


HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 11.4.3
Halifax Regional Council
October 6, 2015

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:  Original Signed
Councillor Wayne Mason, Chair
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee

DATE: September 22, 2015

SUBJECT: Recreation Needs Assessment: Eastern Shore

ORIGIN

Motion by the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee at its September 17, 2015 meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 5 of the Committee's Terms of Reference – 'Oversight – Community Building Initiatives'

RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to:

1. Decline the request from the Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Halifax Regional School Board to fund a HRM enhancement or addition to the new Primary-12 Eastern School; and
2. Engage with the Province Of Nova Scotia in the design discussions of the new Primary-12 Eastern Shore School in order to ensure that, as much as possible, the design of the new school is able to be used to support recreation uses.

BACKGROUND

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee considered a staff report, needs assessment and recommendations at its meeting on September 17, 2015. This report originated from a motion of Regional Council of June 25, 2014 to give direction to staff to prepare a report regarding the Eastern Shore/Sheet Harbour school project including a possible community enhancement, potential partnerships with the Province and possible infrastructure funding opportunities.

DISCUSSION

The Committee agreed with the report's analysis that the Recreation Needs Assessment did not determine that an enhancement or addition to the new school was required but did determine that use of some of the space in the school would benefit the community. The report noted that staff will continue to work with the existing Facility Agreement Lease partners to explore opportunities for additional programming at the existing facilities in order to provide more efficient and effective service to the residents of the Eastern Shore. Following due consideration the Committee approved the staff recommendation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The attached staff report notes that there are no financial implications at this time for the recommendations as proposed.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The staff report dated September 10, 2015 outlined the community consultation undertaken in preparing the report.

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee is a Committee of Regional Council comprised of six Councillors. The meetings are open to the public and the Committee's agendas, minutes, and reports can be viewed at Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

The Committee did not provide alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 'A': Staff report dated September 10, 2015

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No.
Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee
September 17, 2015

TO: Chair and Members of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Brad Anguish, Director, Parks and Recreation
Original Signed

Asa Kachan, Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer

DATE: September 10, 2015

SUBJECT: Recreation Needs Assessment: Eastern Shore

ORIGIN

June 25, 2014 motion of Regional Council:

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee and seconded by Councillor McCluskey that due to the fact that the existing Community Facility Master Plan does not include sufficient data for a full assessment of the recently announced school project in the Eastern Shore/Sheet Harbour and the timing does not permit the project to be considered in the upcoming Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) review, I request that Halifax Regional Council request staff to prepare a report regarding the Eastern Shore/Sheet Harbour school project including a possible community enhancement, potential partnerships with the Province and possible infrastructure funding opportunities.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- *HRM Charter*, Section 79 (1) including (k) recreational programs and (x) lands and buildings required for a municipal purpose
- Community Facility Master Plan, approved by Regional Council on May 28, 2008

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to:

1. Decline the request from the Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Halifax Regional School Board to fund a HRM enhancement or addition to the new Primary-12 Eastern Shore School; and
2. Engage with the Province of Nova Scotia in the design discussions of the new Primary-12 Eastern Shore School in order to ensure that, as much as possible, the design of the new school is able to be used to support recreation uses.

BACKGROUND

Halifax Regional Council approved in principle the Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) in May of 2008 which addressed the provision of a wide range of community, recreation, sport, event and cultural facilities within HRM. The CFMP analyzed demand for recreation facilities in HRM and compared it with the existing facility inventory. The resulting planning document incorporated previous plans, presented guiding principles and implementation models for decisions regarding existing and future facilities. Section 4.3 of the CFMP discusses HRM's relationship with Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB), including joint opportunities to deliver programs and manage and operate facilities. Further, it recommends that HRM explore opportunities to do joint projects, when appropriate, when new school facilities are being planned. The CFMP further outlines the need to ensure that, when new or replacement facilities are developed, they are placed in the most relevant locations and are consistent with other planning documents such as the Regional Plan and the Transportation Plan.

HRM Council approved the renewal of the 2008 CFMP Project (CFMP2) in the 2014/15 Community and Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) Business Plan which will provide the future strategic direction for recreation and sport facilities.

Eastern Shore Primary to Grade 12 School

In December 2013, the Province of Nova Scotia announced a new Primary to Grade 12 School in the Eastern Shore School Board district. After the announcement of the new school, the Province contacted HRM to determine whether HRM would be looking to provide a community enhancement to the school. Potential community enhancements are not typically defined as part of any request from the Province but rather considered defined through assessments of recreation needs.

Due to the timing of this announcement and the Province's timeline for completion, Regional Council requested a separate Recreation Needs Assessment for that community as the necessary information was not available in the 2008 CFMP and the renewal exercise (CFMP2) would not be completed in time to provide a recommendation regarding the need for a community enhancement. The recreation needs assessment, carried out between July and November 2014 included: developing a community profile, data research and analysis, community consultations and interviews with stakeholders.

DISCUSSION

Community Profile of the Eastern Shore Catchment Area

The communities of this catchment area are diverse, unique and each distinct in their own culture. The area includes fishing villages, an industrial park, a hub community with government services such as health, recreation, library, social services and transportation, towns with beach and hiking access and historic sites with a total distance of 96.6 km or 1:30 hour drive from the first community of East Ship Harbour to the last community of Ecum Secum. Inland communities such as Mooseland, Malay Falls, Beaver Dam, Lochaber Mines and Moser River are also included in this catchment area.

Statistics Canada has documented a steady decline in population, high unemployment rates, and an increase in the 65 years of age and older category over the past several census projects for this catchment area. The data indicates that the population in the Eastern Shore recreation catchment area has a larger percentage of citizens over the age of 65 than the Province of Nova Scotia and a lower percentage of 20-34 year old citizens.

Existing Recreation Opportunities

The Library Branch, Parks and Recreation office, and Seaside Fitness Centre, are co-located in Sheet Harbour at 22756 Highway #7 in the leased Bluewater Building. While there is no specific recreation programming rooms at this location, there is a boardroom which is available for recreation programming. In addition, programs are currently offered in alternative locations throughout this geographically

expansive area. These alternative program spaces include church halls, community halls, and local schools. Many are operated by volunteer groups who rely on the income generated by rental of their facilities to support the operating and maintenance costs of the facilities. The rental income, visibility and traffic flow of residents to these various facilities, as well as access to programs in alternate locations, is seen to be a benefit to the overall community. It also provides a level of access that would not be possible if all programs were offered or operated in one centralized facility.

Challenges and barriers that keep many residents from enjoying the recreation programs currently available in the region do exist, and include such things as transportation, travel times, cost of programs, on-line registration, and requirements to pay with credit cards. HRM Recreation attempts to identify the appropriate programs for each community, locate instructors and find rental space that coincides with the availability of instructors while ensuring the program times are suitable for the users. This complex equation often challenges the ability to offer relevant programming at the right time and in the appropriate space, especially in a diverse and vast geographic area.

In addition to the HRM Recreation direct programming, HRM utilizes the alternate service delivery model to provide recreation services through the Facility Lease Agreement program. There are three facilities within this region that offer community recreation opportunities to their local population and operate under Facility Lease Agreements with community boards. These include Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, Moser River Community Centre and Samuel R. Balcom Centre located in Port Dufferin. Also, an additional HRM owned building in Sheet Harbour, McPhee House, provides a gathering space for the community along with a community museum and visitor's centre.

Provision of Recreation Services

The Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP), Section 4.2, indicates that "service providers need to be aligned in order to maximize their financial viability, and to minimize competition between service providers. CFMP criteria for Category 1 facilities (community centres) suggest a best-case scenario of approximately 15,000 residents to form a strong population base per facility, along with an expectation of a five to ten minute drive time." The combined total population of 3,525 residents in the assessment area is far below the CFMP benchmark for facility provision of 1 facility per 15,000 residents.

The rural geographic realities of the region indicate that the benchmark does not adequately address the needs and expectations of rural citizens. In fact, an expectation of five to ten minute drive time for access is also unrealistic in these rural communities as, except for in the three larger communities, citizens generally are required to drive much further to access services. However, facility provision in these three (grouped) communities exceeds an appropriate expectation for recreation facilities and illustrates a problematic level of complexity and competition for service providers. A summary of the available facilities include:

- Moser River and area (pop. 794) currently has six indoor and outdoor facilities for community access. Of the six facilities, three are municipally owned, one is a Provincially owned existing school, one is a provincial park and one is a church hall. HRM owns Samuel R. Balcom Community Centre located in Port Dufferin, Moser River Ball Field and Moser River Community Centre.
- Sheet Harbour and area (pop. 1,562) currently has nineteen indoor and outdoor facilities for community access. Of the nineteen facilities, six are municipally owned, two are existing schools, three others are owned by the Province, one is a church hall, four are privately owned, and three are privately owned non-profits. HRM owns Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, Sheet Harbour Fire Hall, Sheet Harbour Skate Park, Sheet Harbour Rockets Field, Sheet Harbour Lions Playground, and Mushaboom Fire Hall.
- Tangier and area (pop. 1,169) currently has six indoor and outdoor facilities for community access. Of these six facilities, one is municipally owned, one is an existing school, one is privately owned and three are church halls. HRM owns the Billy Bollong Memorial Ball Field.

