%)
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 (32.5%)	20-34 (32.7%)	20-34 - (34.6)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	2,349 (15.6%)	1,896 (12.4%)	2,111 (14.3%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics				
Median Income – All Households	\$45, 483	\$53, 204	\$64, 066	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$21, 785	\$25, 834	\$29,674	\$28, 531
Home Ownership				
Owned	41.3%	42.1 %	43.5%	64%
Rental	58.8%	58.3%	56.6%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs & over	9.2%	7.5%	8.4%	6.3%

2.2.4 District 14: Connaught – Quinpool Profile

HRM owned facilities in this area are the Halifax Forum and the Larry O'Donnell Centre. *The Halifax Forum sits at the edge of both census tracts 19 & 20. Census tract 20 surrounds the Bloomfield site.*

District 14 has the smallest total population of all the Peninsula Districts and has seen the lowest percentage of population decrease (1.7%) of all Peninsula Districts

District 14 has the second largest (by a small margin) population of seniors on the Peninsula.

District 14 has the second highest percent of Elementary / Secondary aged children and youth (13.3%)

This area has the second largest household and individual median income on the Peninsula and the lowest unemployment rate

The area has the least number of immigrants of all the areas in this study

District 14: Connaught-Quinpool: Much of the growth in this District occurred post WW11 with the construction of many post-war pre-fab houses. These homes still make up a large percentage of the housing in this District.

The area has the second largest populations of preschool children (compared to District 11) and Elementary/ Secondary aged children (compared to District 13) on the Peninsula. This area also has the second largest number of seniors compared to District 13.

The District contains three schools, Westmount Elementary, St. Agnes Junior High, and Oxford Elementary and Junior High School. Both the St. Agnes and Oxford schools have seen a moderate decline in enrollment however Westmount has seen a slight increase as of the 2007/2008 school year²⁸.

Table 2.10 District 14: Connaught – Quinpool Socio-Demographic Indicators

	1996	2001	2006	HRM 2006
Population Characteristics				
Population Base	14,067	14,185	13,824	372,679
School Population	2,067	2,027	1,843	66,320
Lone Parent Families	578 – 18%	544 – 17%	496 – 15.5%	17,370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort	20-34 (29.1%)	20-34 & 35-54 (30%)	20-34 - (31.7)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	1,385 (9.9%)	1,374 (9.8%)	1,168 (8.6%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics				
Median Income – All Households	\$38,365	\$44,471	\$48,695	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$19,944	\$23,872	\$26,169	\$28,531
Home Ownership				
Owned	48.3%	49.9%	46.8%	64%
Rental	51.4%	49.9%	53.4%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs & over	8.2%	6.7%	6.1%	6.3%

District 14 includes the Halifax Forum - a category 4 (event) facility. The Halifax Forum sits at the edge of two different census tract districts 19 & 20. As a Category 4 facility it draws from a much wider area than other facilities discussed in this review.

Census Tract 19 is located to the South East of the Forum and comprises a mostly residential area. Census Tract 20 encompasses the Halifax Forum site and has significant commercial and

²⁸ Imagine Our Schools: Background Report, CS & P Architects, 2007, pg 32

industrial areas located in it including the Canada Post sorting facility located on Almon Street. These areas differ from District 14 as a whole in a few ways:

- Both (Tracts 19 and 20) have a significantly lower percent of lone-parent families (4% vs. 15.5%) than District 14 & HRM as a whole
- Both have a lower proportion of Elementary/ Secondary aged children and youth than District 14 (13% - District 14, 11% - census tract 19, 6%- census tract 20)
- Census Tract 19 has seen significantly less population loss (-0.5%) than District 12 (-1.7%) while Census Tract 20 has seen significantly more population decline (-4.1%)

Table 2.11 Halifax Forum Community Profile (Census Tracts 19 & 20)

	Halifax Forum (CT 19)	Halifax Forum (CT -20)	District 14: Connaught- Quinpool	HRM
Population Characteristics				
Population	4,412	2,672	13, 824	372,679
Population Change	-0.5 %	-4.1%	-1.7%	8.7%
Median Age	38	43	NA	NA
School Population	495	150	1,843	66,320
Lone Parent Families	175 – 4%	105 – 4%	496 – 15.5%	17, 370 – 16.5%
Largest Age Cohort	35-54 (31%)	20-34 (30%)	20-34 - (31.7)%	35-54 (32%)
Immigrant Population	360 (8%)	130 (5%))	1, 168 (8.6%)	27,405 (7.4%)
Income Characteristics				
Median Income – All Households	\$46, 669	\$37, 908	\$48, 695	\$54,129
Median Income – Individual	\$24, 920	\$20,864	\$26, 169	\$28, 531
Home Ownership				
Owned	50%	33%	46.8%	64%
Rental	49.9%	67%	53.4%	36%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	5.8%	7.1%	6.1%	6.3%

District 14: Connaught-Quinpool area is second to District 13 in terms of median incomes & housing values. Unemployment rates in this area have historically been lowest on the Peninsula.

Overall the District 14 population is characterized by slow population change, is second in median incomes and housing values, has a significant population of children in the preschool and elementary and secondary school age ranges, has a significant number of lone-parent families and attracts fewer immigrants than the other Peninsula Districts.

2.2.5 Peninsula Summary

With the exception of District 12 (and the portion of that District that hugs the waterfront and the historic centre) the Peninsula in general is experiencing a slight loss in population. In general the population is younger on average than the HRM and the Province. However, there are pockets of older adults located throughout the Peninsula, in particular in District 11: Halifax North End. Median income levels with the exception of District 13: Northwest Arm – South End, are lower than those of the HRM. District 13 also has the largest number of school aged children and youth (5-19) of all Districts on the Peninsula. Home ownership (owner occupied vs. rental) on the Peninsula is on average split evenly with the exception of District 12: Halifax Downtown, which has almost 85% of all dwellings being rental properties.

The areas surrounding HRM recreation facilities reviewed in this study typically have higher unemployment rates, more lone-parent families, more immigrants and lower incomes than the Districts in which they are located – pointing to the continuing need to address these areas specifically²⁹.

2.3 Preliminary Consultation with HRM Staff and Councilors

Informal non-public interviews were held with HRM staff, Councillors from Districts 11, 12, 13 & 14, and representatives of other community service providers to assist the consultants to identify issues, challenges and opportunities. Highlights of those consultations are listed here.

Please note the following comments are those of the individuals consulted in the initial interviews and are not the comments of the consultants. These comments will be subject to further analysis in the study and do not represent a comprehensive understanding of the Peninsula context.

2.3.1 Facility Infrastructure Needs

General

- Most of the facilities in this study are fairly old, and often not purpose built for recreation;
- Older facilities are much more expensive to operate;
- Facilities haven't been planned with respect to distribution but rather many have been acquired on an ad hoc basis;
- There is a need to rationalize facilities – population by distribution by type of facility and determine what population can support each type of facility.

²⁹ With the exception of the area around the Citadel Community Centre, and census tracts 19 & 20 around the Halifax Forum.

Needham Community Centre

- Pool not fully accessible, not appropriately sized to offer more senior instructional programs such as provided at the Captain Spry facility, could use more “fun” facility components in pool;
- Have demand for more evening time and gymnasium programs;
- Need more space for youth, pre-school space;
- Daycare that operates out of Needham requested more space;³⁰
- Some parts of facility considered inappropriate e.g., gymnasium on the third floor, rooms small, some of the facility is underground and not very bright;
- Highland Park Junior High is recommended to be replaced to meet enrolment needs and to enhance program delivery. Currently priority # 9 but this priority could change when phase two of the Imagine our Schools is completed;
- Expensive to operate.

St. Andrews Community Centre

- More and more demand for youth programming, play area, green space, outdoor basket ball court, kitchen;
- Many rental groups use the space due to convenient parking, type of space and gymnasium space;
- Facility management staff noted that as an older building the facility is more expensive to operate than a newer facility.

Citadel Community Centre

- This is the Peninsula’s newest facility opened in the Fall of 2007. The community centre section of the facility (part of Citadel High School) is owned and operated by HRM. A joint use agreement between HRM and HRSB governs the facility;
- Interviews with Centre Staff (currently two full time staff and in the summer four part-time staff) indicated the need for additional office space as well as additional multi-purpose space for programs and community meetings;
- Staff indicate that students and school representatives have indicated an interest in a weight room to be shared with school;
- Staff noted that the school has expressed a need for assembly space;
- Citadel Community Centre operates Monday to Sunday from 8:30 AM until 10:30 PM although hours may vary during the summer months;

³⁰ It is understood that formal day care is not a mandate of HRM Community Services Department or the Municipality as a whole. This comment was however provided to the consultants during the initial consultation activities.

- The Joint Use Agreement with the School provides the community with access to facilities Monday through Friday after 5:30, weekends, exclusive use during the summer months and March Break;
- HRM has exclusive use of the facility during March Break, Summer months and when the school is not using spaces for academic or athletic activities;
- HRM/HRSB and Citadel High School Representatives meet monthly to manage and maximize the joint use agreement for students and residents of HRM;
- The door to the Community Centre is monitored by the Centres administrative support staff and the public has access for inquiries and registration. The Centre entrance is monitored by the recreation front desk and the public has access for inquiries and registration.

Bloomfield

- Staff identified need to replace gymnasium as well as senior's space, kitchen and staff offices;
- Floor of gymnasium must be multi-purpose and accommodate ball hockey – not wooden floor;
- It was noted that Council has recently approved a redevelopment plan that will incorporate arts and culture spaces.

George Dixon

- No dedicated senior's space at George Dixon, however space and programming is available within the local area;
- Joseph Howe School, which is in the George Dixon area, has funding for redevelopment and could be developed as a true community school, which would include community recreation components.

Forum

- Was built in phases (but not as part of an overall master plan for the facility) over almost 80 years of its history, is not up to code, not accessible, no central control desk.

Other Facilities (for which interest was expressed)

- Fitness or health club;
- Walking Track;
- Consultants were asked to comment on the appropriateness of the Forum as a possible future site of a 50 metre pool when Centennial Pool reaches the end of its useful lifespan.

2.3.2 Program Related Issues

- Local community facilities are important to community stability and positive interactions;
- Programming must be responsive to what the community wants,
- Need for financially accessible programming;
- Not all centres function the same way with respect to community outreach;
- Vandalism in the Bayers-Westwood area has increased since housing has stopped providing recreation programs on site.

2.3.3 Development Related Issues

- Projecting a population increase of 10-15K in the peninsula, room for intensification. HRM currently preparing a Housing Affordability Functional Plan;
- Need to understand if the current supply of recreation facilities is filling the required need (contributing to quality of life, making the area attractive etc.);
- HRM wishes to build complete neighbourhoods with appropriate community amenities and connected by active transportation links and to assume a leadership role in creating these neighbourhoods.

3.0 RELEVANT TRENDS AND ISSUES

The type of recreation activities and the manner in which they are delivered are products of broader societal issues and developments. As issues emerge in society at large, and communities in particular, community services respond and adapt to address these issues. So it is with recreation. The following issues and trends are ones that are most relevant to the assessment of operations and service delivery for community recreation facilities on HRM Peninsula.

Please note, while information specific to HRM has been added where available and appropriate, the intent of this section is to outline general trends and issues affecting the delivery of recreation services (facilities and programs) to provide a contextual basis for assessment of gaps in current HRM facility services on the Peninsula.

3.1 Community and Service Profile

In HRM some of the key issues and considerations that influence their planning processes are: environmental and financial sustainability; ensuring HRM Peninsula is an attractive place to live and work; attention to the needs of all residents with a view to inclusiveness; and concern for the quality of life of community residents.

Most of these issues – and others – are interrelated. Concern for quality of life of community residents is as much about managing finite resources available for health care as it is altruistic. Minimizing negative environmental impact of less efficient community infrastructure (e.g., heat escape from older refrigeration technology in arenas) benefits community health and the financial bottom line, as much as it protects the environment.

The following considerations are relevant to decisions regarding existing and future recreation facilities on the Peninsula.

3.1.1 Population Trends and Issues

- **Aging Population:** Communities in Nova Scotia are, on average, getting older. In ten years the post war “baby boomers” will be in their late 50’s to early 70’s and will comprise 38% of the population.³¹ Adults born between 1946 and 1964 are a significant portion of the population. Statistical data and documented trends indicate this group has more disposable income, better health, and less interest in long-term volunteer commitments and obligations, than the current generation of seniors. For a variety of reasons (interest, health, opportunity, fewer with company pensions) this age cohort may also continue to work full or part time well into the traditional retirement age. This, coupled with an increased focus on higher levels of physical activity for older adults, creates an environment where older adults will continue to be significant consumers of recreation services.

HRM’s Recreation Blueprint provides a policy framework for decision making with respect to service levels and priorities within Community Recreation Services³². The Blueprint identifies youth engagement as the “number one value”. The Blueprint indicates that “needs are assessed based on priority age groups...[and that] adult programs and senior adults [programs] are no longer offered, except in high need communities, or when [if] CRS is the sole provider”³³ in which case service level criteria will be assessed in relation to needs for these groups.

There is reason to believe that Baby Boomers, having grown up accessing public recreation for their children and for themselves, and given their ongoing participation in political processes, will continue to look to the public sector to provide some of their recreation needs. This will likely have implications for how HRM provides for this age cohort, although the higher incomes of this group suggests they will not need (in most cases) these services to be publicly subsidized. Certainly the private and not-for-profit sectors will serve many of the needs of this cohort as well.

- **Immigration and Population Retention:** Many Canadian communities are experiencing a reduction in birth rates. The attraction and retention of immigrant families is an essential factor in retaining population and ensuring a younger population to support a vibrant work force. In Canada almost 70% of population growth is now attributed to immigration³⁴. HRM has identified the attraction of immigrants as a priority in the Municipality’s Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010 and have created the *Halifax Region Immigration Strategy* and the *Immigration Action Plan*. Immigrants of course are not a new phenomenon to Canada or to the HRM. Over Canada’s history immigrants have played an important role, contributing to community vibrancy, filling gaps in professional labour sectors, and providing opportunities for global connections in business. The *Immigration Action Plan* identifies more effective communication of HRM services, including recreation, as an important feature in improving immigrant retention rates³⁵.

³¹ Community Counts, Population Projections, Nova Scotia, www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts/default.asp

³² Community Development, Community Recreation Services, “Recreation Blueprint”, (February 2010) pg. 1.

³³ Ibid pgs. 3-4.

³⁴ Solutions Research Group, Diversity in Canada: Backgrounder, 2005

³⁵ Halifax Regional Municipality, Immigration Action Plan, 2005

Recreation is a key component in the integration of immigrants. Recreation services provide opportunities for skills development assisting employment readiness, social connections, and informal development of new language.

Unlike earlier generations of immigrants most of Canada's immigrant population now comes from countries with very different cultural and recreational experiences. In communities currently experiencing significant immigration from the middle and far-east, this has implications for the type of recreation facility being built and the manner in which programs are provided.

Immigration has implications for policies, staff training, marketing, facility design, type of programs, and language of signage and program information and there is currently a successful example of a Muslim adapted program at an HRM pool, and a successful immigrant youth basketball program at the St Andrews Community Recreation facility.

- **Healthy Active Living:** The link between health and active living (physical activity) is clearly understood. HRM and several partners recently launched *the Physical Activity Strategy* demonstrating the connection of physical activity to health outcomes such as obesity reduction. Active healthy living includes walking or biking to work, as well as social activities such as community gardening and of course recreational activities. The installation of active transportation infrastructure (bikeways, walking paths, sidewalks, right of ways, bicycle lanes and bike racks storage lockers etc.) has been identified as a step that municipalities can take to improve physical activity levels of their citizens. Many of the older facilities in HRM are not currently connected to or designed for active transportation and HRM has recently prepared an active transportation plan with future initiatives to advance these opportunities.
- **Time Constraints:** Many households and individuals experience a deficit in time available for recreation activities. Households with two working parents and single parent families are now the norm for families with school age children. Trends in work patterns: e.g., job sharing, part-time employment, early retirement, late retirement, parental leave etc., make the traditional "same day of the week/ ten week sessions" etc. less convenient. Recreation providers in all sectors will need to adjust their program scheduling and/or their approach to programming to accommodate the circumstances of today's scheduling realities if they are to attract and accommodate varying market segments.

Multi-purpose facilities that integrate a variety of features such as aquatic facilities, ice arenas, fitness centers and running tracks, arts and cultural spaces, libraries, and retail are increasingly popular. Consolidating a number of services and facilities in a single location enables families to participate at a common time but in their different activities of interest.

3.1.2 Facility Trends and Issues

- **Building Green:** Sustainable building practices for recreation facilities include: sensitivity to the ecology of each building site, use of recycled and recyclable materials, use of interior finishes that promote a healthy interior environment, use of locally derived material or exterior finishes to reduce the transportation carbon footprint, passive solar design and energy efficient equipment and fixtures for energy conservation.³⁶ While not a new development, there is increasing emphasis on energy efficiency due to increased energy costs and environmental awareness. New technologies e.g., waste heat from the arena used to heat arena seating or the aquatic component, are increasingly adopted. Recreation facilities in HRM such as the Dartmouth East Community Centre and many new facilities across Canada increasingly achieve LEED® certification through the Canada Green Building Program³⁷.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Financial sustainability benefits both service providers and users. For service providers it means reduced costs. For users it means that programs and services are less likely to be changed or cut. The addition or maintenance of features designed not for local recreation use but with the anticipation of attracting visitors and tourists (e.g., significantly larger seating capacities in arenas, competitive facilities, special individual group spaces) must be carefully assessed to confirm that the required investment in larger or specialized facilities will justify the return.

Older and smaller facilities typically require greater amounts of maintenance and are not energy efficient. Smaller facilities have programming limitations and recreation users may have to travel between various facilities to access the range of services they desire. Consolidating certain types of facilities and programs (e.g., competitive, specialized, more expensive, larger etc.) into new multi-district facilities contributes to greater energy efficiency, staffing efficiencies, and realistic revenue enhancement. This is the intent of the provision of multi-district community centres in HRM's 2008 Recreation Facility Master Plan.

- **Accessibility:** Ensuring that facilities and programming are accessible – physically and financially - is an important objective of recreation services. Barriers can be physical (e.g., washroom stall sizes, no elevator, width of halls); financial (e.g., fees beyond the means of users – *see next section*); or cultural (e.g., language or social norms *see next section*). Legislation now requires that new facilities meet building code for physical accessibility.
- **Welcoming Facility Design:** Today's recreation facilities are designed to be aesthetically pleasing and welcoming, (rather than utilitarian) to meet the need for quality, relaxing experiences. Larger, brighter, open concept lobby areas including visitor amenities such as coffee corners, comfortable chairs and tables are increasingly common. Social interaction is as much a part of recreation as the physical exertion itself. In addition to having comfortable space, facilities that provide services to users, such as short term child monitoring or a secure check in for personal items such as laptops, providing

³⁶ *Various articles on sustainable building practices*. 1998. *Perspectives*. Ontario Association of Architects, and personal interviews with landscape architects, 2004.

³⁷ Canadian Green Building Council, LEED Canada www.cagbc.org/leed/what/index.php

special spaces such as family change rooms allow recreation to be more easily integrated into ones daily schedule. By providing welcoming spaces and services that mitigate minor inconveniences, recreation service providers can offset barriers to participation and increase community use while also filling gaps in available community meeting space.

Please note the following facility specific trends were included in anticipation that this study would involve the development of a multi-district community centre.

