

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by 
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 12, 2019

SUBJECT: **Halifax Common Aquatic Area and Open Space Master Plan Update**

ORIGIN

1. Regional Council Motion on December 11, 2012:

“...that staff develop a Master Plan for the historic Halifax Common that builds on the 1994 Halifax Common Plan that is integrated with the development of the Open Space Plan for the Urban Centre and includes a public consultation process...
...that Halifax Regional Council refer this matter to Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee for a staff report and forwards its recommendation to Regional Council.”

2. Information Report to Halifax Regional Council, February 25, 2014:

“while the plan has been very useful, there is staff recognition that:

- at 22 years old, the plan should be reviewed to align with today’s regional planning and open space planning objectives;
- The plan is a guiding policy document and would benefit from a physical master planning process to better articulate relevant policies, similar to the Dartmouth Common Plan. (e.g. policy objectives around pedestrian access through large blocks) and;
- That, as one of the key open spaces in HRM, the Common should be examined in the context of the entire portfolio of public open spaces.”

3. Identified in the 2015/16 (and subsequent) Parks & Recreation Business Plan:

To initiate a review of the 1994 Halifax Common Plan to update the policies and governance, tie together the existing plans for the historic Halifax Common, and produce a plan for the redevelopment of the Central Common.

4. Regional Council, May 14, 2019:

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the Long-Term Aquatic Strategy (Attachments A and B of the staff report dated May 1, 2019) as the strategic direction for municipal aquatic facility planning; and
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate subsequent implementation plans into future annual Business Plans for Regional Council’s consideration.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter

79A(1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if

- (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;...

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:
 - a) Initiate the capital planning and construction for the replacement of the Halifax Common aquatic area and related facilities as outlined in this report;
 - b) Engage with stakeholders to develop plans for the accommodation of uses such as youth music and arts programs within the proposed aquatic facility building and other nearby community facilities;
 - c) Complete the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan as outlined in this report; and
2. Request that the Mayor write a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs to request an amendment to the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* to authorize the Municipality to erect a permanent building and associated fencing on the Central Common to support the redevelopment of the Halifax Common aquatic area.

BACKGROUND

This report proposes a replacement of the outdoor aquatic area and related facilities on the Halifax Common and the accommodation of uses such as youth live music events and arts programming that are within the existing Pavilion building to other nearby facilities. It also outlines how the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan is intended on being completed.

The Halifax Common is located in the centre of the Halifax Peninsula (Attachment A) and originated through a grant from King George III in 1763, "to and for the use of the inhabitants of the Town of Halifax Commons forever". As the city developed, streets were established, and the Halifax Common lands were developed for a variety of purposes. While a portion was sold for residential development, the Halifax Common has been and continues to be, characterised by the presence of public institutions and a multitude of open spaces, including a cemetery, Victorian garden, parks, and active outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

With its central location, the Halifax Common is the subject of pressures and competition for the recreational use of this municipal parkland. In 1994, the City of Halifax approved the current Halifax Common Plan, a document that articulates values and guides decisions for future development. The municipality is currently preparing a new Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan, which includes the development of an overall vision, guiding principles, key policy directions and actions, along with the preparation of conceptual master plans for the municipal parkland. The project has included a series of public engagement sessions to date that has consisted of four public meetings, two online surveys, and additional community and stakeholder outreach. The last public consultation in June/July 2019 presented material that included directions and concept plans. This drew considerable attention regarding the North Common and the potential introduction of increased passive space and with this, the potential removal of ball diamonds. In addition, there was concern raised about the depiction of the Halifax Junior Bangle Lancers' presence on the Wanderers block.

Both matters have attracted overall public interest in the Halifax Common and the Open Space Master Plan, which highlights its importance to the public.

From the outset of the project, a replacement of the aging outdoor aquatic facilities has been identified as an immediate priority. It is currently comprised of a small in-ground pool, a splash pad, and change rooms and mechanical room that are in basement of the Pavilion Building on the Central Common (Attachment B). All its elements are uniformly recognized as being undersized and in very poor condition. Based on this, a prospective replacement has been the focus of specialized study, plans, and public engagement. This focus has been punctuated this summer season as the condition of the pool has deteriorated to the point where it is very challenging to keep it fully operational. Along with the aquatic uses, the Pavilion Building contains space that has been used as operational staging for civic and community events, children's summer day camps, community bookings, youth arts programs, and a longstanding youth live music venue.