HRM has a Facility Lease Agreement with three Community Centres in the Eastern Shore Region; Moser River Community Centre, Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre and Samuel R Balcom Centre in Port Dufferin that have numerous hours available for both recreation and community use. The approximate monthly rental space availability for each facility based on daily access from 9:00am to 9:00pm for 7 days per week (336 hours in total for a 30 day month) is as follows:

- Sheet Harbour Lions Club Community Centre – 209 hours
- Moser River Community Centre – 286 hours
- Samuel R. Balcom Centre – 288 hours

The Facility Lease Agreements outline the expectation for the community group to align with HRM Parks and Recreation Services’ mandate in that they provide, promote and encourage community recreation and cultural opportunities while collaborating and building relationships to promote public use of a municipal asset.

Each facility is responsible for expenditures such as licenses, permits, utilities, insurance, supplies for events and other operational requirements. Chart 8 shows the revenue and expenses for each of the Facilities in the 2013/14 fiscal year.

Chart 8: 2013/14 Revenue and Income for HRM Facility Leased Agreement Facilities

Facility Name	Revenue from Rentals	HRM Funding	Operating Expenses
Sheet Harbour Lions Centre	\$80,082	\$28,225	\$79,864
Moser River Centre	\$25,033	\$11,639	\$22,367
Samuel R. Balcom Centre	\$24,232	\$12,416	\$22,015

The HRM funding includes Contributions Funds based on the size of the facility as well as funding in the form of expenses incurred for services such as building inspections, water tests and boiler cleaning. The Facility Boards may also apply for Provincial and Federal Grants, as well as Councillor discretionary funding. In 2013/14, the Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre received a total of \$12,000 and the Samuel R Balcom Centre received \$1,885 from these funds.

Hub School Model

As directed by Regional Council, a potential partnership with other levels of government and the Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce to build a “hub” as part of the new school project was explored. The hub model, approved by the Province in November 2014, outlines an opportunity for outside agencies, organizations or businesses to be included in the school building as tenants. The model was primarily initiated as a mechanism to maintain schools with diminishing enrollments. However, the regulations do not restrict the consideration of a hub model in new schools. When the new P-12 School was announced, HRM staff met with the members to determine if there was a partnership opportunity and at that time there was no business plan or funding available for the “hub” concept.

The Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce continues to explore the viability of the hub school model using the recently approved Guidelines and Criteria as a potential use of school space in this new school build with the Provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the HRSB; however, there is no evidence as outlined in the attached Eastern Shore Recreation Needs Assessment that there is a need for a community recreation facility at this location. Further, during the time frame in which the Recreation Needs Assessment was conducted, the Provincial Community Services offices have been closed, the community groups indicated they want to retain their own facilities to provide services to their respective communities, other government agencies did not display an interest, and there was no business plan or financial support for the “hub” concept.

Partnership Opportunities

Through this process, opportunities were identified to partner with the three Facility Agreement Boards to provide an HRM commitment to build a collaborative service delivery model. The three Facility Boards have demonstrated the ability to manage and operate their facility, while meeting the needs of their target groups and unique community culture. However, there is evidence indicating a considerable amount of available rental time in each facility that provides a partnership opportunity for HRM to utilize these spaces for programming purposes on a more consistent and/or permanent basis instead of developing another new space that would compete for the same users. Further, many of the activities indicated in the community survey could be accommodated at the existing facilities. Much of the requested programming does not require specifically designed space, but rather can be offered in multi-purpose space, similar to that which is available in the existing facilities. This model would provide the Facility Agreement Boards the stabilization required to continue to deliver their services in a financially sustainable manner while maintaining the "soul" of the communities.

In addition, HRM Library Services leases space in the same building as the HRM Recreation division which is well located in the centre of Sheet Harbour with sidewalk access. In addition to lending services, HRM Recreation and Library Services both offer programming and services. The co-location of both of the services also provides opportunities for some joint programming to be provided to the community. As a result, both Recreation and Library Services see benefit to maintaining a joint HRM presence in the Eastern Shore, as well as exploring any further opportunities to enhance the programming offered by both.

Discussion with HRM Library Services has indicated that proximity to both schools and other community or commercial service providers is important, but that co-location with those other service providers is not necessary, and may not be beneficial. The mandate of the library is to provide services to all residents, including vulnerable populations which may not always align well with the school mandate. Recreation shares a similar mandate. Being able to ensure full community access to the library's programs and services during all business hours is a key component of the library's mandate. Therefore, proximity to local schools is more of a benefit than co-location, as it eliminates the need to ensure any mandate conflicts do not have to be mitigated.

Enhancement or Addition to the Primary to Grade 12 Eastern Shore School

The Recreation Needs Assessment indicates that HRM Recreation service delivery methodology needs to change in this rural and large geographic area. However, there was no evidence to support the cost to incorporate a new community centre or an enhancement into the new school. Further, the site selection process for the new school highlighted some constraints at each of the potential sites which may preclude the opportunity for an enhancement at the school. These include space constraints as a result of the land configuration, access to sufficient potable water to meet the needs of the additional space and centralized location which complements other community and commercial uses.

While the Recreation Needs Assessment did not determine that an enhancement or addition to the new school was required, it did determine that use of some of the space in the school would benefit the community. The school will include a gymnasium which will be used for educational programming during the school day. The Service Exchange Agreement between HRM and HRSB will enable the gymnasium to be booked for community use at non-educational times. Community access to the school amenities would be achieved through the Service Exchange Agreement (SEA) between HRM and HRSB. While challenges have occurred related to consistent and regular community access to HRSB schools, Regional Council has recently provided direction to staff to negotiate improvements to the SEA in order to improve the amount of community access and reduce barriers to achieving that access.

Some new school designs include a cafetorium in place of a cafeteria. The difference is one of design, rather than function as both act as a cafeteria for school usage. In a cafetorium design, the layout is such that the space is also able to be used as performance and enhanced meeting space. The cafetorium design would be beneficial to the Eastern Shore catchment area as it could allow for enhanced

programming by the school, HRM and community groups. Therefore, it is recommended that staff be directed to work with the Province and HRSB to influence the design, as much as possible, towards the cafetorium model. While the recreation needs assessment concludes that additional space is not required and that additional opportunities for programming could be accommodated in the existing facilities located within the catchment area, including the cafetorium model rather than the previous cafeteria model in the design would provide additional benefits to the community as well as the school.

There is existing infrastructure within the catchment area that requires some degree of financial investment to meet the identified needs of the citizens. An opportunity to review the existing Facility Lease agreements for HRM program delivery, participate in the school design discussion to promote a community access model, and complete the renewal of the CFMP will all ensure that the conversation related to identified challenges in the area will be addressed appropriately to better meet the needs of the residents in the catchment area while providing stabilization to the Facility Lease Agreement Boards.

Findings in the Needs Assessment

This geographic area is unique when compared to all other areas within HRM as it is extremely rural and has been struggling over the past decades to retain its identity, population and viability. The current recreation service delivery model is challenging in rural communities due to the geographical and demographic differences, therefore, HRM must adapt to ensure these citizens have access to a service that enhances their quality of life.

In addition, the construction of a new consolidated school for this region is significant in that it will not only create renewed spaces for community usage, but will allow for the development of new spaces and new possibilities as citizens of all ages benefit from the standard design features in the new school. By virtue of construction of a new school, the building will include a new gymnasium and the potential for a cafetorium design. The creation of the school gym will provide opportunities for community usage outside of school hours and supplement the other recreation service currently offered.

As a result of the Recreation Needs Assessment, the following specifics were identified

1. The population of the Eastern Shore is steadily decreasing and the majority of citizens are between the ages of 35-54 and over 65 years of age. Also, housing costs are less and the unemployment rate is higher than the HRM and Nova Scotia average.
2. The factors of transportation, travel distance, quality/availability of instructors and cost are equally important in determining the use of recreation facilities
3. The communities within this area are purposely separate from each other in order to retain their unique identities but all are experiencing difficulty sustaining their respective facilities.
4. The majority of the Eastern Shore citizens who provided feedback rate the importance of recreation programs as a very high aspect to a good quality of life.
5. More than 95% of citizens and groups that participated in the formal and informal feedback opportunities stated dissatisfaction with the current availability of both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.
6. There is currently more facilities per-capita than recreation standards outline. Existing facility provision per-capita illustrates a clear need to develop a more appropriate model for the delivery of recreation services and programs in the existing facilities.

Although there was no evidence that there needs to be a school enhancement to provide additional space for recreation service, improvements to the coordination and variety of recreation programming would be a benefit to the community. Therefore, HRM will continue to work with the existing Facility Agreement

Lease partners to explore opportunities for additional programming at the existing facilities in order to provide more efficient and effective service to the residents of the Eastern Shore.