- **Multi Purpose Complexes:** Contemporary community recreation facilities incorporate a variety of components under one roof. The shift away from sole-purpose facilities to spaces that blend a multitude of components, such as aquatic facilities, libraries, meeting/program rooms, and active living components, has resulted in “one stop shopping” for leisure patrons. Recently, there has been more emphasis on the inclusion of community accessible arts and cultural spaces (such as studio spaces, display spaces, etc.) in these complexes as well, resulting in an increase in cross-programming opportunities for patrons and space sharing opportunities for providers.
- **Aquatic Facility Trends:** The most popular aquatic facilities are those that provide multiple tanks accommodating a range of aquatic experiences. Very often these will include a leisure pool with a waterslide or other leisure amenities, plus a traditional 25m pool that accommodates competitive activities, fitness swims and a wide range of instructional programming. Therapeutic pools with warmer water, shallow depth entry, handrails and ramps/lifts can accommodate therapeutic use by older adults and people with disabilities, as well as parent and tot users and very young swimmers. These are increasingly popular for preventative and responsive health care and are often provided in facilities aligned with health providers.
- **Arena Facility Trends:** Few communities (not including those with small populations) would build a single ice pad arena. This trend from the early days of arena development (e.g., predominantly in the 50's and 60's) accommodated walk-to facilities focused predominantly on children, where fairly inexpensive to construct, and were often the main, if not the only, recreation facility in the community. That model is neither operationally nor energy efficient, nor does it meet the program needs of today's ice users. Two types of arenas have now become the norm: (1) multi-pad (2 or 4) arenas, built in suburban areas that accommodate significant automobile parking and team buses (these may or may not be built as part of multi-purpose recreation centres) and (2) downtown sport and entertainment venues designed to bring people into the central business area to benefit that business centre. Sport and entertainment venues in large urban communities often do not provide large amounts of on-site parking. Public transit and large private parking venues are typical ways to support transportation and parking for event spectators.

In some communities, leisure ice is provided as ice space added to the end of a normal hockey rink, separated from the full ice pad by the end boards, with large doors built into the boards to allow ice resurfacers access to the leisure ice surface. In a number of communities this development is the

inclusion of small, artificial surface “shooter pads” for hockey goaltender skill development and shooting skill development, which can be rented by the hour for individual training sessions.

Arenas without summer ice are made more useful to other sports such as in-line hockey, box lacrosse, basketball and volleyball, through the addition of temporary multi-purpose sectional floor boards and removable artificial turf, with air conditioning and/or fans to cool non-air conditioned facilities.

- **Indoor Walking Tracks:** Indoor walking tracks have grown in popularity as more attention has been paid to the health and wellness of older adults. Walking is one of the best forms of physical activity and it is particularly suited to older individuals. In Canadian winters it is often a challenge to find a safe and comfortable venue for walking. To address this need, many facilities now incorporating indoor walking tracks. There are a variety of methods to provide these facilities. The most common is to suspend walking tracks in an arena or gymnasium. Other options include at floor level tracks around a large gymnasium or multi-purpose space, or to provide wider hallways and a graphic (e.g., footprints) “trail” through facility hallways.

3.1.3 Planning and Organizational Trends and Issues

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Energy conservation, environmentally sustainable building practices, schoolyard plantings, parks clean-up days, and community gardening projects are examples of activities in support of this trend. Increasingly, new and redeveloped recreation facilities are adopting environmentally sustainable building practices to support the “green movement”. In 2007 HRM joined the *Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative* expressing its commitment to sustainability. The use of sustainable practices in recreational facilities would be in line with this policy direction.
- **Tracking Facility Usage:** Many municipalities regularly track activity participation trends to identify changing interests and understand the extent to which different services may be required. Recreation departments increasingly use computerized facility scheduling and registration systems not only for day-to-day operations, but also to understand how individuals and groups use facilities and services, and track and interpret changes in use patterns. Studying recreation user satisfaction on a recurring and scientific basis through surveys, comment cards, and opinion polls can result in a better understanding of issues and opportunities for improvement. Using this information to plan for future facilities and services and improve existing ones will respond to needs and expectations of the public.
- **Financial Accessibility:** The National recreation initiative “Everybody Gets to Play” encourages policy development and programs to support accessibility. Programs such as HRM Kids and Jump Start and community specific initiatives such as the Night Hoops and after school programs in HRM contribute to this level of accessibility. While HRM supports the principle of access to recreation for the economically disadvantaged, in a climate of increasing concern over cost recovery the current rates of user subsidies make reaching revenue targets difficult³⁸, regardless of the management model. The current structure of HRM recreation facilities is divided between Municipally Owned and Municipally Operated

³⁸ Asbell Management Innovations Inc., Community Facility Master Plan, 2008, 5.1 Finance

(MO/MO) and Municipally Owned and Community Board Operated (MO/CO) facilities. Some MO/MO facilities include St. Andrew's, George Dixon, Needham, and Citadel (with a joint use agreement with Halifax Regional School Board). The Halifax Forum / Civic Arena is a MO/CO facility. MO/CO facilities are expected to run on little or no subsidy from HRM and are responsible for full cost recovery from user fees and other sources of revenue. The Community Facility Master Plan (2008) recommends that more facilities move to the MOCO model, where community capacity exists. This would put increased pressure on facilities to meet cost recovery budgets and reduce their capacity for services for economically disadvantaged community members. Clarity on, which programs and which facilities should achieve full cost recovery, and where there is need for financial subsidy will be addressed in future studies.

- **Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities:** The most commonly reported disabilities among adults are mobility or agility related³⁹. The largest age group with disabilities is older adults⁴⁰. More Canadians with disabilities have incomes below the *Low Income Cut-Off*⁴¹ than the total population. For persons with disabilities, reducing the barriers to participation and ensuring that facilities and services are accessible and responsive to their needs will help to improve participation levels in recreation and leisure activities. Community Recreation Services mandate is to provide access and support for persons with disabilities to participate in community recreation services programs. The majority of older facilities in HRM provide limited accessibility features. Many facilities were built before inclusion of people with disabilities was a concern.
- **Cultural Inclusion:** With increasing numbers of immigrants from non-English speaking countries and countries with cultural norms and practices that differ from those traditionally in HRM, there will be requests to identify and deliver appropriate program and facility approaches, to support their accessibility to newcomers.
- **Community Development:** Many municipalities utilize a community development model for involvement and partnerships in service delivery to build community capacity, extend services and reduce staff costs. These community based partnerships must, however, reflect the realities of service provision today, including concerns related to liability and customer service, and they are only effective if the municipality provides appropriate support and ongoing communication.
- **Sport Tourism:** Sport tourism comprises those who travel to participate and/or watch sports and those who are spectators. The economic impact of sport tourism ranges from incidental for local day-tournaments to very significant for international events. Where significant upfront capital costs are required to develop venues and promote the destination in a competitive environment, economic impact may be offset by these costs. Often legacy facilities are a strong motivator for hosting major events. HRM actively participates in sport tourism (e.g., World Junior Hockey competitions, NHL exhibition games, and the 2011 Canada Games).

³⁹ Participation and Activity Limitation Study 2006, Analytical Report, Statistics Canada

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Figures determined by Statistics Canada based on the percentage of income spent on food, clothing and shelter, with household size factored into the calculations

- **Attention to Youth:** Youth engagement and participation in recreation has always been an important consideration for public recreation services. It was in this spirit Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) expressed a clear desire to examine the issues facing youth in an effort to enhance the leadership role of youth in communities and improve the quality of life in the region. The result was the development of the Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) program in partnership with the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development. As a result, HRM has begun a shift from traditional program and service delivery and made organizational changes to ensure meaningful youth consultation and involvement.⁴² CRS's emphasis on children and youth is related to the findings/research of the YES.

3.2 Canadian Indoor Recreation Activity Trends

Many recreation service trends are indicative of an increased desire for unstructured and individualistic recreation opportunities. Certain indoor team or paired sports such as basketball or badminton are increasing in popularity for youth and adults. However this increase is usually in casual pick-up type situations. Time constraints make joining formalized leagues with regular practices and games less appealing for many adults. Public interest in wellness or holistic health rather than sport per se has influenced the increase in the number of activities focused on personal development such as yoga or Pilates in private facilities throughout Canada. HRM's CRS offers many introductory level programs for similar types of activities where there is an identified need.

The following recreation activity trends have been gathered from a number of sources. In some cases they represent data from National or Nova Scotia sport organizations and from National activity surveys. In other cases they reflect the experience of the consultant in studies and projects across the eastern part of Canada.

- **Indoor Soccer:** Participation in indoor soccer has increased rapidly with a number of communities moving their soccer programs from indoor gymnasiums where it is still commonly played to purpose built facilities – either air support structures or more permanent construction. Nova Scotia Soccer is currently expanding its indoor space with a new indoor facility that will cover the only covered full regulation size field in Nova Scotia, at their current site in the vicinity of Mainland Common in HRM. A common service delivery model for indoor soccer facility development has been a partnership between community soccer associations and municipalities. The private sector is also now a well established participant in the indoor soccer market. The rise in interest in indoor soccer is consistent with the significant rise in participation in soccer generally.

⁴² For further discussion of the YES program please see the document Youth Engagement Strategy: Engaging Youth and Building Strong Communities

- **Court Sports:** Participation in basketball, volleyball and badminton is increasing, particularly among youth and young adults⁴³. In the 2005 Physical Activity Monitor racquet sports (including tennis, squash and racquetball) indicated declining participation. The 2008 Physical Activity Monitor shows similar rates of participation (between 13 and 10% for those 18-24 and between 25 and 44 years of age respectively) to those indicated in the 2005 monitor indicating that currently participation in these activities is stable. However, as participation drops significantly for those in mid-adult years and as the percent of the population under 40 is declining participation in court sports would be expected to remain stable or decline.
- **Fitness Centre Activities:** Fitness participation has changed significantly in recent years and while there is still a strong market for equipment-based fitness facilities, the growing trend is toward unstructured lifestyle based fitness (e.g., fitness walking, rollerblading, biking etc). An increased awareness of the importance of daily fitness, and the need for fitness amidst busy schedules, longer commuting times and work and family responsibilities has created a greater demand for walking and cycling trails. Nova Scotia residents are more likely to report being able to access community fitness facilities near their place of work⁴⁴.
- **Yoga, Pilates, Mind/Body Activities:** Although specific statistics are not available, the trend towards increasing personal “wellness” has spurred growing participation in programs supporting holistic health such as yoga, Pilates, and other mind/body centered activities. While private facilities have capitalized on this trend in the past, it is increasingly common for public recreation centres to offer these activities in facilities once used primarily for dance, aerobics, and general fitness. HRM’s CRS, in cases where there is a clear and identified gap in these types of activities and no alternative service provider, will offer introductory programs.
- **Recreational Swimming:** Recreational swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure activities for all ages. In the 2005 Physical Activity Monitor⁴⁵, swimming was the number one sport for facility-based participation for adults and youth. As the population ages and older adults remain active well into their 80’s and beyond, services that support this low impact, aerobic activity will be in increasing demand.
- **Aquafit:** Unlike other fitness classes, water exercise offers a total body workout that is deceiving in its intensity. The workout obtained from this type of exercise is easy on joints and the 55 and older age group make up the majority of participants in day-time classes. Classes for pre and post-natal women are common.

⁴³ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute , 2005 Physical Activity Monitor, www.cflri.ca

⁴⁴ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, Physical Activity Among Canadian Workers: Trends 2001-2006,

⁴⁵ Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute.

- **Therapeutic Swimming:** Increasingly, specialized aquatic programs are being recommended as a form of therapy for seniors (e.g., for stroke recovery, flexibility for arthritis sufferers, etc.)⁴⁶. Facility requirements to serve this population include warm pools at an adequate, adequate accessibility into the facility, and programs that are scheduled for daylight hours for retired adults.
- **Adult Recreational Hockey:** Adult recreational hockey is experiencing growth, with league activity for those 19-30 years of age. Women's hockey continues to experience growth with adult hockey in general experiencing some of the most significant percentage growth of all groups⁴⁷. Adult recreational hockey and adult leagues are well represented at current Peninsula facilities⁴⁸. As the number of older adults increases this activity will undoubtedly continued to expand.
- **Lacrosse:** Lacrosse is easily adaptable to both indoor and outdoor participation making it open to year round participation. Arena facilities that do not require ice pads to be active can serve as competitive and training venues for lacrosse typically referred to as box lacrosse in this context. Lacrosse participation in Nova Scotia has remained relatively stable with between 1800-1900 people participating at the various skills levels. The dominant age group being youth aged 9-16 years old. There has been a slight increase in the number of females participating, which has created minor issues involving recruiting and offering enough programming/coaching. The sport is growing in urban areas, including Truro. HRM hosts the Metro Minor Lacrosse League, which has teams from across HRM competing in several tiers.
- **Ball Hockey:** Ball hockey as a pick-up sport is relatively inexpensive and is easily accommodated within any indoor recreation facility as long as it has a suitable gymnasium. The sport is difficult to map as it is primarily a recreational and non-competitive activity and may in many circumstances have players of varying age ranges and skill levels playing on the same team. HRM has an organized ball-hockey league, which has its regular games at the Stadacona Fitness & Sports Complex.

Creative Recreation Trends: According Statistics Canada's 2005 General Social Survey, 74% of Canadians participate in arts and cultural activities. Women are more likely to participate in the arts than men, and participation as a spectator is more likely to increase with age. Longitudinal trends indicate that children who participate in the arts are more likely to participate as adults. Increasingly community leisure facilities include spaces that support the arts (dance, visual arts, music, performing, literature) provide a range of leisure opportunities for those whose interests are in the arts, and to provide for multiple interests.

⁴⁶ Based on experience of consultants through work in various communities throughout Canada and the US

⁴⁷ Canadian Hockey Association, comparison of 2006-07 and 2009-10 Annual Reports indicates that adult recreational hockey grew by over 31% during that time period.

⁴⁸ Al Driscoll, Memorandum, Aug. 10th, 2009

3.2.1 Facility Supply Standards

Communities no longer use, or at least put much stock in, facility to population ratios. Supply depends on many variables including but not limited to: level of interest and demand, resources, competing opportunities, age and socio-cultural demographics. Supply is also influenced by ease of access. For example, many very small and somewhat remote rural communities with populations of less than 2,000 have an arena, although a ratio of 1:2,000 would never be considered in an urban community. Some facilities (e.g., playgrounds, outdoor sport pads, outdoor tennis courts, outdoor pools, outdoor skating rinks, smaller skateboard parks, open space) are often considered “walk-to” recreation facilities and are placed and designed so that local residents can access them by walking or bicycle within at most a kilometer from their homes. Major indoor facilities such as community aquatic facilities, arenas, gymnasias, indoor sport courts etc., are now usually provided as part of multi-purpose facilities that serve communities generally in the 35,000 to 50,000 range. Where communities have higher densities – and therefore more people can access the facility within a 10 to 20 minute walk.

4.0 FACILITY AND SERVICE PROFILE

This section provides an overview of the primary facilities included in this review. Information has been gathered from brochures, registration reports, interviews with staff, staff supplied statistics and background reports as available. A walkthrough and visual inspection of the facilities was conducted by the study architects.

Several terms are used in this section need defining to ensure understanding of some of the points made.

- **Rentals** - one time or reoccurring room rentals
- **Registered Program** – direct service delivery” consists of programs directly provided by HRM staff, for which a registration is taken and registration cost paid to HRM. Program design, delivery, monitoring etc., is the responsibility of HRM
- **Free or low cost HRM Program** – programs similar (with respect to responsibility) to registered programs but without a fee, or with a nominal donation, referred to as “access programs”.
- **Tenancy** – Lease for exclusive use of space. Space could be offered at either market or below market cost per square foot

4.1 St. Andrews Recreation Centre

St. Andrews Recreation Centre is located at 6955 Bayers Road approximately at the exit/entrance to the Bicentennial Drive and north of the Halifax Shopping Centre.

4.1.1 St. Andrews Facility and Operational Profile

St. Andrew’s was originally built as a school and converted to a community recreation centre in 1983. The exact date of the current buildings age is unclear although it is assumed to be more than 40 years old. Classroom space is now used for art and dance studios, general programs and meeting rooms. There is a single gymnasium, kitchen, and staff offices. While the former classrooms are used for programming for children, seniors and pre-school children, they lack specialized features that would typically be found in purpose built space.

The site is accessible by bus, has ample parking and provides pedestrian access from the Bayers-Westwood community housing development to the north east. Pedestrian access from other directions is somewhat more difficult due to the busy major arterial road (Bayers Road) on which the Centre is located.

St. Andrew’s is not easily seen from the road and the road entrance can be missed if one is not familiar with the facility’s location. Even when entering from the Bayers Road entrance the view of

St. Andrews is partially obscured by a pre-engineered metal building that houses Alta gymnastics. The entrance to the site is currently under significant development for a high-rise residential building.

The parking area is in need of repair, there is an outdoor green space, formerly a small baseball field, now used for unstructured play. Both interior and exterior appear tired with worn finishes.

St. Andrews is owned and operated by HRM. The facility falls within the management area known as Mainland North and Western Communities. The area also includes the following recreation facilities: Northcliffe Centre, Lakeside Centre, Hubbards Centre, Rockingham Centre, The Bay Community Centre, Upper Hammonds Plains Centre, the new Prospect Road Community Centre and the new Canada Games Centre. Full-time staff include: one Recreation Area Coordinator, one on site Community Recreation Coordinator and one Administrative Support staff. Casual staff include: 6 front desk staff, 18 recreation staff. There are approximately 33 volunteers that work in various program areas, 20 of these are for *Summer Celebration*, a once a year special event.

4.1.2 St. Andrews Program Profile

St. Andrew's Community Centre had the largest number of registered programs listed in the Fall/Winter 2009/2010 program catalogue of all of the recreation centres in this review. Registration numbers for St. Andrew's have been fairly consistent from 2006 -2009 with the majority of registrations occurring in the spring and autumn months⁴⁹. The major age groups involved in programs at St. Andrew's are in the 5-9 and 10-14 age ranges, representing over 50% of registrations for the 2009/2010 year. St. Andrews also had the largest number of people in the 55+ range registered for programs of all the Peninsula facilities.

St. Andrew's provides a range of free-of-charge or reduced fee programs (access programs) directed toward children, youth and adults including: Mini-Hoops for young children, Night Hoops for youth, after-school program, Girls Gym Nights and St. Andrew's basketball.

St. Andrew's has the largest number of rentals of the facilities under review, with the number of rentals remaining more or less constant over the past 4 years. Many of the rental groups serve specific nationalities such as the Vietnamese Association, or are interest/condition based such as the Halifax Stroke Club.

⁴⁹ All registration data is drawn from Performance Indicators, for 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 provided by CRS staff. Data for the 2009/2010 year does not include statistics for the winter months.

4.1.3 St. Andrew's Operational Costs

The facility had annual operational costs (utilities and maintenance staff only) of \$211,405⁵⁰.

Table 4.1 St. Andrews Operational Costs 2007/ 2008

St. Andrew's Community Centre	
Program Costs	\$242,707
Program Revenues	\$107,217
Real Property Cost	\$211,405
Net	-\$346,895

4.1.4 St. Andrew's Building Condition and Capital Plan Upgrades

Sperry & Partners Architects in their facility inventory report identified several features that should be addressed to improve the facility, including:

- Creating a barrier free entrance system for those with reduced mobility;
- Upgrading washrooms and change room accessibility to meet today's standards;
- Providing an elevator to enable upper level accessibility by those with mobility challenges.

HRM's current five year plan for the facility includes installation of an elevator, the repaving of at least some of the parking area, replacement of boilers, ventilation improvement, and a facility wide audit and an accessibility audit.

Table 4.1 outlines the capital retrofit costs identified by HRM 5 Year Capital Plan and those identified by Sperry & Partners Architects in their structural assessment.

Table 4.2: Estimated Capital Retrofit Requirements for St. Andrews

HRM 5 Year Capital Plan		Additional Items - S&P Architects	
Additional paved parking	\$75,000	Washroom upgrades	\$25,000
Replacement of both boilers	\$80,000	Barrier free entrance	\$15,000
Ventilation system upgrade	\$50,000		
Provide elevator / Facility audit	\$250,000		
Painting and finishes	tbd		
Sub total	\$455,000	Sub total	\$40,000
Total for all immediate retrofit requirements		\$495,000	

⁵⁰ All Operational costs are based on Operating Actuals 2007/2008 supplied by CRS staff.