DISCUSSION

Aquatic Facilities Replacement

Since the outset of the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan project, determination about the replacement of the existing aquatic facilities on the Central Common has been identified as an early deliverable. This report, focused on the aquatic area, represents a first phase of the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan project and is meant to align this component of the plan to the capital budgeting process. The report also aligns to the Long Term Aquatic Strategy which confirmed the need to recapitalize the Common outdoor aquatic area since loss of the Common pool would; eliminate the only municipal outdoor public pool on the peninsula, reduce the municipal inventory, and decrease the associated public service provision for learn to swim and open swim programs. The report is recommending a new replacement facility that is to be comprised of an outdoor recreation pool, splash pad, a new playground, and a supporting building comprised of change rooms, public washrooms, and community space.

History of Aquatics on the Halifax Common

The area of the Halifax Common was originally low-lying wetlands depicted as swampy, scrubby and poorly drained. The former Egg Pond was part of the original Freshwater Brook that ran from the northwest corner of the North Common through the Central Common to the large pond in the Public Gardens, then through Victoria Park down to the harbour near modern day Pleasant Street. Most of the brook has since been piped through the development of the City of Halifax with only Griffin's Pond and the small pools in the Public Gardens surviving today. In the late 19th Century the Egg Pond on the Central Common became a popular location for boating after the First World War. The pond's egg shape was defined by a stone retaining wall that was rebuilt three times pre-1897, c. 1898 and c. 1931. The pond activities were supported with two generations of a combination boathouse and canteen, the last one rebuilt in 1956. During this same time the Central Common was a popular children's play space with swing sets.

By the mid-20th Century, a public swimming pool and wading pool were built to the north of the Egg Pond. In 1968 the Central Common was improved with a new softball diamond, tennis courts and the Central Common Pavilion was built in preparation for the Canada Summer Games of 1969. By the 1990's the wading pool had been converted to a splash pad due to health concerns around stagnant water associated with shallow wading pools, and the Egg Pond was no longer being fed with sufficient water and became a rundown concrete basin with a crumbling stone wall.

1994 Halifax Common Plan

The 1994 Halifax Common Plan recognized that the aging aquatic facilities on the Central Common offered important recreation opportunities for nearby residents and that investment was needed to ensure their safety and function. The Plan recommended for the long term, the swimming pool, wading (spray) pool, and Egg Pond area should be considered for upgrading and designed as a well-planned, low maintenance, integrated water feature.

The plan also called for the feasibility of restoring the Egg Pond as a water feature to be investigated in the long term. At the time, it was viewed that the skate boarding facility in the Egg Pond should be regarded as a short-term use with the notion that the pond could be reinstated as a water feature due to its heritage importance. This did not happen, and instead the skatepark was expanded with community investment in the early 2000's. The swimming pool and spray pad continued to be maintained and open for public use for the next 25 years to the present.

Halifax Long Term Aquatic Strategy and Other Facilities

In 2019, Regional Council approved the Halifax Long-term Aquatic Strategy. The purpose of this Strategy is to recommend directions for the provision of aquatic facilities and how they may be accessed by the general public and specialized groups over the next 15 years. Its scope includes municipal indoor and outdoor pools, training and competition aquatic sport facilities, municipally-supervised beaches, and splash pads. The Aquatic Strategy investigated the need for the replacement of Halifax Common facility with regard to outdoor pools, splash pads and supervised beaches as well as in the context of other public swimming facilities on the peninsula, including the Centennial competition pool, Needham pool recapitalization, and the new YMCA indoor pool. Information about these facilities is as follows:

The Centennial Pool: Its primary use is for aquatic sport club training with a smaller amount of community programs and public lane swims. It is considered as a training and competition facility and its design limits its broader multifunctionality as a recreation pool. At the pool, aquatic sport clubs make up nearly all the early morning allocation and 63% of evening and weekend allocation. The facility is 50+ years old. As a municipal facility, the Centennial Pool receives an annual operating grant and the municipality covers some maintenance and capital expenses. The municipality's Community Facilities Master Plan 2 (CFMP2) notes that Centennial Pool should be considered for replacement within an approximate 10 to 15-year lifecycle. The Aquatic Strategy provides direction for the assessment and replacement of the Centennial Pool, with an updated regional training and competition hosting aquatic facility, with a future location to be determined.

The Needham Centre Pool: Located in the North End of Halifax, the Needham Centre Pool is the oldest indoor recreational pool in the municipality's inventory. It has the lowest recreational usage, largely because of the facility not fully meeting program requirements. The Aquatic Strategy provides direction to replace the Needham Recreation Centre and explore design options for an updated recreational aquatic facility that complements existing facilities and meets community recreational needs. Needham pool replacement is currently slated for 2024/2025 and 2025/2026.

