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Item No.
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee
May 19, 2016

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

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by:

Brad Anguish, Director of Parks & Recreation

DATE: April 25, 2016

SUBJECT: Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program Update

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

- June 10, 2014, Halifax Regional Council Motion:

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Craig that Halifax Regional Council:
Adopt Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV providing the Terms of Reference for the Halifax
Explosion 100th Anniversary Advisory Committee as outlined in Attachment 1 of the April 10, 2014
staff report. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- Section 12 of Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV Respecting the Special Advisory Committee on
the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion which requires the submission of a written report to the
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee on the status of the Municipal
Commemorative Program at least twice annually.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Section 79 (1), The Council may expend money required by the
Municipality for; (k) recreational programs; (x) lands and buildings required for a municipal purpose; (ai)
public grounds, squares, halls, museums, parks, tourist information centres and community centres.*

BACKGROUND

In 2013, Regional Council approved a plan to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion through three specific projects:

1. An enhanced civic commemoration event on Dec. 6, 2017;
2. A legacy capital project; and
3. A grants program to support non-profit organizations and charities in their commemoration of the anniversary.

Regional Council also appointed a citizen-led Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Special Advisory Committee (HEAAC) to advise staff on the development and implementation of the commemorative program. The Committee has met 17 times since August 27, 2014. An information report was presented to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) on November 19, 2015 outlining the first update on the Committee's activities and the status of the Municipal Commemorative Program to that point. This information report provides a further update as per Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV Respecting the Special Advisory Committee on the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion.

DISCUSSION

The following information outlines the current status of the three specific projects from 2014 to present:

1. Civic Commemorative Event

During the HEAAC deliberations, the Committee indicated that to properly commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion, support should be provided for a series of events leading up to the civic commemorative event on December 6, 2017. As such, they requested that Project 1 be divided into two sub-components:

- a. The December 6, 2017, Expanded Commemorative Ceremony; and
- b. The 100th Anniversary Commemorative Program.

Expanded Commemorative Ceremony

Regional Council has directed the delivery of an 'Expanded Commemorative Ceremony' based on the ongoing annual commemoration ceremony at Fort Needham Bell Tower on December 6th. The November 2015 status update presented to CPED identified a series of prospective added elements that would enhance the ceremonial program at the Fort Needham site. While the development of the additional elements is ongoing, staff presented a framework approach to HEAAC at the December 2015 meeting.

The 100th Anniversary Commemorative Cultural Program

As noted in the November 2015 report to CPED, HEAAC has indicated an interest in an approach incorporating a series of events and proposed that the project be divided into sub-components in order to achieve higher-order and/or integrative program elements. However, the proposed approach is outside of the scope of any of the 3 previously-defined anniversary program categories approved by Regional Council. These elements have come to the attention of the HEAAC either through correspondence received from interested members of the community, or through the Committee's own efforts in relation to best-practice research, workshops and consultation. The proposed program elements are characterized as falling within two general thematic groupings:

1. Signature Commissions of a scope and scale not achievable under the conditions of the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Grant Program, and which represent a specific intention of the Municipality (e.g. the commissioning of a signature artwork or event component).
2. A Consolidating, Interpretive and Presentation Framework which would centralize and provide ease-of-access to information related to the Explosion and its history, as well as community

events and commemorations taking place around the 100th Anniversary Event, including those funded through the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Grant program.

Both are seen by the Committee as program components that would be specifically undertaken by the Municipality, along with potential partnerships with other levels of governmental and institutions.

In considering how to address these perceived gaps, staff has been strategically reviewing the frameworks of the existing Anniversary Program elements. Upon consideration of the resources and budget required to develop an additional new program, it has been determined that there is adequate scale within the existing programs to achieve the desired outcomes. As well, there are two potential opportunities being explored that would achieve similar outcomes:

- With respect to 'Signature Commissions', the Expanded Commemorative Event may create possible avenues for signature commissions. In that case, HRM would issue a targeted procurement for a municipal commission (e.g. commissioning of a signature artwork or event component).
- With respect to a presentation framework, there are two elements that would achieve that outcome. The Municipality has supported a community application from the Narratives in Space and Time Society (NIS&T) to the Canadian Heritage: Community Anniversary Fund. This non-profit organization has led Explosion-themed community walks throughout Halifax and Dartmouth, with the aim of engaging the legacy of the Halifax Explosion within the physical space of the present day. The group's application to Canadian Heritage includes the development of an interactive App with dynamic Explosion-related content, as well as a series of arts and cultural presentations to engage the public and disseminate their research through a variety of creative approaches.
- As well, staff is engaged in discussions within the Provincial Government to develop a shared web-presence with a comprehensive calendar of events and with extensive linkages to institutional resources and community-based presenters.

Since the last update to CPED staff has completed the following tasks:

- Presented plans for December 6, 2017 100th Anniversary Enhanced Event to HEAAC;
- Supported Community-based application (Narratives in Space and Time Society) to the Department of Canadian Heritage Community Anniversary Fund;
- At the request of the HEAAC, undertook correspondence with Parliamentary Poet Laureate, George Elliot Clarke, regarding his interest in producing a work related to the 100th Anniversary of the Explosion;
- Developed and submitted the application to Canadian Heritage, Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage - Legacy Fund, including requested support for a launch event to coincide with the December 6th, 2017 Anniversary; and
- Coordinated with Communications Nova Scotia and other Provincial Government stakeholders on the development of a collaborative web-presence to include curated links to Explosion information and resources as well as an updated calendar of events related to the 100th Anniversary.