4.2 Needham Community Centre

Needham Community Centre is located at 3372 Devonshire Avenue in the north east quadrant of the Peninsula close to the area known as the Hydrostone. It is surrounded by a high need lower income community.

4.2.1 Needham Facility and Operational Profile

The facility was purpose built in 1972 to address the high needs of the surrounding community. It was originally a boys club operated by the Halifax Police Department prior to HRM assuming operations. Needham is served by three bus routes in close proximity to the facility.

Facilities in the Centre include a single gymnasium, a six lane 20 yard pool, locker rooms, multi-purpose rooms, recreation offices, a dance studio with mirrors, and a licensed daycare.

There are concerns regarding suitability and accessibility of some of the program spaces within the facilities, including the third floor gymnasium, some program rooms being too small, a lack of dedicated seniors space and parts of the facility being below ground. A demand for increased space for youth and pre-school children has been identified by HRM staff.

Needham Community Centre is owned and operated by HRM. The facility falls within the management area known as the Halifax Peninsula. Fulltime staff include: one Recreation Area Coordinator, one on-site Community Recreation Coordinator, one on-site aquatic specialist, and one on-site administrative support staff. Casual staff includes: 30-40 recreation instructors/ leaders dependant on the season and up to 30 youth leaders during the summer and 20 during other seasons. During summer camps an additional 16 staff are hired.

4.2.2 Needham Program Profile

Needham Community Centre is most active during the spring and summer sessions. The largest concentration of users are children age (<1) -14 years. Dry-land program registration has increased since 2006. Aquatic program registration has fallen slightly despite use through joint programs with George Dixon.

The Fall / Winter 2009/2010 Catalogue had 12 non-aquatic and 21 aquatic programs listed. Eight of the dry-land programs were for children and 4 for adults. Eighteen of the aquatic programs were for children and youth. Needham Community Centre has a number of free drop-in and community development programs, (e.g., Junior Leader and Leader in Training, *Night Hoops*). Centre staff also supervise Community Justice placements.

4.2.3 Needham Operational Costs

In 2007-09 the facility had annual operational costs (utilities and maintenance staff only) of \$198,307.

Table 4.3: Needham Operational Costs 2007/ 2008

Needham Community Centre	
Program Costs	\$327,421
Program Revenues	\$91,415
Real Property Cost*	\$198,307
Net	-\$434,313

4.2.4 Needham Building Condition and Capital Plan Upgrades

The study architects indentified the following points that should be addressed to improve the facility:

- Entrance system is not barrier free;
- Only the multi-purpose room and main floor offices are considered accessible;
- Washrooms / change rooms are not accessible by today's standards;
- Pool deck is not accessible;
- Facility is not sprinklered;
- Main pool drains are plumbed individually and pose a suction hazard;
- Acoustic ceiling tile is not suitable for pool area and should be replaced;
- Current exits from the pool area are poor and an additional exit directly to the exterior should be installed;
- Exits generally do not meet current code requirements.

Table 4.4 outlines the capital retrofit costs identified by HRM 5 Year Capital Plan and those identified by Sperry & Partners Architects in their structural assessment for the Needham Community Centre.

Table 4.4: Estimated Capital Retrofit Requirements for Needham Community Centre

HRM 5 Year Capital Plan		Additional Items - S&P Architects	
New entry doors	\$15,000	Elevator to reduce barriers (3 stops)	\$170,000
Interior Painting	\$7,000	Accessible washrooms	\$70,000
New floor for Preschool	\$30,000	Pool drainage (poses current suction hazard)	\$25,000
New Gym floor	\$100,000	Pool roof replacement	\$23,000
New kitchen cupboards	\$15,000	Provide up to code exit system	\$25,000
New washroom stalls / fixtures	\$27,000		
Outdoor gazebo	\$30,000		
Paving	\$20,000		
Sprinkler system	\$90,000		
New windows	\$40,000		
Retiling of pool deck	\$40,000		
Sub total	\$414,000	Sub total	\$313,000
Total for all immediate retrofit requirements			\$727,000

4.3 George Dixon Community Centre

George Dixon Community Centre is located at 2502 Brunswick Street in the central east section of the Peninsula, generally within the area referred to in HRMbyDESIGN as the *Capital Region*. It is therefore an area that could be subject to or at least be affected by intensified development in this area of the HRM.

4.3.1 George Dixon Facility and Operational Profile

The George Dixon Community Centre was built in 1969 as a purpose built recreation and community centre. Facilities include a gymnasium with stage, pottery studio, offices, kitchen, board room, computer lab, multipurpose rooms. The outdoor park was completely renovated in 2008 and includes a large outdoor play area with multiple basketball courts, playground, water play area, asphalt pathways that link Gottingen and Brunswick street, a horseshoe pitch, and a seasonal outdoor ice rink. There are also two saunas, although these are currently not operational.

According to facility operational management staff the current operational approach at George Dixon (use of contract staff rather than full time municipal staff) makes it one of the least expensive buildings to operate.

Many of the facility's users walk to the facility from the surrounding neighbourhood. It is also well served by numerous bus routes running along Gottingen Street.

George Dixon Community Centre is owned and operated by HRM. The facility falls within the management area known as the Halifax Peninsula. Full Time staff include: one Recreation Area Coordinator one on site Community Recreation Coordinator, and one on site administrative support staff.

4.3.2 George Dixon Program Profile

George Dixon Community Centre had the fewest *registered* programs of the community facilities included in this study⁵¹. These programs are mostly for children from the ages of 3-11 years. The majority of registrations for programs come from the 5-9 age groups. George Dixon has seen a moderate decline in program registration numbers since 2006 except for summer session programs that have remained stable.

While providing a small number of registered programs, George Dixon Community Centre also offers a variety of free and minimal fee community based programming⁵². The after-school program at George Dixon uses the Needham Pool regularly.

George Dixon has sought to establish connections with local community groups and organizations to encourage recreation and community development in the area. Some highlights include the construction of an outdoor rink on-site, and the creation of the George Dixon Community festival, Summerfest, Winter Carnival and the Go North Art Gallery Tour as well as the Boat Building program and Treasure Chest program.

4.3.3 George Dixon Operational Cost

The facility received a tax subsidy in 2007/08 of \$327,138. Of this \$114,968 was related to utility and maintenance, with the remaining \$212,170 for staff and program costs.

Table 4.5 George Dixon Operational Costs 2007/ 2008

George Dixon Community Centre	
Program Costs	\$256,506
Program Revenues	\$44,335
Real Property Cost	\$114, 968
Net	\$327,138

⁵¹ Based on a review of the 2009/2010 recreation program catalogue.

⁵² For a full list of these programs please see Appendix C

4.3.4 Building Condition Report & Capital Plan Upgrades

The study architects notes that the 40 year old facility is showing signs of age and identified the following points that should be addressed to improve the facility.

- The roof above the multi-purpose room has numerous puncture holes in it that may contribute to water damage;
- The roof deck over the multi-purpose room should be insulated;
- The entrance system is not barrier free;
- Most washrooms / change rooms are not barrier free (one stall per washroom is barrier free);
- Upper level activity spaces are not accessible by people with limited mobility except from the exterior of the building;
- Facility requires sprinklers.

Table 4.6 outlines the capital retrofit costs identified by HRM 5 Year Capital Plan and those identified by Sperry & Partners Architects in their structural assessment for the George Dixon Community Centre.

Table 4.6: Estimated Capital Retrofit Requirements for George Dixon Community Centre

HRM 5 Year Capital Plan		Additional Items - S&P Architects	
New HVAC system	\$150,000 ⁵³	Repainting (masonry)	\$10,000
Interior Painting	tbd	Bay off gym – reflashing & reglazing	\$10,000
Multi-purpose room expansion	\$150,000	Barrier free entrance system	\$15,000
Oil tank replacement	\$15,000	Elevator for accessibility (2 stops)	\$125,000
Roof deck insulation	tbd	Accessible washrooms	\$25,000
Sub total	\$315,000	Sub total	\$185,000
Total for all immediate retrofit requirements			\$500,000

⁵³ These figures were provided by staff from their most current 5-year capital budget. Staff however, expressed some concern that these figures are not too low and will need to be adjusted. This adjustment is beyond the scope of the consultants work in this study.

4.4 Citadel Community Centre

Citadel Community Centre located at 1955 Trollope Street, is the newest fully wheelchair accessible facility on the Peninsula. It adjoins Citadel High School adjacent to the Halifax Common Halifax Skate Park and the Halifax Pavilion music venue, and is approximately in the centre of the Peninsula.

4.4.1 Citadel Facility and Operational Profile

The school and community centre opened in the fall 2007 and is operated through a joint use agreement between the Halifax Regional School Board and HRM. Operation staff indicate that the arrangement has been fiscally beneficial to the Municipality. Current facilities include two full size gymnasias, dance/martial arts room, staff office, locker rooms, activity studio, access to three school classrooms, cafeteria, drama rooms and kitchen. The site is supported by its proximity to the Halifax Common playing fields, skate-park and water features.

Currently the second and third floor space is incomplete and serves as storage space for Citadel High School. When this space is required it is assumed that it could be utilized as more multi-purpose space for increased recreation programming.

The site is easily accessible by numerous transit routes. The pedestrian access routes to the site are mostly long stretches of open space offering limited evening lighting and visual monitoring.

No architectural assessment was made during the initial phase of this study due to the newness of the facility. HRM staff noted that they have prepared some preliminary plans and costs for development of the second and third floor, which will be confirmed if facility need is confirmed in the preliminary phases of this study.

The facility falls within the management area known as the Halifax Peninsula. Fulltime staff include: one Recreation Area Coordinator, one on site Community Recreation Coordinator, and one on site administrative support staff.

4.4.2 Citadel Program Profile

Community access to the facility, as per the Joint Use Agreement, is Monday through Friday after 5:30, weekends, exclusive use during the summer months and March Break.

Citadel Community Centre offered the second largest number of registered programs (relative to other facilities in this study) in the 2009/2010 Fall / Winter Catalogue. Programs were evenly distributed across all age groups. Citadel Community Centre has seen an increase in registration numbers from 2008 – 2009. The majority of those registered in programs at Citadel are in the 0– 14 age ranges.

The Community Centre also offers a number of ongoing drop-in and youth development programs including the Youth Employability Project Partnership and the Junior Leader, Leader in Training program and Night Hoops. Staff indicate that greater access to space during the school day and/or on weekends would support the provision of earlier and more extensive after school activities, a youth drop-in space, and day time programming for adults/older adults.

4.4.3 Citadel Operational Cost

Citadel Community Centre occupies 7% of the overall space and pays 7% of the operating costs through the Municipal / School Board Joint Use agreement. The 2008/09 budget for Citadel Community Centre is noted in Table 4.7. Citadel received a tax subsidy of \$220,350 in the 2008/09 fiscal year of which \$93,098 was related to utility and maintenance.

Table 4.7 Citadel Operational Costs 2008/ 2009

Citadel Community Centre	
Program/Facility Costs	\$232,470
HRSB (Real Property Costs)	\$93,098
Program Revenues	\$105,218
Net	\$220,350

4.4.4 Building Condition Report & Capital Plan Upgrades

As the Citadel facility is a new building a building condition report was not conducted. However, the unfinished second level (actually second and third although this space is not yet divided into floors) is important to note here. It is currently used for storage of school sport equipment. This equipment is significant and if relocation was required could assume close to one of the floor “levels” by visual inspection.

A second access point would be required (there is currently only one) to the large unfinished room. An elevator to the second (and third) floors would also be required if space is to be used for programs and public use. Staff indicated a need for additional office space, a kitchenette for staff and program use, and division of the space into a large program room ideally with smaller program rooms/break out rooms adjacent to a large multi-purpose space.

4.5 Halifax Forum

The Halifax Forum main entrance is located at 2901 Windsor Street in the central north of the Peninsula, comprising a full municipal block and well served by public transit and major arterials. It is very close to the Bloomfield Community Centre, an area subject to a recent master planning process. Its major focus is as an ice rental and event facility.

4.5.1 Forum Facility and Operational Profile

The Halifax Forum consists of four buildings: the Forum Arena built in 1927; the Civic Arena built in 1996, the Multi-purpose Centre built in 1989, and the Halifax Forum Bingo Hall built in 2003. Facilities include 2 ice surfaces that are both less than NHL regulation size (197 ft x 80 ft), 15 full size dressing rooms (7 full size and 2 small in the Forum and 6 in the Civic). Other features include a built in public sound system a canteen in the Forum and Civic Arena and the Multi-purpose centre. The facility is primarily used as an ice sport and events venue.

In the past there has been concern expressed by the neighbours of the Forum regarding on-street parking and excessive noise whenever events occur at the Halifax Forum or Civic Arena. The facility is served by regular bus service at the Almon Street, Windsor Street and Young Street entrances. Planning staff have indicated that they believe adjustments in transit and transit parking arrangements could result in greater non-automobile access.

The Forum is owned by HRM and operated by a not-for-profit community board of management. Theoretically facilities operating under this model are intended to operate at a break-even level putting pressure on the facility operation to generate revenues to reduce deficits. While some low cost skating times are available the majority of activity at the Forum is profit driven. The Forum Board has expressed interest in the development of an indoor fitness and weight room and an indoor walking track to enhance revenues.

The Halifax Forum/Civic Arena Complex staffing includes: a General Manager, Operations Manger, 3 administrative staff, and an Events/Concession Supervisor. There are approximately 25–50 part-time staff depending on the season (8 full-time and 3 part-time unionized staff responsible for ice surface and general custodial duties). Programs at the Forum are administered by HRM community recreation staff or by private groups.

4.5.2 Forum Program Profile

The Halifax Forum and Civic Arena host private, community and regional events and festivals, entertainment and minor league sports, AAA hockey, and registered skating programs for all ages. In a typical year the facility hosts approximately 16 tradeshow and over 300 non-bingo, non-ice rental service event days. The temporary closure of St. Margaret's Bay arena for renovations, (they

have now resumed regular facility hours)⁵⁴ temporarily increased usage of the Forum and the Civic⁵⁵. The four-pad arena, which will open in time for the Canada Games in 2011, may have implications for all Peninsula arenas including the Forum.

4.5.3 Forum Operating Costs

The Halifax Forum has a variety of revenue sources other than ice rentals, such as event rentals and social nights, bingo and bar and canteen sales. The facility for the 2008/2009 year had \$3,333,311 budgeted for operations.

While the Forum / Civic Arena offers a wide variety of skating lessons for children and some for youth and adults, they do not collect revenues from these programs nor are they responsible for running them. Community Recreation Services, supplies staff to run programs and then pays the Forum / Civic Arena the rental costs for the ice time. Ice time prices are variable dependant on the time of day / season and the organization renting.

The Forum rents facilities for non skating events such as concerts and trade shows, running from \$750 - \$5,000 per day dependent upon the venue and the type of event.

4.5.4 Building Condition Report and Capital Plan Upgrades

Sperry & Partners Architects identified the following issues based on their visual inspection:

- Generally the facility is in good repair although many of the interior and exterior finishes could be described as tired and worn;
- Insufficient parking for large events particularly when simultaneous events occur. This results in considerable on-street parking;
- Seating areas of the Forum above its main floor level are not accessible;
- Upper level seating in the Civic arena is not accessible by the main floor although it is from the exterior;
- Complex does not have an organized circulation system, which is confused by the 14 entrances serving the four buildings, making controlled access a concern.

Table 4.8 outlines the capital retrofit costs identified by the Halifax Forum Board of Management in their 5 Year Capital Plan. Sperry & Partners Architects in their structural assessment for the Halifax Forum Complex did not find any outstanding work to be done that was not identified in the Halifax Forum Board of Managements plan.

⁵⁴ St. Margaret's Bay Arena, front desk staff, Oct. 26th, 2009

⁵⁵ Al Driscoll, Memorandum, Aug. 10/ 2009

Table 4.8: Estimated Capital Retrofit Requirements for Halifax Forum Complex

HRM 5 Year Capital Plan		Additional Items - S&P Architects
Natural Gas heat conversion / maintenance	\$250,000	None Identified
Security cameras	\$80,000	
Ice deck – new floor covering	\$150,000	
Renovate Male washroom	\$40,000	
Renovate Dressing room	\$80,000	
Refinish Stanhard Forum Corridors	\$50,000	
New Stage	\$50,000	
Masonry Repair (East, North, South and West walls)	\$290,000	
Enlarge Wolverine Lounge	\$100,000	
Steel brine lines from header to plant	\$30,000	
Renovate 3 Civic dressing room showers	\$20,000	
Finish replacing Civic Arena boards	\$60,000	
Paving in Young Street lot	\$50,000	
Replace sound system	\$100,000	
Sub total	\$1,350,000	
Total for all immediate retrofit requirements		\$1,350,000

4.6 Operating Cost Comparisons

Several factors contribute to the overall cost of operating the recreation facilities in this Review, the most significant of which is the age of facilities.

Table 4.9 illustrates some clear differences in cost comparisons for older and new facilities. The Operating cost information included in Table 4.9 is based on the last 3⁵⁶ years for Needham and St. Andrews. The annual operational costs per facility were averaged and then divided by the total square footage of each facility. The estimate of capital retrofit costs were determined by taking the total costs of contract services (retrofit costs) for the years (2007 and 2008) provided by operations staff, adding to that the capital requirements as noted by staff (five-year capital budget) and any additional costs identified by Sperry & Partners and arbitrarily dividing the total by four years. The total was then divided by the square footage of the facility to identify a cost per square foot for capital retrofit. This is we recognize an arbitrary formula but does allow us to incorporate capital retrofit realities into ongoing operations costs.

⁵⁶ Costs for the 2009/2010 fiscal year for Needham, and St. Andrews were provided for year to date and calculated to estimate a full year of operation costs.

The annual operating costs for Needham and St. Andrews were compared to first year operating costs for Gordon R Snow a new building. As would be expected the operational cost of a new building are significantly less on a square foot basis than an older facility. The Needham pool has a significant bearing on its annual operating cost, also as would be expected.

Needham and St. Andrews have one or more tenant groups and operating cost comparisons are also relevant for establishing fair and realistic rental rates.

Table 4.9 Operation Cost Comparison and Implications for Leased Space

Item	Needham	St. Andrews	Gordon R Snow
Total Square Footage	19,830	22,880	30,000
1. Average Operational Costs/Sq. Ft. (over three years divided by sq. ft.)	\$9.45	\$5.61	\$6.42
2. Estimate of Capital Retrofit Costs / Sq. Ft.	\$9.99	\$5.96	\$0.01
3. Total average Sq. Ft. Cost	\$19.44 (includes pool cost) ⁵⁷	\$11.56	\$6.43
4. Comment on Access to other Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day care has access to pool and gymnasium. Pays for the cost of one lifeguard when using pool. No additional payment for use of facilities outside the leased space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MISA, HCSC, HARC pay lease costs of 8.00 /sf MISA and Halifax Immigrant ESL rent additional space @ approx. \$3.00 / hr (varies with space and time). HDMC lease is \$5 /sf (reduced as HRM and HARC require access to roof through this space). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have leased space Space allocation includes Fire Truck Bay
5. Lease Space Costs per Sq. Ft.	\$5.00	\$8.00	
6. Short Fall / Sq. Ft. based on Actual Costs	\$14.44	\$3.56	
7. Average Market Rate for Commercial Space ⁵⁸	\$10-\$16/ sf	\$10-\$16/ sf	

⁵⁷ Staff note that in other situations tenants are not charged for costs associated with aquatic facilities. In this case however these costs have been included because (1) the main tenant – the Day Care Centre makes use of the aquatic facility in their programming, and (2) it will be very difficult to separate all costs and cost implications of energy use and maintenance costs given the aquatic component.

⁵⁸ Based on leased space in a strip mall in Burnside - includes operating costs and taxes. Number supplied by Diane Moulton Facility Services Manager, Real Estate and Facility Services, Transportation and Public works.