The Halifax YMCA Pool: The YMCA is being constructed on South Park Street across from the Public Gardens and will include a replaced and updated recreational pool. The YMCA is planning a 6-lane 25m pool and a separate small teaching pool and therapy/hot tub. Its business plan aims to have 6000+ members; 70% of those are expected to be adults. The YMCA will also cater to nearby afterschool use, therapy/ hospital usage, university students, seniors and community use.

While these facilities do provide indoor aquatics, the Aquatic Strategy outlines that HRM has limited outdoor facilities and relies on its natural features for outdoor aquatics. It observes that the Halifax Common Outdoor Pool is the oldest outdoor facility in the municipality's inventory and is at the end of its lifecycle. It is the only municipal outdoor pool on the peninsula, where there are also no supervised beach locations. The facility offers no-cost learn to swim programs, and while it has the lowest amount of recreational usage, this is believed to be due to the facility being undersized and in poor condition with reduced operating hours compared to other facilities. On hot days the pool cannot accommodate the demand, and users are lined up to gain access. The pool is located adjacent to a converted wading pool that now functions as a basic spray pad. It too is at the end of its lifecycle and is not accessible.

Outdoor pools play a specific role in the municipality's aquatic services and, together with other outdoor facilities such as supervised beaches and splash pads, provide a network of outdoor aquatic opportunities. Open swims are the largest category of participation in outdoor pools. The Aquatic Strategy notes that the

municipality falls below the benchmark analysis for outdoor pools and recommends that the current inventory should be retained and recapitalized to improve functionality, user experience and accessibility.

In reviewing the potential replacement for the Halifax Common aquatic facility, consideration was also given to a splash pad. Splash pads provide safe, free (no cost) water-play activity and have lower operational and capital costs when compared to outdoor pools, but they do not offer the same range of aquatic program opportunities. Replacing this outdoor pool with a regional splash pad only facility would likely be a less costly alternative, but it would eliminate the only municipal outdoor public pool on the peninsula, reduce the municipal inventory, and decrease the provision for learn to swim and open swim programs.

Current Public Consultation Findings

Public engagement activities for the Halifax Common Master Plan have involved over 2400 people and included four public meetings, two online surveys, a youth focus group, and stakeholder and community organization focus groups. The most recent was a public meeting on Monday, June 17th, followed by an online survey that ran until July 22nd where components of the draft Master Plan were shared with the public. Key directions and Common-wide strategies for connections, character and recreation experiences, as well as concept plans for the municipal open spaces, were presented for feedback. The online survey garnered 1279 submissions.

Generally, the overall support for the draft master plan was positive, with most respondents indicating Support or Complete Support for all the components of the plan. Throughout the survey it was evident that the community strongly values the continued access to green space for outdoor recreational uses. However, there were two areas of concern that did emerge; regarding the potential removal of five out of the nine ballfields on the North Common, and the perceived impacts to Halifax Junior Bengal Lancers facility. These are discussed in further detail below.

The key directions and concept plan for the Central Common, which includes the aquatic facility, had the second highest approval rating after the Public Gardens & Camp Hill Cemetery with 69 percent of respondents indicating Support or Complete Support for the plan. The survey had considerable support for the replacement of the outdoor aquatic facilities. Many affirmed the need for a public outdoor swimming pool on the Common. Of the 16 percent who Oppose or Completely Oppose the Central Common Plan, nearly three quarters stated a protest of either the potential loss of ball diamonds on the North Common or the perceived impact to the Bengal Lancers facility, and not a specific opposition to what was presented for the Central Common. Twelve percent rated moderate support and four percent indicated Don't know/Not sure.

In the open-ended feedback, the most frequent topic discussed was the pool and splash pad improvements, followed by positive comments of support of the plan overall. The next popular topics were about vegetation and greenspace, and the nature play playground. Some concern was raised about the size of the proposed new building and its impact to green space, and that the building size should be modest with a profile that blends in with the landscape.

Throughout the public engagement process there has been strong support of the importance of an all-ages venue and art space and in the survey, many voiced that if the plan involves the demolition of the building it will be important to continue to offer youth an accessible music venue in some other form.

From the community engagement completed for the Halifax Long-Term Aquatic Strategy, some pool users expressed that the Halifax Common was ideal as a regional destination because of its central location and proximity to other facilities. It was also noted that the facility is unsightly, not up to standard, and not functional as a recreational pool.