As per the CFMP direction regarding efficiencies and levels of inventory, HRM should work within the existing structure to improve access and effectiveness by reducing the level of direct competition for the same user in the provision of recreation services and programs. Further, the information determined in the Eastern Shore Recreation Needs Assessment is relevant to the renewal of the CFMP currently underway. The CFMP renewal will consider all recreation needs across the municipality as a whole. The process includes a significant stakeholder and community consultation and the information determined through this process will supplement that process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Four public consultations were held: two in Sheet Harbour on September 23 and 24, 2014; one in Moser River on October 6, 2014; and one in Tangier on October 7, 2014. Also, several formal stakeholder meetings were conducted throughout the needs assessment exercise.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee could choose to recommend that Regional Council approve a community enhancement to the new Eastern Shore School.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: Eastern Shore Recreation Needs Assessment

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Cathy Nearing, Program Support Services, 902-490-6542

ATTACHMENT 1
HALIFAX

Eastern Shore Recreation Needs Assessment

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Purpose and Rationale	3
Framework and Methodology	3
Background Documents	4
Community Profile	4
Current Recreation Options	10
Outdoor Recreation	12
Alternate Service Providers	12
Summary of Current Recreation Needs	16
Standards for Provision of Recreation Services	16
Hub School Model	17
School Siting & Design	17
Partnership Opportunities	18
HRM Library	18
Findings	19
Conclusion	20
Schedule “A”: Community Consultation Notes	20

Introduction

On June 25, 2014, Regional Council passed a motion which indicated “That due to the fact that the existing Community Facility Master Plan does not include sufficient data for a full assessment of the recently announced school project in the Eastern Shore/Sheet Harbour and the timing does not permit the project to be considered in the upcoming Community Facility Master Plan review, I request that Halifax Regional Council request staff to prepare a report regarding the Eastern Shore/Sheet Harbour school project including a possible community enhancement, potential partnerships with the Province and possible infrastructure funding opportunities.”

Additional context as part of this motion stated that staff include in their report a table explaining the relationship between the Province, Halifax and community facilities, their contributions and how the community contribution was met.

Purpose and Rationale of the Recreation Needs Assessment

Regional Council approved in principle the Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) in May of 2008. The CFMP presents guiding principles, implementation models for making decisions about existing and future facilities, and site-specific recommendations. This plan is built on several key themes:

- Integrated Planning – to serve the needs of the citizens, the work is done collaboratively with the community, Council and other HRM Business Units
- Distribution of Facilities – facility planning and development that takes into account the needs of the population and its distribution within HRM
- Activity Coverage – provision of a range of recreation opportunities for HRM residents and design facilities that promote participation
- Community based arts and culture – ensure program opportunities are built into facilities whenever feasible
- Communities building through asset management – recommend models other than municipally operated recreation facilities
- Balance new assets against lifecycle obligations – balance between investing in new assets and existing facilities

The CFMP discusses HRM’s relationship with the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) and joint opportunities to deliver programs and operate facilities. CFMP’s recommendation #53 expands on this by recommending HRM build upon the past successful relationship with the HRSB and explore further opportunities to do joint projects whenever new school facilities are being planned. The HRSB *Imagine Our Schools* 10 year plan recommends enhancing opportunities for community-centred schools with a commitment to exploring partnerships and joint-use agreements.

HRM is granted permission under the Provincial Education Act to partner with the Province to enhance the Eastern Shore Primary-12 school project if there is a community recreational need. Potential community enhancements are not typically defined as part of any request from the Province but rather considered defined through assessments of recreation needs. Therefore, a comprehensive recreation needs assessment was carried out to review the existing recreational opportunities for the Eastern Shore communities, to identify gaps in service delivery and to determine if there is any requirement for a community enhancement to the new school.

Framework and Methodology of the Recreation Needs Assessment

The focus of the Recreation Needs Assessment was to investigate how effective and efficient the provision of HRM mandated services are delivered in the Eastern Shore communities. The geographical area under review is based on the HRM Eastern Shore Recreation catchment area from East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum.

The following actions were completed to develop the contents of this Recreation Needs Assessment.

1. Demographics of community:
 - a. Total population, percentage growth, new housing stats, employment
 - b. Development of “community profile” using several years of comparative data

2. Inventory of facilities:
 - a. Identification of existing community/private recreation/community facilities in the community
 - b. Services provided, services required or wanted, cost structures

3. Community Consultation – Engagement with the Citizens:

Discussion held with community regarding what is currently working well or challenging with recreation service delivery and what improvements would a community enhancement offer the community. The goal was to gain the appropriate community perspective, context and commentary to help craft recommendations.

 - a. Four Public Consultations were held: two in Sheet Harbour, one in Moser River, and one in Tangier

4. Interviews with Stakeholder Groups:
 - a. Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce
 - b. HRM Parks and Recreation staff
 - c. Halifax Regional School Board
 - d. HRM Library Services
 - e. Non-profit Community Groups
 - f. District Councillor David Hendsbee

5. Inventory and understanding of level of usage at existing facilities:
 - HRM owned facilities – Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, Moser River Community Centre, Samuel R Balcom Centre, HRM Fire Halls
 - Local non-profit facilities – Legions, Church Halls, Masonic Hall
 - Government – Schools, Hospitals
 - Outdoor – playgrounds, campgrounds, beaches, sports fields
 - Lease – Bluewater Building – HRM Recreation and Library offices, Nursing Homes

Background Documents:

The following items were used as background:

- Community Facilities Master Plan 2008
- HRM Regional Plan
- Community Counts Census Data
- HRM Recreation Blueprint
- HRSB *Imagine Our Schools*
- Rental Data for Eastern Shore Recreation Programs
- Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce Recreation Survey 2008 and 2013 results
- Results from a World Café held at Duncan MacMillan High School November 2013
- Public Engagement Evaluation Forms
- HRM Recreation Program Catalogue

Community Profile

The communities of this catchment area are diverse, unique and each has their own distinct culture. The area includes fishing villages, an industrial park, a hub community with government services such as health, recreation, library, social services and transportation, towns with beach and hiking access and historic sites with a total distance of 96.6 km or 1:30 hour drive from the first community of East Ship Harbour to the last community of Ecum Secum. Figure 1 below provides a visual display of the

expansiveness of the HRM Eastern Shore Recreation catchment area. The area begins at East Ship Harbour and ends at the HRM municipal border in the community of Ecum Secum Bridge on the coastal route. Inland communities such as Mooseland, Malay Falls, Beaver Dam, Lochaber Mines and Moser River are also included in this catchment area.



Figure 1: Eastern Shore Map

In order to fully appreciate the diversity of this catchment area, three community groupings were examined to determine their demographic profile as compared to Nova Scotia.

1. Tangier: includes East Ship Harbour, Mooseland, Murphy Cove, Pleasant Harbour, Ship Harbour, Spry Bay, Spry Harbour, Tangier, Taylors Head, Third Lake
2. Sheet Harbour: includes Beaver Harbour, Lochaber Mines, Malay Falls, Mushaboon, Port Dufferin, Sheet Harbour, Sheet Harbour Passage, Sober Island, Watt Section
3. Moser River: includes East Quoddy, Ecum Secum, Harrigan Cove, Mitchell Bay, Moosehead, Moser River, Necum Teuch, Smith Cove, West Quoddy

Population Data

Chart 1 below compares the age groupings in each community.

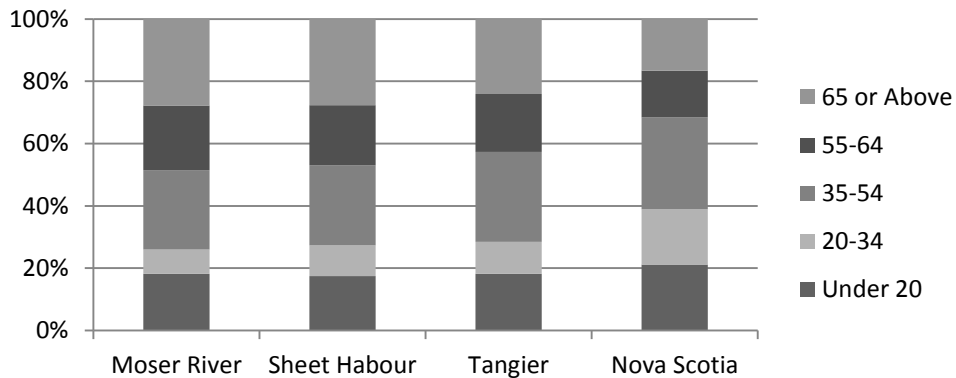
Chart 1: Percentage Comparison of Population

Age Group	Moser River	Sheet Harbour	Tangier	Nova Scotia
Under 20	18.3%	17.5%	18.2%	21.2%
20 – 34	7.9%	9.9%	10.2%	17.7%
35-54	25.7%	25.7%	28.9%	29.5%
55-64	19.4%	19.4%	18.5%	7.0%
65+	27.7%	27.7%	24.1%	16.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

The above data indicates that the population in the Eastern Shore recreation catchment area has a larger percentage of citizens over the age of 65 than the Province of Nova Scotia and a lower percentage of 20-34 year old citizens. The data also showed that the area is declining in a relatively similar manner to other rural areas of Nova Scotia.