5.0 GAP ANALYSIS & PRELIMINARY DIRECTIONS

The 2008 CFMP includes a number of guiding principles (referenced in chapter 1.0) relevant to the analysis portion of this review. The CFMP recommends for example that community recreation facilities consider the needs of the local population in the distribution of facilities, and encourages provision of a range of recreation opportunities in the design of facilities. A third principle identified in the Facility Master Plan is the need to balance new assets against lifecycle obligations. Those principles have been kept front of mind in this analysis.

All but the Halifax Forum complex⁵⁹ are Category 1 facilities as described in the Facility Master Plan. The Halifax Forum complex is a Category 4 facility, although it also has aspects of a Category 2 or multi-district community centre.

The second document used in this analysis was the *Recreation Blueprint* that guides the Community Recreation Services program delivery to emphasize youth and children, introductory programs, and pays special attention to areas of high need. The CFMP, while generally endorsing the directions in the *Recreation Blueprint*, suggested that the specific focus on children and youth may be inconsistent with the realities of changing community demographics and heightened awareness of the importance of active living and social connectivity for older adults. However as stated in section 1.3 the *Blueprint* does not focus on children and youth to the exclusion of other age groups and incorporates a methodology for assessing and meeting the needs of all sectors of the HRM community.

A third key document is the Regional Plan HRMbyDESIGN. It is understood that HRMbyDESIGN is specifically to planning for the Capital Region (understood to be the historic downtown areas of Halifax and Dartmouth), rather than the Municipality or the Peninsula as a whole. However, HRMbyDESIGN incorporates current thinking in community planning and neighbourhood building. A number of the principles in that Plan: sustainable, adaptable, diverse/mixed and complete (with regard to amenities, services, and residents) neighbourhoods, are as relevant to communities across the Peninsula as they are to the Capital Region and have therefore been liberally adopted to guide this analysis.

The analysis has also been informed by the issues highlighted in section 3.0 of this report. The points in that section present an overview of considerations and trends that are current and that influence the delivery of recreation across all communities. These include the style of recreation facility that best meets today's recreation and community needs; the type of components that address high profile issues such as healthy living; design to support community cohesion,

⁵⁹ This facility is referred to as a "complex" to acknowledge that it includes the original Halifax Forum arena, the newer (replacement) Civic arena, the bingo hall and the multi-purpose room.

inclusiveness etc.; and facility distribution and design to address community priorities of sustainable growth and economic viability.

Finally, the analysis used the information presented in sections 2.0 and 4.0 of this report regarding each community and details of the community centres.

Chapter 5.0 includes three sections:

- Section 5.1 outlines considerations for an “*ideal model for recreation facility delivery*”. This so called “ideal” is a composite of directions from the 2008 CFMP and concepts and indicators highlighted in section 3.0 of this report. The “ideal facility model” is consistent with the vision and principles of HRMbyDESIGN that are considered particularly relevant to this review including: community building, sustainability, and active transportation links.
- Section 5.2 presents an overall gap analysis for the facilities and Districts within this review. To prepare the overall analysis it was necessary to first review the facilities individually. However, for purposes of overall flow the text addresses the big picture first followed by individual facilities (5.3). The reader is encouraged to consider all sections of chapter 5.0, to the extent possible, as a whole.
- Finally section 5.3 provides a more detailed analysis of the primary facilities within this review.

5.1 Ideal Facility Model for the Peninsula

The CFMP proposed a “hub and spoke model”. Such a model is consistent with modern principles of community planning, recreation facility and service planning, and with the Municipality's recent planning documents. The following points outline ideal hub and spoke facilities.

The Multi-District Facility

The CFMP proposed that a multi-district / multi-purpose recreation centre – serve a population of approximately 60,000 to 80,000 people – which in the case of the Peninsula would be the entire population.

This service ratio is somewhat high for this type of facility. A more typical ratio for such a facility is often closer to 40,000 or perhaps 50,000. On the Peninsula however, while there are currently no municipally owned *Category 2* facilities (notwithstanding the Halifax Forum complex, which partially meets this need) there are other facilities including the Dalplex and the YMCA, which provide similar opportunities to residents of the Peninsula and others across HRM, particularly those who work in the municipal core. Given the presence of these facilities, and with consideration to principles of partnership in service delivery, one municipally owned *Category 2* facility for the Peninsula is appropriate, at least until such time as the Peninsula significantly exceeds its current population.

That facility should incorporate principles of modern recreation facility design for this type of facility. It should be welcoming, encourage participants to congregate and socialize, should provide a variety of activity options, must be physically accessible to all, should be connected to active and public transportation links, and should balance activities that are revenue positive with those that support financial accessibility. In short it must truly act as a district community centre, welcoming and attracting participants from across the Peninsula.

Local Community Centres

The CFMP recommends that multi-district facilities be augmented by more local serving, smaller, community centres that address unique needs of the immediately surrounding communities. The CFMP suggests that local facilities will serve communities of approximately 15,000. Population-to-service-ratios serve as a guideline and are not prescriptive. For example, a multi-district facility will also function as a local community centre for those communities immediately surrounding these larger centres. This situation has implications for how multi-district facilities operate including the need to provide access equivalent to that provided by local serving facilities elsewhere in the Municipality.

Local community centres do not have to be municipally owned. For example, where schools, churches, not-for-profit agency buildings (Boys and Girls Clubs etc.) encourage community access, these facilities can serve as local community spaces. The need for smaller local serving community centres within an urban area should be dictated by the specific needs and outstanding gaps in a community, not by a service to population ratio.

Local community centres should, in their design and programming, serve the local community and be well connected to active transportation links. To the extent possible these facilities must also incorporate the principles of the CFMP and incorporate the ideals and considerations of today's recreation facility design and program directions.

Local community serving facilities should accommodate programming all ages with spaces designed to support programs for preschoolers, social and program space for youth and older adults, active recreation spaces for such activities as afterschool programs, crafts, non-equipment based fitness and exercise activities, spaces for local meetings, and of course areas for casual socializing. Local community centres generally do not incorporate major facility components found within a multi-district community centre and take into consideration existing assets so as to not compete or duplicate services.

5.2 Analysis of Overall Facility Needs

The geographic area considered in this review is the north-western area of the Peninsula with respect to community serving recreation facilities (generally the western, northern and downtown areas of the Peninsula). The “north-western” demarcation is not a rigid “line”. Residents from beyond the Peninsula and residents from more southern portions of the Peninsula use the community facilities in the study area occasionally, or even on a regular basis.

5.2.1 Multi-District Facility Gap Analysis

The reader is referred to 5.3.1 regarding more detailed analysis of the Halifax Forum. The Forum, or at least that site, is appropriate for development of as a multi-district recreation facility. Typically, facilities that function as district-wide (e.g., serving populations of 40,000 to 50,000) community centres incorporate a variety of major recreation and community facility components including aquatic facilities, large gymnasia, fitness facilities including equipment based and free exercise areas, indoor walking tracks, libraries, major congregating spaces, spaces for arts and cultural activities such as dance and visual arts.

Many communities also incorporate multi-pad ice facilities and indoor field houses. These facilities also give consideration to active transportation, housing intensification, reduction of automobile transportation in major urban centres (increasingly a general urban planning principle), and general concern to maintain safe and pleasant neighbourhoods, the inclusion of facilities that require many acres of parking (or expensive parking garages), would be counterproductive to those objectives. Notwithstanding the previous comment, inclusion of a single major event arena is consistent with objectives of urban planning and attraction to downtown businesses.

The existing Forum site is an appropriate location, centrally located within the northern half of the Peninsula, to fulfill the role of the multi-district community centre. The facility as it exists however, is inconsistent with the “ideal” multi-district community centre, and would need to be largely rebuilt (while incorporating elements as appropriate of the original Forum Arena) to serve this function.

While this review did not proceed with a feasibility study for a multi-district community centre⁶⁰, in the consultant’s experience⁶¹ the following elements would be appropriate for a multi-district facility to serve the northern half or two thirds of the Peninsula include: (1) original Forum Arena (2) future aquatic facility that at minimum accommodates a 25m pool, (3) double gymnasium to meet the needs of replacing the Bloomfield gymnasium (4) spaces for visual and creative arts including dance studio / spaces suitable for recreation artistic activities (5) social and congregating space (6) large multi-purpose program space suitable for large events, active recreation etc. (7) indoor

⁶⁰ Please see Page 1, Introduction regarding mid-point changes to the study scope.

⁶¹ Based on feasibility studies and market assessments completed by dmA and facilities viewed and assessed by dmA in communities across Canada.

walking track (8) meeting and program rooms to accommodate rentals from groups across the Peninsula and perhaps beyond.

Currently the configuration of the Forum is not consistent with principles of urban community development that seeks to minimize urban traffic, large parking areas, excessive noise and traffic in urban areas etc. Any new development of the Forum site should consider these concerns.

Programs, facilities and services of a multi-district community centre should be accessibility to all residents of the district. Accessibility refers not only to physical accessibility but also financial access. Most public recreation facilities utilize a range of pricing tools and options to access programs and facilities (e.g., annual memberships, multiple “times” tickets, registration fees for programs, pay-as-you go fees, and reduced cost or no-cost options). Traditionally access to programs and facilities in HRM's multi-district facilities has been through membership fees and rentals. To be truly accessible adoption of a full range of fee for service options is needed. This is particularly important when considering the dual role a multi-district facility plays with respect to local community space for area residents.

5.2.2 District 11: Halifax North End

District 11: Halifax North End is the north-west section of the Peninsula. The two municipal community recreation facilities (considered in this study) in this area are the St. Andrews Community Centre and the Needham Community Centre.

There is some indication that the facility serves as a local community centre to the neighbourhoods to the west (Fairview, Clayton Park). It is likely that participants from Fairview and Clayton Park (for example) are in fact part of broader community serving rentals as other local facilities are or will soon be in closer proximity.

With a population of 14,892 District 11 should be served by at least one Category 1 “spoke” facility. The use of electoral districts and population numbers in themselves are however, somewhat arbitrary. Within District 11 are two distinct areas considered high needs, both distinct enough to suggest that more than one facility may be required. To the extent that these can be provided through partnerships with other providers this higher level of service to population may be accommodated.

St. Andrews is not geographically situated to truly serve as a local community centre for the District 11 area but rather, due to its peripheral location and ready access to the 100 series highways, draws regional users in equal proportions to local users. The facility is geographically at the perimeter of the community it serves, is not easily accessed from the broader district and is not particularly visible to the local community.

Unlike St. Andrews Community Centre, Needham Community Centre is reasonably situated to serve the needs of the more local community. However, the Needham Centre has limitations including: small size of program rooms, absence of dedicated senior's space, and issues of physical accessibility. There are several non-municipal facilities in the area that offer recreation activities for seniors and at present HRM has not identified a significant demand for dedicated seniors space.

As an older facility Needham Community Centre lacks energy efficiency elements that would make it a more sustainable operation. Finally, an aquatic facility is not typically considered a component of a local community facility.

Section 5.3.3 provides more specific analysis related to the Needham Community Centre as a local serving facility. The potential to redevelop local indoor recreation space as part of the possible future redevelopment of Highland Park Junior High would provide an excellent opportunity to develop a modern locally oriented community centre within District 11. The development of Highland Park Junior High is currently unfunded.

The number and distribution of major and busy roads in the area (Connaught, Bayers, Windsor, Young, Agricola, etc.) make travel by walking or biking difficult from one individual neighbourhood to another. Regardless of location access to a local serving community centre for the District 11 area must address the issue of active transportation access. There may not be any better land options to site local community serving facilities, however locations that are central to the District but also within convenient walking or busing distance for all residents should be explored and be considered as preferential.

5.2.3 District 12: Halifax Downtown

District 12, is along the eastern edge of the Peninsula and has a population of 14,352 residents (just slightly smaller than District 11). District 12 includes the George Dixon Community Centre and the new Citadel Community Centre.

George Dixon Community Centre is located near the northern boundary of District 12. It appears to be within or just beyond the Capital Region district as defined by HRMbyDESIGN and therefore is likely to feel the impact of growth through intensification in this area.

Given the current and anticipated population increase in the Capital Region (downtown Halifax) and District 12 and the areas of high needs/subsidized housing around George Dixon, two facilities in this area is not excessive. Citadel Community Centre responds to an audience that is broader than the immediately local community and clearly attracts users to its unique facilities from a much wider area.

Citadel Community Centre provides valued active recreation space serving many sport groups from the Peninsula and the wider HRM community. Access to the classroom space, library resources, etc., is also provided. It may not however, provide more general or less active recreation space e.g., spaces for pre-school or older adult programming in the immediate area. Students are not permitted to use Centre entrance during school hours. The Centre entrance is monitored by the front desk and the public has access for inquiries and registration".

5.2.4 Area Gap Analysis Summary

In the area covered by this review there is clearly a need for a multi-district community centre that could serve not only the specific communities in the north of the Peninsula but others somewhat farther south. The analysis also supports continued provision of community level facilities to serve two northerly areas in this study – areas currently served by Needham Community Centre and St. Andrews Recreation Centre and the more central community served by George Dixon Recreation Centre.

As a central multi-district facility the "Forum" would reasonably provide arena and aquatic facilities. The site's redevelopment should consider future replacement of Centennial Pool. Similarly, this site will be considered in the context of the long-term arena strategy which will address future need for the Devonshire Arena.

Section 5.3 analyzes each of the primary facilities in greater detail. Preliminary recommendations were developed for the facilities in this review.

5.3 Individual Facility SWOT Analysis

Each of the primary facilities in this review has been analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses relative to an *ideal situation* and with regard to the communities they serve. Assessment includes an analysis of structural considerations, program services, and operating profile. The analysis by facility was used to prepare the overall analysis (section 5.2) regarding how facilities on the Peninsula work together – successfully or less so – to present a comprehensive spoke and hub facility model⁶².

5.3.1 Halifax Forum Assessment

The Halifax Forum is located within the District 14 area. The socio-demographic characteristics of this District, while relevant to more local facilities, are less relevant to the Forum in that it will be considered as a multi-district facility, therefore responding to at least the population of the four study divisions. While the Forum does not sit in an area of significant projected growth, it is close to the Bloomfield development and its redevelopment would certainly augment the development of

⁶² The use of the term "spoke and hub" references this term in the 2008 HRM Recreation Facility Master Plan.

the Bloomfield area as it would complement the culturally focused activities at Bloomfield with more sport and fitness centered activities as the Forum. These two aspects could conceivably act as major attractions that would support increased population growth in the vicinity. The site also abuts an area with a significant older adult population⁶³, and redevelopment should anticipate the needs of that demographic.

The Halifax Forum, while dated and not well designed to serve as a *Category 2* facility is well situated in the centre of the north half of the Peninsula to serve this role. It is well served by public transportation at two main entrances. Future developments on the perimeter of the Peninsula to accommodate parking could enhance access by transit users. The active transportation plans for the area will connect the site by both primary and secondary bike routes.

There are a number of fairly significant issues with the facility as it currently exists. In addition to the general age of the facility, it does not meet current codes for accessibility, and does not have sufficient space to accommodate current parking during the many events it holds. One of the more noticeable detractors for this site is the general disorganization of the circulation system. The facility has been built in phases over its almost 90 year history. Phases were added in the absence of a comprehensive master plan, resulting in an inefficient facility from an operational and programming perspective.

The original Forum Arena has a heritage designation. The City's principal heritage objective is "the preservation and enhancement of areas, sites, structures, streetscapes, and conditions in Halifax which reflect the City's past, historically and/or architecturally." Among the several implications of this policy are two that are relevant to any future development of the Forum site. First, a registered heritage building cannot be altered in a way that diminishes its heritage value; and secondly development must maintain the integrity of the heritage property and streetscape⁶⁴. While other components of the Forum Complex do not have a heritage designation preliminary comments from staff indicate that the Civic Arena is reasonably new and continues to provide appropriate opportunities to ice and other users. Other components of the Forum are however, deemed to be more expendable.

The bingo hall and multi-purpose space are designed to support revenue generation for the facilities ongoing operating costs. The development of the Casino in downtown Halifax has presumably cut into some of these revenues. We understand that trade show numbers are consistent although it is unclear whether this is the best site with respect to trade show promoters and visitors. The limitations of parking and disruptions to the local community may warrant reassessment of this as the most appropriate site for such events.

⁶³ Statistics Canada, census tract data, Census tract 20 = 29% 65+, Census tract 19 = 14% 65+

⁶⁴ Policy 6.8 of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy

There is a benefit to an event arena, particularly an historic one such as the Forum, in the central core. Many communities build on such arenas to attract visitors to their city centres and this remains a viable option for the Forum.

From initial consultation it was noted that the Forum Board of Directors had spoken about the potential for including a fitness centre on the site to add a walking track around one of the arenas, and to add commercial retail uses to this space. These are all realistic options to consider where a primary mandate of the Board is to operate the Forum Complex as a profit centre (or at least to minimize annual net costs). There are however issues with each of these options.

First, there are private fitness facilities in the downtown core and we understand the YMCA has plans to redevelop the downtown Y to include a fitness facility. Those along with fitness facilities associated with the universities may result in oversupply of fitness. At minimum a full assessment of capacity and plans of other providers should be undertaken before contemplating development of a fitness facility.

The addition of an indoor walking track is a popular trend and well suited to this location. There is a need to replace the gymnasium from the Bloomfield Centre. Depending on final recommendations regarding other local community centres in the study area spaces such as multi-purpose and meeting space could be added. To accommodate these additions it is likely that all but the original Forum Arena will need to be removed. A sensitive combination of the historic façade and other elements of the original Forum with a modern multi-district facility that incorporates the elements of an ideal district centre would be appropriate for this site. This complete (largely) redevelopment would not only enhance the recreation services to the Peninsula it would reduce operating costs through better facility design and a more energy efficient facility.

This analysis supports the creation of a Category 2 multi-district community centre at the Forum complex site.

5.3.2 St. Andrews Community Centre Assessment

St. Andrews Community Centre falls within the District 11 study area. With the imminent closure of the Bloomfield Centre and the recommendation (preliminary) to redevelop the Forum as a multi-district community centre, St. Andrews is one of only two local community centres at opposite ends of District 11.

With a population of 14,892 residents the District should reasonably be served by at least one local community centre. The District population has decreased in the past ten years and is not in a projected future growth area. The St. Andrew's facility itself is surrounded by areas of low income and high unemployment which would be expected in a subsidized housing community like Bayers-Westwood, which abuts the facility. School populations in the area have seen a 14% decrease from 1996-2006⁶⁵. The District has an immigrant population of approximately 9%; however there is a higher concentration of 12% around St. Andrew's. On the opposite side of Bayers Road is a large senior's population. This may account in part for the high use of the facility by adults over 55, although given the road patterns this access is likely largely by automobile.

The former classrooms work well for many of the rental groups who look for larger meeting and program space. The availability of space and parking makes this an attractive rental and program location. Approximately just under half of the members of the rental groups are not from the local community but rather from the wider HRM community.

The facility is not well designed for local congregating (casual social and waiting space) and program space. There are indications that as mentioned in the above paragraph that the local community may not be the dominant users of the facility. Staff suggested that there are some challenges to getting exact data regarding the number of participants who use the facility on a drop in basis however they suggest that most of these users are from the local community.

The facility has fairly large annual utility and maintenance costs, consistent with an older facility and one with significant rental use.

Preparing a preliminary direction for St. Andrews was one of the more difficult in this review. On one hand it is an important local serving community centre serving a fairly large population; it is apparently well used by rental groups due to the nature of the space and the availability of parking; and it abuts a high needs area, which should make it a priority relative to the *Recreation Blueprint*. On the other hand it is not easily accessed except by car from most parts of the District. Additionally it may require added efforts in reaching out to the local community as some feel it is not well integrated with the Bayer-Westwood community, and it appears to equally serve a city-wide cliental and a local cliental. It may be possible that city wide cliental may be able to be served elsewhere should there be suitable space and parking.