Overview of Proposed Facility

The main components of the proposed replacement facilities are an outdoor public pool, splash pad, playground, and aquatic building (Attachment C). The design of these features and their siting is influenced

by major underground sewer and water infrastructure that run through the site, particularly the two large combined sewer pipes (formally Freshwater Brook) that run on both sides of the existing pool area, and the main water transmission line that feeds downtown Halifax. (Attachment D). This underground infrastructure restricts any expansion of the aquatic area in its current location. Therefore, the area to the west of the pool was identified as the best alternative site on the Common for the proposed aquatic area. Existing facilities in this area include the children's playground, asphalt play area with basketball standards, and an open lawn area used for community events such as the Natal Day celebrations. These facilities would be relocated or accommodated elsewhere on the Common. Community events would move to the Oval on the North Common. Basketball activities could be accommodated at the adjacent Citadel High School which has a full fenced basketball court and four half courts available for community use outside of school hours. The playground would be replaced and relocated as described later in this report.

The outdoor pool is envisioned as a public community pool primarily for leisure aquatic recreation designed for all ages and abilities. Outdoor recreational pools, like indoor recreational pools, are designed for broader participation and have a combination of facility features that allow for more diverse programming, multifunctionality, scheduling flexibility and accessibility. The size of the pool is based on a capacity of 450 people. The proposed pool design includes:

- A main pool that would be approximately 25 x 48 metres, with one third the area being a beach entry zone with a shallow incline. The six-foot depth (1.8m) deep end would be able to be roped off for swimming lanes;
- The option for swimming lanes, although the pool would not be designed for competition swimming;
- Accessibility features include the zero-entry pool access (beach entry), ramp with handrails, and pool lift station;
- Play elements could include spray features along with climbers or rope swings in the deep end; and
- A pool deck that is sized to be about two times the area of the pool would allow families and groups to stay together within the fenced area of the aquatic facility.

The splash pad component of the facility would be separate from the pool and envisioned to have a variety of spray features that would be themed to reflect the natural history of the Common and the historic Freshwater Brook. The splash pad could be placed outside the fenced area to allow better public access during times when the pool is not in operation or at capacity. Co-locating the splash pad with the building and pool would allow for efficient utility servicing and user access to the changerooms and public washrooms.

The playground would be relocated to the area north of the skatepark in the site of the current splash pad and Pavilion building. The existing playground was built before 2007 and will be ready for recapitalization during the project timeline. The replacement playground would integrate with the surrounding landscape to provide a variety of nature play opportunities. It would also be designed for inclusive play for children of all abilities and include accessible pathways. It would be designed for high volume use with robust play structures and resilient surfacing.

A new aquatic building would house the aquatic mechanical systems, shower change rooms, public washrooms, lifeguard offices, and storage. It will also contain multi-purpose community space that is further described below.

Pavilion Building Community Space

The Pavilion is owned by the Municipality and is located on the Halifax Common adjacent to the existing outdoor pool. The upper floor has a multi-purpose room that is available for community rental and recreation programming. The municipality is the primary user of the space for summer children's day camps and civic events logistics for Canada Day and Natal Day. The next largest user group of the space is The Spot, a free drop-in youth music and arts program run by the Youth Arts Connection (YAC) and Connections Halifax. The Pavilion Youth Association (PYA) also books the space for all-ages live music venue that hosts bands and performers. It provides opportunities for aspiring underage musicians to develop through live

performance. It also provides youth an opportunity to see many of the alternative touring acts that come through the city in a safe space with no alcohol and low cover charge. Over the last three years the group has hosted 16 to 18 shows each year with most shows typically having 40 to 100 people. The All-ages music events make up about 13% of the Pavilion's annual booking. The multi-purpose space has also been booked for other community and park related events such as birthday parties, workshops, and newcomers' events as well as support space for events on the Common.

With the aquatic building replacement of the Pavilion, it is recognized that there will still be a need for space for community rental, recreation programming and support for park events. With its location on the Halifax Common, public access to the facility should be maximized and the design be appealing to a variety of users and available to a variety of community uses for booking.

Staff intend to work with the groups that currently book space at the Pavilion to assess the ability to meet their needs in the new space. The proposed multi-purpose community space would be large enough to handle all the current uses including live music events under 100 attendees. It is recognized that the design for a live music venue has additional considerations above a standard multi-purpose room and that there are challenges to accommodating differing types of uses within the same space.

To date, the vacant second floor of the Citadel Community Centre has been considered as a medium-term capital project for youth arts programming and possible all-ages music venue. In addition, it is recognized that other nearby community facilities may also have potential use as a live music venue and will be further explored. A potential option is the George Dixon Center located 1.3 km from the Common Pavilion. The centre has a gymnasium space with an elevated fixed stage that could be fitted up for accommodating live music concerts. The gymnasium is currently underutilized on weekend evenings.