Based on the 2011 Census of Population, Moser River had a population of 794 which is 14.4% lower than in 2001, Sheet Harbour had a population of 1,562 which is 10.5% lower than in 2001 and Tangier had a population of 1,169 which is 11% lower than in 2001. In comparison, Nova Scotia had a population of 921,725 which is 1.5% higher than in 2001. Figure 2 provides a visual population comparison.

Figure 2: Population Comparison:



The data verifies the current trend that the population is aging and total population is decreasing similar to other rural areas in Nova Scotia.

Family Structure

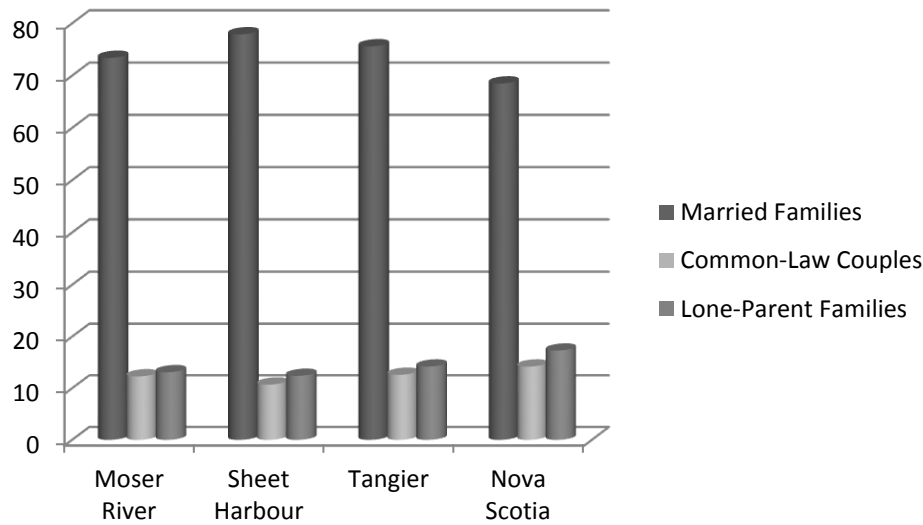
In Nova Scotia, family structure has shifted from the traditional larger married families to smaller married families with an increase in both common-law and lone-parent families.

In 2011, for Tangier, total census families decreased 11.0% to 602. Married families decreased by 12.3%, while common law families increased 4.1% and lone-parent families increased 15.0%. Lone female parent families were 9.3% of all families, while lone male parents were 3.3% of all families. In 2011, for Sheet Harbour, total census families decreased 10.5% to 484. Married families decreased by 3.8%, while

common law families increased 13.0% and lone-parent families decreased 25.0%. Lone female parent families were 9.1% of all families, while lone male parents were 2.9% of all families. In 2011, for Moser River, total census families decreased 14.4% to 244. Married families decreased by 21.1%, while common law families increased 25.0% and lone-parent families increased 10.3%. Lone female parent families were 11.1% of all families, while lone male parents were 3.3% of all families.

In comparison, for the same 2011 period, Nova Scotia total census families increased 2.7% to 270,065. Married families decreased by 2.1%, while common law families increased 28.3% and lone-parent families increased 5.9%. Lone female parent families were 13.9% of all families, while lone male parents were 3.4% of all families.

Figure 3: Family Structure 2011 Census

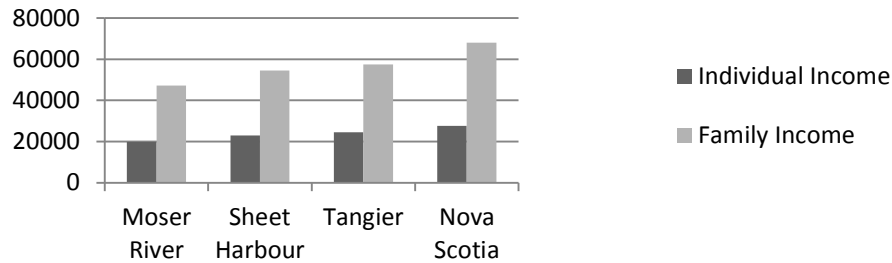


Compared to Nova Scotia, all three communities had a relatively low immigrant population. In 2011, immigrants made up 0% of the population in Moser River, 0.6% in Sheet Harbour and 1.7% in Tangier, as compared to 5% immigrants for Nova Scotia. In Moser River 99.3% of people indicated they were Canadian citizens, in Sheet Harbour 99.7% of people were Canadian citizens and in Tangier 99.5% of people were Canadian citizens, as compared to 97.6% for Nova Scotia.

Income Comparisons

In 2011, the median income for individuals in Moser River was \$19,838, Sheet Harbour \$23,043 and Tangier \$24,475 a year, compared with the median of \$27,570 for Nova Scotia. Families in Moser River had a median income of \$47,261, Sheet Harbour \$54,454 and in Tangier \$57,508, compared with the median of \$68,102 for Nova Scotia families.

Figure 4: Income Comparisons



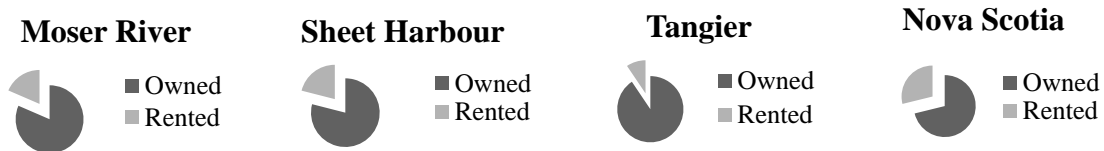
Education Data

In 2011, 61.5% of the population of Moser River, 61.5% in Sheet Harbour and 69.9% in Tangier age 20 and over had a high school diploma or post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. In Nova Scotia, 77.7% had completed high school or received a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree. Alternatively, the percentage of the population who indicated they did not complete high school or attain a certificate, diploma or degree was 38% in Moser River, 37.7% in Sheet Harbour, 30.7% in Tangier, but 22.3% for Nova Scotia.

Housing Data

In 2011, 81.9% of the population of Moser River owned their dwellings and 18.6% rented, 79.6% of the population in Sheet Harbour owned their dwellings and 21.2 % rented, 90.2% of the population in Tangier owned their dwellings and 9.4% rented this compared with 70.8% and 28.7% for Nova Scotia respectively. Figure 5 provides a visual depiction of these statistics.

Figure 5: Home Ownership Comparisons



The dwelling values and rental costs are relatively lower in Moser River, Tangier and Sheet Harbour as compared to the average dwelling values and rental costs in Nova Scotia. Chart 2 outlines the average values for the various communities and for Nova Scotia as a whole.

Chart 2: Housing Costs

	Moser River	Sheet Harbour	Tangier	Nova Scotia
Average Household Value	\$132,128	\$159,618	\$161,849	\$201,991
Average Rental	\$564	\$630	\$463	\$771

Employment Data

The 2011 employment rate for residents over the age of 15 for each community as compared to Nova Scotia is as follows:

Moser River:	36.7%
Sheet Harbour:	41.3%
Tangier:	46.2%
Nova Scotia:	56.8%

The 2011 unemployment rate for residents over the age of 15 for each community as compared to Nova Scotia is as follows:

Moser River:	20.1%
Sheet Harbour:	8%
Tangier:	11.8%
Nova Scotia:	10%

Transportation Data

The residents of the Eastern Shore catchment area generally use a vehicle as their main mode of transportation to the workplace with negligible data captured for other modes of transportation. According to the 2011 Census data the only anomaly was in Tangier where 4.9% of the residents walk to work. This is compared to the Nova Scotia average where 84.6% rely on vehicle use, 6.6% use public transit, 0.7% bicycle and 6.8% walk. It is important to note that these communities do not have immediate access to public transit, so it makes sense that the statistics for vehicle usage would be higher.

The average 2011 commute to work for residents of Tangier is 36 minutes one way, 15 minutes for residents of Sheet Harbour and 21 minutes for residents of Moser River. Nova Scotia statistics were not available.

In summary, Chart 3 outlines all of the 2011 Census Data key indicators and comparisons.

Chart 3: 2011 Census Data: Key Socio-Demographic Indicators and Comparisons

Indicators	Eastern Shore Area	HRM	Nova Scotia
Population	3,525 (2011)	390,288 (2011)	921,725 (2011)
Elementary/Secondary School Age (5-19)	322 (18%)	83,522 (21.4%)	195,448 (21.2%)
Largest Age Cohort	35-54 (26.7%) 65+ (26.1%)	35-54 (30.5%)	35-54 (29.5%)
Population Change since 2001	- 12%	8.70%	1.5%
Income Characteristics			
Median Family income - all households	\$53,074	\$80,097	\$68,102
Median Individual Income	\$22,452	\$32,084	\$27,570
Household Ownership			
Owned	83.9%	62.8%	70.8%
Rented	16.4%	37.2%	28.1%
Unemployment Rate 15 yrs and over	13.3%	7.2%	9.1%

It is important to note that more than half of the population in the Eastern Shore catchment area is over 35 and a large segment is over 65 indicating that the citizenship is aging and many younger families are either relocating or choosing alternate places to reside.