⁶⁵ Based on an aggregate of Community Counts data for age groups 5-9, 10-14, 15-19

5.3.3 Needham Recreation Centre Assessment

The Needham Recreation Centre is also located in District 11. The facility itself is surrounded by a low income housing area with a significant senior population and a higher concentration of Elementary/Secondary aged children and youth than District 11. While the District 11 area as a whole is not a significantly low income area compared to the Peninsula the community immediately surrounding the Needham Recreation Centre is an area of low income and high levels of unemployment.

Needham Recreation Centre has very high operating costs, lacks physical accessibility consistent with current building code. Aquatic program registration has been declining at the facility while non-aquatic program registration has increased. The facility is well used by local youth with the highest use of such programs as *Night Hoops*. The day care within the facility has only eight subsidized spots while the day care across the road is 90% subsidized. The Needham daycare is currently on a lease with a non-renewal clause.

Similar to St. Andrews, there are a number of conflicting considerations with the Needham Recreation Centre. Unlike St. Andrews however, it is clear that, notwithstanding the day care centre, the Needham Recreation Centre is well used by local residents, particularly youth. The high senior population may not be as well provided for at this particular facility as they could be however, seniors currently are participating at other facilities on the Peninsula⁶⁶. Should demand for increased senior's service become apparent, an assessment process will be undertaken according to the Recreation Blueprint's service level criteria. While the facility is reasonably well positioned to serve as a local Category 1 community centre the facility is inefficient, is not wheelchair or fully accessible and is not as well designed as it should be to serve today's needs.

The Halifax Regional School Board's planning document "Imagine our Schools" has identified Highland Park Junior High school as # 9 on the list of schools projected for redevelopment in Phase One of that Plan. HRSB planning staff did note however, that when phase two is completed # 9 on Phase One could drop in priority. Should HRSB proceed to redevelop Highland Junior High they would be very interested in working with HRM and other partners as appropriate to develop a true community school. This would present an opportunity to redevelop Needham Recreation Centre.

It is also noted that Needham Recreation Centre is just less than two kilometers from the Halifax Forum, which if redeveloped as a multi-district community centre could also easily serve as a local community centre for residents within several kilometers. Staff have noted however, that local youth would not likely participate in programs beyond their community.

⁶⁶ CRS Staff, personal transmission

5.3.4 George Dixon Recreation Centre Assessment

George Dixon Recreation Centre located in District 12 is surrounded by an area of low median income levels, high unemployment and a large number of lone parent families. The area also has a significant population of school aged children and older adults.

George Dixon operates many free and community based programs within the study area indicating a high commitment and responsiveness to the local community. The Centre is well located with potential for expansion and is well situated in attractive green space.

Staff have established strong connections with other service providers in the community, with those service providers indicating very positive responses to these initiatives.

5.3.5 Citadel Recreation Centre Assessment

Citadel Recreation Centre also located in District 12, is a new facility built in conjunction with the Citadel High School. Its three gymnasias and other facilities are well used by the school and the community. Easy access to parking and the adjacent commons make this a popular site for not only residents in the immediate area but perhaps for all who come to the Peninsula for work. There are however, limitations with the centre with respect to times of access (very little daytime use during the school year)- currently community use is Monday through Friday after 5:30, weekends, plus exclusive use during the summer months and March Break".

6.0 CONSULTATION

Consultation activities were held in two stages. First, preliminary recommendations were reviewed with the project Steering Committee, HRM Senior Staff, the Forum Board of Directors, and Councillors for the Peninsula. Participants in the initial round of consultations were asked to comment on the preliminary recommendations. Themes from those meetings are summarized in section 6.1.

Further investigation of future plans of the Halifax YMCA, Dalplex (Dalhousie University), and the Tower (St. Mary's University) was undertaken with input noted where appropriate to the theme.

Following the initial consultation managed by the consultants, HRM staff undertook a more extensive consultation process. The engagement process allowed for a variety of consultation opportunities. The mechanisms for sharing and gathering information included:

- 28 small group facilitated sessions (maximum 15 participants);
- 2 online surveys (one specific to community centre feedback and one specific to a multi-district facility);
- Option to send personal comments to a project specific email address;
- Option to make a phone call to a project specific number.

In advance of this process staff developed a FAQ sheet that was posted on the HRM website and provided to participants in the various consultations. The input from the second stage consultations are summarized in section 6.3.

Please note the information provided in this section reflects the input of the community and various stakeholders, staff, and elected officials. No attempt was made to verify the accuracy of these comments. Except where explicitly noted the comments in this section do not reflect the position of the consultants, but the opinions of those who participated in the consultations.

6.1 Input to Preliminary Recommendations from Staff, Councilors and Forum Board

6.1.1 Facility Infrastructure

With the exception of the Citadel Community Centre and the Civic Arena all the municipally owned facilities in this review are over 30 years of age. Staff noted that the high cost of maintenance, which has limited the extent of upgrades, has resulted in many buildings that are not energy efficient and require costly repairs. The age of most of the facilities predates legislation for accessibility and most of the facilities in this review are not barrier free. Some facilities were not initially built as recreation facilities and consequently do not provide spaces consistent with the type

of facilities that meet the program requirements of Category 1 (local community serving) facilities. None provide the type of spaces of a multi-district community centre.

The Halifax Forum has seen various additions during its approximate 90 years of operation. Over the years additions were added without an overall master plan.

6.1.2 Policy Direction

It is the Municipality's goal and policy that community managed facilities, regardless of category, achieve a net "0" annual cost to the Municipality. Those that are operated by the Municipality directly and are within high needs communities do receive tax support. The CFMP notes that this policy is increasingly a challenge. Further the CFMP recommends that the Recreation Blueprint be amended to support equitable user fees and subsidies across all indoor and outdoor service delivery areas, and further to increase financial support for Community Boards through the Community Contribution Fund⁶⁷. There are indications that this direction is being considered in new developments and current planning initiatives.

As an event facility the Halifax Forum has to date operated with no annual tax-based financial input. To do this the Forum has incorporated programming that is not specifically recreation (as per the Department's definition of what constitutes recreation activities). While this is not necessarily an issue in its operation as an event facility the type of activities currently incorporated within the Forum's operation may not be consistent with a more recreationally focused facility. Forum Board of Directors expressed concern regarding the need to generate sufficient revenues to cover all annual operating costs if some of the current facility components were eliminated.

In a similar vein some concerns were expressed regarding the type and scope of programming supported within local (Category 1) recreation facilities. In some cases the nature of existing space (e.g., St. Andrews Community Centre) lends the facility to use by non-recreation uses. This use does bring in revenue but concern was noted by some that this may be at the expense of a more recreational focus.

6.1.3 The Role of Other Providers and Public Recreation Facilities

Consultation with staff at St. Mary's University's athletic centre – the Tower, Dalhousie University's athletic facility - Dalplex, and the Halifax YMCA, as well as with HRM staff, confirms that these facilities do provide recreation program and facility options for residents on the Peninsula and those who work but perhaps do not live on the Peninsula. All three service providers are in the process of expanding and upgrading their respective facilities. St. Mary's anticipates funding to begin construction of a new arena and to develop an associated fitness and wellness facility. Dalhousie is completing a significant university-wide planning process to construct new facilities and redevelop

⁶⁷ CFMP pg. 63

current ones, and has broached the idea of a partnership to HRM. The YMCA has plans for major new development adjacent to its current site (currently the site of CBC South Park and Sackville streets) which they hope will proceed to site plan approval in the coming year. In consultations with staff of these three facilities some concern was noted with respect to the overall fitness market and potential saturation of that market⁶⁸.

6.1.4 Program Focus of Local Facilities

HRM recreation facilities on the Peninsula have differing success in attracting and engaging local populations. Some facilities, notably Citadel Community Centre, but also St. Andrews Community Centre, both Category 1 facilities, attract users from beyond what might be assumed to be their local areas.

6.1.5 Timing of Implementation of Directions

HRM staff indicated in the initial round of review that no facilities would be closed until a better replacement is found. There will be issues regarding how the staging of this process is completed. This has particular implications for such facility components as the Needham Pool, and the Forum arenas. With respect to the Forum, HRM staff and area Councillors indicated that the original Forum Arena is a heritage facility and will not be removed regardless of other redevelopment that may take place on the Forum site. As a long term strategy Centennial pool could be relocated to the Forum site. Staff noted timing of that development (anticipated to be perhaps fifteen years or more in the future) is not likely to fit with current needs of the Needham pool. Any future plans for the Civic and Devonshire arenas must be consistent with findings of a further assessment of ice needs.

6.1.6 Service Needs

Area Councilors indicated that many smaller community venues such as church halls are closing due to dwindling community support and consequently there is increased pressure on HRM facilities to provide community meeting and program space.

The southern portion of the Peninsula (below Quinpool Road) is served primarily by private, agency and institutional recreation providers. This area has been identified by Councilors as offering little in the way of HRM recreation facilities. They further noted that the current Citadel Community Centre is not fulfilling a role for the local community, as per discussion in this report related to non-active recreation programs.

⁶⁸ Consultation with the YMCA was a formal consultation, discussions with both DalPlex and SMU were less formal and comments must be taken as opinions rather than formal positions of these organizations.

6.2 Themes from Initial Public Meeting Consultations

Three public meetings were held to present the preliminary recommendations of HRM Peninsula Recreation Facility Review and to solicit input from the local communities. Meetings were held at Needham Community Centre, St. Andrew's Community Centre, and the Halifax Forum on the evenings of November 23rd, 25th and 26th 2009 respectively. The following sections note themes that emerged from the public meetings.

6.2.1 St. Andrew's Community Centre

A public meeting to discuss preliminary recommendations for St. Andrews Community Centre was held at the Centre on November, 25th. The total attendance for the meeting was approximately 150 people, many from the Bayers-Westwood area. City Councilors from District 11, 12, & 14 were present.

Residents who attended the public meeting stressed the importance of the St. Andrew's Community Centre as a focal point for socialization and collective community history. Emphasis on the importance of having the space to call home for both the seniors and children in the area was frequently expressed. Those in attendance viewed St. Andrew's as a key component to their community, for both youth and seniors. A number of participants indicated that they had been using the facility from childhood to adulthood in one form or another and that the facility is one that community members use throughout the stages of life.

Participants noted concern for accessibility, indicating it is limited for those with reduced mobility. Suggested upgrades included the installation of an elevator and adjustments to the general flow in the building through some structural changes. Concern over external access to the building was raised regarding the surrounding streets.

Parents expressed concern over children having to cross Bayers Road to access the Centre. The option to provide a left turning lane from Bayers to Romans Avenue was mentioned. External lighting was identified as a safety concern for those using St. Andrew's at night. Signage was also mentioned as limiting visibility of the Centre in the larger community.

Opportunities for the site such as increased and better marketing of information on programs and classes, the addition of change rooms, the creation of outside recreational space and the addition of more intergenerational and multicultural community programming were mentioned several times. There were concerns over the suitability of some classrooms for meetings and the need for additional recreational programs and capacity building programs and activities.

Overall there was acknowledgement that the facility does require some fairly substantial upgrades such as the addition of an elevator and the development of associated outdoor recreation space.

There was no opposition to the creation of the Forum as a multi-district community centre as long as it did not result in the loss of St. Andrew's.

6.2.2 Needham and George Dixon Community Centres

Needham Community Centre was the site of a public meeting generally aimed at input related to Needham and George Dixon Centres. Total attendance was approximately 175 people, many from the Mulgrave Park area as well as a significant number of parents of children from the Needham day care. The Councilor for District 11, and Maureen MacDonald, Minister of Health, Minister of Health Promotion and Protection were present, and made statements at the meeting. The primary comments at this meeting focused on Needham Community Centre.

Participants indicated strong community support for the current Needham Centre indicating that the Centre plays a central role in the community notably with respect to the day care and aquatic facility. The importance in investing in the Needham Centre over a multi-district / multi-purpose facility was mentioned repeatedly. Community members expressed the view that HRM does not take the needs of their community into account when making decisions and that increased public input is necessary.

Overall two primary themes arose from the meeting: 1) any changes to the Needham Centre, physical or programming wise would be unacceptable. 2) The community did not support the development of the Forum as a multi-district community centre.

In spite of repeated attempts by presenters to solicit input from those in attendance regarding what programs, services or amenities might be lacking in the Needham Centre, limited input of this nature was forthcoming. Participants appeared of the opinion that the Centre faced imminent closure, which became the focus of their input. Relevant comments that were provided included: expression of concern over the current state of programming at the Centre (e.g., inconvenience of programming times and the limited variety and amount of programming available in particular for afterschool programs); and interest in an arts and crafts space and a media studio for youth.

6.2.3 Halifax Forum

The final of the three public meetings scheduled for Phase Two of the Study was held from 7:00 – 8:30 PM at the Halifax Forum's Multi Purpose Centre. The total attendance, not including staff, was approximately 19 people. City Councilor Jennifer Watts of District 14 and MLA Howard Epstein were in attendance.

Issues that arose from the presentation were limited. Two of the primary issues related to accessibility and cost of the development of the Forum as envisioned in the presentation. Accessibility (physical and financial) was presented as being of the utmost importance for any

redevelopment of the Halifax Forum site. The current state of the building was mentioned as presenting numerous barriers for those with limited mobility or other sensory disabilities.

Access to the Centennial Centre's pool as it currently operates was called into question. It was suggested that the current management arrangement for the facility restricts community access. It was suggested that an additional 50 meter pool be constructed on the Peninsula, perhaps at the Halifax Forum site.

The cost of actually building and operating a multi-district community centre at the Forum site was called into question based on the current operating and capital costs incurred by similar facilities in HRM such as the Sackville Sports Stadium and the Dartmouth Sportsplex. Attention to the costs a facility of this type may incur, and the resulting price for community access was expressed.

Unrelated to that night's presentation but significant nonetheless was the raising of concerns over the involvement of residents from the Needham and St. Andrew's communities. The speaker who raised the concern felt that it is imperative that these communities have a significant role in any decisions made regarding their respective community centres especially in regards to service reductions or reorientations.

There was general acceptance of the concepts and models presented for HRM Peninsula recreation facilities. Overall those present did not take issue with the proposed development of the Halifax Forum as a multi-district community centre nor with the development of the smaller community centres increasing their focus on local community services and programs.

6.3 Second Stage Consultation

To acquire a more detailed perspective from members of the general public, HRM staff developed and led a comprehensive, facilitated process with citizens that included small group sessions (28 advertised and 24 conducted); online surveys – one for general community centre feedback and the other specific to the multi-district facility concept; and (3) and email address and (4) phone number, both of which the public could use to provide commentary. A Frequently asked Question (FAQ) sheet regarding the study process was prepared and shared at the consultations and posted on the Municipal website. This FAQ included summary points from relevant background reports such as the CRFMP and the preliminary recommendations⁶⁹.

Approximately two hundred participants participated in the 24 workshops. Stakeholder groups included facility rental groups, aquatic users, program participants, facility staff, youth, seniors, residents associations, and the general public. Approximately one hundred online surveys were completed. Key themes that emerged from the second round of consultations included:

⁶⁹ These were the same preliminary recommendations presented at the initial round of consultation.

6.3.1 The Need for Equitable Access

Staff noted that the overwhelming comment from citizens indicated significant concerns regarding financial, physical, geographic, and cultural barriers to Municipal community facilities. Participants noted that:

- Facilities must be reasonably priced and affordable and that the current cost is in many cases prohibitive to their participation. This was especially prevalent in discussions related to a multi-district community centre, but was also a common comment related to the community centres in this analysis.
- Existing facilities are not physically accessible. The current design and configuration of Peninsula facilities prohibits appropriate access for citizens overall. Examples from lack of elevators to multi level hallways, poorly designed locker rooms, and general inability for citizens with mobility and visual disabilities to access facilities comfortably is a serious problem. In some cases citizens noted that lack of appropriate wayfinding signage at the facilities contributes to the challenges of access.
- Participants at the facilitated sessions noted that they greatly value the ability to walk safely to their community recreation centres on the Peninsula. That having facilities such as these conveniently located makes it possible for children to safely use the facilities after school, evenings and weekends, and that parents generally feel that their children are safe. Citizens spoke of a sense of community and connection created in these spaces that continues in their neighbourhoods, and that there is a sense of pride of ownership that exists.
- Group participants indicated that there is a desire for HRM to be more inclusive and flexible in program delivery relative to the types of programs and services that citizens value. Current facility design creates some limitations and some may require a broader interpretation of the definition of recreation. Examples of programming requests suggested were: family oriented programs, social programs for new immigrants, life skill development programs.

6.3.2 Suggestions for Facility Development

Participants in the focus groups and respondents to the Survey responded to our focus group questions and to the survey, indicated that by and large, they are happy with their community facilities from a “bricks and mortar” perspective. Participants were more likely to comment on limitations of current facilities than indicate what they liked about them. The following list outlines what second round consultation participants identified as adjustments for each of the facilities in this study

St Andrews Community Centre

Citizens were clear in their message that the location for this facility is paramount to the quality of life of neighbourhood residents. Further, although there are some large groups using the facility that do not live directly in the area, those groups fit nicely with other users of the Centre, enhance the overall experience, and are welcome at the centre.

However, the facility is dark, not accessible to the second floor, is problematic for wheel chair athletes, and only multi use spaces rather than purpose built elements. In addition, citizens spoke of their desire to have outdoor spaces developed with sitting and play areas as part of the overall service provision. Comments regarding the state of the parking lot indicate a need to upgrade that area, and concerns regarding the new residential development, currently underway, indicates a need for more information regarding how the entities on the site will co-exist in future.

Suggestions for facility enhancements included the following:

1. **Basic Infrastructure Repair**
 - a. Requires an elevator for access to the second floor
 - b. Roadway, parking, signage, access from highway needs to be improved
2. **Facility enhancements**
 - a. Small cafeteria – café area
 - b. Separate rooms (noise)
 - c. Playground
 - d. Need a “youth” room
 - e. Dance studios and bigger rooms for activities
 - f. Rock climbing walls
 - g. Sinks with traps to strain paint – room for painting club with a sink and tables
 - h. Community kitchen
 - i. New tables
 - j. Computer room for families, youth and seniors
 - k. Facilities for children with special needs
 - l. Small library to share books / magazines

Needham Community Centre

Consultation participants noted that Needham centre meets all of their needs, and that they particularly enjoy the use of the pool. Participants recognize the limitations of the facility but are willing to compromise on other components to keep the pool open. Improvements required to the facility, however, were lengthy and included:

1. **Basic infrastructure**
 - a. An elevator for access to the second floor
 - b. Larger, better shower, locker room and washroom spaces
 - c. Pool ramped entrance for disabled
 - d. Better ventilation
 - e. Improved sound system
 - f. Improved parking / bike area
2. **Facility enhancements**
 - a. Bigger pool
 - b. Play equipment in the gym – balls, hula hoops, etc
 - c. Hot tub
 - d. Coffee / gift shop

- e. Amateur theatre space
- f. Computer room for kids
- g. Weight room
- h. Climbing wall
- i. Studio spaces
- j. Change 4th floor to youth room
- k. Outdoor court with lights

George Dixon Community Centre

Generally the community likes the facilities they have – especially the outdoor facilities. Indoor facilities are limiting and are not completely accessible. There is a ramp available for one level of access but no apparent access to the upstairs areas. Suggestions for facility enhancements fell generally into two categories - basic infrastructure repair and facility enhancements.

1. Basic Infrastructure Repair

- a. The need to repair the showers and saunas
- b. Need for improved heating and ventilation
- c. Need more windows
- d. Brighten up building

2. Facility enhancements

- a. Need for more equipment in the gymnasium for programs (i.e., mats, skipping ropes, hula hoops, basketballs, etc.)
- b. Need for a “teen room”
- c. Need a “work out” gym
- d. Desire for a bigger computer room
- e. Running track
- f. Picnic tables and benches outside
- g. Canteen
- h. Roller blade or skate board facility
- i. Place for senior – coffee, tea, etc
- j. Walking track outside with a measured km

Citadel Community Centre

The consultation process for Citadel attracted current users of the facility, restricted primarily to gym users. For this reason the responses did not indicate a broad comment relative to the types of facility components and services that one would typically expect to have available at a community centre. There were three primary groups that offered comments: Part time and casual staff; rental groups; and representatives from HRSB. Their comments are summarized here.