Staff have recently met with representatives from PYA and they have indicated that it is still their desire to relocate to the new Pavilion replacement. They recognize that the new space would be multi-purpose in function with limited space. They also indicated that a smaller venue with a cap of 100 attendees would meet their needs and may even be preferred as a better fit for their operations. Other locations can continue to be explored for the youth music venue and other potential user groups.

Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan Update

Following a decision about the aquatic facility, staff will refocus on completing the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan. As noted above, this will include the issues raised with regard to the Halifax Junior Bengal Lancers facility and the potential reduction in softball diamonds.

The Halifax Lancers is a group that has had longstanding presence on the Common. The concept plans that were presented at the latest engagement caused operational concerns for the Halifax Lancers as a result of the proposed relocation of off-street parking along Bell Road to the back of the facility, and more public access around the outdoor paddock area. Staff has discussed the conceptual nature of the information with the Halifax Lancers and outlined that would only be envisioned with further consultation and a review of operational requirements. Separate to these matters, the Halifax Lancers has also submitted a proposal to expand its facility that is being reviewed.

Staff will also be concentrating on the proposed changes to the North Common and doing further stakeholder consultation and investigation around the ball diamonds usage. Results from the public online survey showed that more than half of respondents indicated Support or Complete support for the concept plan for the North Common but 28% were opposed, mainly to the proposal of removing ball diamonds.

There are currently nine ball diamonds on the Halifax Common that when fully in use, limit other uses. There are conflicts with the current fields and pathways layout in that they are not configured safely for the types of uses happening on the Common. Space is limited for the current number of ball fields and many of the outfields overlap each other. The existing formal paved pathways are often indirect and circuitous and do not reflect the strong desire lines for people walking and cycling through the North Common causing

a network of informal paths to appear. These informal paths conflict with the ball diamonds and sport fields damaging the fields with ruts and exposing pedestrians and cyclists to hazards of errant balls and play.

A frequent theme throughout the engagement process was that the Halifax Common's green spaces are for the enjoyment of everyone. Many voiced that having softball take up so much of the area and prime time usage of the Common's recreational lands was excessive for such a prominent public green space, and that although the diamonds are popular with ballplayers, they do not offer much variety or reflect the diverse needs of the community. Since the 1994 Halifax Common Plan, there has been a longstanding desire to 'rebalance' the North Common to allow for a better mix of organized and unstructured recreation with an emphasis on increasing opportunities for local park uses. Recreation and leisure trends show that there is more interest in unstructured recreation (such as walking, public skates, or informal play) than in organized sports, and this was confirmed through the public engagement findings. The Common's function as a local park will become more important as Centre Plan's proposed Centres and Corridors densification gets implemented and more people live in and around the Halifax Common.

The concept plan that was presented for community consultation outlined proposed changes to introduce a higher degree of general community green space for informal recreation with the introduction of a large open play lawn, treed landform, gardens, and social activity spaces. It also addresses the current presence of informal pathways that cross over the ball fields. With a reduction in ball fields, the concept plan also proposed lighting on the remaining fields that would extend evening use and the number of available hours for prime-time scheduling. Importantly, the concept plan presented represents a possible long-term view that could only be implemented following other reviews and accommodation of any service loss. One such investigation underway is the municipality's Playing Field and Ball Diamond Strategy.

At this time, staff are considering other concept plan alternatives, including those that might outline phased approaches for the North Common. With the above, staff will be considering further stakeholder consultation and anticipate returning to Regional Council with the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan in Spring 2020.

Costing and Implementation

The estimated project budget for the Halifax Common outdoor aquatic facility replacement, including new building, splashpad, playground and landscaping is \$15 to \$17 million based on conceptual planning. The estimated costs are preliminary in nature and would be revised through detailed design. The scope of work would include:

- Demolition of the existing aquatic pools, playground and Pavilion building;
- Relocation of the underground water transmission line within the park area;
- Construction of the new aquatic facilities including the outdoor pool, splash pad and aquatics building;
- Construction of a new playground; and
- Site development including landscaping, pathways and park amenities.