Current Recreation Options

Recreation is provided at a variety of locations in the area and at both indoor and outdoor sites.

There are 3 Elementary Schools located between East Ship Harbour and Ecum Secum:

1. Lakefront Consolidated School services East Ship Harbour to Spry Bay
2014 student population – 32
2. Sheet Harbour Consolidated services Spry Bay East to Quoddy
2014 student population – 98
3. Eastern Consolidated School services Quoddy East to Ecum Secum Bridge
2014 student population – 7

There is one Junior / Senior High School (Duncan MacMillan High School) that services the entire area from East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum Bridge with a 2014 student population of 185.

The Library Branch, Parks and Recreation office, and Seaside Fitness Centre, are co-located in Sheet Harbour at 22756 Highway #7 in the leased Bluewater Building. While there are no specific recreation programming rooms at this leased location, there is a boardroom which is available for recreation programming. In addition, programs are currently offered in alternative locations throughout this geographically expansive area. These alternative program spaces include church halls, community halls, and local schools. Many are operated by volunteer groups who rely on the income generated by rental of their facilities to support the operating and maintenance costs. The rental income, visibility and traffic flow of residents to these various facilities, and access for citizens to programs in alternate locations is seen to be a benefit and provides a level of access that would not be present if all programs were located in one centralized facility.

HRM Recreation attempts to identify the appropriate programs for each community, locate instructors and find rental space that coincides with the availability of instructors while ensuring the program times are suitable for the users. This complex equation often challenges the ability to offer relevant programming at the right time and in the appropriate space, especially in a diverse and vast geographic area.

In addition, there are three HRM facilities operated by community groups through Facility Lease Agreements within this region that offer community recreation opportunities to their local population. These include Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, Moser River Community Centre and Samuel R. Balcom Centre located in Port Dufferin. Also, an additional HRM owned building in Sheet Harbour, McPhee House, provides a gathering space for the community, community museum and visitor's centre.

Chart 4 provides examples of the recreation spaces that are currently used to provide HRM recreation programs.

Chart 4: Inventory of HRM Recreation Spaces

	HRM Recreational Spaces	Ownership
Tangier & surrounding areas	Billy Bollong Memorial Ball Field- Spry Harbour	Municipal
	Lakefront Consolidated School and Playground	Provincial
	Coastal Adventures	Private
	St. James Church Hall-Spry Bay	Church
	St. Peters Church Hall- Murphy Cove	
	St. Dennis Parish Centre-East Ship Harbour	
Sheet Harbour and surrounding areas	Sheet Harbour Lion's Centre	Municipal
	Sheet Harbour Fire Hall	
	Sheet Harbour Skate Park	
	Sheet Harbour Rockets Field	
	Lion's Playground	
	Mushaboom Fire Hall	
	Duncan MacMillan High School and sports fields	Provincial
	Sheet Harbour Consolidated School and Playground	
	Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital	
	Taylor's Head Beach	
	Sheet Harbour Wildlife Park	
	Albert Howe Centre (Millbrook Band Use only)	Private Owners
	Malay Falls - Aquatics	
	Sheet Harbour Consolidated Playground	
	Bluewater Building – HRM leased space for HRM Recreation, HRM Library Sheet Harbour	
	Masonic Hall	Private Not For Profit Owners
	Sheet Harbour Legion	
Lily's Hill		
St. Peters Catholic Church Basement	Church	
Moser River & surrounding areas	Moser River Ballfield	Municipal
	Samuel R. Balcolm Centre	
	Moser River Community Centre	
	Moser River Park and Playground	Provincial
	Eastern Consolidated School	
	Lochaber Mines Church Hall	Church

Outdoor Recreation

In addition to recreation programming in facilities, there are outdoor recreation facilities which are used for HRM programming and booking by local user groups. The HRM outdoor recreation facilities in the area include:

Billy Bollong Memorial Ballfield
Duncan MacMillan sport field
Eastern Consolidated Elementary Ballfield
Samuel R Balcom Ballfield (currently not in use – HRM Municipal Operations to make operable for 2015)

The HRM maintenance category for the above fields is “D” which means that there is minimal maintenance. In addition none of the fields in the area meet the required field specifications for regulation baseball, softball, soccer, or football games. As a result, they tend to be used for practice and recreation purposes.

In addition there are other outdoor facilities that are used to provide alternate recreation opportunities; such as:

Sheet Harbour Wildlife Park
Sheet Harbour Skate Park
Sheet Harbour Rockets Ballfield
Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre: archery, outdoor movies, tennis court, play field
Moser River Ballfield
Moser River Park and Playground
Lily’s Hill outdoor rink and sledding hill
Taylor’s Head Beach
Coastal Adventures

In the winter months, some residents visit Lily’s Hill which is an outdoor skating rink and a sledding hill. This provides residents an opportunity for family oriented fun and is also used by HRM Recreation for programs.

Also, access to a recreation bus that is shared with the Musquodoboit Harbour Recreation office allows for group activities that require travel such as hiking at Taylor’s Head Beach, kayak instruction at Coastal Adventures, skating at the Musquodoboit Arena and swimming at Liscombe Lodge.

Alternate Service Providers

In addition to HRM Programming in the area, other Community Service Providers exist who provide additional programs and services within their own distinct communities. As noted, HRM has utilized an alternate service delivery model through Facility Lease Agreements with three of these facilities, namely:

- Moser River Community Centre
- Samuel R Balcolm Centre located in Port Dufferin
- Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre

Charts 5 – 7 provide a typical monthly overview of programs offered at each centre:

Chart 5: Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre Programs and Activities – a typical month

Program/Activity	Total Monthly Hours	Number of Participants per event
Lions Bingo	16	65
Lions Events	9	25
Provincial Court	6	10
Judo	24	10
Sheet Hbr Chamber	4	50
Wrestling	24	15
Teen Dance	6	90
Trivia Night	5	25
Rental to seniors group	6	25
Rental to Prov gov't dept	6	40
Gerald Hardy Society Events	21	125
Total Monthly Rental = 127 hours		

Chart 6: Moser River Community Hall Programs and Activities – a typical month

Program/Activity	Total Monthly Hours	Number of Participants per event
Darts	12	30
Grand Friends activities	16	20
Hall Board Meeting	2	20
Card Parties	12	30
Rentals for private events (suppers, dance, variety show)	8	40-100
Total Monthly Rental = 50 Hours		

Chart 7: Samuel R Balcom Centre Program and Activities – a typical month

Program/Activity	Total Monthly Hours	Number of Participants per event
Weight Watchers	8	8
Board Meeting	1	15
Church supper	9	180
Flea Market	22	100
Fitness	2	varies
Board supper	6	160
Total Monthly Rental – 48 hours		

The Facility Lease Agreements outline the expectation for the community group to align with HRM Parks and Recreation Services' mandate in that they provide, promote and encourage community recreation and cultural opportunities while collaborating and building relationships to promote public use of a municipal asset.

Each facility is responsible for expenditures such as licenses, permits, utilities, insurance, supplies for events and other operational requirements. Chart 8 shows the revenue and expenses for each of the Facilities in the 2013/14 fiscal year.

Chart 8: 2013/14 Revenue and Income for HRM Facility Leased Agreement Facilities

Facility Name	Revenue from Rentals	HRM Funding	Operating Expenses
Sheet Harbour Lions Centre	\$80,082	\$28,225	\$79,864
Moser River Centre	\$25,033	\$11,639	\$22,367
Samuel R. Balcom Centre	\$24,232	\$12,416	\$22,015

The HRM funding includes Contributions Funds based on the size of the facility as well as funding in the form of expenses incurred for services such as building inspections, water tests and boiler cleaning. The Facility Boards may also apply for Provincial and Federal Grants, as well as Councillor discretionary funding. In 2013/14, the Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre received a total of \$12,000 and the Samuel R Balcom Centre received \$1,885 from these funds.

HRM is responsible for the capital expenses of each of the three facilities. A building assessment was conducted on each indicating the anticipated capital expense to ensure the usage for the next 25 years. Based on the building assessments, Moser River Community Centre requires capital expenditures of approximately \$305,000, Sheet Harbour Lions Club Community Centre \$630,000 and Samuel R. Balcom Community Centre \$320,000, as illustrated in Figures 4-6.