Next Steps:

- Formalize a draft Enhanced Anniversary Program with defined elements for the HEAA;
- Refine Enhanced Anniversary Program based on Committee feedback;
- Determine budget for Enhanced Anniversary Program and identify funding sources;
- Return to CPED with a report containing recommendations with proposed scope, budget and process for direction to Regional Council, now expected in late Fall 2016; and
- Liaise with Corporate Communications to coordinate protocol and invitations with the Mayor's Office.

2. Legacy Capital Project

The Fort Needham Park project will be advanced in phases, but will serve as the physical memorial to the victims and the legacy of impact of the Explosion. Central to the design of the space will be physical/geographical ties to the Explosion, new interpretive features, as well as restored interpretive and commemorative elements, and an enhanced infrastructural capacity for ongoing commemorative events as well as passive and active reflection.

Since the last update to CPED, staff has completed the following tasks:

- Obtained Regional Council approval for \$2.2 Million in the 2016/17 Capital Budget for the Fort Needham Master Plan implementation project;
- Awarded consulting service contract for Detailed Design and interpretive site planning to Ekistics Planning & Design; and
- Submitted funding application to the federal Canadian Heritage Legacy Fund program for cost sharing for Phase 2.

Next Steps:

- Develop a communications plan for park users and general public regarding design consultations and construction schedules;
- Complete design development for Phases 1 and 2 of the master plan which will include updates to cost estimates;
- Complete the Site Interpretive Plan for the park, Bell Tower, and new memorial artworks. The interpretive planning will run in parallel with the site design development work, and will include engagement with the HEAAC and other stakeholders;
- Develop a project plan and promotional materials for Phase 2 work to support funding partnership efforts;
- Tender and award construction contracts for Phase 1 work (Fall 2016);
- Finalize Phase 2 Project Plan and tender documents for year 2 construction. Construction tender packages will be tailored to meet available funding raised through cost sharing partnerships and donations;
- Tender and Award Construction contracts for Phase 2 work;
- Manage construction in 2016 and 2017; and
- Rededication of Fort Needham Park, Fall 2017.

3. Grants to Non-Profit Organizations

The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Grants Program is intended to broaden the scope of community participation in the centennial through projects undertaken by local non-profit organizations and charities. Funding is merit-based and focuses on educational initiatives for children and youth, ethno-cultural communities, interpretation, exhibitions or displays, and ceremonial or dedication events. The program also accommodates an opportunity to “celebrate stories of personal and community resilience and resurgence”. The maximum value of each grant is \$10,000. The first intake for submissions closed on December 6, 2015.

Since the last update to the CPED, staff has completed the following tasks:

- Presented the recommended awards to HEAAC on January 27, 2016;
- Presented the recommended awards to Grants Committee on February 1, 2016. Recommendation report approved;
- Obtained Council approval of awards and transfer of funding to reserve for 2016 program;
- Issued letters of notification and grant awards; and
- Liaised with Corporate Communications on advertising campaign.

Next steps:

- Update the program guidebook for the 2016 program;
- Obtain budget confirmation and issue open call for applications for 2016 program; and;

- Complete 2016 program for including information sessions, website updates, advertising and application evaluations in preparation for Grants Committee and Regional Council approval.

100th Anniversary Commemorative Emblem

In addition to the three specific projects included in the plan for the commemoration approved in 2013, Regional Council passed a motion to have a commemorative emblem developed for use as a visual identity and recognition of the projects surrounding the 100th anniversary in 2015. The emblem is intended to reflect the municipality's commitment to the significance of this commemoration and be featured at special events, projects and official communications in the year leading up to and during 2017.

In order to obtain sufficient feedback for creation of the emblem, an engagement campaign was undertaken to solicit citizen feedback. The engagement was completed in two parts:

- a) The on-line engagement tool, Shape Your City Halifax was used to gather feedback between March 9, 2016 and April 5, 2016. Over 350 submissions were received. Citizens were made aware of this feedback mechanism through the use of social media, the Halifax website, media opportunities, radio and existing stakeholder networks.
- b) Direct contact was made with over 40 stakeholders including representatives of the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq communities, relatives of survivors, the armed services and historians.

Next Steps:

The feedback is currently being compiled and sorted by theme to develop a creative brief, which will form the basis for the emblem design. Steps include:

- Development of emblem concept(s) using an external design/branding consultant;
- Testing of the design with citizens using our newly-created Halifax Region Opinion Panel; and;
- Collaboration and information-sharing with other partners such as the Province of Nova Scotia.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this Information Report. Financial implications will be outlined in a future report outlining program budget and scope for Council direction.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Advisory Committee is comprised of volunteer members of the community. The Committee regularly meets on a monthly basis, and meetings are open to the public. Agendas, reports, and minutes are available online.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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.

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