Implementation of the project is estimated to take 3 years. If approved by Council, the request for proposals would be released and awarded in the Spring of 2020 with 12 months allocated for detailed design. Pending approval by Council, construction would commence in the Fall of 2021 after the pool closes for the season. Construction is anticipated to take 12 months with some components of the project completed for the Fall of 2022 and the new aquatics facility opening for the Summer of 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Pending Regional Council approval to proceed with the Halifax Common Aquatic Facility replacement, staff have incorporated funding in the 2020/ 2021 Capital Budget process and prioritized this facility replacement against other capital priorities. The capital expenditures are proposed to be spread over three years with detailed design in 2020/21 and construction costs to be split between the 2021/22 and 2022/23 capital budgets. The capital budget requests for the next three years would be:

- \$600,000 for 2020/21 (plus \$300,000 carried over from previous years) for detailed design
- \$7,625,000 in 2021/22 for contract administration and construction
- \$7,875,000 in 2022/23 for contract administration and construction

RISK CONSIDERATION

The condition of the Common outdoor pool is critical. Investigations done in September revealed that although the pool can be brought online for next summer there is a high risk that it could fail. Staff have begun exploring contingency plans that include:

- Preliminary discussions with the YMCA to provide space for some of the municipal learn-to-swim and open swim programming that is currently provided at the Common pool
- Temporary installation of spray features and water play activities on the Common

If the pool is shut down, this would eliminate the only municipal outdoor public pool on the peninsula, reduce the municipal inventory of outdoor pools, and decrease the aquatic service provision for learn to swim and open swim programs. The recommendation in this report would help mitigate this risk by proceeding with design of replacement aquatic feature as Phase 1 of Common Master Plan.

The North and Central Commons are the remaining areas of common land from the original Halifax Common land grant that continue as open space. With permanent enclosures created by the construction of buildings, it has been HRM's past practice to seek legislative approval from the Province of Nova Scotia. This was done for the construction of the Oval building on the North Common. Therefore, it is recommended that HRM request an amendment to the HRM Charter to authorize the erection of a permanent building and associated fencing on the Central Common to support the redevelopment of the Halifax Common aquatic area.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan involved consultation through public meetings and workshops, online surveys, a youth focus group, and stakeholder and community organization focus groups that included arts, recreational sport, and local service providers.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate environmental implications associated with this report. Should Regional Council choose to proceed with the Aquatic Facility replacement further environmental investigations will be done as part of the Detail Design Phase of the project.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Halifax Regional Council could direct staff to proceed with a replacement aquatic facility that includes only a splash pad or in-ground pool.
2. Halifax Regional Council could direct staff not to proceed with any aquatic facility and to develop other open spaces and recreation alternatives for the Central Common.
3. Halifax Regional Council could defer direction to staff on the aquatic facility until completion of the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan.
4. Halifax Regional Council could direct staff to amend the proposed aquatic facility to accommodate additional or expanded uses. This would require an updated concept design and cost estimates.
5. Halifax Regional Council could direct staff to complete the Halifax Common Open Space Master Plan in a different manner than that which has been set out in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Halifax Common Context Map

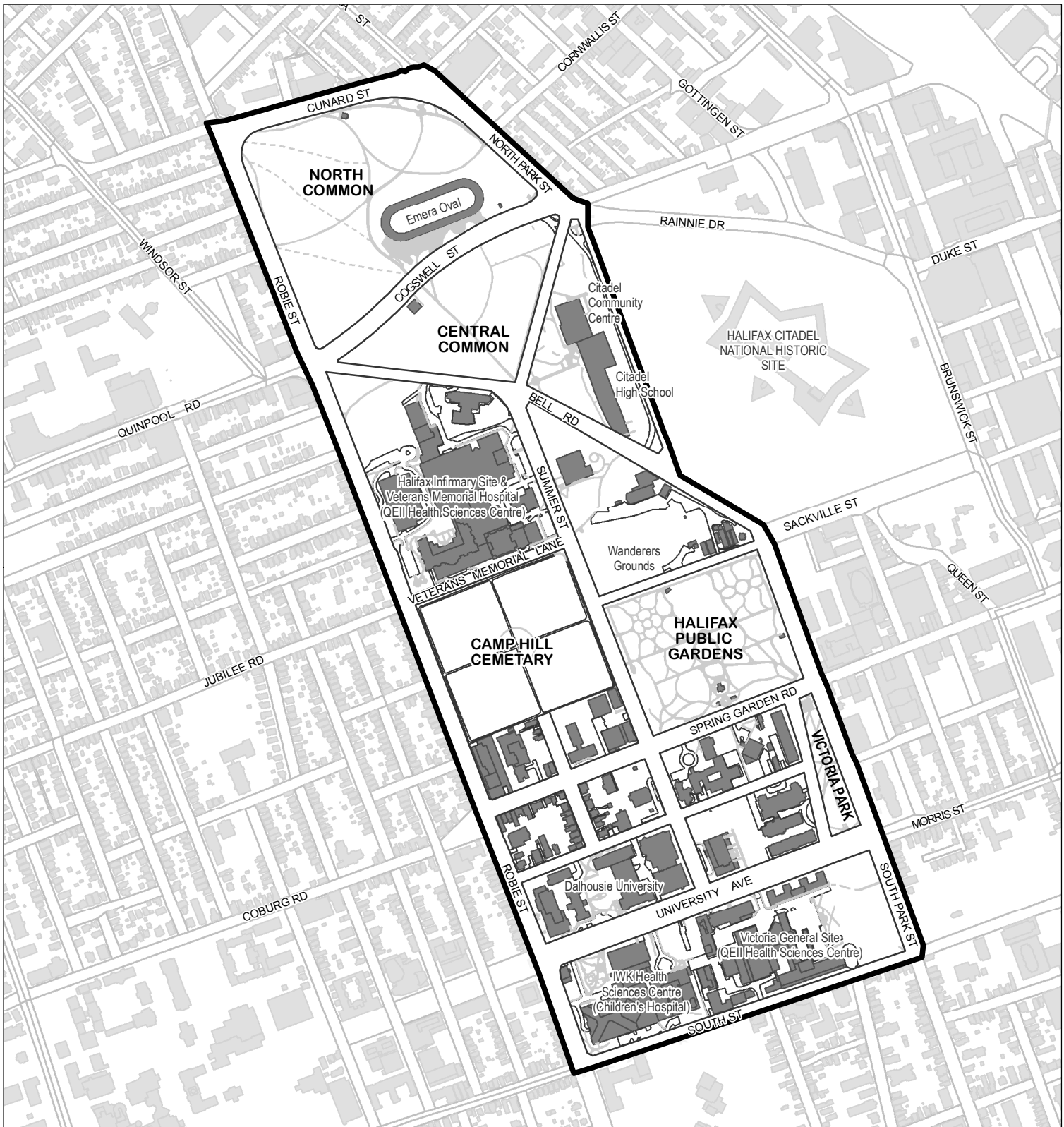
Attachment B: Central Common Existing Recreation Features Map