Figure 4: Recapitalization costs for Moser River Community Centre

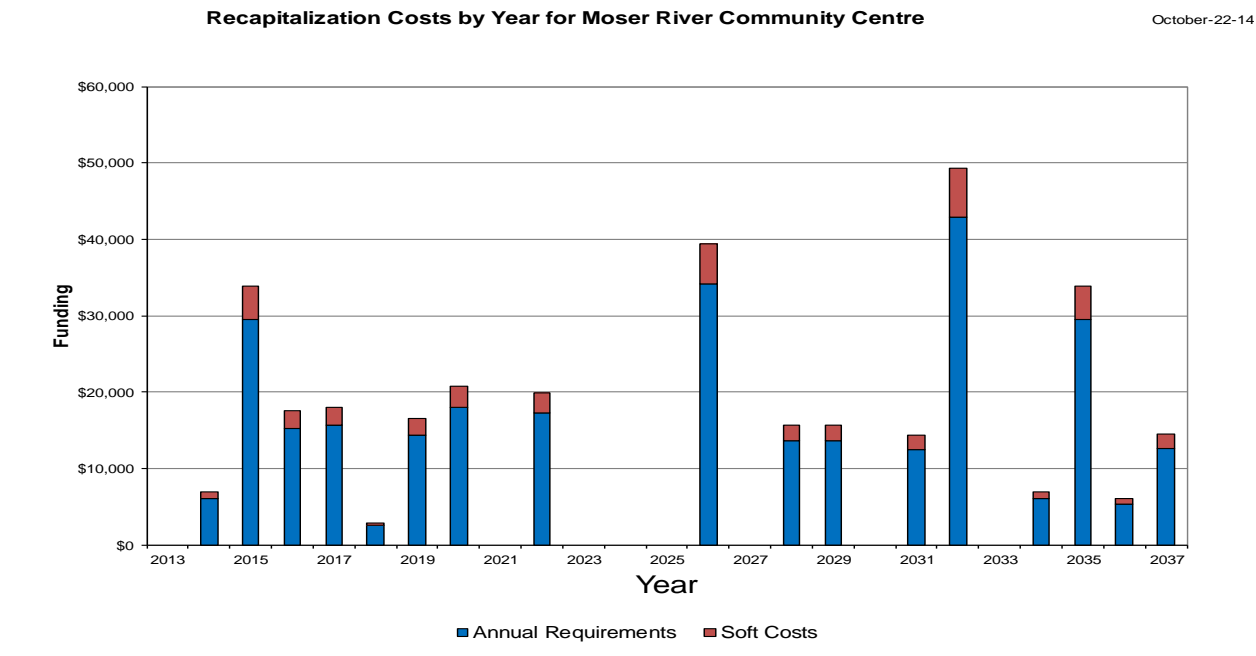


Figure 5: Recapitalization Costs for Sheet Harbour Lions Club Community Centre
Recapitalization Costs by Year for Sheet Harbour Lions Club Community Centre

October-22-14

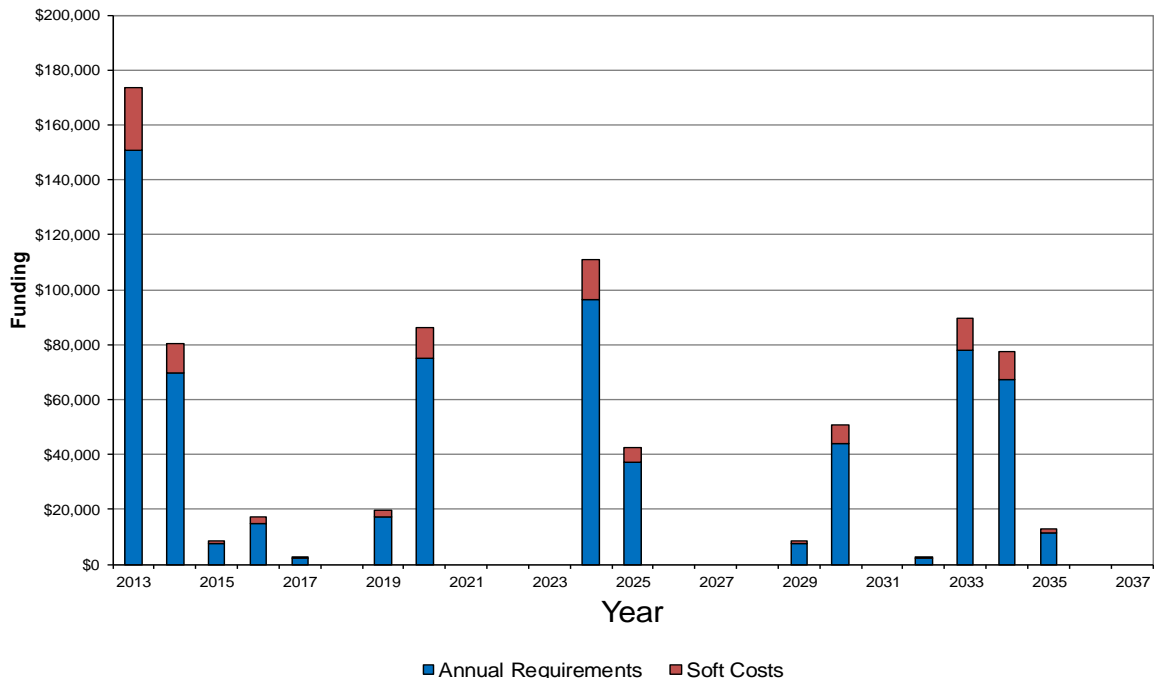
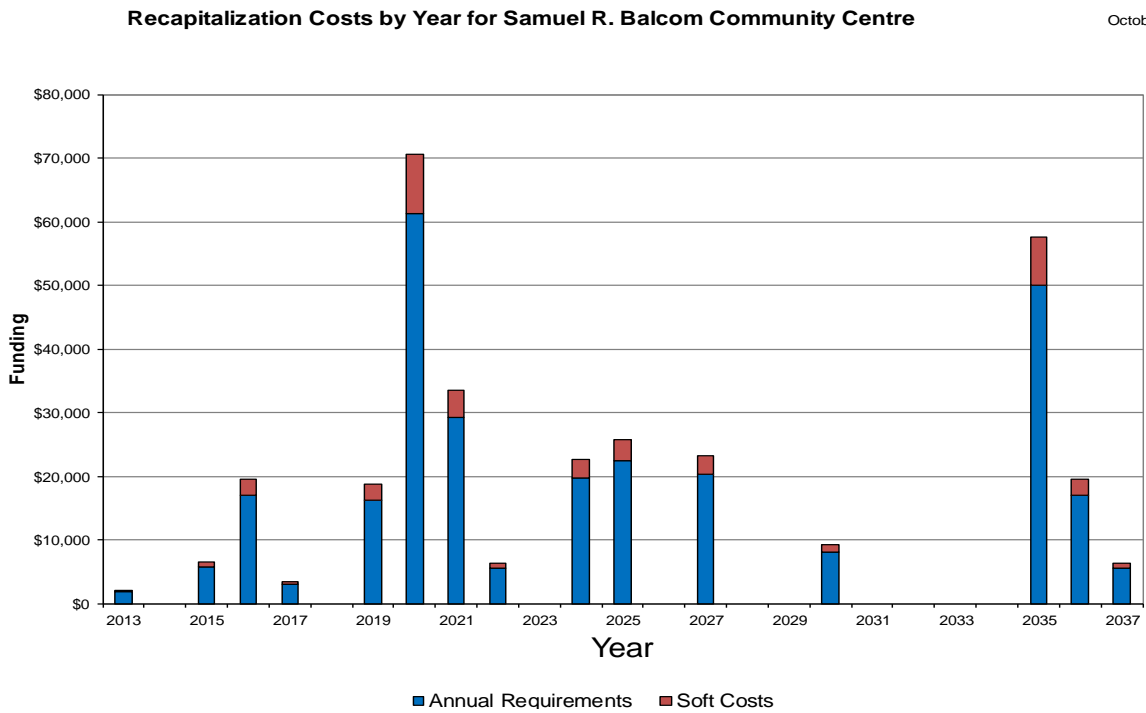


Figure 6: Recapitalization Costs for Samuel R. Balcom Community Centre

October-22-14



Summary of Current Recreation Needs

There are no major youth sport groups within this catchment area that provide a league program, however, there are community specific little league and women's ball clubs, a small youth soccer group, and school related activities. There used to be Girl Guides and Scouts but, due to cost and diminishing population, these programs are no longer offered. The Cadet Program is available and is at no cost to participants. Sports such as gymnastics, hockey, dance, swimming, etc., must be accessed outside this catchment area.

There are no waiting lists for HRM Recreation programs and the participation is not optimum. Evidence of the declining population exists in the number of children and youth who are present in the communities and who are available to participate in registered and informal recreation opportunities. With only 320 school age residents in this region with access to current school programs as well as participation in alternate activities, there is limited participation in HRM recreation programming.

Many of the facilities that were active in the past have closed; there was a bowling alley housed within the United Church Hall and Holy Trinity Hall, a swimming pool which was covered and is now used as the Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, an archery club, and many church halls.

In this rural area, programming could be more successful if the focus was shifted to address the needs of the majority of citizens who are age 35+ with a large senior contingent.

Standards for Provision of Recreation Services

The Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP), Section 4.2, indicates that, "service providers need to be aligned in order to maximize their financial viability, and to minimize competition between service providers. CFMP criteria for Category 1 facilities (community centres) suggest a best-case scenario of approximately 15,000 residents to form a strong population base per facility, along with an expectation of a five to ten minute drive time.

Currently, based on the 2011 Census of Population:

- Moser River (includes East Quoddy, Ecum Secum, Harrigan Cove, Mitchell Bay, Moosehead, Moser River, Necum Teuch, Smith Cove, West Quoddy) has a total population of 794 which is 14.4% lower than in 2001;
- Sheet Harbour (includes Beaver Harbour, Lochaber Mines, Malay Falls, Mushaboon, Port Dufferin, Sheet Harbour, Sheet Harbour Passage, Sober Island, Watt Section) has a total population of 1,562 which is 10.5% lower than in 2001; and
- Tangier (includes East Ship Harbour, Mooseland, Murphy Cove, Pleasant Harbour, Ship Harbour, Spry Bay, Spry Harbour, Tangier, Taylors Head, Third Lake) has a total population of 1,169 which is 11% lower than in 2001.

While the number of residents is significantly lower than the standard per recreation facility, the rural geographic realities of the region indicate that the benchmark doesn't adequately address the needs and expectations of rural citizens. In fact, an expectation of a five to ten minute drive time for access is also unrealistic in these rural communities as, except for in the three larger communities, citizens generally are required to drive much further to access services.

However, even when the rural nature of the area is factored in, facility provision in these three (grouped) communities exceeds an appropriate expectation for community facilities, and illustrates a problematic level of complexity and competition for service providers. A summary of the information listed above indicates that available facilities include:

- Moser River and area (pop. 794) currently has six indoor and outdoor facilities available for community access. Of the six facilities, three are municipally owned, one is a Provincially owned existing school, one is a provincial park and one is a church hall. HRM owns Samuel R.

Balcom Community Centre located in Port Dufferin, Moser River Ball Field and Moser River Community Centre.

- Sheet Harbour and area (pop. 1,562) currently has nineteen indoor and outdoor facilities available for community access. Of the nineteen facilities, six are municipally owned, two are existing schools, three are owned by the Province, one is a church hall, four are privately owned, and three are privately owned non-profits. HRM owns Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre, Sheet Harbour Fire Hall, Sheet Harbour Skate Park, Sheet Harbour Rockets Field, Sheet Harbour Lions Playground, and Mushaboom Fire Hall.
- Tangier and area (pop. 1,169) currently has six indoor and outdoor facilities available for community access. Of these six facilities, one is municipally owned, one is an existing school, one is privately owned and three are church halls. HRM owns the Billy Bollong Memorial Ball Field.

With the number of facilities and the combined total population of 3,525 residents, the provision of facilities is far below the CFMP benchmark for facility provision per capita of 1 facility per 15,000 residents.

As per the CFMP direction regarding efficiencies and levels of inventory, HRM should work within the existing structure to improve access and effectiveness by reducing the level of direct competition for the same user in the provision of recreation services and programs.

Hub School Model

In November 2014, the Province announced a new model for consideration of hub school proposals. The hub model outlines an opportunity for outside agencies, organizations or businesses to be included in the school building as tenants. The model was primarily initiated as a mechanism to maintain schools with diminishing enrollments. However, the regulations do not restrict the consideration of a hub model in new schools. The Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce carried out two surveys of residents from East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum to determine if there was a need for a Community Facility; one in 2008 and another in 2013. The results indicated that over 84% of respondents would use the facility for recreation and cultural programs. Their concept of a “hub” would house governmental agencies, community groups and potentially private sector offices. When the new P-12 School was announced, HRM staff met with the members to determine if there was a partnership opportunity and at that time there was no business plan or funding available for the “hub” concept.

The Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce is exploring the development of a proposal to submit to the Provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and HRSB that adheres to the recently approved Guideline and Criteria for a “Hub School Model”. This proposal for use is very detailed and must clearly demonstrate that there is no increase to capital or operational costs for HRSB or the Province, and not create additional or unreasonable management responsibilities for HRSB. Also, the business plan must contain 7 elements, at a minimum, including an analysis of financial, an operation model, an implementation plan and a cost/benefit analysis. Staff will continue to monitor the proposal process.

School Design and Siting

The construction of a new school involves the selection of a site followed by detailed design of the building. In the case of the Eastern Shore school, staff understands that site selection committee has narrowed the potential sites to three options. A specific site selection has yet to be completed by the Province of Nova Scotia at the time of writing this report. Upon determination of the final site, the detailed design of the building will be finalized which incorporates any site constraints.

In the case of the three potential sites for the Eastern Shore school, there would be challenges for each site to incorporate an enhancement to the school to accommodate either community space or a hub school model. The challenges include space constraints as a result of the land configuration, access to sufficient potable water to meet the needs of the additional space and centralized location which

complements other community and commercial uses. As a result of these constraints, the design of the new school may not be able to accommodate any additional space which would eliminate any opportunity for a community enhancement.

Partnership Opportunities

Through this process, opportunities were identified to expand on the existing partnerships with the three Eastern Shore Facility Boards to build a collaborative service delivery model which would allow for enhanced programming opportunities within the community along with improved sustainability for the facilities. The three Facility Boards have demonstrated the ability to manage and operate their facility, while meeting the needs of their target groups and unique community culture. However, there is evidence indicating a considerable amount of available rental time in each facility which is being explored as a potential partnership opportunity for HRM to utilize these spaces for programming purposes on a more consistent and/or permanent basis instead of developing another new space that would compete for the same users.

The approximate monthly rental availability for each facility based on daily access from 9:00am to 9:00pm for 7 days per week (336 hours in total for a 30 day month) is currently as follows:

- Sheet Harbour Lions Club Community Centre – 209 hours
- Moser River Community Centre – 286 hours
- Samuel R. Balcom Centre – 288 hours

Based on the hours available, many of the activities indicated in the community survey could be accommodated at the existing facilities. Much of the requested programming does not require specifically design space but rather can be offered in multi-purpose space, similar to that which is available in the existing facilities. Increase in the program offerings at the existing facilities would also provide additional revenue to the facility boards, thus improving their sustainability.

In particular, the Sheet Harbour Lions Community Centre is centrally located in the Eastern Shore and has existing indoor and outdoor infrastructure that would allow HRM to deliver recreation services as identified by the residents in this needs analysis. The possible relocation of the HRM Parks and Recreation office to this location on a permanent basis once the current lease at the Bluewater Building has expired (December 2016) would provide opportunities for enhanced program offerings and the stabilization the Facility Board requires to continue providing their services in a sustainable manner.

HRM Library

The HRM Library Services leases in the same building as the HRM Recreation division which is well located in the centre of Sheet Harbour with sidewalk access. In addition to lending services, HRM Recreation and Library Services both offer programming and services. The co-location of both of the services also provides opportunities for some joint programming to be provided to the community. As a result, both Recreation and Library Services see benefit to maintaining a joint HRM presence in the Eastern Shore as well exploring any further opportunities to enhance the programming offered by both.

Maintaining the joint presence by HRM Recreation and Library Services is important to be able to most effectively offer programs and services to the Eastern Shore communities. Therefore, exploration of any opportunities to changes or enhancements to service delivery would need to ensure both recreation and library services could be accommodated.

Discussion with HRM Library Services has indicated that proximity to both schools and other community or commercial service providers is important but that co-location with those other service providers is not necessary and may not be beneficial. The mandate of the library is to provide services to all residents, including vulnerable populations which may not always align well with the school mandate. Being able to ensure full community access to the library's programs and services during all business hours is a key component of the library's mandate. Recreation shares a similar mandate. Therefore, proximity to local

schools is more of a benefit than co-location, as it eliminates the need to ensure any mandate conflicts do not have to be mitigated.

In addition to the Sheet Harbour Library branch, there are other groups within this region who have benefitted from partnering with HRM Recreation to gain the expertise and share examples in program development and delivery. Other examples include local seniors' homes and the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital. This model can be expanded to many other community groups in order to enhance program offerings in the area.

Findings

This geographic area is unique when compared to all other areas within HRM as it is extremely rural and has been struggling over the past decades to retain its identity, population and viability. The current recreation service delivery model is challenging in rural communities due to the geographical and demographic differences, therefore, HRM must adapt to ensure these citizens have access to service that enhances their quality of life. Enhanced opportunities for HRM Recreation programming in the existing facilities needs to be explored to ensure their continued sustainability without competing for the same user in a diminishing population region.

In addition, the construction of a new consolidated school for this region is significant in that it will not only create renewed spaces for community usage, but will allow for the development of new spaces and new possibilities as citizens of all ages benefit from the standard design features in the new school. By virtue of construction of a new school, the building will include a new gymnasium and the potential for a cafetorium design. The creation of the school gym will provide opportunities for community usage outside of school hours and supplement the other recreation service currently offered. Community access to the school amenities, including the gym and potential cafetorium would be achieved through the Service Exchange Agreement (SEA) between HRM and HRSB. While challenges have occurred related to consistent and regular community access to HRSB schools, Regional Council has recently provided direction to staff to negotiate improvements to the SEA in order to improve the amount of community access and to reduce barriers to achieving access.