1. Basic infrastructure

- a. Signage outside isn't noticeable
- b. Proper lighting (things get stuck in the lights)
- c. Technology in space – need wireless

2. Facility enhancement

- a. Need for a staff room
- b. Need for a kitchen for summer and march break camp programs
- c. Need a craft room with tables
- d. Multipurpose room with a kitchen
- e. Storage room
- f. Place for parents and children to sit and wait while others are in programs (chairs, magazines, etc)
- g. Equipment – mats, stereo
- h. All weather field
- i. More space for football dressing rooms
- j. Performance space would be nice
- k. Multi purpose rooms for meetings / events
- l. Conference room – plenary area
- m. Weight room
- n. Multi purpose room – screens and projectors
- o. Outdoor facilities attached to the entre – fields, gardens

6.3.3 Program and Services Delivery

Participants offered numerous suggestions for services they felt would be appropriate for community centres to offer. Some of those suggestions and ideas were:

St. Andrews

Sports/Fitness Activities	Group Programs/Classes (non-sport)	General Services for Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> baseball sport nights for girls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more dance programs/classes food programs for seniors off site university programs pottery music/mixed media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> place to relax for youth games and TV computers for leisure programs to bring community together (new immigration population) more programs for children outdoor programs playground, park area, picnic table party hall licensing

Needham Centre

Sports/Fitness Activities	Group Programs/Classes (non-sport)	General Services for Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aquacise • earlier swims • boxing • basketball tournaments • walking group • tai chi • yoga • roller skating at Devonshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cooking classes • movie night • dances for 14+ and -14 • homework assistance • bingo for teens • cake decorating for kids/adults • hip hop dance • art classes • summer camp • health for seniors & other issues • health promotion programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should be open on weekends • programs to be advertised better • babysitting services while parents in programs • evening programs for adults • computer access for youth and seniors • more evenings/weekends • "tween" programs • keep programs going all summer • more training for life guards & instructors • innovative programming

George Dixon

Sports/Fitness Activities	Group Programs/Classes (non-sport)	General Services for Centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yoga • Pilates • karate • boxing • sports for kids (t-ball, volleyball, baseball, dodge ball) • badminton • tennis & squash courts • girl night hoops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belly dancing • cooking classes (youth & adults) • dance lessons (hip hop, ballet) • stomp • guitar lessons • life skill education sessions for youths • cheerleading • homework club • mime theatre • music programs (daytime) for seniors • workshop for kids (peer mentoring, bullying, etc.) • movie nights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open more hours • computer room to be open every day • more evenings for game nights • keep a balance • more stuff for junior leaders • more programs for adults • more non-sport programs • more youth programs for visually impaired • more activities after 5:30 pm • opportunities to volunteer • awards for kids (e.g., achievement awards) with parent & community involvement

Citadel Community Centre

Sports/Fitness Activities	Group Programs/Classes (non-sport)	General Services for Centre
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • later hours • facility should ask for community input • not enough gym space • better advertising

6.4 Comparison of First and Second Round Consultations

First and second round consultations were reasonably consistent around issues related to infrastructure requirements.

For **St. Andrews**, Centre staff, the study architects, and participants in both rounds of consultation identified the need to enhance physical accessibility with the addition of an elevator, ventilation and washroom upgrades, as well as some painting and freshening of the interior. Staff and Study architect also noted the need to repave the parking lot. In the second round of consultation with facility users more detailed facility enhancements were identified including specific room types and uses to expand the program options. With respect to programming second round consultation participants identified a desire for additional sport activities for girls, more children's programs, adult education programs and opportunities for unstructured socializing.

For **Needham Community Centre** the Municipality's 5-year capital plan (prepared by staff) identified new flooring, painting, paving windows and sprinkler system, as well as some other program and "freshening" items, all of which were supported by the study consultants. Study architects also identified barrier reduction elements including an elevator and accessible washrooms, as well as some retrofitting of pool elements. Accessibility requirements were noted in both the first and second round of consultations. Additionally, participants in the second round focus groups identified additional program elements including coffee shop, weight room, studio spaces, and a larger pool. Second round participants identified a wide range of program interests. Of note the initial gap analysis identified a relative lack of programs at Needham Centre, an issue that may relate to financial accessibility. The desire for more programming options was echoed in the second round of consultations with a wide range of program suggestions for all age groups.

The Municipal 5-year capital plan for **George Dixon Centre** noted requirements for a new HVAC system, some interior painting, and expansion of the multi-purpose room. In addition to these requirements and some repointing of brickwork and interior painting the study architects also identified an elevator and barrier free entrance system for the Centre. Participants in the second round of consultation also noted the need for a new HVAC system and some freshening and

brightening of the facility. Second round consultation participants also noted facility enhancements related to program and space designation such as a work out gym, and teen room, measured walking track outdoor walking track etc.

As with Needham Centre program second round consultation participants also noted a reasonable number of program interests. Notably while there are currently a fair number of community and no or low cost programs at George Dixon there does appear to be a significant outstanding demand for more and different programming. This may also reflect an issue related to financial accessibility.

No specific public consultation was carried out in the first round of consultation for **Citadel Community** Centre. Staff did note the need for more space and the opportunity to expand to the unfinished second floor. Second round consultations with the community were generally consistent with earlier staff input with respect to expansion of both program space and program hours.

The second round of consultations did not result in any new information related to a **multi-district centre**. Three focus groups were advertised for this facility but were not well attended.

7.0 Recommendations

The recommendations in this section have been adapted as needed in response to both the initial and second round of consultations.

7.1 Multi-District Facility

Following the second and more detailed consultations (see section 6.3) it was determined that there were too many outstanding issues, and considerable additional information required, to prepare a detailed feasibility study for a multi-district facility at the Forum site. There was minimal participation in the second round of consultations, although three focus group opportunities were provided. Other outstanding issues with implications for development of a multi-district centre on the HRM Peninsula include completion of the long-term arena strategy, and an assessment of lifespan of Centennial Pool (to be assessed by the Infrastructure Asset Management group).

Recommendation 1: Prepare a feasibility study for a multi-district community centre for the Halifax Peninsula, including an assessment of market need, relevant competing markets, detailed business plan and facility design options.

7.2 Community Centres

The following recommendations for each of the facilities in this review are based on information gathered throughout the study process. Recommendation 2 related to St. Andrews Community Centre is further explored in section 8.0 of this report.

7.2.1 St Andrews Community Centre

Given the considerable outstanding work required to complete a schematic and business plan for a multi-district facility this activity of the work program was transferred to St. Andrews Community Centre.

Recommendation 2: Proceed with redevelopment of St. Andrews Community Centre, including design consultation process with the community.

Please see chapter 8.0 for detail on the high level concept for St. Andrews Community Centre redevelopment and for detail on estimated capital costs. Community engagement in the redevelopment process is also outlined in chapter 8.0.

7.2.2 Needham Community Centre

Needham Community Centre provides important and necessary programs and services to the surrounding community. The facility however, is dated, operationally inefficient, and cannot provide the full breadth of recreation experiences required by the community. The current site does not lend itself to redevelopment although in the immediate vicinity of the Centre the Municipality owns land (current Devonshire Arena) that could accommodate the Needham Centre redevelopment. The future of the Devonshire Arena will be addressed in the context of the long-term arena strategy currently underway.

With respect to issues related to current accessibility issues it is noted that this is a broad concern that cannot be rectified simply by the instillation of an elevator. An accessibility solution will require an overall redesign of the front, interior, pool access areas, and change rooms, in addition to an elevator.

Recommendation 3: Begin the planning process for a replacement facility for Needham Community Centre including: initiation of a design consultation process with community. Until then, it is recommended that recapitalization at this facility be restricted to items required to maintain safe usage only.

Recommendation 4: Gather feedback and suggestions from the Needham community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.

7.2.3 George Dixon Community Centre

The preliminary recommendations for George Dixon Recreation Centre indicated that it should remain largely as it currently is, although barrier free accessibility enhancements, and retrofit of roof insulation and damage should be part of the annual budget process. Further assessment of the implications for current programming and the facility were recommended in the context of decisions regarding the Forum, anticipated future intensification of the Capital Region (downtown Halifax), and plans of partners. All these recommendations remain relevant.

During both the second phase of consultation and in the information gathered for the planning context portion of this study, the relatively limited supply of registered programs, and the lack of diversity of programs in general were noted. The second phase of consultation also noted the absence of a formal vehicle for the local community to provide input to program and service needs. In light of that finding the following recommendation is put forward.

Recommendation 5: Proceed with the infrastructure retrofit plans for George Dixon CC as noted in the 5-year capital plan and additional investment to create barrier free access.

Recommendation 6: Gathering feedback and suggestions from the George Dixon community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.

7.2.4 Citadel Community Centre

Development of the second floor (and potentially a third floor) would enable more program diversity and extend use of an already active Centre. The existing unfinished second floor space, which is approximately 5,600 – 6,000 square feet, could also be divided into two levels. The school currently uses the unfinished second level for storage of sport equipment and would reasonably require space for this equipment if the “second floor” was fully developed as program space. This would provide the school with the newly created “third floor”, presumably not finished, with storage space.

It is not within the scope of this study to fully design and cost the finishing of the second floor. However, assuming approximately 6,000 square feet of unfinished space the following new spaces could be created:

- Division of the space into two floors, the second new floor (third floor) left unfinished;
- Addition of an elevator to the second and third (unfinished floor);
- Appropriate washrooms for public use;
- project work spaces for up to 4 staff/individuals;
- Small Kitchenette;
- Division of remaining space to one large multi-purpose room and two to four break out rooms.

This general arrangement of space, and indication of need for this space, is supported by the current study. Staff indicated that an earlier estimate of \$2M had been suggested as the cost of the finishing of the second floor roughly as noted above. Study architects visited the site and confirm that the project as defined here is realistic within that budget figure and further have suggested that at today's costs they would estimate approximately \$1.8M to complete the work.

While Citadel staff provided input, as did a small number of community residents, it is the consultant's view that additional consultation with youth participants, participants of the Larry O'Connell pre-school program, and area residents is warranted. The school's use of future developed space is also relevant. Future developments at the Forum may have implications for the Citadel, particularly as these relate to use of active fitness, gymnasium space. Depending on the timing of a full feasibility study for the Forum staff may wish to include further assessment of the needs for Citadel Community Centre in this assessment. Timing of decommissioning of the Bloomfield facilities is also a factor for both facilities. It is therefore recommended that:

Recommendation 7: Gather information from current users of Citadel Community Centre and the Larry O'Connell facility to confirm area facility needs.

8.0 St. Andrews Community Centre Preliminary Feasibility Study

The communities immediately surrounding St. Andrews Community Centre have a population of approximately 15,000 residents. Some areas of the community include low income and high unemployment populations. Area school enrollment has decreased although the area has a relatively high immigrant population, which may contribute to increasing the younger population. There is a large older adult population on the opposite side of Bayers Road, which may contribute in part to the high use of the facility by adults over 55. The availability of space and parking makes this an attractive rental and program location.

Residents who attended the initial public consultation meeting stressed the importance of the St. Andrew's Community Centre as a focal point for socialization and collective community history. It is noted that the Centre as it is currently configured is not ideal for these activities. Those who attended both the initial and second round of consultations viewed St. Andrew's as a key component to their community, for both youth and seniors.

Members of the public who provided input noted that the facility is not bright and welcoming (in décor), is not accessible to the second floor, and has general limitations with respect to barrier free access though out. The lack of purpose built elements catering to different age groups and interests was noted. Limitations with outdoor spaces were also noted including the general absence of sitting and play areas, and need for parking lot repairs. Some participants noted the need for change rooms or better access to washrooms from the gymnasium. The need for external lighting and much improved signage was noted.

Doug Branscome, Recreation Area Co-ordinator for St. Andrews provided a number of documents including a report (prepared by Derico Symonds, youth leader for the Centre) titled "Children and Youth Moving Forward. The report summarized input from children and youth regarding their wishes for the centre. The youngest (5-11 years) identified a number of items related to equipment needs, and the desire to brighten up and paint the facility. Most relevant to the issue of facility concept was their desire for their own space that they refer to as "Kid's Zone". Youth aged 12 – 16 expressed a similar desire for "*space-of-their-own*".

The input of these young participants will be considered in section 8.2.2 related to programs. However, we note that the brightening and painting of this centre is very relevant to enjoyment of participants and this has been incorporated in the projected capital costs. With respect to designation of space this will also be addressed in section 8.2.2 although we note here that the second floor has six classroom areas. One of these is currently used by the Radio Club and another by Immigrant Services. Both have leases that will end in 2012.

8.1 Facility Concept

Figures 8.1 through 8.3 present: (1) an estimate of capital costs, (2) a conceptual view of the recommended alterations to the first and second floor, and (3) a site plan concept respectively.

These concepts are preliminary sketches to illustrate how the recommended indoor facility enhancements and outdoor recreation and amenity additions might be incorporated within and on the site. Following receipt of this Report and assuming approval of its recommendations related to St. Andrews Community Centre HRM will initiate the design process with a request for proposal. This process will incorporate review by the community and staff for the actual design elements.

Recommended enhancements at the level prepared for this review include:

Lower Level

- A new main entry – generally in the area currently used as the facility manager's office. The office space would be removed and a new opening to the stairwell created, as well as an elevator to the second floor. A skylight is provided in the entry to let in natural light. Sufficient area for waiting area inside the new lobby (e.g., for wheel-trans clients) has been created. Additionally, with plantings immediately outside the main entry a pleasant seating and waiting area can be created for waiting in warmer weather.
- On entering the building one would be greeted by staff at a new reception/control desk located at the "T" junction of the two main lower-level halls.
- The large activity room on the lower level – to the right on entering the building through the main doors is divisible into two rooms by a movable, sound diminishing wall. Both rooms are multi-purpose areas suitable for a variety of ages and interests.
- A sink and cupboards have been added to the activity room to support craft programs (clean up and storage).
- The storage toward the back of the larger of the two sections of this activity area has been adjusted to cover the back wall allowing an entry/exit door from the back of the room to the expanded kitchen across the hall. This new entry/exit is provided to enable participants who might use the kitchen (e.g., seniors or after school programs) closer and therefore safer proximity to the kitchen (so that food, hot beverages do not need to be carried down the hall to the other entrances).
- Some adjustment has been made to the downstairs washroom areas.
- The kitchen has been expanded and upgraded with new counters and cupboards, new kitchen equipment, plumbing and electrical changes.
- Reverse doors are provided in the entry to the gymnasium to comply with code.
- The current main entry is upgraded to code and can be used as a secondary or staff entrance.

- Staff offices are upgraded and reconfigured.
- New access doors to the playing field from the gymnasium are provided.
- New glare-free glazing in upper window walls of gymnasium provided.
- A new equipment room is provided at the back of the gymnasium with access to the outdoor sport field.
- New flooring is provided in the corridors as needed.

Upper Level

- Elevator to second floor and exists upgraded to comply with code.
- Male/female washrooms expanded and upgraded.

General Interior

- New light fixtures and controls, new electrical heat for additions and electrical modifications for elevator are provided.
- General painting and freshening of the interior is recommended.

Exterior

- Repaving of parking area, curbing and sidewalks added as well as some new sodding and landscaping.
- Oil truck and emergency vehicle access provided around the building.
- Access to St Andrews Avenue off the emergency access is provided.
- Play area and splash pad adjacent to the outdoor playing field. This area and costing includes provision for shade and a water feature. Both considered important in small park development particularly in urban areas and areas where summer temperature and cooling stations are required. The placement of this feature adjacent to the playing field provides a number of benefits including: a place for siblings to play while other family members are playing on the sport field; ease of supervision during summer day programs, safety away from parking and traffic areas. Ideally, the play area can be designed to create “eyes on the park” from adjacent planned residential development.
- Landscaping to the front and side of the building to provide a calming and pleasant exterior plan.

Cost estimates in Figure 8.1 are provided at a Class D level. Some of the items noted in Figure 8.1 could be phased. Additional consideration with respect to implementation, programming, design and supervision implications will be incorporated in the formal design stage. Most significantly, the proposed play area and splash pad in the playing area behind the facility. Prices given here are for a relatively modest water play and play structure area although relative to the overall costs these may not be insignificant. They would however, add to the general ambience of the facility and

provide outdoor areas for children and caregivers. Placement within the property should be assessed relative to the use of the playing field as a formal sport area.

Overall projected capital costs including contingencies, design fees, and HST at 15% are estimated at just over \$2,000,000.

High level capital costs for St. Andrews renovations are noted on the following page.

Figure 8.2 St. Andrews Main and Upper Floor Redevelopment Concept

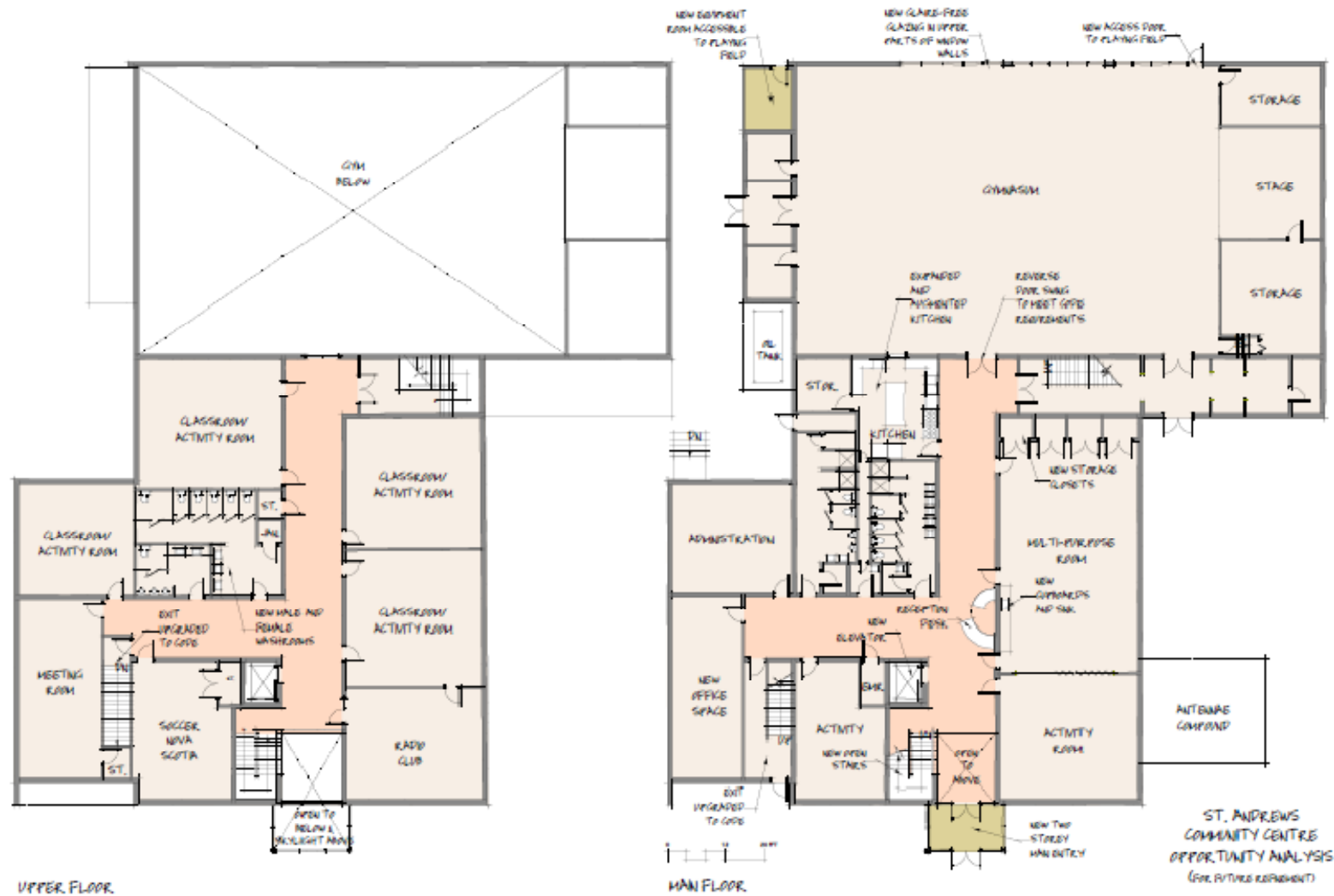


Figure 8.3: Site Plan Concept



8.2 Operating Plan

This section has been developed using information gathered through the two consultation processes, an assessment of need and opportunity relative to service and societal trends, and the redevelopment program for St. Andrews Community Centre outlined in section 8.1. The operating plan assumes HRM will continue to operate the centre in much the same way as it currently does – with municipal staff managing all program and operational tasks. Assuming that is the case this overview will not identify any staffing costs – those would remain as is. However, some adjustment in program direction is suggested based on the input of the community. Program suggestions are also noted. Finally, based on the building program, current costs, and proposed new initiatives, high level annual operating costs are noted.

8.2.1 Operational Directions

St Andrews Community Centre is operated directly by the Regional Municipality of Halifax. Centre staff⁷⁰ are responsible for managing rentals and developing programs (with community input). Staff use a number of tools to identify program needs including: demographic data, surveys in local schools, surveys of current users, community ideas and suggestions. Additionally, resources such as *Youth World Cafes*⁷¹, HRM Councillors, Community Police, youth staff, rental groups, and the Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre, provide helpful input.

Of the 46 Category 1 community centres in HRM 19 are municipally owned and operated, and 27 are municipally owned but operated by community boards of management (in a few cases other service providers) under a lease agreement. There are typically municipal recreation staff in all community centres, although some are simply officed in these facilities but do not have direct responsibility for programming within these facilities⁷² (e.g., Dartmouth North CC). In other cases, where a centre is quite new (e.g., Gordon R Snow CC) municipal staff are working to recruit and develop the management board, which when in place will assume responsibility for day-to-day management and programming.

The operational arrangement at St. Andrews reflects two factors, the most significant being that this is the way community recreation facilities in the former City of Halifax were operated, an approach that continues to be supported by area residents. The second factor reflects the higher needs in the community and a decision by the Municipality to provide increased management and programming support for this reason. This is by the way the same rationale for similar operation of George Dixon and Needham Community Centres.

⁷⁰ Area Recreation Co-ordinator, Programmer, Administrative Assistant, and part time staff.

⁷¹ An online process/website to share ideas and thoughts with those of similar interests.

⁷² Community recreation staff officed in these facilities have responsibilities for programming throughout a region, may use the centres for some programs, but also use other facilities including area schools.

Community Engagement in Centre Operation

One of the key points that emerged from the consultation activities was the extent to which community residents felt that St. Andrews contributed to, or would contribute to, the community's well being, if a number of changes were made. To a significant extent those suggestions were physical and have been incorporated in the concept presented earlier in this section.

Participants however, also expressed a desire for new program options. They noted a desire to access St. Andrews for community social gatherings (e.g., pot lucks, unstructured youth space, computer access for youth and families, a park gathering area etc.). There does not appear to be a clear reason why St. Andrews could not be used for these activities now, except perhaps related to revenue losses that might result (on the assumption that these activities were low cost and would be in place of a current rental).

The Area Recreation Co-ordinator notes that community development, which we assume to include community outreach, is a current staff role. There are indications from consultation activities that some, or perhaps many, in the community are not familiar with opportunities to access the Centre. Further, that community outreach is not happening in as assertive a manner as perhaps it should. In communities that are more transient, that include many new Canadian, and/or low-income families whose primary focus may not be on recreation or social opportunities community outreach must be much more overt than would be the case in a middle class community. Development of strong partnerships with other helping organizations is a prerequisite, as is flexibility in programming.

The interest expressed by participants in the Centre suggests that, while maintaining the current operational approach (HRM owned and operated), there would be great benefit to creating more ongoing and formal opportunities for community residents to become active in the life and direction of the Centre – beyond participation in programs. This could be achieved through a number of avenues and probably should be a multi-pronged approach. Suggestions include:

1. Community Centre program staff should increase efforts to create service partnerships with other helping agencies in the community (e.g., area housing managers, places of worship, youth service providers, senior service providers, immigrant service providers) not simply with respect to rental space but to identify and address recreational program needs.
2. HRM program staff should increase outreach and community development activities throughout the St. Andrews catchment area.
3. Developing communication and marketing approaches, perhaps in collaboration with other community agencies, to ensure that area residents know and understand the opportunities for use of the Centre.

4. Work with the community to establish a St. Andrews advisory committee representative of the community and long-term lease holders. It is recommended that in this regard community representation has the greater participation. Participation by lease representatives who can contribute to relevant program opportunities is appropriate. However, where leased space results in limitation of needed space by the community the community's needs should prevail.
5. Staff should initiate regular community input meetings and feedback regarding the results of these sessions.

Leased Space

There are currently four long-term leases at St. Andrews.

- The Halifax Amateur Radio Club is part way through a 5-year lease (2007-2012) of 1,040 sf. Rental revenue of \$693 per month based on a sf rate of \$8.00.
- The Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association and Halifax Immigrant ESL have two 5-year leases, one for 750 sf (2007-2012) and a second for 540 sf (2008-2013). Combined rental revenue from this lease is \$860 per month.
- Halifax City Soccer Club leases 780 sf under a 5-year lease arrangement (2007-2012) for 708 sf. Rental revenue is \$472 per month based on a sf rate of \$8.00.
- The Halifax Dartmouth Multicultural Council leases 170 sf on a 5-year lease (2007-2012) at a sf rate of \$5.000 for monthly revenue of just under \$71.00. The lease rate is reduced as both HRM and the Halifax Amateur Radio Club require access to the roof through this space.

With the exception of the Halifax City Soccer Club none of the other groups are considered to be recreation groups. It is understood that the arrangements reflect the pre-amalgamation responsibilities of the City of Halifax for social services. This has now changed and groups such as the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association and the Halifax Dartmouth Multicultural Council now come under Provincial responsibility. It is unclear where the Halifax Amateur Radio Club fits, although it is understood that the HARC has some connection to municipal emergency response (EMO) in which case it may indirectly be a municipal service.

While the City does not have a policy against renting space in its recreation facilities to non-recreation groups staff have indicated that in the future they should not be subsidizing this space.

This suggests a comment and a question.

1. If a service or lessee is not recreational in nature then presumably when leases come due for renewal they should be renewed at fair market rate. Table 4.9 on page 57 illustrates that current lease rates at St. Andrews are approximately \$3.50 ⁷³/ sf under the actual cost to operate and maintain the centre. It is also noted that current lease rates are between \$2.00 and \$8.00 below 2009 market rates for commercial space. Using these two indicators and at today's costs it would be reasonable to renew these rates at costs closer to \$12 / sf.
2. Should space be leased on an exclusive long-term basis to groups who are not recreation-based if the space could be used to provide additional recreation spaces?

It may not be possible to answer the second point at this time. All leases are at least two years from renewal, others are 3 years. However, in anticipation of the time for renewal of these leases consideration of use of these spaces should and will be made.

Of the seven larger “class rooms” on the upper level three are allocated to rental groups. Of the others, one is used as a dance studio (and for other activities), and at least one seems to be used for meetings. This leaves two spaces that could be developed as “kid” specific (Kid Zone) and youth specific spaces.

While both the children who participated in the Derico Symonds review and adults who participated in the second round of consultation indicated desire for a computer room for children, youth and families, incorporation of computers with more active space, or space for painting and crafts is not appropriate. However, it might be possible to allocate one of the current lease spaces (e.g., space used by MISA for classroom space) as a computer room, accessed under supervision during the day by MISA clients and (again under supervision) during after school hours by children, youth, families. A partnership with MISA and/or the local library or the business community to support this option could be considered.

There are of course many ways to configure this space to make it more program friendly. Partnerships with existing lease holders, area businesses, and other Municipal services such as the library can be engaged to benefit the interests and needs of all community members.

8.2.2 Program Direction

Suggestions for new program direction must be developed in the context of suggested changes noted in the preceding section. Desired program direction noted by participants in the consultation activities include additional youth programming, social programs/experiences for adults and families, more children's programming, and programs for adults. Staff note that: “finding space to add [additional programs] and ...the need to then identify additional [dollars] to support the new

⁷³ This is based on figures calculated using 2009 numbers and may therefore be somewhat low by 2010 costs.

programs [if access programs]"⁷⁴ are issues that might currently limit this type of programming. Staff further note that the revenues do not need to come from each program but that there is an overall expectation for revenue generation. The current arrangement that includes significant rentals is required to support the current number of Access programs.

Until or unless the operational issues are addressed it is unclear that staff can do much more to enhance the current supply of access programs. In other words, as long as there remains a requirement to minimize annual operational deficits through accommodation of significant rentals there will be space and financial constraints that will limit staff's ability to respond with greater low cost recreation and social programs.

Based on community input it would be a simple matter to recommend increased low-cost youth, children, and family recreation programming, supported and developed by enhanced community outreach on the part of staff. However, the issue we believe is much larger than program direction, or even staff roles and responsibilities. Rather, it is fundamentally connected to the direction – real or implied – that staff must do as much as they can to minimize annual operating costs.

Staff anticipate this issue will be at the forefront of the Recreation Service Review scheduled for this year.

Notwithstanding the preceding point, to the extent that staff can, within the current operating and space realities, enhance desired programming this should be undertaken. In the short term this could include:

1. Expanded outreach and partnerships with helping agencies, and perhaps parents groups, to create additional access programming for children, youth, and families.
2. Assess new spaces, and anticipate the end of leases to assess potential to assign one of the rooms on the second level to a youth or child "zone".
3. In the redevelopment of the lower level consider the room currently used as a senior room as a family room. The photo to the right is a "family style" room in a recreation facility outside Phoenix Ariz., designed to be used for supervised afterschool programs, by adult groups, and by children and youth with a parent or guardian at scheduled times. A similar, albeit smaller games area could be created in the large lower-level multi-purpose space.



⁷⁴ Email from D. Branscome, June 23, 2010 in response to question from consultant of what limits this type of programming currently.

Over the medium-term as leases come due for renewal consideration other uses of space or partnerships with lessees in consideration of lease rates could be considered.

8.2.3 Operating Cost Implications

No additional spaces have been added to St. Andrews, nor will the current leases change in the before 2012. Some minor plumbing and electrical work will be undertaken and some glazing on the windows of the gymnasium. We understand that many of the windows have been replaced and no additional work in that regard has been recommended. Therefore it is unlikely that overall operating costs will either increase or decrease in the short-term.

Increased lease rates to current lessees closer to market rates could add additional revenue although this may result in their relocation to alternate space.

As alluded to in the previous section, the balance of rental and other revenue requirements vis-à-vis community access in specific communities should be undertaken. Should this result in fewer rental uses and more access programming it would likely result in lower revenues. This is not necessarily a bad thing from the perspective of community programming, although it would be from the perspective of revenue achievement.

These are critical elements that will form the foundation of the Recreation Service Review. It is expected that Council approved policy and direction will result.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The final chapter outlines the implementation plan associated with the nine recommendations presented in this report. Recommendations are summarized in Table 9.1 noting relative priority (timeframe) of recommendations; any additional work required to address unresolved issues or preliminary steps; parties responsible; and as appropriate any associated costs. Timing and more specific tasks are illustrated on the accompanying Gantt Chart.

Priority reflects timing rather than simply importance. In the case of a number of the recommendations there is a need for some preliminary work or in the case of Recommendation 1 related to the multi-district recreation facility, some additional information requirements. Five terms have been used to identify timing:

- Immediate to start immediately, generally do not have capital budget implications
- Short term to start within the next year and completed by the end of 2012
- Medium term to start and be ideally be completed between 2012 and 2014/15
- Long term to start and be completed in after 2014/15
- Ongoing continuous

Projected costs are based on costs if completed in 2010. These costs should be revisited for projects that will not start immediately. In the case of the estimate confirmation for Citadel Community Centre and for St. Andrews these will need to be confirmed with a more detailed cost analysis in advance of development. For George Dixon the costs noted are combined capital initiatives noted by staff as well as additional items noted by the study architects. Similar costs for Needham Community Centre are noted. However, at least some of these costs (approximately \$750,000 to retrofit the existing facility) would not be undertaken if the facility is to be replaced. Whether any of the capital retrofit costs associated with Needham should be undertaken in the short term will need to be assessed in light of plans to replace the facility in the medium term.

Table 9.1 suggests which staff unit in the Municipality should take the lead, or co-lead, each of the recommendations.

Table 9.1: Implementation Process

Recommendation	Priority/Timing	Parties Involved	Projected Costs	Additional /Associated Work Required
Forum Multi-District Centre (see section 7.1, page 83)				
<p>R # 1 Prepare a feasibility study for a multi-district community centre for the Halifax Peninsula, including an assessment of market need, relevant competing markets, detailed business plan and facility design options.</p> <p>(please see Additional / Associated Work Required column for related points)</p>	<p>Immediate (study) – Staff indicate this will be completed in the Fall of 2010</p> <p>Long Term (development)</p>	<p>To be led by HRM but should involve major other recreation facility service providers on the Halifax Peninsula</p>	<p>\$TBD upon further staff review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information from a number of ongoing or related projects will provide important information for this study: (1) the long term arena strategy, (2) lifecycle assessment Centennial Pool. Confirmation of plans of other institutional recreation providers, particularly the YMCA, should be better understood. The feasibility study should not to include additional projects that would take the focus from the multi-district facility. The feasibility study should include a full assessment markets, a detailed business plan and facility design, capital costs should be at minimum Class D although Class C is preferable.
Capital Projects for Area Community Centres (see sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.4, pages 84-86)				
<p>R # 2 Proceed with redevelopment of St. Andrews Community Centre, including design consultation process with the community.</p> <p>(please see Additional / Associated Work Required column for related points)</p>	<p>Immediate – for inclusion in the 2011 capital budget. Capital costs may be phased.</p>	<p>To be led by HRM's CRS and Infrastructure and Asset Management Staff</p>	<p>Design Fees – approx \$185K</p> <p>Development Costs approx \$2.04M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP for design process to be released following approval of the 2011 Capital Budget with design work, and public review of concept in 2011. Development work may be phased from 2011 through 2013. Design Fees in the order of \$185,000 an immediate cost. Capital costs should be confirmed during design stage.

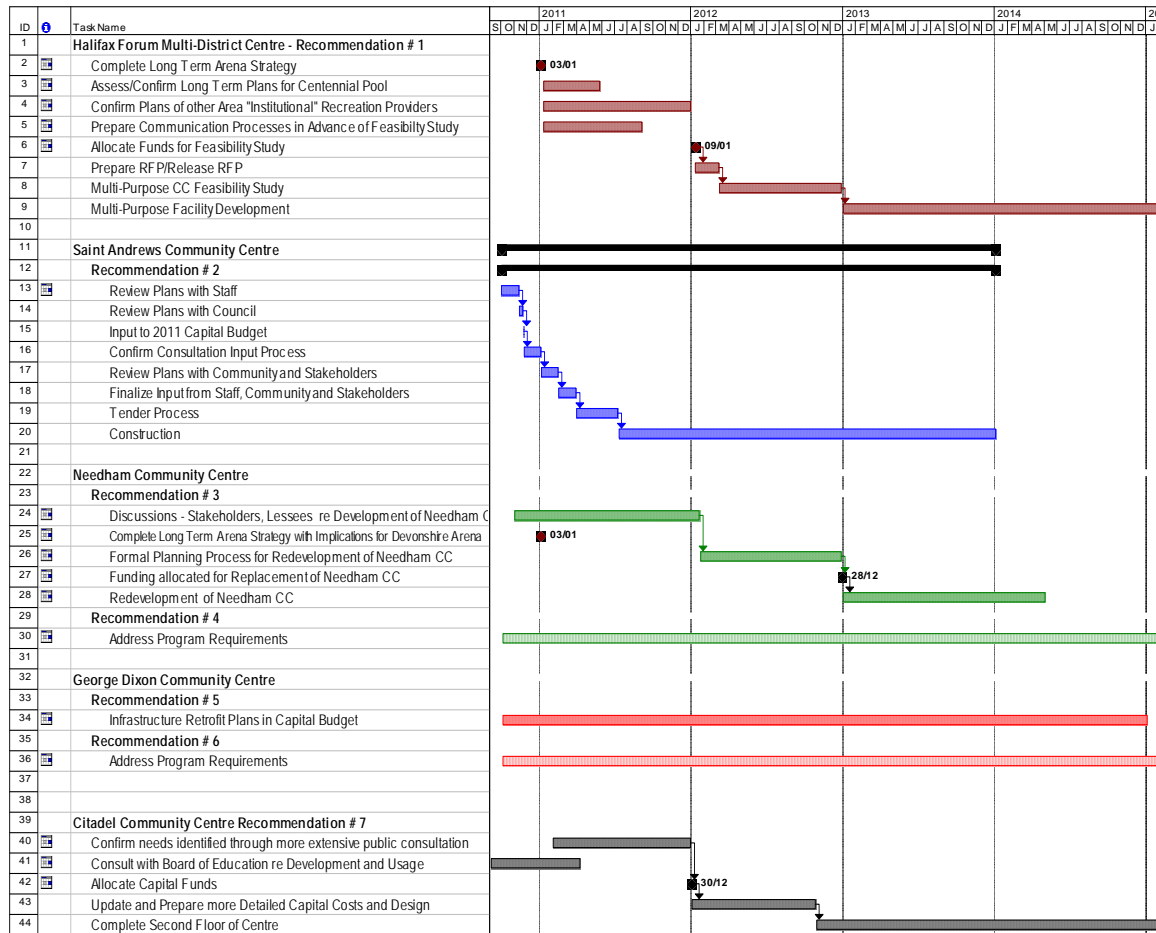
Recommendation	Priority/Timing	Parties Involved	Projected Costs	Additional /Associated Work Required
R # 3 Begin the planning process for a replacement facility for Needham Community Centre including: initiation of a design consultation process with community. Until then, it is recommended that recapitalization at this facility be restricted to items required to maintain safe usage only.	Medium to Long Term	To be led by HRM's CRS and Infrastructure and Asset Management Staff	The capital cost estimates to upgrade Needham in its present location were approximately \$750,000. Planning or Design Study \$TBD New Facility Costs \$TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gantt Chart indicates that the remainder of 2010 and into 2011 be used to review this report and plans for Needham CC with stakeholders and the surrounding community. By mid 2011 with information from the Long Term Arena Strategy and discussions re Needham Pool complete a formal planning process should be undertaken to document this input and to create a concept for the replacement facility. Whether this is a full feasibility study or a later stage design study should be assessed by staff based on work completed and gathered. Capital costs for upgrades currently identified should be reviewed in light of recommendation to replace Needham CC. 2013 is identified as the earliest year for redevelopment. Replacement will need to consider plans related to the multi-district recreation facility.
R # 5 Proceed with the infrastructure retrofit plans for George Dixon CC as noted in the 5-year capital plan and additional investment to create barrier free access.	Medium Term	To be led by HRM's CRS and Infrastructure and Asset Management Staff	\$500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With respect to infrastructure this study confirms and supports initiatives identified in the capital budget. Investigate options to incorporate more fitness activities including development of a measured walking "track" within and around the centre e.g., on local sidewalks.

Recommendation	Priority/Timing	Parties Involved	Projected Costs	Additional /Associated Work Required
R # 7 Gather information from current users of Citadel Community Centre and the Larry O'Connell facility to confirm area facility needs.	Short-Term	Community Recreation Staff responsible for Citadel CC	\$1.8M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital costs were prepared for HRM at some point in Citadel's development. These costs were confirmed at a high-level as part of the current study. In advance of proceeding a more detailed assessment of capital costs will need to be undertaken. Consultation with the community should be a prerequisite for future development. With this data and in the context of better information regarding future assessment plans for the Forum and for the Bloomfield gymnasium, and with input from the Board of Education, confirm the preliminary plans for development of the second floor of this facility.
Program and Service Related Recommendations (see sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.4, pages 84-86; section 8.2.1 page 95, Section 8.2.3 page 98)				
R # 4 Gather feedback and suggestions from the Needham community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.	Immediate and Short-Term	Community Recreation Staff responsible for Needham CC	Any additional cost would be based on additional program subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program expansion should consider financial accessibility and ways to expand programs while maintaining affordable access.
R # 6 Gather feedback and suggestions from the George Dixon community and create expanded program opportunities in this geographic area.	Immediate and Short-Term	Community Recreation Staff responsible for George Dixon CC	Any additional cost would be based on additional program subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program expansion should consider financial accessibility and ways to expand programs while maintaining affordable access.

Table 9.2: Cost Implications by Recommendation

Recommendation	Ongoing/Immediate (2010)	Short-Term (2011-2012)	Medium-Term (2013-2015)	Long-Term (> 2015)
# 1 – Multi-District Centre Feasibility Study	\$TBD			\$TBD
# 2 – St. Andrews Infrastructure (Capital)	\$185,000	\$1.9M		
#3 – Needham CC		\$TBD	\$TBD	
#4 – Needham CC (Access Programs)	N/C			
# 5 – George Dixon CC Infrastructure(Capital)		\$500,000		
# 6 – George Dixon CC (Access Programs)	N/C			
# 7 – Citadel CC Infrastructure (Capital)			\$1.8M	

Figure 9.1: Project Schedule



Appendix A: Peninsula Districts Cross-Comparison Table

District	11 –Halifax North End	12-Halifax Downtown	13-Northwest Arm-South End	14-Connaught-Quinpool
Population Characteristics				
Population Base	14, 892	14, 353	14, 375	13, 824
Pop. Change	-4.5%	16.8%	-5.9%	-1.7%
Total # Census Families	3,581	2,572	3,343	3,205
Lone Parent Families	974 (27.2%)	483 – 18.8%	400 – 12%	496 – 15.5%
Immigrants	1,357 – 9.4%	1,381 – 10.4%	2,111 – 14.3%	1,168 – 8.6%
Home Ownership				
Owned	47.2%	15.5%	43.5%	46.8%
Rented	52.4%	84.1%	56.6%	53.4%
Average Dwelling Value	\$195,739	\$199,596	\$410, 093	\$285,696
Income Characteristics				
Median Income – All households	\$42,743	\$33, 072	\$64,066	\$48,695
Median Income - Individuals	\$25,370	\$22,152	\$29,674	\$26, 169
Unemployment	8.0%	8.3%	8.4%	6.1%
Age Cohorts				
Preschool > 5 years of age	624 – 4.1%	323 – 2.2%	420 – 2.9%	516 – 3.7%
Elementary / Secondary 5-19 yrs	1,842 – 12.3%	1,080 – 7.5%	2,071 – 14.4%	1,843 – 13.3%
Labour Force Ages				
• 20-34 yrs	3,841 – 25.7%	6,797 – 47.3%	4,981 – 34.6%	4,392 – 31.7%
• 35-54 yrs	4,341 – 29.1%	3,177 – 22.1%	3,368 – 23.4%	3,894 – 28.1%
• 55-64 yrs	1,578 – 10.5%	1,321 – 9.2%	1,691 – 11.7%	1,244 – 8.9%
Seniors				
• 65-74 yrs	1,033 – 6.9%	712 – 4.9%	930 – 6.4%	794 – 5.7%
• 75+ yrs	1,597 – 10.7%	1,048 – 7.3%	896 – 6.2%	1,105 – 7.9%
Educational Attainment by Highest Level Completed				
Total per District	11, 951	11,955	12,259	11 322
No Certificate, Diploma or Degree	2,261	1,003	582	1,111
High School Grad. Certificate	2,836	2,666	2,355	2,722
Post Secondary Certificate or Dip	2,098	1,721	1, 062	1,439
Trade certificate or diploma	1,144	651	370	735
University Certificate, Diploma or Degree: Bachelors or Higher	3,631	5,899	7,907	5,326

Appendix B: Consultation Activities

B1: First Phase Consultation

Public Meetings

Needham Community Centre November, 23rd
St. Andrew's Community Centre November, 25th
Halifax Forum Multi-Purpose Centre between November, 25th

Staff and Elected Officials

Monday September 21st, 2009

HRM Staff

Paul Dunphy, Director Community Development
Doug Rafuse Manager Service Delivery, Community Development
John Henry Coordinator Aquatic Services
Al Driscoll General Manager, Halifax Forum Commission
Doug Branscombe Area Coordinator, CRS
Roberta Boutilier, Administrator for St Andrews
Virginia Jaurequi, Programmer St Andrews

Peninsula Councilors

District 11: Councilor Jerry Blumenthal
District 12: Councilor Dawne Sloane
District 13: Councilor Sue Uteck
District 14: Councilor Jennifer Watts

Wednesday, September 23rd, 2009

Jill McGillicutty, Planner, Halifax Regional School Board
Diane Moulton, Manager, Building Services
Terry Gallagher, Manager, Facility Development
Halifax by Design – Planners
Austin French, Manager, Planning Services
Kelly Dente, Supervisor Planning Applications, Planning Services
Andy Fillmore Project Manager, Urban Design
Claudette Levy, Area Coordinator, CRS & staff

Steering Committee Meeting / Workshop

Monday, November 2nd 2009

Doug Branscombe Area Coordinator, CRS
Al Driscoll General Manager, Halifax Forum Commission
Betty Lou Killen, Coordinator, Client Services, CRS
Claudette Levy, Area Coordinator, CRS
Diane Moulton, Manager, Building Services
Joan, McDonnell, Program Manager, CRS

Monday, December 14th 2009

Doug Branscombe Area Coordinator, CRS
Andy Conrad, Staff - Service Delivery, Community Development
Al Driscoll General Manager, Halifax Forum Commission
Paul Dunphy, Director Community Development
Betty Lou Killen, Coordinator, Client Services, CRS
Claudette Levy, Area Coordinator, CRS
Joan, McDonnell, Program Manager, CRS
Diane Moulton, Manager, Building Services
Doug Rafuse Manager Service Delivery, Community Development

Peninsula Councilors Meeting

Monday, November 4th 2009

District 11: Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
District 12: Councillor Dawne Sloane
District 13: Councillor Sue Uteck
District 14: Councillor Jennifer Watts (connected via speaker phone)

Forum Board Meeting

Monday, November, 4th 2009

Al Driscoll General Manager, Halifax Forum Commission & Forum Board
Betty Lou Killen, Coordinator, Client Services, CRS

YMCA Meeting

Thursday, November 6th 2009

Peter Clive, Member Board of Directors YMCA of Greater Dartmouth/Halifax
Betty Lou Killen, Coordinator, Client Services, CRS
Lori Turnbull Financial Development and Communications YMCA of Greater Dartmouth/Halifax
Bette Watson-Borg CEO YMCA of Greater Dartmouth/Halifax

B2: Second Round of Consultation

HRM staff developed and led a comprehensive, facilitated process with citizens that included small group sessions (28 advertised and 24 conducted); online surveys – one for general community centre feedback and the other specific to the multi-district facility concept; and (3) and email address and (4) phone number, both of which the public could use to provide commentary. A Frequently asked Question (FAQ) sheet regarding the study process was prepared and shared at the consultations and posted on the Municipal website. This FAQ included summary points from relevant background reports such as the CRFMP and the preliminary recommendations

Appendix C: Facility Structural Assessments

Structural Assessment by Community Centre

Needham Community Centre

Site Review Notes, September 22, 2009

In Attendance: Vince Brimicombe – HRM, Jim Reardon – S&P

The purpose of this review was to:

- Conduct a visual inspection and speak to staff to identify any risks and/or apparent facility related issues/needs, including physical accessibility;
- Review HRM's current project list and recapitalization costs from the current five-year capital plan projected for these facilities; and
- Identify high level order-of-magnitude capital cost for **significant** repairs not identified in the current 5-year capital plan and estimate.

Exterior Observations:

- The facility is generally in good repair with a well-maintained masonry veneer. There was evidence of previous maintenance/repainting.
- Roofing consists of asphalt shingles on the sloped roof areas and single ply EPDM ballasted flat roof over the Gym. The only evidence of leaking within the building was in the exit stair where there was minor water stains on the ceiling and wall. Staff thought the water infiltration was through a fresh air intake located above the ceiling in the area of the leak.

Interior Observations:

General

The building (constructed in 1972) is generally in good repair, but dated and tired with regard to finishes.

The current 5 year plan has scheduled upgrades to several of these areas including:

- New front entry doors
- Interior painting
- New floor for Preschool – top floor
- New kitchen cupboards
- New washroom stalls and fixtures
- Outdoor gazebo
- Paving
- Sprinkler system
- Ventilation system upgrade – gym
- New windows
- Retile pool deck (address ponding) and tank

Building Accessibility

- Although the building is accessible by ramp from the exterior, the entrance system is not barrier free. There are plans to replace the entrance system, which will provide a barrier free entry. Once inside, however, the only spaces considered reasonably accessible are the main floor offices and MPR. In general, washrooms/change rooms are non-accessible by today's standards. The same goes for the pool on the main floor as the pool deck is located approximately 48" below the main floor and change rooms and is only accessible by stair.
- Capital costs: (1) to make this facility barrier free, an elevator would be required (\$170K–3 stops not including the pool level) (2) improvements made to washroom and change facilities (\$70K). It's our opinion it's not practical to make the pool accessible.

Health and Life Safety

- This facility is non-sprinklered. We were advised that there was a desire to add sprinklers to the day care area, but the authorities would not permit a partially sprinklered building. The 5-year plan includes adding sprinklers to the entire building.
- There were areas on the pool deck where water ponds. This will be addressed under the 5-year plan.
- Main pool drains are plumbed individually and pose a suction hazard. We understand that the drains will be reconfigured to eliminate this safety issue. We estimate this work could cost in the order of \$25K if performed at the same time the tank is retiled.
- The ceiling of the pool area is finished with what appeared to be conventional suspended acoustic tile. We assume the ceiling was installed for acoustical purposes but question its suitability for a pool environment. There are metal ceiling systems that are more suitable for this environment. To replace the ceiling with a metal acoustic panel would cost in the order of \$23K.
- Exits from the pool area are limited. Effectively there is a single exit. One exit requires that you exit through the lobby. The second signed exit requires that you go through the women's change room, which takes you through the same lobby as the other exit. We don't believe it appropriate or desirable to have the exit through the women's change designated as an exit. It would be possible to add a second exit directly to the exterior through the existing stairwell. We estimate the cost to add a second exit would be in the order of \$25K.
- Exits generally do not meet current code requirements. Generally each floor level has one exit that requires you to pass through the main lobby. The second exit from each floor level is through an enclosed stairwell that exits directly to the exterior at the main floor level. To gain access to this exit stair on the lower and main floors it's necessary to exit through another space to get access to the exit. If these spaces were locked, then the remainder of the floor level is limited to a single exit.

Mechanical Systems

- According to the documents provided, the smaller #2 boiler was replaced in 1991. We have no information on the age of the main #1 boiler but have seen no documentation that it has been replaced.
- In 1993, a new heat pump system was installed to dehumidify and heat the pool air and water. Much of the remaining building ventilation was also replaced at the same time.

Total Cost of identified Capital Retrofit Requirements not currently identified in 5-year plan = \$313,000

George Dixon Community Centre

Site Review Notes: September 23, 2009

In Attendance: Vince Brimicombe – HRM, Jim Reardon – S&P

The purpose of this review was to:

- Conduct a visual inspection and speak to staff to identify any risks and/or apparent facility related issues/needs, including physical accessibility;
- Review HRM's current project list and recapitalization costs from the current five-year capital plan projected for these facilities; and
- Identify high level order-of-magnitude capital cost for **significant** repairs not identified in the current 5-year capital plan and estimate.

Exterior Observations:

- The facility is generally in fair repair with a masonry veneer. There was evidence of previous maintenance/repointing. Some localized repointing is required and we recommend an allowance of **\$10K** to perform this work.
- We were unable to gain access to the roof to view its construction or condition. The perimeter roof flashing looked relatively new from grade which may be an indicator that the roof has been replaced. (VB-HRM to confirm)
- The projected bay off the side of the gym could be reglazed and reflashed. We recommend an allowance of **\$10K** to perform this work.
- Associated site amenities include: playground, multiple basketball courts, water play area and horseshoes.

Interior Observations:

General

- The building (constructed in 1969) is generally in fair repair, but dated and tired with regard to finishes. The MPR (Gym) addition was constructed in 1984. The current 5 year plan has scheduled upgrades to several of these areas including:
 - Interior painting
 - New HVAC system
 - MPR expansion
 - Oil tank replacement
- The roof of the MPR consists of steel decking on OWSJ. The roof is insulated from below with vinyl-faced insulation that has a multitude of punctures, which may allow condensation to form on the underside of the steel decking. It may be worth considering insulating above the roof deck the next time the roof requires replacement to avoid the potential for hidden water damage.

Building Accessibility

- Although the building is accessible by ramp from the exterior, the entrance system is not barrier free. We estimate it would cost in the order \$15K to provide a barrier free entrance. Most spaces on the ground floor, including the original and more recent construction are considered reasonably accessible. In general, washrooms/change rooms are non-accessible by today's standards although some effort has been made to at least provide a barrier free stall within the washroom. The upper floor activity spaces are only accessible by stair from within the building but they can be accessed from the exterior of the building at the upper lobby level. In order to make this facility barrier free, an elevator would be required (\$125K–2 stops) and improvements made to washroom and change facilities (\$25K).

Health and Life Safety

- This facility is non-sprinklered.
- Exits generally appear to meet current code requirements. Each floor level has at least one exit directly at grade. The second exit from each floor level is through an enclosed stairwell that exits through a lobby.

Mechanical Systems

- We have seen no record that the boilers have been replaced. (VB-HRM to confirm).

Total Cost of identified Capital Retrofit Requirements not currently identified in 5-year plan = \$185,000.

St. Andrews Community Centre

Site Review Notes, September 23, 2009

In Attendance: Vince Brimicombe – HRM, Jim Reardon – S&P

The purpose of this review was to:

- Conduct a visual inspection and speak to staff to identify any risks and/or apparent facility related issues/needs, including physical accessibility;
- Review HRM's current project list and recapitalization costs from the current five-year capital plan projected for these facilities; and
- Identify high level order-of-magnitude capital cost for **significant** repairs not identified in the current 5-year capital plan and estimate.

Exterior Observations:

- The facility was originally a school and is generally in fair repair with a combination of masonry veneer and metal siding on the exterior.
- The roof appears to be a relatively new modified bituminous roof system. *(VB-HRM to confirm)*
- Vehicular access point off Bayers Road is very easily missed and view of the building is obscured by pre-engineered metal building, which is currently leased by HRM to a privately run gymnastics club.
- Associated site amenities other than parking are non-existent.

Interior Observations:

General

- The building most likely dates back to the early 70's and is considered in good repair, but dated and tired with regard to finishes. The current 5 year plan has scheduled upgrades to several of these areas including:
- Additional paved parking area
- Replacement of both boilers
- Ventilation improvements
- Facility audit
- Provide elevator
- Most finishes date back to the school years and include VCT flooring, painted gypsum board and suspended acoustic tile ceilings, mostly intact and in good repair.

Building Accessibility

- Although the building is accessible at grade from the exterior, the entrance system is not barrier free. We estimate it would cost in the order **\$15K** to provide a barrier free entrance. Most spaces on the ground floor are considered reasonably accessible. In general, washrooms/change rooms are considered non-accessible by today's standards although some effort has been made to at least provide a barrier free stall within the washroom. The upper floor activity spaces are only accessible by stair from within the building but they can be accessed from the exterior of the building at the upper lobby level. In order to make this facility barrier free, an elevator would be required and improvements made to washroom and change facilities (**\$25K**).

Health and Life Safety

- This facility is completely sprinklered.
- Exits generally appear to meet current code requirements, at least to the extent that there are 2 exits from each level.

Mechanical Systems

- Boilers look to be original and are slated to be replaced under the 5-year plan.
- Compressor for pneumatic controls was replaced in 2004.

Total Cost of identified Capital Retrofit Requirements not currently identified in 5-year plan = \$40,000.

Halifax Forum Complex

Site Review Notes, September 23, 2009

In Attendance: Al Driscoll – Manager, Halifax Forum Complex
Mitch Brooks – S&P

The purpose of this review was to:

- Conduct a visual inspection and speak to staff to identify any risks and/or apparent facility related issues/needs, including physical accessibility;
- Review HRM's current project list and recapitalization costs from the current five-year capital plan projected for these facilities; and
- Identify high level order-of-magnitude capital cost for **significant** repairs not identified in the current 5 year capital plan and estimate.

Exterior Observations:

- This facility is composed of 4 adjacent buildings (the Forum Arena, the Civic Arena, Multi-Purpose Centre, and the Halifax Forum Bingo Hall) constructed at significantly different times. The Forum proper is a Heritage Registered Property built in 1927 and designed by the well-known architect Andrew Cobb. The other three buildings are of more recent vintage, respectively 1996, 1989, and 2003.
- The exterior of the four buildings vary in state of repair/condition. The face brick of the Forum has been the beneficiary of ongoing masonry repair in recent years but significantly more brick replacement and re-pointing work is required. The other three buildings are generally of steel frame construction and metal cladding and are in generally acceptable condition and repair. Minor work such as cleaning, replacement of gutters and repair to dented cladding and cracked masonry is outstanding.
- Staff report that the Complex's roofs are in satisfactory condition and have not exhibited leaks in recent years. The newer facilities have sloped metal roofing while the Forum building is a sloped membrane system dating to 1987/88.

Interior Observations:

General

- The facility overall is generally in good repair, but dated and tired with regard to finishes, which are general utilitarian in nature in any case.

Building Accessibility

- The Forum Complex is generally accessible through its main floor levels but suffers from a number of different floor levels; there is no common main level. The seating areas of the Forum above its main floor level are not accessible. The upper level of the seating of the Civic Arena is accessible, not from its main floor level but from the exterior.

- The Complex does not have an overall organized common circulation system and there are in the order of 14 entrances serving the four separate buildings. This represents a significant hurdle in guiding people to the right access for their event and for internal movement.

Health and Life Safety

- The four components of the facility are sprinklered with the exception of the arena area of the Forum proper. This is an acceptable state of safety to the Fire Marshal and HRM Building authorities.
- Generally, the facility meets other Code requirements within reason. The seating of the Forum, for example, would not meet modern code requirements for riser and guardrail heights. Unless these areas are to undergo significant renovations (not likely nor necessary) these are considered acceptable as pre-existing conditions.

Facility Related Issues/Needs

- There are no obvious outstanding facility related issues/needs that are not being addressed by the management's current 5 year capital plan and estimate. The Complex is being converted to natural gas heat in the forum, security issues are being addressed, renovations to dressing rooms and washrooms are being undertaken, concourse flooring areas are being improved and purchases such as a portable stage and ice deck covering have been completed. The future components of the five year plan allow for additional masonry repairs, further dressing room/shower renovations, the completion of the Civic's board replacement (75% complete), replacement of a sound system and parking area upgrades. Replacement of a corroded steel brine piping will be required in the near future and is identified 2010/11 item.
- There are no obvious significant repairs not identified in the current 5 year capital plan and estimate.
- One of the most demanding long term planning issues for the Complex is parking. On-site parking is limited at ±420 cars maximum. Large or simultaneous events consume this parking and challenges the neighbourhood as patrons struggle to find on-street parking. Further building additions to the Complex will aggravate this situation.

Total Cost of identified Capital Retrofit Requirements not currently identified in 5-year plan = \$0