Attachment C: Proposed Aquatic Area Concept Plan






Attachment D: Existing Underground Infrastructure Plan

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

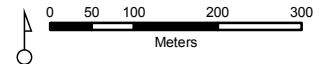
Report Prepared by: Carolle Koziak Roberts, Landscape Architect, 902-490-1037



HALIFAX COMMON - CONTEXT MAP

-  Halifax Common Boundary
-  Road Access Right of Way
-  Walkway/Trail
-  Informal Trail
-  Building or Other Structure

HALIFAX
 Parks & Recreation
 Strategic Planning & Design





HALIFAX COMMON - CENTRAL COMMON

Existing Recreational Features

 Halifax Central Common Boundary

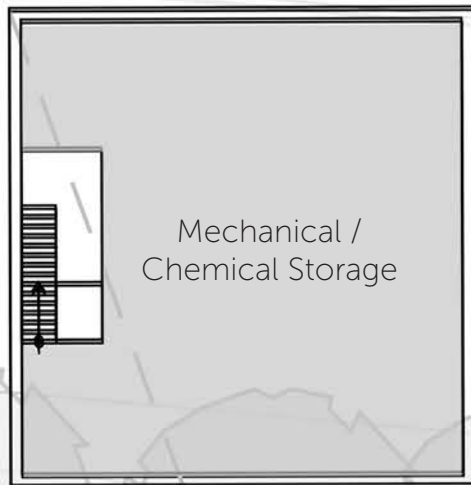
HALIFAX

Parks & Recreation
Strategic Planning & Design





- Female Change Room
- Male Change Room
- Family Change Room
- Community Space
- Staff Space
- Circulation



Basement
Plan

Roof Line

Outdoor Showers



Drawing Key Notes

A - Aquatic Area

- 1 Building (see pg.16 for building)
- 2 Loading & emergency access
- 3 Arbour w/ loungers
- 4 Patio tables & umbrellas
- 5 Unit paver patio area
- 6 Leisure pool w/ swimming lanes
- 7 Spray features - beach theme (in pool)
- 8 Seat wall & railing
- 9 Splash pad - brook / meadow theme
- 10 Lifeguard chairs (x3)
- 11 Activity wall
- 12 Perimeter fence & plantings

B - Nature Playground

- 1 Boardwalk edge w/ arbour
- 2 Shaded seat edge
- 3 Woodland play w/ cocoons
- 4 Custom spider climber w/ web net
- 5 Custom bee play feature
- 6 Nature play
(Balancing logs & stumps, climbing boulders)
- 7 Kiddie bug riders
- 8 Wood stump climbing feature & hill slide
- 9 Woodpecker towers
- 10 Water play activity station
- 11 Brook play w/ butterfly canopy features
- 12 Willow tunnel
- 13 Sand / rock play