As a result of the Recreation Needs Assessment, the following findings were identified:

1. The population of the Eastern Shore is steadily decreasing and the majority of citizens are between the ages of 35-54 and over 65 years of age. Also, housing costs are less and the unemployment rate is significantly higher than the HRM and Nova Scotia average.
2. The factors of transportation, travel distance, quality/availability of instructors and cost are equally important in determining the use of recreation facilities.
3. The communities within this area are purposely separate from each other in order to retain their unique identities, but all are experiencing difficulty sustaining their respective facilities.
4. The majority of the Eastern Shore citizens who provided feedback rate the importance of recreation programs as a very high aspect to a good quality of life.
5. More than 95% of citizens and groups that participated in the formal and informal feedback opportunities stated dissatisfaction with the current availability of both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.
6. There is currently more facilities per-capita than recreation standards outline. Existing facility provision per-capita illustrates a clear need to develop a more appropriate model for the delivery of recreation services and programs in the existing facilities.

Although there was no evidence that there needs to be a school enhancement to provide recreation service, HRM will continue to work with the existing Facility Agreement Lease partners to explore more efficient and effective service to the residents of the Eastern Shore.

As per the CFMP direction regarding efficiencies and levels of inventory, HRM should work within the existing structure to improve access and effectiveness by reducing the level of direct competition for the same user in a diminishing population region in the provision of recreation services and programs. . The CFMP renewal, currently underway, will also consider all recreation needs across the municipality as a whole. The process includes significant stakeholder and community consultation. With the necessary steps required for the siting of the new Eastern Shore school, there is the possibility that the CFMP renewal will be completed before the school project. If that does occur, and if any new or additional information is received as part of that consultation process, Regional Council would have the opportunity to consider the impact of the additional information as part of their deliberations on the CFMP.

Conclusion

With the combined total population of 3,525 residents, the number of facilities is far below the CFMP benchmark for facility provision of 1 facility per 15,000 residents. The new school will include a gymnasium and potentially a cafetorium which can be used for community programming. While there are recreation needs in the area, there is no evidence that a community enhancement of the new school is required for recreation programming. Those recreation needs can be better addressed through improvements to programming at the existing facilities through the development of improved partnerships with the Facility Lease Agreement Boards for provision of additional recreation programming. Therefore, as per the CFMP direction regarding efficiencies and levels of inventory, HRM should work within the existing structure to improve access and effectiveness by reducing the level of direct competition for the same user in a diminishing population region in the provision of recreation services and programs.

Since there is no recommended contribution for an enhancement at the new school, there is no direct relationship between the Province, Halifax and community facility. Therefore, a table explaining a relationship, their contributions and how the community contribution was met, is not required or possible.

Schedule "A"

Eastern Shore Community Meetings

HRM staff held four community meetings in order to provide the public another feedback choice regarding the potential community enhancement of Eastern Shore P-12 school; one in Moser River, one in Tangier and two in Sheet Harbour. Each session began with a brief presentation explaining the background legislation that allows HRM an opportunity to explore the potential community enhancement to the school, what types of community enhancements could occur, the process for developing and presenting staff recommendations to Regional Council and the next steps if the potential community enhancement is approved.

General themes were as follows:

1. Citizen feedback reflected the desire to have a multi-purpose centre that contained a pool, and access to a variety of municipal services; however, the location of this site was not as relevant as long as there was a provision of programming opportunities for all ages to enjoy at the same time.
2. The factors of transportation, travel distance, quality of instructors and cost are equally important in determining the use of recreation facilities.
3. There is a lack of accessible facilities and programs tailored to physical or mentally challenged citizens.
4. The communities within this area are purposely separate from each other in order to retain their unique identities while all experiencing difficulty sustaining their respective facility.

5. HRM Recreation staff is unable to meet the needs of this catchment area due to lack of dedicated recreation programming space, lack of qualified instructors and lack of a strategy to address rural recreation needs such as transportation, travel costs, appropriate marketing, cost of programs, and provision of multi recreational experiences for families.
6. Marketing and advertising of HRM programs need to change in the rural areas. The catalogue is not an effective method to promote and inform; mass mail outs was a suggestion by many.

Each session had a question and answer component as well as a small group exercise in which the participants replied to two questions.

Question 1: Tell us what indoor or outdoor recreation facility you or a family member currently enjoys. Why?

Question 2: What are the recreation facilities or programs currently not available that you or your family member would utilize if possible. Why?

Community Meetings: Sheet Harbour

Number of Participants: **Sept 23 – 78**
 Sept 24 - 37

Question 1:

Response
Dog walking
Yoga
Fitness Centre
Piano and guitar lesson
Lea Place
Cadet Program
Sidewalk walking
Trivia night at Henley House
ASL classes
CAP site
Live music
Field trip
Teen Dances
Library
Floor Hockey
Card Parties
Swimming lessons – Malay Falls
Bingo
Painting
Soccer
Gym
Choirs
Music
Sledding
Bocce

Lily's Hill
Movie Night
Kayaking
Baseball
Swimming
Darts
Photography
Pool
Tae Kwan do
Hiking
Skating
Archery
Shooting
Hunting
Fishing
Gardening
Playgrounds – HRM and Lions
Snow shoeing
Snow mobiling
4 wheeling
Board game nights
Martial Arts
Sight seeing

Why? Access, opportunity to socialize, cost, time of program, and transportation.

Question 2

Response
Scouting/Girl Guides
Dance Programs
Archery Club
Golf – driving range
Canoe Club
More senior programs
Soccer or rugby field
Youth centre for grade 7-12
Indoor swimming pool
Arena
Bowling alley
Choral Music
Theatre – plays, concerts, movies,
Art studio
Indoor Playground
Cheerleading
Regulation size gym and field
Martial Arts studio
Studio and Gallery: textiles, writing

Hiking and Biking trails
Cross Country Skiing
Running Club
Gymnastics – baby and youth
Kindermusic
Dirt and Mountain Bike trails
Bike Track
Multi- purpose facility – pool, darts, movies, music, basketball, games, floor hockey
Squash court
Wildlife outing, outdoor survival
Tennis court
Café in school
Solarium
Community center with wrap around services
Spray park
Theatre
Curling
Roller Derby
Day Care Centre
Indoor walking area
Badminton
Marina
Dance Studio

Why? Year round activities for all ages, not being forced to travel long distances for recreation opportunities, quality of life, social, enjoyable, volunteer opportunities, support child mental and physical development, all one spot for entire family

Community Meeting October 6th – Moser River

Number of Participants: 43

Question 1

Response
Craft Night
Darts
Seniors dinner and games
Monday Afternoon get together
Carpet Bowling
Indoor Curling
Card games
Book Club
Music Group
Shuffle Board
Board Games
Washer Toss
Swimming – Liscombe Lodge
Walking

Biking
Grand Friends Program
Fishing
Hunting
Gardening
ATV
Fly tying
Golf
Snow Shoeing

Why? Socialization, get outdoors, local, and free

Question 2

Response
Swimming pool – indoor and/or outdoor
Bowling alley
Theatre – movie and arts
Cooking programs
Painting – crafts
Sign Language
Astronomy
Ice Rink
Hall used for team sports
Gym facilities in Moser River
Boat building school
Indoor tennis
Sewing and quilting club
Workshops – Battenburg lace making
Cooking classes
Qi Gong
Pool Games
Spanish Lessons
Drama
Yoga
Archery
Woodworking projects
Wine making
Taxidermy
Wool spinning / weaving

Why? Want to be able to access programs in Moser River, would not want to go to Sheet Harbour due to smell of Harbour (raw sewage), inability to travel, need cost to be affordable, accessibility challenges

Community Meeting Tangier October 7, 2014

Number of Participants: 14

Question 1

Response
Tennis
Badminton
Swimming in Truro or Cole Harbour Place
Cadets
Aquafit
Hiking
School sports
Biking
Seasonal Skating
Cards
New Horizons
Theatre – outside community
Red Hat Society
Art
Ballet
Baseball
Soccer
HRM Rec programs
Walking and running

Why? Programs in the Musquodoboit Community are just as close as Sheet Harbour so will often go there, mobility and enjoyment, free, local, exercise, will travel to rink for hockey

Question 2:

Response
Indoor Swimming pool
Theatre/Cinema
Late bus from school so children can benefit from school programs
Track
Arena
Tennis
Basketball
Bigger gym in local area
Shower in the Seaside Fitness Centre
Bowling
Café with Wi-Fi
Multi – purpose centre
Dance studies
Arcade
Indoor walking trail
Horseback Riding
Dog park
Art class
More seniors programs

Why? Growing senior population would benefit from pool and indoor programs, not everyone wants to travel to Sheet Harbour, things should be spread out in the catchment area to benefit everyone and residents from Sheet Harbour should travel to facilities, promote art and culture, socialize, enable family focused recreation where all family members could enjoy different activities at the same time, transportation needs to be addressed