C - Egg Pond & Recreation

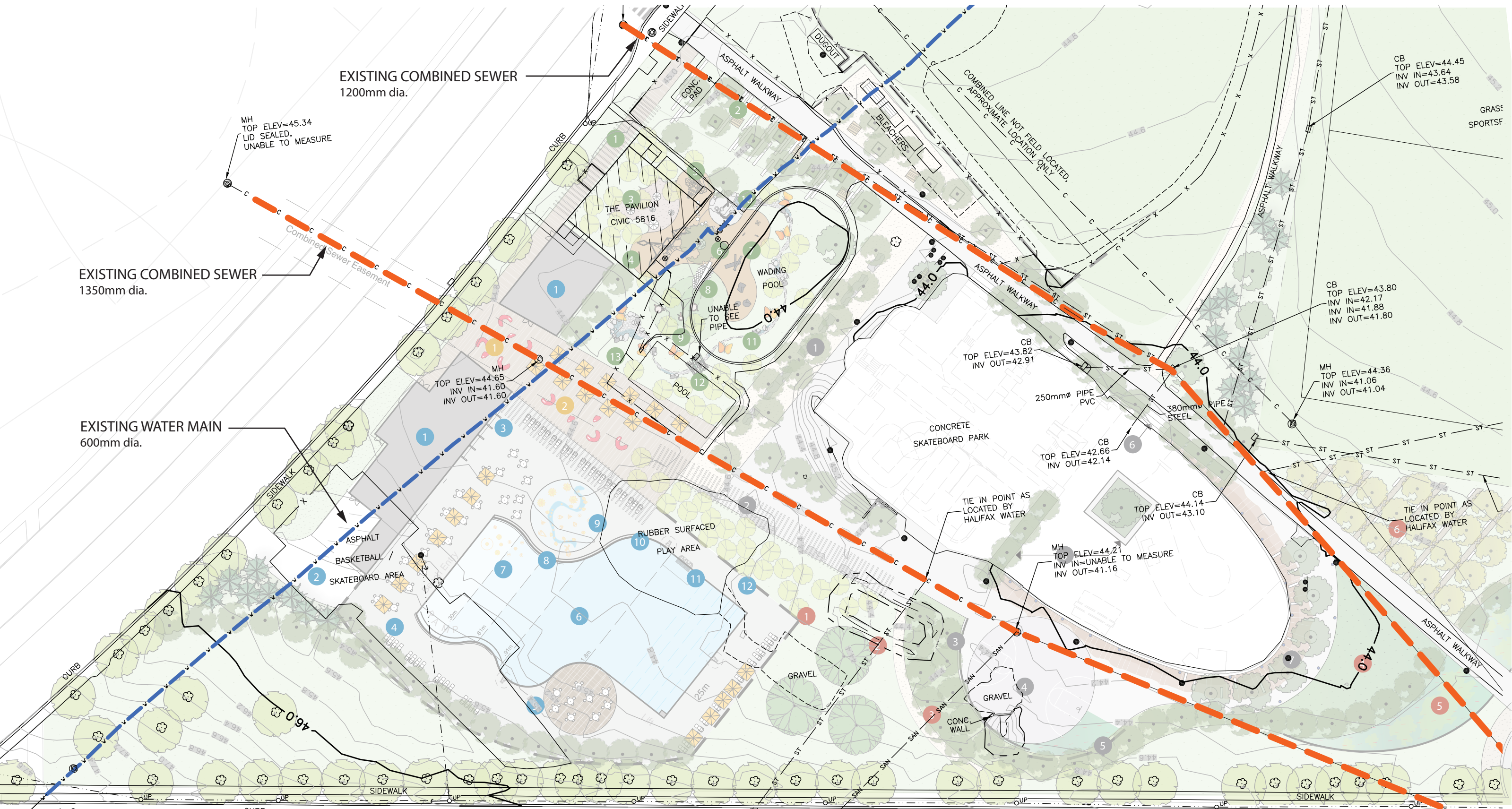
- 1 Natural rock seat edge
- 2 Arbour & rock seating
- 3 Basketball court
- 4 Seat wall
- 5 Fence
- 6 Existing skate park w/ improved access and greening
- 7 Enhanced heritage wall
(paving band w/ inscriptions, trees, lighting, benches)

D - Sun Deck

- 1 Sculptural benches
- 2 Patio tables & umbrellas

E - Open Space

- 1 Aspen meadow
- 2 Pedestrian pathway
- 3 Shade plantings
- 4 Meadow
- 5 Ornamental garden
- 6 Grove



BELL ROAD

AQUATIC AREA

HALIFAX COMMON - HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE