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Item No. 7.5
Halifax Regional Council
September 22, 2020
September 29, 2020

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

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

DATE: August 17, 2020

SUBJECT: **HRM Parks Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy**

ORIGIN

2016/17 Parks and Recreation Business Plan

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter

7A The purposes of the Municipality are to (b) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality;

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. Approve the *HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy* and associated Addendum as a framework for municipal decision-making regarding washrooms and drinking fountains to support the recreational use of parks; and

2. Direct the Chief Administration Officer (CAO) to prepare annual business plans for washrooms and drinking fountain projects for consideration in the annual capital budgets on the basis of the 6.6 Alternative Budget as identified in the *HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy*.

BACKGROUND

Parks are a very important part of any modern municipality. They enhance physical and mental wellbeing and overall quality of life and help define the character of a community. Successful parks often meet a variety of needs, but in doing so they need to be well serviced. The more that people are attracted to parks, the longer the visits become and the more likely they will need to use a washroom or have access to drinking water. Access to washroom facilities is particularly important for populations who must use them at a greater frequency, including seniors, families, and women.

Park washroom facilities play a critical role in bolstering HRM's overall network of public bathrooms. This network comprises an essential part of the ongoing work of building a more inclusive public sphere, supporting more equitable access to all HRM's public and open spaces.

The municipality's 2016/17 Parks and Recreation Business Plan outlined the need to develop a washroom and drinking fountain strategy to guide decision making in the recapitalization and installation of new facilities in HRM parks and open spaces. Given that HRM is a large municipality with a limited budget, it is important to be strategic on how to locate such facilities in existing and future parks. Public washrooms are costly to build and maintain so it is important to prioritize where they should be located.

Over the past year the municipality engaged Ekistics Plan + Design (now Fathom Studio) in preparing the *HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy* (Attachment A).

DISCUSSION

The *HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy* (Strategy) outlines policy and design recommendations and a proposed action plan for the municipality in considering the planning, recapitalization, and installation of facilities. This was based on a review of background information, best practices, an inventory of existing washrooms in the municipality, and consultation with municipal staff. The remainder of this report provides an overview of the Strategy, along with updates that stem from a final review of document that has subsequently informed a proposed staff-developed addendum that is included for Regional Council's consideration.

The Strategy is focused on the recreational user needs for washrooms and drinking fountains. Although not necessarily highlighted in the Strategy, it is recognized that there are other broader societal needs for these facilities that are not within its scope. The need for additional subsequent work on this matter is addressed further in this report.

Strategy Overview

Background

The Strategy notes that there are no legal requirements for the municipality to provide washrooms or drinking fountains, but the premise for the provision of these facilities is that:

> "Parks need basic services if they are to be fully used and appreciated by visitors. The longer people stay in a park, the more chance they will need a washroom or a drink to rehydrate. The most basic inputs and outputs of humans. For small parks that have a short visitation period, this is not an issue. Large parks that serve-up long hikes or bike trails, and sports facilities that have multiple-hour games, need to provide washroom facilities and in some cases a drinking fountain or the experience will be diminished." (p. 6)

There are several noted considerations in the development of the Strategy including, universality, gender, anti-social behavior, brand, tourism, efficient planning, time-of-day and seasonality, seniors, and families.

Best Practices

Although washrooms and drinking fountains are recognized as essential facilities within parks, it is noted that there are little in the way of strategies or policies that address them, noting that this Strategy may be somewhat exceptional. While there is a lack of comprehensive approaches, in review of other municipalities and judications it was observed that:

There seem to be three common approaches to the provision of bathrooms in urban areas and parks:

1. Classifying parks and public spaces in a hierarchy, and using the hierarchy as the basis for siting facilities
2. Master planning, where each park in the system is analyzed individually for suitability or for the requirement of a facility based on amenities
3. Setting design standards and a typology, where broad requirements are set for number of stalls, sinks, etc., or a few prototypical facilities are designed whose detailed design can be worked out in a later phase (p. 20)

A review of these best practices helped inform and develop the policy and design recommendations in the Strategy.

Existing Washroom Inventory

The municipality characterizes parks into four types in a hierarchical system:

- Neighbourhood Parks, that serve immediate local needs for unorganized recreation;
- Community Parks, that may be designed for youth and adult sport along with unorganized recreation;
- District Parks, that serve the needs of several communities with a population in the range of 10,000 with a range of recreation facilities and uses; and
- Regional Parks, that have significant natural or cultural importance that are regional in scope.

An inventory of washrooms is included in the Strategy and organized by the classifications, noting that there are a variety of washroom design types and conditions located in Community, District, and Regional Parks, and as might be expected, no washrooms within Neighbourhood Parks given their smaller local scale. There are few drinking fountains within the municipality, and it is observed that their locations do not seems to be related to park type. This inventory further informs a categorization of needs and potential recapitalization requirements.

A staff review of the prepared inventory noted that some washrooms had not been included and are now included in a proposed addendum that has been prepared by staff (Attachment B). These additional facilities have not been found to materially impact any of the subsequent recommendations in the Strategy. The complete inventory will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to update as needed and considered in developing recommendations for capital expenditures within future business plan presentations to Regional Council.

Consultation

Some of the key discussions from the consultation with staff in preparation of the Strategy highlighted matters related to:

- Safety;
- Maintenance;
- Aesthetic;
- Cost;
- Hours of Access;
- Accessibility; and
- Amenities.

Challenges and opportunities related to these matters were informed by broad-based staff experience with

park facilities and users. There will be additional opportunities for consultation on an ongoing basis when the municipality develops park master plans or as applicable park projects are completed.

Policy and Design Recommendations

Based on the preceding outlined matters, the consultant prepared policy and design recommendations in the Strategy organized as follows:

Siting

The main emphasis in the developed siting guidelines is the co-location with other publicly visited facilities, in safe places, and venues where there is available water service. The specific guidelines are:

A.01 Co-locate washrooms with other buildings (public and private)
A.02 Locate washrooms where they are in plain view of the street or parking lot or entrance to the park
A.03 Where other potential uses are possible (offices, meeting rooms, visitor centre, canteen, etc), combine the washrooms with other building uses
A.04 Orient doors and windows to well-lit areas
A.05 Site washrooms in public areas whenever possible to ensure eyes
A.06 Site washrooms near existing facilities (playgrounds, ballfields)
A.07 Site water fountains in many parks with amenities, where water service exists

Standards

The developed design standard guidelines place an emphasis on practical, aesthetic, and environmental considerations:

B.01 Follow accessibility (CSA, NS building code, etc.) guidelines
B.02 Employ passive solar, and domestic HW solar where possible
B.03 Use durable, vandal-resistant materials
B.04 Integrate into public realm
B.05 Reflect local character
B.06 Do not obstruct entrances (with landscaping, etc.)
B.07 Signage must show opening hours, provide contact info for maintenance issues, and gender facility availability
B.08 Encourage artistic and/or contextual design
B.09 Use low-flow/dual-flush toilets
B.10 Use natural ventilation
B.11 Use directional signage to ensure park users can find the washroom
B.12 Enhance the public realm with landscaping
B.13 Examine demand for adult change tables
B.14 Provide needle disposal containers
B.15 Integrate drinking fountains into washrooms

Typology

The Strategy identifies a variety of washroom design types with diagrams, ranging from large facilities to temporary washrooms such as porta-potties that can, in some circumstances, be considered as pilot projects to determine actual needs. Stand alone drinking fountains are presented as a single typology.

Planning

Similar to the Design Siting guidelines, the Strategy outlines the following guidelines in the planning of washrooms and drinking fountains:

D.01 Washrooms should only be located in fully serviced park locations

D.02 Use temporary washrooms to test demand
D.03 Anticipate Washroom Use for new parks
D.04 Equip any adjacent municipal facilities with washrooms if possible or explore a public private partnership with adjacent businesses rather than build a stand-alone permanent facility
D.05 Do not use existing classes [classifications] to evaluate parks for washroom provision
D.06 Consider eventually linking the parks washroom and drinking fountain strategy with a wider strategy for all major public spaces

In staff's review, an additional consideration is a priority on the recapitalization of existing facilities that are of a condition that warrants their refurbishment or replacement. The inclusion of this as a further guideline will ensure an emphasis is placed on a state of good repair with existing facilities. This additional guideline is outlined in the proposed addendum.

A further additional consideration identified by staff is the opportunity for funding for particular projects that may arise from partnerships, other levels of government for projects that are specific to certain locations or park types, or other sources. This may change a prioritization of certain projects and is captured as an additional guideline in the proposed addendum.

Park Selection

In selecting the types of parks for washrooms and drinking fountains, the following guidelines are outlined:

E.01 Do not consider small parks, or those with few amenities
E.02 Do not include parks with nearby out-of-park washrooms
E.03 Do not include parks with existing (or already planned) washrooms
E.04 Priority parks should be near neighbourhoods with certain attributes
E.05 Ensure decommissioned buildings are removed

Action Plan

Based upon the inventory and policy and design guidelines, the Strategy outlines costing information and recommendations for upgrades and new washrooms and drinking fountains that are prioritized across various parks throughout the municipality. A program for wayfinding signage to nearby washroom facilities, is also included. In total, the Action Plan outlines a possible five-year timeframe.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Subtotal
New washroom installations	$1,337,000	$377,100	$374,700	$615,700	$490,000	$3,194,500
Upgrades	$391,000	$253,500	$541,000	$206,000	$128,500	$1,520,000
Wayfinding to other washroom facilities		$57,000				$57,000
Drinking fountain installations					$63,000	$63,000
Total Budget	$1,728,000	$687,600	$915,700	$821,700	$681,500	$4,834,500

In support of the capital plan, a typical cost of $300,000 per permanent washroom was used in the Strategy as a benchmark. However, staff have found that actual costs of recent washroom installations have been higher and a cost of $600,000 should anticipated. In addition, technical and costing aspects associated water and sanitary access is an additional consideration that would need to be evaluated on an individual basis.

Recognizing that the municipality has many competing capital pressures and priorities, the Action Plan also identifies an Alternative Budget (section 6.6) that would have the same capital recommendations but spread over 14 years. With the possibility of higher capital costs and competing capital priorities, it is recommended that Regional Council direct the CAO to implement future capital recommendations over the 14-year

alternative budget period. This more measured approach would also balance the relatively high operational costs associated with facilities such as washrooms. As an indication, the municipality has historically spent an average of $24,000 on the maintenance of a stand-alone permanent washroom (pre-COVID). Therefore, the additional operating costs to capital (OCC) will also influence the extent and pace to which the municipality can implement additional facilities.

A further consideration in determining the Action Plan is that a combination of required upgrades and new facilities are recommended within the Strategy's Action Plan. In the recommended projects, a greater emphasis has been placed on upgrading facilities that are not in a state of good repair, along with a lessor number of new facilities that has already been an identified as being a municipal need. It is therefore recommended that an initial prioritization be placed on the projects within the Amended List of Washroom Projects for Upgrades and New Facilities as identified in the Addendum.

On a yearly basis, prospective upgrades and new facilities would be proposed in the municipality's capital plan to Regional Council.

Washrooms and Drinking Fountains for Non-recreational Users

While the scope of the Strategy is specific to supporting the recreation needs for washrooms and drinking fountains needs within parks, it does highlight the necessity of washrooms for more equitable access to HRM's public spaces, with consideration given to more vulnerable populations. Park facilities provide an important node in HRM's existing network of washroom facilities.

The recent challenges caused by COVID-19 have highlighted public washrooms as essential infrastructure both for and beyond recreational needs. It has underscored the need of these facilities beyond recreational needs. In order to effectively address this need, future work may be considered separately by the municipality on an individual basis, or if necessary, as part of a subsequent future review project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with the report. However, there are financial implications that will need to be considered for future budget and business planning cycles.

Park washrooms are funded from project account CB200010 Regional Park Washrooms. The approved 2019/20 Capital Budget included $400,000 for the replacement of the Penhorn Beach Washroom. The 2020/21Capital Budget includes the following for years one to three: $500,000 in 2020/21, $800,000 in 2021/22 and $500,000 in 2022/23. The proposed funding for 2020/21 and 2021/22 is for a new washroom building at Kiwanis Grahams Grove Park.

Washrooms and drinking fountains have operational costs. As an indication, the estimated operational cost of a permanent washroom is $24,000, which is currently approximately 20 percent higher due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The advantage of the Strategy is that it provides a framework and plan for upgrades and new installations of these washrooms and drinking fountains to support recreation uses within parks. The risk in not adopting the Strategy is that the municipality will not have a guiding document for such decisions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was not undertaken in the preparation of the Strategy.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report. Environmental implications will be a consideration in the siting and design of washrooms and drinking fountains.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose to direct staff to consider alternatives to the directions in the Strategy and addendum. This may involve additional assessments, revisions to the Strategy, and a subsequent staff report to Regional Council.

2. Regional Council may choose to not approve the *HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy*.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy
Attachment B HRM Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy Staff Addendum

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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.

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ekistics plan+design

HRM WASHROOMS & DRINKING FOUNTAINS STRATEGY

ekistics plan+design

Attachment A

HRM WASHROOMS & DRINKING FOUNTAINS STRATEGY

A report by **Ekistics Plan + Design**

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1.0 Background

1. Background

1.1 The Imperative

Parks and nature reserves are a vital part of modern cities, not only because of their capacity to conserve representative landscapes and native flora and fauna, but also because their presence helps to define the social character of the city. Well designed parks offer communal spaces that help reinforce strong social bonds in the community. Beyond improving the quality of life for city residents, parks can also be a major draw for visiting tourists.

Parks need basic services if they are to be fully used and appreciated by visitors. The longer people stay in a park, the more chance they will need a washroom or a drink to rehydrate. The most basic inputs and outputs of humans. For small parks that have a short visitation period, this is not an issue. Large parks that serve-up long hikes or bike trails, and sports facilities that have multiple-hour games, need to provide washroom facilities and in some cases a drinking fountain or the experience will be diminished.

Washroom facilities are very costly to build and maintain, so it becomes important to prioritize where they should be located in order to plan for the long-term capital investments needed to realize the full potential of our parks and open spaces.

This plan strives to establish policies, considerations and priorities for future washroom facilities and drinking fountains in HRM parks in the future. An objective policy and strategy should provide HRM staff, council and the public with a defensible and logical rationale for locating facilities in current and future parks. It should also provide a capital budget plan for this important investment.

Surprisingly, very few municipalities, provinces or even national parks have developed such an important policy study on washroom or drinking fountain facilities in public parks. Decisions are often made on a case by case, reactionary basis. As an example, the very busy Boston Common piloted a mobile restroom facility in the summer of 2018. “What we learn during this pilot, and what we hear during the master planning process, will inform proposals for increased permanent restroom facilities on the Common.”

FIGURE 1. HRM Green Network Plan

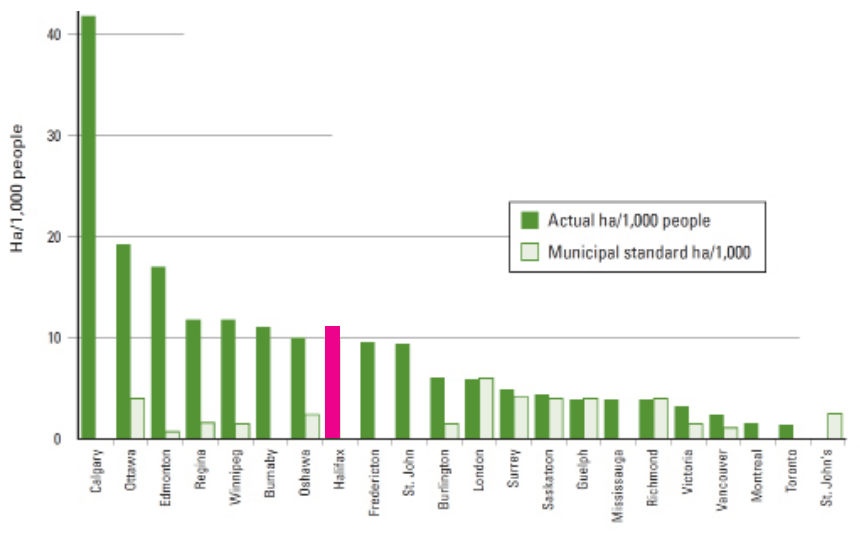


FIGURE 2. Green Space Provisions and Standards in Canadian Urban Municipalities: Hectares per 1,000 people

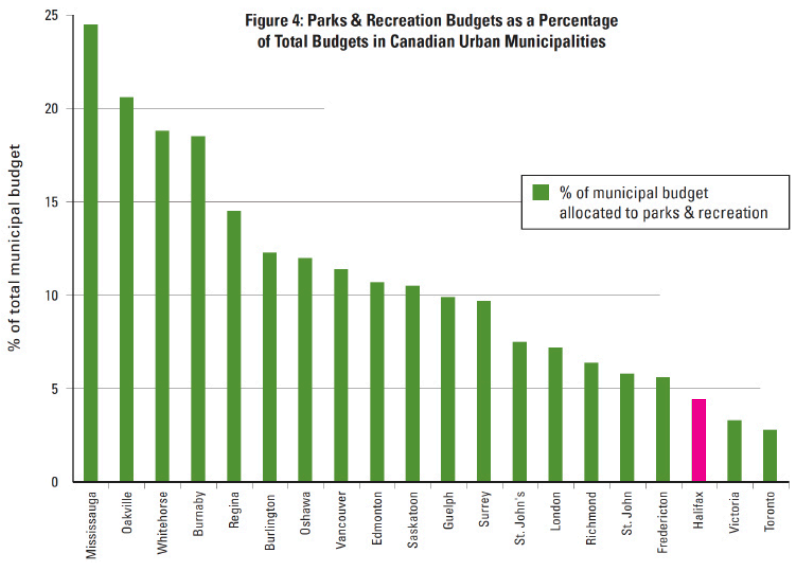


FIGURE 3. Parks and Recreation Budgets as a % of the total budget in Canadian Urban Municipalities

HRM PARKS IN CONTEXT

Halifax Regional Municipality has 917 parks spanning about 5,300 ha (0.9% of HRM's total area of 594,414 ha). The province has also designated 94,185 ha of nature reserves, protected wilderness areas, and provincial parks within HRM, for a total of 15% of all lands within the municipality.

With 5,000 ha of municipally designated parkland, or 12 hectares per 1000 people, HRM has one of the higher municipal park/people ratios in Canada when compared with other municipalities. Unfortunately though, HRM's Park and Recreation budget is one of the lowest in the country at just over 4% of the total municipal capital budget. Many urban municipalities have well over 10% of their capital budgets allocated to parks and rec (see Figure 3).

The challenge for HRM is that with the large area and number of parklands and a limited budget, the municipality must be strategic about how to add new facilities that require large capital investments and ongoing maintenance and upkeep. Still, many of HRM's park facilities are extremely well used and while a select few parks have washrooms and drinking fountains, the vast majority of well-used parks still do not. This research report provides the context for prioritizing where these facilities should go, what considerations should go into their design and siting, and what policies are needed to ensure their proper consideration in future budgets. This strategy will evaluate the existing facilities within HRM parks and trails, and make strategic recommendations about siting and design of facilities in the future.

1.2 Requirements for Washroom Facilities

There are currently no legal requirement to provide public washroom facilities in parks, except as required by building code regulations for public buildings. Where parks have been paired with municipal facilities (like the RBC Centre in Burnside, built alongside the East Region Sports fields), the building's washrooms can serve neighbouring sports facilities as well as the building itself. In some cases, the washrooms may need to be enlarged in the design phase to accommodate both the building use and the neighbouring park or sports field use.

1.3 Methods

This research report will form the basis of a comprehensive washroom strategy for parks. To produce this strategy, we followed the following methods:

1. Search for best practices from other municipalities
2. Research policy, opinions, and academic writing on washroom provision and design
3. Consider the HRM context
4. Develop criteria for evaluating existing facilities
5. Audit existing washrooms and drinking fountains based on criteria
6. Prioritize HRM parks for washroom upgrades, new installations and closures based on research
7. Make recommendations on siting facilities within parks
8. Produce guidelines for amenities (design standards)
9. Develop cost estimates for recommended implementations

1.4 Out of Scope, for Further Consideration

While this is intended as a comprehensive strategy for HRM, there are several issues out of scope of this project which may be worth further exploration in the future to strengthen the plan:

- Public engagement
- Engagement with disabled groups, families, LGTBQ regarding specific needs, or to evaluate design proposals
- Detailed design and/or prototyping of potential facilities

1.5 Considerations

UNIVERSALITY

Washrooms and drinking fountains provided by the municipality should be universal: usable by all residents and visitors. "Universal" in the context of the design and siting of washrooms and drinking fountains means removing barriers for those with physical, auditory, visual, and cognitive challenges, but also incorporating inclusive and diverse thinking on gender. The standards in this strategy will be guided by best practices for accessibility and universal design (Canadian Standards Association, Americans with Disabilities Act, Parks Canada standards), and complement with more current design thinking where necessary.

GENDER

This strategy will include best practices for gender provision in washrooms, following practices in the Parks Canada washrooms design standard, as well common practices in the UK, Australia and other recent washroom strategies.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Public washrooms unfortunately have a long history of being sites for anti-social behaviour—vandalism, drug use, voyeurism, prostitution, and public sex—which diminishes their function and perception in the general public. While public facilities need to be built to be rugged, designing uninspiring, placeless concrete "fortresses", is not and acceptable design approach. Instead, making public facilities visible, accessible, safe and design inspired, is a much better approach. Public washrooms, like any public building, should be a point of pride and this will act as a first line of defence for anti-social behaviour.

BRAND

It may seem strange, but public washrooms are part of the municipality's brand: residents and visitors alike will build associations (positive or negative) based on their experiences in parks, including the comfort and accessibility of any municipal washroom facilities. When washrooms are poor quality, in bad shape, or closed or unavailable, it can affect people's perceptions of the municipality, and thus the brand.

TOURISM

Provision of washrooms can have a positive effect on tourism in HRM. Encouraging tourists to stay longer in HRM parks or sports facilities means they may spend more time in the region, spending more money and increasing visitor satisfaction and potential for repeat visitation.

EFFICIENT PLANNING

We will consider efficiency of service delivery, such as making use of existing facilities near to parks or clustering building services in central facilities to maximize oversight by existing building staff.

TIME-OF-DAY AND SEASONALITY

Hours of operation and seasonality are important to users. If a park is open and used all-year-long, public facilities should be available as well. Having washrooms available for more hours of the day, or for more days of the year could enable or encourage greater park visitation. When facilities are not available, signage should post the opening hours/days, or direct users to the nearest alternative.

SENIORS

Halifax is currently below the Canadian average for the proportion of residents above 65 years of age (15.7% in 2016). Nevertheless, this population has been growing since 1996, with a large increase (23%) in the over 65 population since 2011. Since seniors have a greater need for washroom provisions, encouraging healthy living for seniors in HRM must start with adequate public services in our public parks.

FAMILIES

Families with young children, like seniors, also need access to public washrooms at sports fields, parks and outdoor venues and destinations. Young children and seniors need washroom facilities more frequently than other populations. Washroom design should recognize the special needs of families with young children. Change tables are a must for parents of all genders with babies.

TERMINOLOGY

Because of a general reticence in western culture to discuss people's washroom practices, there are quite a number of euphemistic terms for toilet facilities. We use the Canadian standard "washroom" throughout this document for the facility and "toilet" to refer to the porcelain fixture.

However, our source materials refer to such facilities using any of: washroom, bathroom, restroom, facilities, comfort station, W.C., lavatory, toilets, not to mention the myriad humorous or irreverent choices available.

1.6 A Brief History of Public Washrooms

Historically, public washrooms have always been more common than private facilities. It is only since the twentieth century that most dwelling units came with at least one private washroom. In ancient Greece as well as in Europe during the Middle Ages, use of public latrines would have been very common, especially for men. Homes didn't have toilets; people who needed to go in their home would have used a bucket or pan, and the results would have been thrown out the window into the street, or left in the garden. Soil buckets might have been emptied into the nearest waterbodies, such as rivers, lakes and oceans, and many public latrines were located next to such waterbodies.

As urban areas intensified, these methods of disposing of urine and feces became less and less tenable; fresh water sources were severely polluted and disease such as cholera was spread through these unhygienic practices.

Gradually, in the 18th and 19th century, better homes started to include an "earth closet", the precursor to the modern washroom. The room enabled feces to be collected and stored in a hatch, to be removed frequently by workers called "nightmen". Earth closets were still used in many places (especially in rural areas) even into the 20th century. The "nightsoil" that was carted away would have been used for various uses, especially in agriculture as fertilizer.

Of course, the earth closet was an imperfect solution, dependent on cheap (and presumably unappealing) labour. The modern flushing toilet was only developed in the 19th century, but quickly became the gold standard for governments looking to clean up their cities. Cities responded by building complex public works to deliver fresh water, and to carry away wastes in sewer networks.

During the late 19th and early 20th century there was a fad for civic improvements in many western countries, and many familiar public amenities in our cities date from that time: parks, street lighting, signage, and public washrooms.

These public facilities were often installed in prominent urban locations, and sometimes were constructed underground. They were perhaps well intentioned designs, but often the facilities showed the biases of their time: facilities were often provided for men but not women, and frequently fees were charged to washroom users, which would have deterred the poor from using them. The leaders of the time, including aldermen, engineers and other

administrators, would have been men, and they did not consider women's needs.

Since the advent of modern sewer systems, washrooms in private residences and public buildings developed a great deal, with today's building codes regulating numbers and kind of washroom facilities in every building we construct.

Despite the washroom's importance to public sanitation in the early days of city planning and public works, washroom provision and sanitation generally are generally left unmentioned altogether in civic plans of today. Of course, as zoning and suburbanization spatially separated work, play, and home, people were left travelling farther and farther from one destination to another whether by car, bus, bike or on foot. This means that people are often left farther from the available private washrooms than they would have been in earlier times while moving between places. (Greed, 2003).

HALIFAX

During the early 20th century, Halifax was under the spell of the Civic Improvement League, an advocacy organization which requested many improvements to infrastructure, including public lavatories. In 1911 council requested an initial set of plans and costing for a public lavatory underneath the Grand Parade, which would have been both central and prominent as a location. Despite borrowing money to construct a "comfort station" in the following years (see Council Minutes p.453 1915–16), the lavatory was never built. New plans were requested by council on several occasions for years to come, but ground was never broken.

Today the city has 27 public washroom facilities spread over 24 parks, 4 standalone waterfountains, as well as other facilities in public urban spaces, and a handful of public-private-partnerships for washroom provision. The facilities are in various states of accessibility, availability, and repair with some functional, up-to-date and clean, and others missing the mark; this will be evaluated further detail later in this report.

1.7 Policy Context

Given the obvious importance of toilets to every person (and especially people with health and mobility issues, elders, and children) there is very little policy or legislation on the provision of public toilets or drinking fountains in outdoor public spaces in Canada.

Federal and provincial building codes contain requirements for providing washrooms in buildings both private and public. But where there is no building, there is typically no policy on where and whether toilets are required. There are a few areas of policy where the importance of public washrooms is inherent or indirect, and we outline such relevant policies below.

NOVA SCOTIA

There is no direct mention of washrooms in the primary health policy strategy in NS, 2012's ***Thrive!***. Nevertheless, washroom provision could be indirectly implicated in the clear intent to encourage more physically active Nova Scotians: "Thrive! includes actions to develop a provincial active transportation policy and plan, work with municipalities on land use policy to support physical activity and healthy eating, expand physical activity leadership programs into all municipalities and Mi'kmaq communities, and increase access to facilities and places to be active." (Thrive, p5)

One important component of encouraging people to be more active outdoors would be to ensure that they can spend more time on the go—and having washrooms and drinking fountains available in prominent recreation areas and on active transportation trails would be a start. The importance would be amplified for children, families, and elders, all of whom would need to know washrooms were close at hand before setting out. Drinking fountains would naturally also be encouraged within this policy, as availability of water is of course essential in areas where recreation, exercise, and active transportation come together in parks.

Nova Scotia's Department of Seniors released a policy document ***Shift*** relatively recently which has a few policy recommendations favourable, if indirectly, to washrooms and drinking fountains in public parks. The most significant is:

"Work with municipalities and other partners to increase access to Communities, culturally safe, convenient, and affordable facilities and recreational Culture & Heritage programs for older adults in all their diversity—including frail older adults, and especially people with low incomes." (p23)

Nova Scotia's ***Accessibility Act*** sets out how municipalities and public bodies will address issues of accessibility. It states that municipalities and public bodies will be required to create accessibility plans, which will outline what measures the municipality intends to take to address accessibility,

FIGURE 4. National Scenic Routes (Norway) washroom

as well as a plan for how municipalities will assess their own proposed policies, services, by-laws, and enactments for their impacts on accessibility (Accessibility Act, p9). Again, while washrooms are not directly mentioned, provision for accessible washrooms should be addressed in municipalities' future accessibility plans.

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

There is no statutory requirement for municipalities to provide washrooms in outdoor public spaces such as parks or urban squares. The HRM Charter does not require (or mention) public washrooms or drinking fountains in outdoor public spaces.

Washrooms are required for buildings built under the Nova Scotia Building Code or National Building Code, but there is no requirement to construct a washroom building where no building would exist otherwise.

HRM's bylaw pertaining to parks (P-600) does not mention washrooms or drinking fountains; it neither sets regulations for park users, nor administrative requirements for the municipal director of parks to provide them.

FIGURE 5. Automated public toilet (APT)

FIGURE 6. Community toilet schemes (CTS)

1.8 Common Washroom Strategies

It seems that municipalities to date have tried several strategies to providing public toilets which have worked to varying degrees:

SUPERVISED WASHROOMS

Washrooms in several New York parks, 25 public squares in San Francisco, and throughout Singapore, are staffed by attendants who are able to respond to any issues of cleanliness or security. Providing a human element and always visible, the presence of attendants is known to deter antisocial behaviour.

AUTOMATED PUBLIC TOILETS (APT)

Common in several European cities, and attempted in a few North American cities, APTs are automatic self-cleaning washrooms which require little daily maintenance. They are used generally in high-pedestrian traffic and tourist areas. APTs are popular because of easy maintenance, and the potential for their maintenance to be contracted out to private firms in exchange for advertising privileges (such as JCDecaux in Paris).

Unfortunately, they have many issues. They are very expensive to operate, and have some environmental and social issues associated with them. Environmentally, they use a very large amount of water daily for the single-use cleaning function. Socially, each person is on a time limit of generally 12 minutes; which means they are useful only for very specific washroom needs. They are not generally useful for parents of families, who may need to change diapers or help children. Some people avoid them for fear of being stuck in them during the cleaning cycle. Lastly, the cleaning cycle (generally a few minutes per user) can cause significant queueing when installed in busy areas.

COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEMES

In lieu of constructing new facilities, municipalities may partner with providers of existing washrooms in private buildings, such as restaurants, grocery stores, or pubs. This scheme seems most common in the UK. It may include a subsidy for a provider in exchange for public access to a washroom during a certain time period daily.

PLANNING INCENTIVES

It is possible for developers of new buildings to include publicly accessible washrooms in exchange for a loosening of other planning rules (such as building height, or gross floor area ratio/GFAR). Ideally such facilities could have a separate entrance to the outdoors so access is never restricted. Arrangements would need to address opening hours, servicing responsibilities, etc. The only HRM example we are currently aware of is at Bishop's Landing on the Halifax downtown waterfront: privately-owned public

washrooms are integrated into the retail space along the boardwalk. Public washrooms could be added to the list of amenities accepted as public benefits under density bonusing rules, or inclusive zoning policies.

Public washrooms are not generally considered a land-use matter, but according to UK planner Clara Greed, we require all kinds of other amenities in our land-use plans such as vehicle parking spaces, to which we do not give a second thought (Greed, 2003).

WAYFINDING TO EXISTING FACILITIES OUTSIDE PARKS

In many cases, public buildings such as recreation centres and libraries already provide public washrooms just outside park boundaries. Before installing new washrooms or drinking fountains in parks, it is worth looking to abutting facilities for public facilities. The adjacent facility should have similar opening hours as the park, or must have a separate entrance or access for when the main facility isn't open.

TEMPORARY WASHROOMS

The municipality is already using this strategy in some parks where the all-day/every day demand for washrooms is low, but where there is a periodic demand during sports games or special events. Portable washrooms are always provided on contract with firms that provide delivery, maintenance and service, and removal—the municipality would in general not provide and maintain the facilities directly. Fully accessible temporary washrooms are readily available. The lack of plumbing means that adding drinking fountains may not be possible unless provided as part of the maintenance contract with water delivery.

According to Mark Tabor of Denver Parks, temporary washrooms can be a great way to test out demand for a facility on a given site before investing fully. A significant concession is that temporary washrooms are not as well respected from users, and may be more likely to fall into disarray or be damaged. As a result, while they provide a great method of testing for need, temporary washrooms should not become a permanent solution.

1.9 Accessibility / Universal Design Standards

There are several guidelines and regulations which provide guidance for the design of washrooms in Canada. None except the Parks Canada guidelines address outdoor and parks washrooms specifically.

NOVA SCOTIA BUILDING CODE

The Nova Scotia Building Code (NSBC) contains statutory regulations for all construction in the province with regards to barrier-free design. The standards apply to barrier-free design in all aspects, not only washrooms; however, regulations in this legislative document must be followed for any construction in the province.

Existing buildings have alternate methods of compliance to follow, which makes the application of these standards vague for existing public park washroom facilities; in a public washroom strategy, the standard to which existing public washrooms be upgraded would be have to be explicitly addressed.

ACCESSIBLE DESIGN FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Canadian Standards Association's (CSA) Accessible Design for the Built Environment lays out in detail the standards any exterior, interior, residential, or vehicular access space should adhere to. While not statutory unlike the NSBC, the standards are more detailed and comprehensive with respect to washroom design than the statutory requirements in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations.

Generally, the guidelines address: the amount of clear area required; operating control standards for door handles, window operators, faucets, electrical switches, thermostats, and fire alarm pull stations; standards for control devices, such as the requirement of tactile and auditory information; floor and ground surfaces; protruding objects that pose a hazard; width and height requirements for walls, hallways, doorways, and openings; stairs, ramps, and handrail requirements; and accessible evacuation procedures.

Drinking fountain and washroom provisions are in the 'interior facilities' section of this document. Specifically, there are provisions for: drinking fountains, including spouts, appearance, placement, and controls; and washroom facilities, including signage, floor area, lavatories and their counters, mirrors, grab bars, soap dispensers, toilets, stalls and doors, urinals, universality, change benches, and bathing facilities. These provisions outline in detail how the facility is to be designed and constructed in order to allow for universal access by those with physical, sensory, or other disabilities.

There are also provisions regarding washrooms and drinking fountains in the 'exterior circulation, space, and amenities' section of the document. Briefly, fountains and permanent outdoor washrooms are addressed, specifically with regards to their location in relation to accessible routes, access to the washroom, and signage. Temporary outdoor toilets are addressed as well, with regards to their location, signage, entry, doorway, total interior space, and the toilet itself.

The CSA's accessibility standards should be the primary basis for guidelines in this public washroom strategy.

STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), similar to the CSA's accessibility document, provides detailed standards for the construction of plumbing facilities such as washrooms and drinking fountains. However, unlike the CSA's document, the provisions in the ADA are legally enforceable in the USA. It lists detailed provisions for all aspects of washroom and drinking fountain facilities: drinking fountains, including operable parts, spout height and location, and water flow; washrooms, including turning space, mirrors, door orientation, hooks and shelves, water closet size, grab bars, flush controls, toilet paper dispensers, clearance, urinals, lavatory placement and clearance; and bathing and laundry facilities.

In addition to the provisions about design, installation, and construction of washrooms and drinking fountains, the ADA

provides regulations for how new construction should be addressed vs. modifications to existing buildings.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Universal Design (UD) is not a list of specifications, nor is it a regulation; it is an approach to design that considers the varied abilities of users. It is a design process where the goal is producing a product or process that includes as many potential users as possible. There are seven principles that guide UD:

1. Equitable: the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
2. Flexible: the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. Simple and intuitive: use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
4. Perceptible information: the design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
5. Tolerance for error: the design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. Low physical effort: the design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
7. Size and space for approach and use: appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

These principles should guide any architecture, landscape, and graphic designs that result from the recommendations in this report. For further information, there is detailed guidance at the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design.

NOVA SCOTIA ACCESSIBILITY ACT

The Province of Nova Scotia recently made law the Accessibility Act, which dictates that all public sector bodies and municipalities shall prepare an accessibility plan. The accessibility plans will contain a report on what measures the body or municipality has taken and will take to ensure barrier-free access in their jurisdiction, as well as information about procedures the body or municipality will use to assess other policies, programs, services, by-laws, and enactments for their impact on accessibility.

The province will be producing a set of regulations under the act. If a public washroom strategy is to get out ahead of a municipal accessibility plan, it should address all the provisions that we can expect the washroom strategy to contain. We can't guess at all the contents of the regulations before they are written, but it is reasonable to assume that they will include the CSA standards as a starting point.

The accessibility plans released by municipalities are intended to address the "identification, removal and prevention of barriers in the policies, programs, practices and services of a public sector body" and so an accessible public washroom strategy should also address all of these concerns.

Any HRM washroom strategy and designs should meet the requirements in the municipality's accessibility plan, if written by the completion of this project.

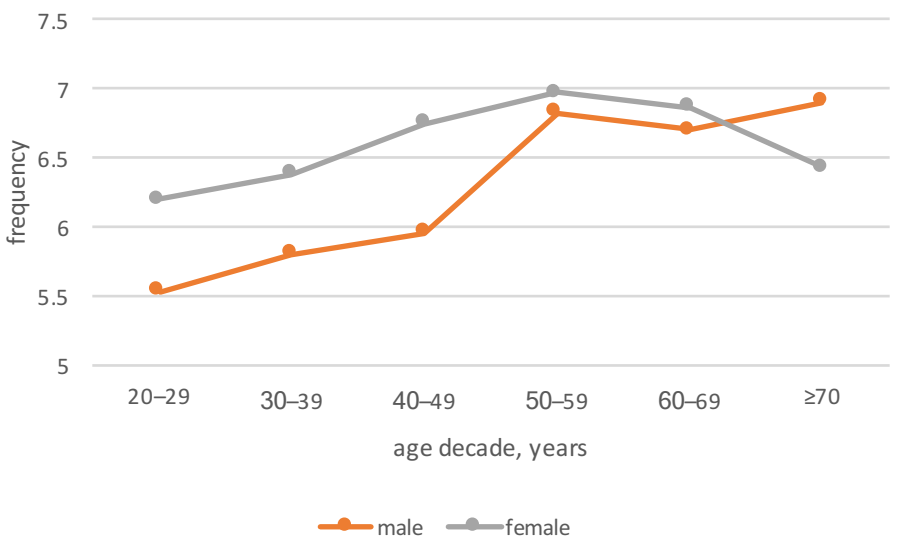
PAVILION AND WASHROOM FACILITIES

This Parks Canada document provides a guide for washroom and pavilions in national parks. It describes key considerations for siting and designing washroom facilities within national parks, which include providing universal access as well as integrating the building into the surrounding landscape.

The guide lays out landscape elements to consider and design for when building washroom facilities, followed by building materials and elements and a modular design guide. It details how modules should be designed and employed, and gives examples of applicable modular combinations for functional and accessible public washrooms in parks.

FIGURE 7. Urination Frequencies by age and gender. (2004, E.P. VAN HAARST, E.A. HELDEWEG, †, D.W. NEWLING and T.J. SCHLATMANN, "The 24-h frequency-volume chart in adults reporting no voiding complaints: defining reference values and analyzing variables)

AGE	SEX	DAY (16H)	AVG. HRS TO VOID
20–29	M	5.53	2.9
	F	6.20	2.6
30–39	M	5.80	2.8
	F	6.38	2.5
40–49	M	5.95	2.7
	F	6.75	2.4
50–59	M	6.83	2.3
	F	6.97	2.3
60–69	M	6.70	2.4
	F	6.86	2.3
≥70	M	6.90	2.3
	F	6.43	2.5



1.10 Voiding Frequency

Some scientific studies have been undertaken to understand how frequently different age groups will urinate or defecate (termed 'Voiding'). It turns out that people urinate 2-3 times more often than defecating so the controlling variable is urination frequency. While the main purpose of requiring a bathroom is for 'voiding', it is also used by women during menstruation or by parents to clean-up or change their kids.

Understanding the voiding frequency of different age and gender groups gives us a probability function that a given number of people will need bathroom facilities in a given period. For instance, if a large park facility is used for an average of 4 hours per day per user (e.g. a long trail walk, or a soccer field on a tournament day) and the average user urinates once every 2.5-3 hours, there is a high chance that each park user will need to use the bathroom while visiting that park. People with bladder issues or kids with smaller bladders will have to go more frequently.

In 2004, a study was undertaken[1] to determine how frequently different age and gender groups urinate. During the daytime, males urinate between 5.5–6.8 times per day (once every 2.4-2.9 hours) in a 16 hour period. Females urinate between 6.2-7.0 times per day (once every 2.3-2.6 hours). The study did not look at ages below 20.

In order to better understand how frequently bathroom facilities may be used at any particular location, it is important to understand the demographic for the park (male or female and age group), and the length of time that people are anticipated to stay. For parks that are used for less than 2 hours, the requirement for a washroom may be low. Of course the travel time to and from that park would have to be factored into the equation. Also, a very large facility with multiple fields could easily have up to 50 people per game (soccer games are 2 hours) per field.

Parks that require 2–4 hours for kids less than 10 years of age will have a high likelihood of needing a washroom facility. For most seniors, parks that require 4-6 hours of use will have a high likelihood of needing a bathroom facility. Parks that have people visiting for 6–8 hours will definitely require bathroom facilities.

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1 E.P. VAN HAARST, E.A. HELDEWEG, †, D.W. NEWLING and T.J. SCHLATMANN, "The 24-h frequency-volume chart in adults reporting no voiding complaints: defining reference values and analysing variables

2.0 Best Practices

2. Best Practices

2.1 Introduction

Washrooms and drinking fountains provide an important amenity to all people in municipalities, but they are rarely addressed in public policy in Canada, aside from those required by building codes within indoor public, pseudo-public, and private spaces. Our research revealed no comprehensive public washroom strategies of any kind in Canada. Nevertheless, several other nations' municipalities have developed broad strategies, with some especially well thought out examples in Australia, Denver in the USA, and in the UK. This section briefly looks at case studies from outside Canada which could be applied to the Halifax context, Edmonton, which has age-friendly policies which address washroom provision, as well as the case of Parks Canada, which has recently developed a new standard for washrooms in national parks.

There seem to be three common approaches to the provision of bathrooms in urban areas and parks:

1. Classifying parks and public spaces in a hierarchy, and using the hierarchy as the basis for siting facilities
2. Master planning, where each park in the system is analyzed individually for suitability or for the requirement of a facility based on amenities
3. Setting design standards and a typology, where broad requirements are set for number of stalls, sinks, etc., or a few prototypical facilities are designed whose detailed design can be worked out in a later phase

Many of the cases we looked at employed one or more of the above approaches to decision making. Some strategies included an implementation plan, costing, or other budgetary or scheduling inputs to municipal councils. Other strategies provided only recommendations and design standards, leaving aside implementation considerations for later.

Where documents are publicly available, their names are hyperlinked in blue, below.

FIGURE 8. Hereiane, Norway
©Foto: Hege Lysholm / Statens vegvesen

FIGURE 9. Liasanden, Norway
©Foto: Werner Harstad / Statens vegvesen

FIGURE 10. Denver, Colorado

2.2 Denver, Colorado, USA

RESTROOM MASTER PLAN—PLANNING FOR WASHROOMS IN PARKS

The state capital of Colorado is also the most populous city in the state, with an official population of about 700,000 and a metro population of over 2 million.

The City and County produced a Restroom Master Plan, which was accepted by its council in 2005. The master plan is essentially a strategy for providing washrooms in parks across the municipality, with scope to address only plumbed bathrooms (i.e. not including porta-potties).

The document audits the city's existing 46 facilities on several criteria, going on to make recommendations for 28 upgrades and 10 new installations based on levels-of-service, building fitness, maintenance and management. The plan includes a set of design standards for durability, accessibility, etc. and provides a prototypical washroom design which can be implemented. An implementation plan and a rough costing for twelve years of capital projects concludes the report, providing fodder for council's budgeting and planning.

The Master Plan is now beyond its 12-year implementation timeline, but Denver Parks and Recreation confirmed that the document has had a big impact on the public washrooms that have been installed, and is still considered guiding policy. Location criteria and design guidelines in the 2005 plan are still actively used to decide on whether and where to build new washrooms, or whether to upgrade old ones. The plan is likely to be updated in the coming years.

According to Denver parks planner Mark Tabor, location criteria are still relevant and are based on the best proxy data the city has. However, in the balance of durability vs comfort, he feels that the guidelines and prototypical designs in the master plan could be rebalanced in favour of greater comfort for washroom users. Involving the communities makes a big difference also; where there is the potential for social problems in washrooms, neighbourhood leaders can help decide where and whether a site will work, or help to evaluate designs. The municipality closed some washrooms where the problems (drug use, vandalism, etc.) could not be stopped, but this was only a last resort when no other solutions could be found.

Tabor also emphasized that, although the master plan does not include any planning for portable washrooms, such temporary facilities can provide amenities in smaller parks with less administration and lower cost when it's warranted. They are not a replacement for fully-plumbed facilities, but can bridge gaps in the system.

2.3 Kingston, Australia

PUBLIC TOILET STRATEGY

The City of Kingston is one of the many independent administrations within the municipality of Melbourne, with a population of about 150,000 people living fifteen kilometres south-east of the city centre.

Kingston in 2016 did an audit of its existing facilities, consulted with the public to set goals for washroom provision in the municipality, and produced design guidelines and a set of washroom typologies. The result, the City of Kingston Public Toilet Strategy, is a clear strategy for 10 years of implementation, beginning from principles, and ending with investment priority planning. The plan is based on six guiding principles:

Provision—that the municipality will provide washrooms in selected public spaces, with greater priority for installation on currently-owned land.

Safety—the safety of the community will be given priority over other considerations

Inclusive access—facilities will be high quality, accessible and usable by all (including compliance with Australian accessibility standards, the Disability Discrimination Act or DDA).

Cleanliness—washrooms will be maintained and cleaned to meet community expectations, with high-use facilities maintained more frequently.

Siting & design—various guidelines for siting and design are in the strategy to ensure the facility is usable, accessible, durable, and limits anti-social behaviour.

Investment Priority & Community Benefit—washrooms should be sited where there is a demonstrated public need, balanced by practical matters of provision, operations, and budgets. The city divides sites into two priority areas, with major centres, regional and district parks, and the waterfront as most important.

The strategy includes a typology of washrooms, from "flagship"-level down through "basic" and "temporary"(i.e. portable), linking each washroom type with the kinds of public spaces and parks in which such facilities should be installed, e.g. "basic" washrooms are for local-area parks, whereas "flagship" ones should be installed in very high public use, regional-level parks.

The report includes as its basis a fair bit of analysis, including the results of stakeholder engagements, public consultations, online surveys, and other important research. Though such direct community preference research is not part of the scope of this project, Kingston's research may provide a useful analogue for Halifax.

The 10-year action plan in the document recommends specific upgrades and new installations for 15 locations around the city.

2.4 Sydney, Australia

PUBLIC TOILET STRATEGY 2014

The plan for washrooms in Sydney, Public Toilet Strategy 2014, is comprehensive, including recommendation for providing washrooms in all public spaces, not just in municipal parks.

Important to the plan are the city's commitment to tourism and active transportation, both of which are supported by a good network of public washrooms. This plan, unlike the other cases presented in this report, contains a specific catchment recommendation:

> *To ensure that public toilets are available within 400 metres of any point within central Sydney and at all village centres and major neighbourhood parks with play or sports facilities. (p4)*

Like the plan written for the City of Kingston, Sydney's plan ends with an action plan, with nine prioritized new builds and five upgrades to existing washrooms, and an estimate . The plan begins with a set of issues identified in public surveys, most of which are common to public washroom strategies elsewhere:

- lack of washrooms in important public spaces
- public urination
- low quality of existing facilities
- lack of cleanliness of existing facilities
- lack of information about facility location and hours

Unlike Kingston, Sydney's plan suggests investments as high, low, and medium priorities, and recommends courses of action or further study, but does not provide a timeline or path for each recommendation.

Some useful recommendations in this strategy that may be relevant to Halifax:

- To encourage developers to include public washrooms in new buildings.
- Promoting and communicating more about the washroom system through wayfinding signs in parks, and on such things as bus shelters.
- Include communication on washroom facilities for opening hours, and indicating alternative facilities nearby
- That facilities should be regularly audited for cleanliness and maintenance to ensure that they are meeting a certain level of service

2.5 Edmonton, Alberta

The City of Edmonton does not have a public washroom strategy. However, it does have some fairly recent policy in the area of Age Friendly planning. In 2010, the city adopted an Edmonton Seniors Declaration, stating that the city would not discriminate against elders in the provision of services, and that its planning and design would take their needs into account wherever possible. The declaration has resulted in several important policies since then, including the recently completed Access Design Guide (2017).

The guide provides elder-friendly design guidelines for many different types of municipal infrastructure, such as trails, street furniture, and amenity buildings, including washrooms. It has some specific guidelines for design (e.g. minimum widths for pathways), but also broad requirements for what amenities should be available to satisfy elders' needs. Most importantly to this report, the document prescribes installing "barrier-free public toilets ... within a distance of not more than 400m from major areas of interest / seating nodes. " (A.5.1) It is not defined what destinations "major areas of interest" includes, but there is clearly an intent to require washrooms in the design of all important municipal public spaces.

In addition, there are a few other policies in the Access Design Guide which are relevant. Clause A.5.3 recommends providing water fountains / bottle filling stations "within high activity areas, well-used public squares / plazas and at Transit Centres / LRT Stations." The policy includes recommendations about wayfinding signage to washroom facilities where they exist. Lastly, the document does give more specific guidance as to the number of washroom stalls, size, layout and location of facilities, and is worth keeping in mind as one of the few Canadian design standards guides for washrooms, that is written into municipal public policy.

FIGURE 11. Aldrich Bay Park, Hong Kong

FIGURE 12. Parks Canada washroom in Terra Nova National Park; design by Ekistics

2.6 Parks Canada

PAVILIONS AND WASHROOM FACILITIES—COMPONENTS AND PROTOTYPES

Parks Canada does provide a useful design guideline and prototype package which we thought worthy of among the other cases here, as it is the most comprehensive guidelines we are aware of for parks washrooms.

The washrooms proposed in the Parks Canada standard are made up of "modules": like adding blocks of Lego together, pre-designed elements which can be assembled to produce a facility based on standardized dimensional units. The design may scale depending on the need or the site context. . Accessibility, universality, and sensitivity to the surrounding environment is written into every aspect of the guidelines.

The modularity allows for a range of washroom types. The authors identify three approaches, for which various modules can be assembled:

Universal—every part of the washroom is barrier-free and family-friendly

Inclusive—gender neutral and family-friendly facility, with certain designated barrier-free facilities

Traditional gendered—separate men's and women's spaces, with some shared space between them, and barrier-free washrooms in both

Vandalism is often mentioned as a major issue for public washrooms. It has been a problem in national parks as well, and the design guidelines here recommend materials and fixtures which are durable, easy to care for, but which also are good-looking and respect their environment.

While the design prototype was produced with campgrounds in mind, there should be much in the Parks Canada recommendations which will be relevant to urban parks as well. The number of fixtures and amenities may be fewer (indoor showers and lockers, for example, may not be required or expected in some municipal parks), but the Parks Canada guidelines may be a useful starting point on facilities which are designed with universality in mind, which are appealing to the public, but are built to last and easy to maintain.

2.7 Toronto, Ontario

Toronto does not have a written policy on public water provision in parks, but a 2012 policy banning the sale of disposable bottles on city land predicated some capital investments on drinking fountains in parks. Even before the bottled water ban, Toronto had a very high proportion of parks with drinking fountains available: circa 700 parks had drinking fountains in 2012, out of 1500 parks within the city (2012 background report). To compare, Halifax has just six drinking fountains within its 908 parks.

Since Toronto's water bottle ban in 2012, Toronto has installed 68 new drinking fountains, with 44 more planned for 2017–18. The city also provides drinking water for special events in parks out of mobile water stations, via its water utility Toronto Water (see 2017 background report).

Installing water fountains in Toronto has been relatively low cost, with simple free-standing fountains at $4000, and more complex water bottle filling stations costing up to $7500, if installed where water service lines exist. Each fountain costs the city about $700 in annual expenses, for seasonal shut-off, water testing, repair and other maintenance fees.

2.8 Conclusion

A review of best practices revealed that HRM could be a leader among Canadian municipalities—no other municipality has comprehensive policy or strategy for provision of washrooms in parks, or otherwise. Fortunately, there are many other cases we were able to draw from in Australia and the US (and elsewhere).

We will certainly be employing the cases presented here to:

- Select criteria for evaluating existing facilities (especially Denver, whose strategy includes an extensive checklist);
- Decide how to prioritizing facilities by park class (as in Kingston AU); and
- Produce flexible design guidelines, and address the needs of several social groups with each facility (as with Parks Canada's strategy).

Each case comes with useful original and background research which we will draw upon extensively for the recommendations given within this strategy.

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3.0 Inventory

3. Existing Washroom Inventory

Before assessing the state of HRM's current public washroom facilities, it is first important to first understand how HRM classifies its parks in the municipality. HRM has four main park classifications, as defined in the municipality's 2014 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy. Each park type has a different function and service catchment. The four categories refer largely to a purported catchment area of a park, but within each category there are a very wide variety of parks.

HRM PARKS SERVICE AND AREA

According to Halifax's data, 714 developed parks cover 47 km^2 of land; a larger area than the entire regional centre (33 km^2). This means that there is one developed park per 540 residents, or about 121 m^2 of developed parkland per person.

HRM is a vast municipal area, covering over 5,490 km^2 of land. Developed, HRM managed parks are spread over a land area of about 2104 km^2, making them difficult to serve efficiently. Fortunately, most of the parks are close to the centre of the city: 59% of the parks (440 parks, 41 km^2) fall within the urban service area, and 14% (105 parks, 4.5 km^2) are within the Regional Centre. When examining the regionally-classed parks alone, an even greater proportion are close to the centre: 90% of the regional parks are within the urban service area, and 55% are within the Regional Centre.

Certainly, one of the challenges of this project will be to consider the broad range of park forms and types, and to recommend criteria for parks which will fit any potential park uses, over a wide range of landscapes, and in many disparate forms.

To properly understand the context park washrooms currently exist in, we conducted a high level audit of the existing washrooms in HRM's parks. Within the four classifications, eight regional parks, nine district parks, and six community parks have washroom facilities.

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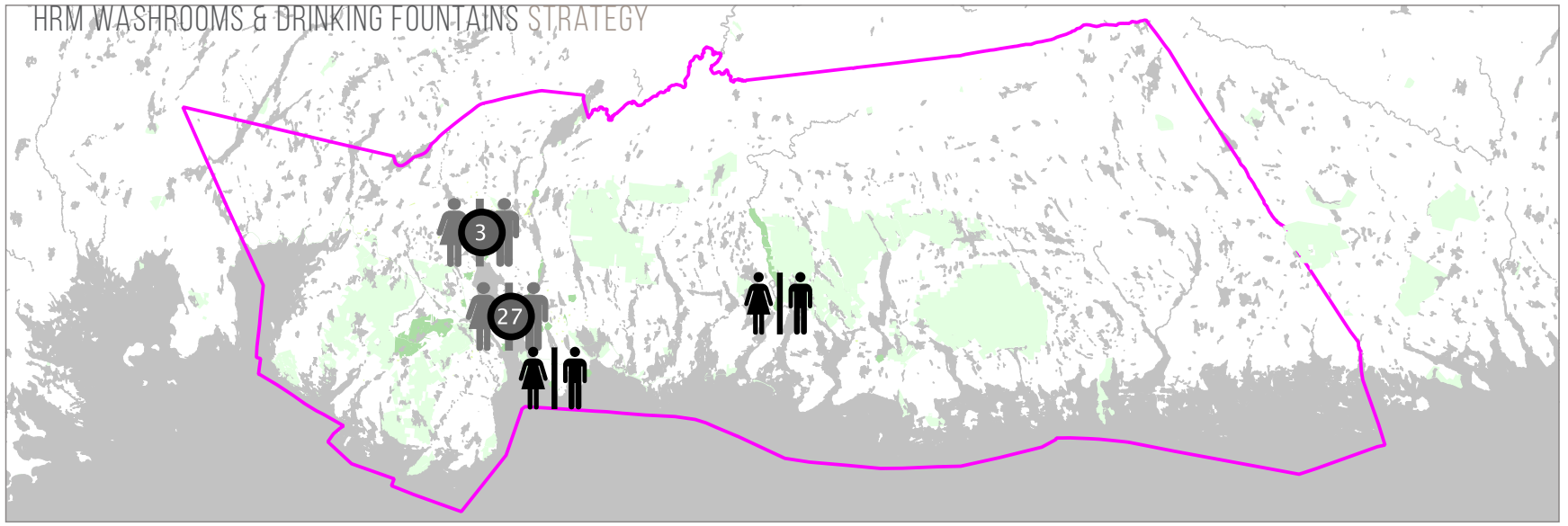
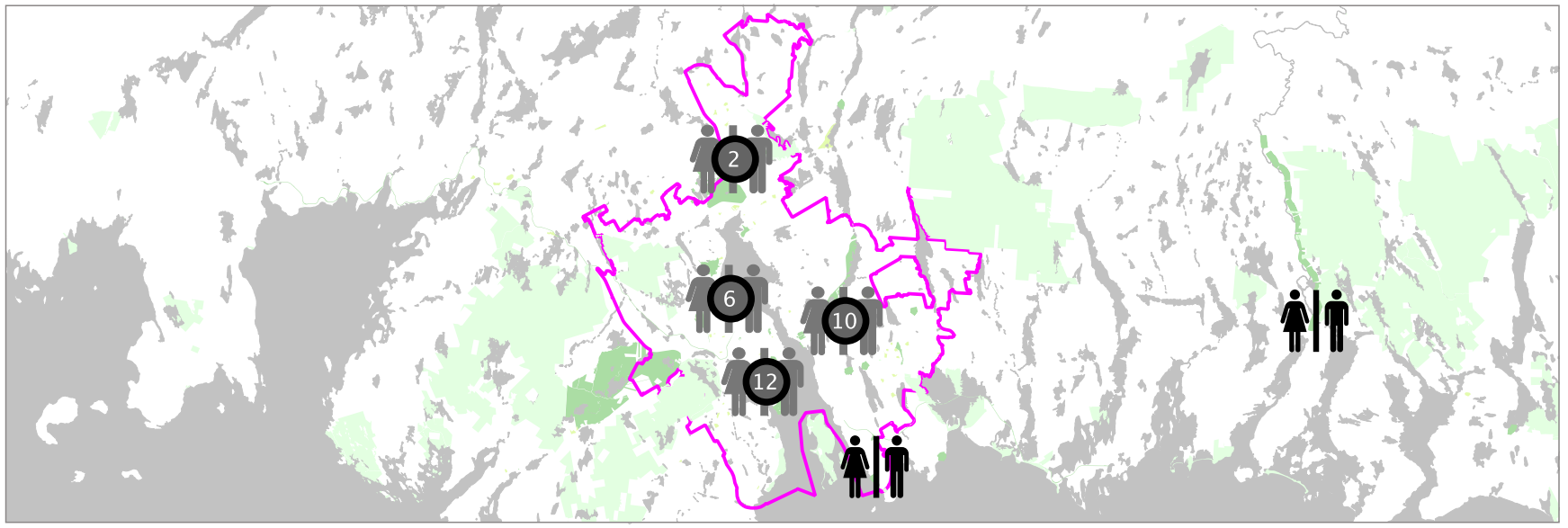
PARK CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	# OF WASHROOMS	EXAMPLES
1. NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK	Neighbourhood Parks are primarily designed to provide unorganized play activities for children, quiet seating or rest areas and/or linear linkages between other municipal parks or open spaces. These parks typically provide centrally located recreational services for neighbourhoods of 80 - 120 households.	0	» Cabot Place Park » Charles Tupper Elementary School Park » Chebucto Road Park
2. COMMUNITY PARK	These parks may be designed for organized youth and recreational adult level sports but may also include facilities for play by children. These areas may also be designed for passive recreation and left in a predominantly natural state. Community Parks are primarily intended to serve the recreation needs of a community comprised of three or four neighbourhoods with a population in the range of 1200 persons.	6	» Jollimore » Birch Cove Park » Chocolate Lake
3. DISTRICT PARK	District Parks are primarily intended to serve the recreation needs of several communities with a population in the range of 10 000 persons. District Park facilities may provide a range of recreational uses including, but not limited to, walking and cycling trails, sports fields, picnic areas, supervised beaches, and play facilities for children and areas intended for passive recreation uses that are left in a predominantly natural state.	9	» Westmount » Spryfield Centre » Kearney Lake Beach
4. REGIONAL PARK	The primary objective of a Regional Park is to preserve and protect significant natural or cultural resources. The essential feature of a Regional Park may include, but not be limited to, open space, wilderness, scenic beauty, flora, fauna, and recreational, archaeological, historical, cultural and/or geological resources. A Regional Park will have sufficient land area to support outdoor recreational opportunities for the enjoyment and education of the public. The size of a Regional Park must be sufficient to ensure that its significant resources can be managed so as to be protected and enjoyed. Regional Parks may be federal, provincial or municipal properties and are intended to serve the educational, cultural and recreation needs of the population of the entire region as well as for visitors to HRM.	11	» Point Pleasant » Mainland Common » Shubie Park » Shearwater Flyer Trail
E. UNCLASSIFIED	n/a	1	» Musquodoboit Trail AT Greenway

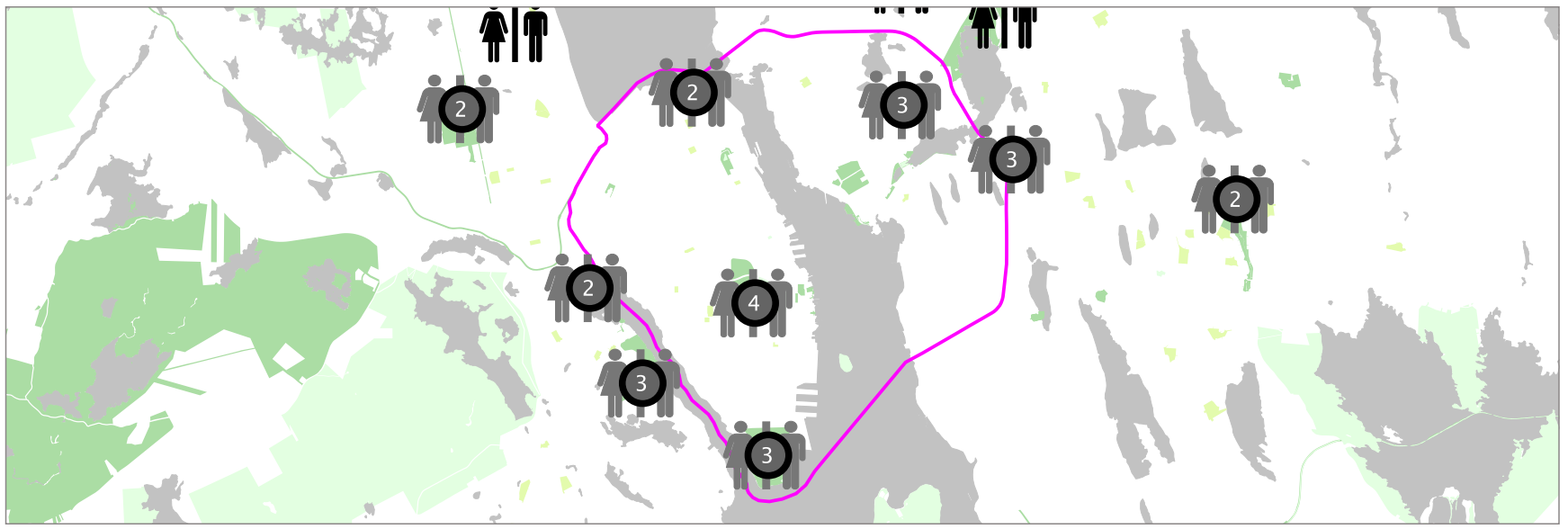
FIGURE 13. HRM Park classifications with distribution of washrooms by class



Facilities across HRM



Facilities within the Urban Service Boundary



Facilities within the Regional Centre

existing facilities

washroom

N

FIGURE 14. washroom locations in HRM

Our survey of existing facilities was modeled after that conducted by Denver, Colorado, whose audit addressed washrooms' site features, landscape architecture, architecture, accessibility, and wayfinding and signage. This survey was meant to inform us on the current situation of washrooms in HRM's parks, and how the washroom facilities and the structures themselves are performing.

After gathering results from our audit, we then quantified the results in a spreadsheet, giving different weights to seven sections: accessibility, architecture, safety, equality / universality / inclusivity, landscape architecture, wayfinding, and aesthetic / appearance. Weights were assigned based on relative importance to a park user's comfort in a given facility; for example, the surrounding landscape architecture has less of an impact on a user's ability to safely access the washroom and its amenities than the washroom's accessibility and safety provisions do, so landscape architecture is given a smaller weight than accessibility or safety.

The complete survey and audit results are available in a separate document.

FIGURE 15. Public Gardens

FIGURE 16. North Common

FIGURE 17. Point Pleasant Cable Rd.

FIGURE 18. Point Pleasant Lower Lot

3.1 Regional Parks

HRM's current regional parks are areas of cultural, natural, or historical importance that have a large draw, not catering just to residents in the immediate vicinity. Of the 38 parks currently classified as regional by HRM, 8 of these have washrooms managed by HRM and available for public use. The parks served by washrooms vary in size and types of use, but are located mostly within the regional centre or just outside the periphery.

Note: Fort Needham Park will be receiving a washroom in 2019, but it had not been consrtructed at the time of this audit.

PUBLIC GARDENS

The Public Gardens have two washroom buildings, one containing female washrooms and the other with male washrooms and a gender-neutral 'family' washroom. While all washrooms contain barrier-free stalls, the entrances to the washrooms themselves have high ledges that do not comply with the Nova Scotia Building Code for accessible entrances. Besides this, the washrooms are in good condition and are mostly equal in gender provisions. 5771 Spring Garden Rd.

HALIFAX COMMONS

The facilities on Halifax's North Commons are at the north end of the Common, facing west towards the Robie and Cunard intersection. These washrooms service the Commons and all the adjacent activity areas, including eight baseball fields and other sports facilities like rugby and cricket areas. For the most part, the washrooms are in fair condition. There is some vandalism throughout the building's interior and exterior, and the walls have signs of mildew and have been painted over at different times; however they have equal provisions for men and women. 5816 Cunard St.

POINT PLEASANT PARK - CABLE ROAD

The Cable Road public washrooms appear to be well-maintained and in good condition. They are visible from the trails, Cable Road and Serpentine Road, and provide two gender-neutral, self-contained washroom units. The building is not particularly unique or characteristic of the park, and isn't connected back to Point Pleasant Park through any branding. As an iconic part of Halifax, Point Pleasant Park could have unique and contextually designed facilities that would leave a positive memory in visitors' and tourists' minds.

POINT PLEASANT PARK - LOWER LOT

The facility adjacent to the lower parking lot, by Black Rock Beach, is well-located and easily visible, but the building itself is not in good shape. The doors into the washrooms speak to this; the entrance to the mens washroom is in poor condition, with rust, graffiti, and mildew especially along the bottom. The womens' door is in better condition, and actually made of different material, which shows that the facility has been updated but not fully. *Note: this washroom building was demolished since the audit.*

POINT PLEASANT PARK PRIVIES

Aside from the washrooms near the lower parking lot and those on Cable Road, there are four unserviced, two-unit facilities throughout the park. These washrooms are all in similar condition and of similar construction. They are bunker-style, labeled for men and women, but with no other distinguishing features between the two stalls. They are not barrier-free, with a tall ledge at the door of each stall. The buildings have been vandalized and generally seem like they have not had much attention paid to them. In addition, some of the facilities' close proximity to nicer washrooms such as those on Cable Road make them more unappealing by comparison.

FIGURE 19. Point Pleasant Park privies

COLE HARBOUR COMMONS

The older facilities at Cole Harbour's athletic fields and commons, to the south of Auburn Drive, are well maintained, accessible, and equal between genders. The entrances are highly visible while still being secure when the facilities are closed. Nearby are two baseball diamonds, trails, tennis courts, and a track and field facility. The washrooms are equal in terms of provisions for men and women, and neither washroom is in better or worse condition than the other.

FIGURE 20. Cole Harbour Commons

SHUBIE PARK

The Shubie Park washrooms are located in the main parking lot, across from the interpretive centre. The building is comprised of two self-contained units, one for men and one for women, and a central maintenance room. Other than a urinal in the mens washroom, the two units are mirror images of each other. The washrooms are accessible and barrier-free, with ample room inside to turn around. 54 Locks Rd.

FIGURE 21. Shubie Park

SIR SANFORD FLEMING PARK

The washrooms in the park's canteen building are adequate for able-bodied persons but are not barrier-free; even the stalls labeled as accessible do not have a wide enough path of travel as specified by the Nova Scotia Building Code. The entrance to the washrooms is separate from the entrance to the canteen, and the washrooms have their own security system as well as heating, as they are open year-round. Besides being quite safe, the washrooms are not equal for men and women and are not in great condition.

FIGURE 22. Sir Sanford Fleming Park

MAINLAND COMMONS - SOCCER FIELDS

The washrooms at the Mainland Commons soccer fields are in a portable construction trailer, rented by the municipality. As facilities for soccer players and able-bodied spectators, these washrooms are functional and aesthetically pleasant on the inside, however they are not barrier-free. The trailers are set up with stairs to the entrances. Because of the facility's temporary nature, the surrounding landscape architecture is less important than that of a permanent building; however, the condition of the interior, the universality, and the accessibility are all sub par. 210 Thomas Raddall Dr.

FIGURE 23. Mainland Commons—temporary

FIGURE 24. Canada Games Centre

FIGURE 25. Sandy Lake Beach

FIGURE 26. Beazley Field

FIGURE 27. Dartmouth 4-Pad

FIGURE 28. Albro Lake Beach

MAINLAND COMMONS - CANADA GAMES CENTRE

The washrooms on the northeast side of the Canada Games Centre are not accessible to the public on a daily basis, and are only open when the adjacent fields are in use. The facilities are accessible, with plenty of space inside. The washrooms are clean and clearly well-maintained, with high ceilings, and walls that are easy to paint over in case of vandalization. There are more facilities for men that for women, but besides this, the washrooms are in great condition. 26 Thomas Raddall Dr.

SANDY LAKE BEACH

The washroom facilities at Sandy Lake Beach in Bedford are accessible by wheelchair, effectively gender neutral, and aesthetically unimposing, as well as being low environmental impact composting toilets. The building is not weather proof, and while the spacing between wall and roof provides natural ventilation, it does not provide protection from all types of weather.

3.2 District Parks

District parks in HRM are defined loosely by serving at least 10,000 people. Like regional parks, they have multiple uses, such as active transportation routes, beaches, or sports fields. The parks served by washrooms are found in Dartmouth and on the Halifax mainland, with one further outside of the city in Lower Sackville. Of the 61 district parks, 9 have washroom facilities, of varying quality and type.

BEAZLEY FIELD

Beazley Field's washroom facilities are located in the baseball field house. The building is very close to the East Dartmouth Community Centre, where public washrooms are also located. Finding the washrooms from outside the building is difficult, however once inside they are clearly signed. While the washrooms are separated by gender, the toilets are in stalls similar to those in the Gorden Bell Park washrooms (described later in this chapter), and could easily be gender-neutral. 50 Caledonia Rd., Dartmouth

DARTMOUTH HARBOUR EAST RECREATION CAMPUS

The new RBC Centre Arena has washroom facilities that are accessible for men and women. The facilities are in good condition, clean and free of graffiti, and are clearly labelled near the entrance of the arena building. Instead of doors, the washrooms have a labyrinth entrance style, which reduces barriers to washroom facilities and reduces the risk for disease or illness spreading as there is no surface that every person entering or exiting the washroom will have to touch. The washrooms are in very good condition. 61 Commodore Dr.

ALBRO LAKE BEACH

The Albro Lake Beach facilities were constructed recently, along with the Chocolate Lake Beach facilities, in 2014. Between the parking lot and the lake, these facilities include a changing room, accessible stalls, baby changing tables in both mens and womens washrooms, and a shower outside for swimmers to rinse off. The interior of the washsooms had clearly not been cleaned at the time of this audit, which was before they had been opened for the season. 1 Sea King Dr.

RAVENSCRAIG

The washrooms at Ravenscraig Park are similar to those at Shubie Park or Cable Road, being two self-contained units with their own entrances. At the time of our audit, there were no signs on the doors indicating whether they were mens or womens washrooms, and the interiors are identical, meaning that they are effectively gender-neutral. Overall, the facilities are in fair to good condition in terms of architecture, accessibility, and safety. 15 Ravenscraig Dr, Halifax

FIGURE 29. Ravenscraig

METROPOLITAN ATHLETIC FIELD

The washrooms at Metropolitan Athletic Field in Lower Sackville are close to the track and field facilities but are not clearly labeled. The facilities themselves are in fair condition, with two self-contained gender-neutral washrooms. The building also houses changing rooms with benches and showers for users of the field and running track. 94 Metropolitan Ave.

FIGURE 30. Metropolitan Athletic Field

TREMONT PLATEAU PARK

The Tremont Plateau Park washrooms (near MSVU) are situated along one of the paths through the park, with high visibility from all angles. The facility itself is an unserviced, concrete bunker-style building with two stalls. The building has some vandalism and the interior is only in fair condition. 45 Trailwood Pl.

FIGURE 31. Tremont Plateau

MAYBANK PARK

The facilities at Maybank Park are part of a larger building with other facilities, presumably maintenance and storage for the adjacent soccer fields and baseball diamonds. The washrooms are not accessible as there is a large ledge at the entrances. Due to the unusual shape of the building, the washrooms are shaped pentagonally, with sloping ceilings and the sink situated on an angle relative to the stalls. Besides these shortcomings, the facilities are in mediocre condition. 1088 Micmac Blvd., Dartmouth

FIGURE 32. Maybank Park

WANDERERS GROUNDS

The washrooms at Wanderers Grounds were unidentifiable at the time of this audit, with no signage or wayfinding at all pointing in the direction of these washrooms. The washrooms themselves are in poor to fair condition, with no barrier-free stalls and most of the interior architectural features scoring 'fair'. The entrances make the washrooms non-accessible as they have large ledges at the thresholds. It is also unclear whether the washrooms are meant to service the sports field or the Bengal Lancers club, with no wayfinding from either. 1690 Bell Rd.

FIGURE 33. Wanderers Grounds

GRAHAMS GROVE

The facilities at Grahams Grove are in the worst condition of all the facilities in this audit. There is no signage pointing toward the building, and the signage on the doors is in poor condition. The facilities are not accessible as the building is located off of the trail, with no clear or smooth path of travel. As well, the building is vandalized and generally not in good condition. 1088 Grahams Grove, Dartmouth

FIGURE 34. Grahams Grove

FIGURE 35. DeWolf Park

FIGURE 36. Chocolate Lake Beach

FIGURE 37. Birch Cove Beach

FIGURE 38. Eastern Passage Commons

FIGURE 39. Penhorn Lake Beach

Community Parks

Of the parks classifications, community parks are the smallest classification with parks served by washrooms. Community parks are defined by serving 1,200 people. Of 262 parks classified as community parks, 6 have washrooms. The community parks with washrooms are either beaches or sports fields, with the exception of DeWolf Park.

DEWOLF PARK

The DeWolf Park washrooms building was constructed recently and is similar to the facilities at Chocolate Lake Beach and Albro Lake Beach, but suited to its surroundings: it lacks the changing and showering facilities that would be necessary at a swimming area. These facilities, as shown in Appendix A, scored the highest out of every washroom audited, and they are in excellent condition. 150 Waterfront Dr., Bedford

CHOCOLATE LAKE BEACH

The Chocolate Lake Beach facilities were designed and constructed at the same time as the facilities at Albro Lake Beach and so have the same amenities available. The building is therefore similar in architectural integrity to the Albro Lake facilities, but is in better condition for cleanliness and maintenance. 3 Melwood Ave.

BIRCH COVE BEACH

The washrooms at Birch Cove were upgraded for the International Canoe Federation's World Sprint Championships in 2009, so they are relatively new when compared with some of the facilities around the city's parks. The building is only in fair condition, however. Half ofthe building is settling at a different rate than the other half, likely because it was an addition and so was constructed at a later time. 44 Oakdale Cr., Dartmouth

EASTERN PASSAGE COMMONS

The Eastern Passage Commons are a large space with sports fields and the washroom facilities are located in the 'field house'. The field house is not accessible, due to a large ledge at the entrance of the building. The interior of the building is not in good condition, which is obvious just from the floors, nor are the washrooms equal in terms of gender provision. 110 Oceanview School Rd.

PENHORN LAKE BEACH

The Penhorn Lake Beach washrooms are similar in construction to those at Grahams Grove, but in slightly better condition. The entrances are facing the beach with some visibility from the road, but are not optimal in that they provide some opportunity for hiding places. The building is another CMU construction, bunker-like structure, which doesn't fit aesthetically with its surroundings or the adjacent neighbourhood. 70 Penhorn Dr.

FIGURE 40. Chocolate Lake Beach

FIGURE 41. Canada Games Centre

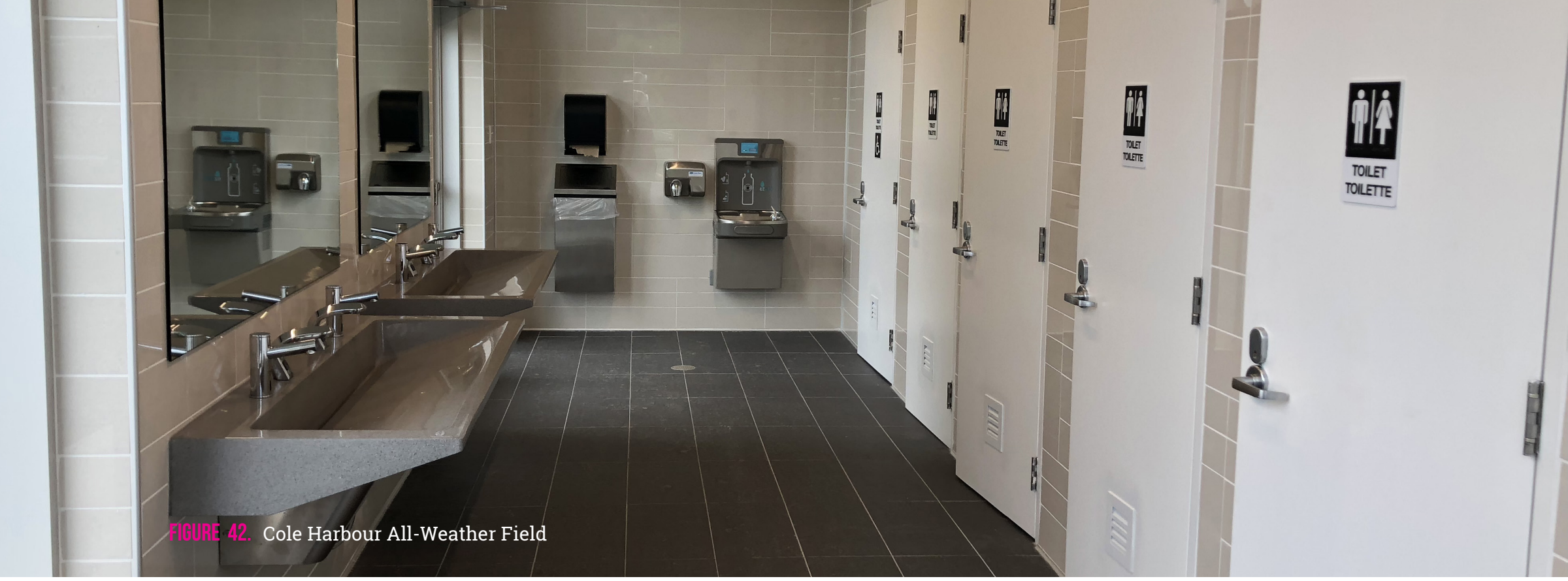


FIGURE 42. Cole Harbour All-Weather Field

COLE HARBOUR ALL-WEATHER FIELD

The facilities at the all-weather field in Gordon Bell Community Park were constructed and passed to HRM Parks recently. The building features a common space where the sinks and mirrors are located along with a drinking fountain / water bottle filling station. The six stalls that come off of this common space are gender-neutral. Two of the stalls are wider with grab bars and are labelled as accessible, one of these has a baby changing table, and two more also have grab bars. 460 Auburn Dr.

3.3 Unclassified Parks

Outside of the classifications HRM Parks use, there is one park that contains a washroom. Based on the current classification system, it is unclear why the washroom is sited where it is, with two community parks abutting the park in question.

MUSQUODOBOIT TRAIL AT GREENWAY

The composting toilet facility on Park Road in Musquodoboit Harbour is the only washroom facility located in an unclassified park. The washroom building is off of the parking lot at the Musquodoboit trailhead, however it is opened only during baseball games, and so does not service the trails during regular park hours.

One of the issues raised with this washroom is a common occurrence of vandalism. The lower level, where the composting tank is kept, has been broken into and the composting system tampered with. The community member also mentioned that the exterior lights are often smashed. Additionally, the women's washroom was not yet open for the season at the time of the audit, because the toilet seat had been vandalized and damaged and needed replacing.

The cleaning and maintenance at this washroom is unique. The washroom was put in by HRM. However, the surrounding community takes care of any cleaning and facilities maintenance that they can with their own resources, and rely on HRM only for help with situations that cannot be handled with community resources.

FIGURE 43. Musquodoboit AT Trail

3.4 Drinking Fountains

The drinking fountains in HRM's parks are sparse and generally unique, with no standard to apparent standard for siting. The fountains at Albro Lake and Chocolate Lake are the same, as with the rest of the two facilities. DeWolf Park's fountain is separate from the washroom building, but only a few metres away.

FIGURE 44. Halifax North Common

Sir Sanford Fleming Park's drinking fountain was not hooked up to water servicing at the time of our audit, and in terms of design it looks very different from any other municipal drinking fountain. In the context of the Dingle Tower, the fountain fits aesthetically. The drinking fountain at the Halifax Commons is not within sight of the washrooms, but is a useful and valuable fixture for the park.

The bottle filling station / drinking fountain in the Cole Harbour is a feature especially fitted to a sports field, but is something that might be considered to be placed in most types of parks, as well as all over the municipality.

A new drinking fountain of the same type as in the Halifax North Common was just installed in Starr Park in Dartmouth.

The absence of drinking fountains in many parks is sometimes a function of lack of potable water services. In some cases, the park was designed before off-the shelf drinking fountains were readily available.

Having drinking fountains with water bottle filling stations incorporated would allow users to bring refillable water bottles, cutting down on single-use plastic water bottles.

Sites currently with waterfountains:

- Birch Cove Beach
- Albro Lake Beach
- Chocolate Lake Beach
- Sir Sanford Flemming Park (Dingle)
- Admiral Harry DeWolf Park (Bedford)
- Starr Park (near Ochterloney St., Dartmouth)
- Halifax North Common (near Cornwallis St.)
- Cole Harbour All-Weather Field

Sites currently with non-operational waterfountains:

- Public Gardens (in stone structure)

4.0 Consultation

4. Consultation

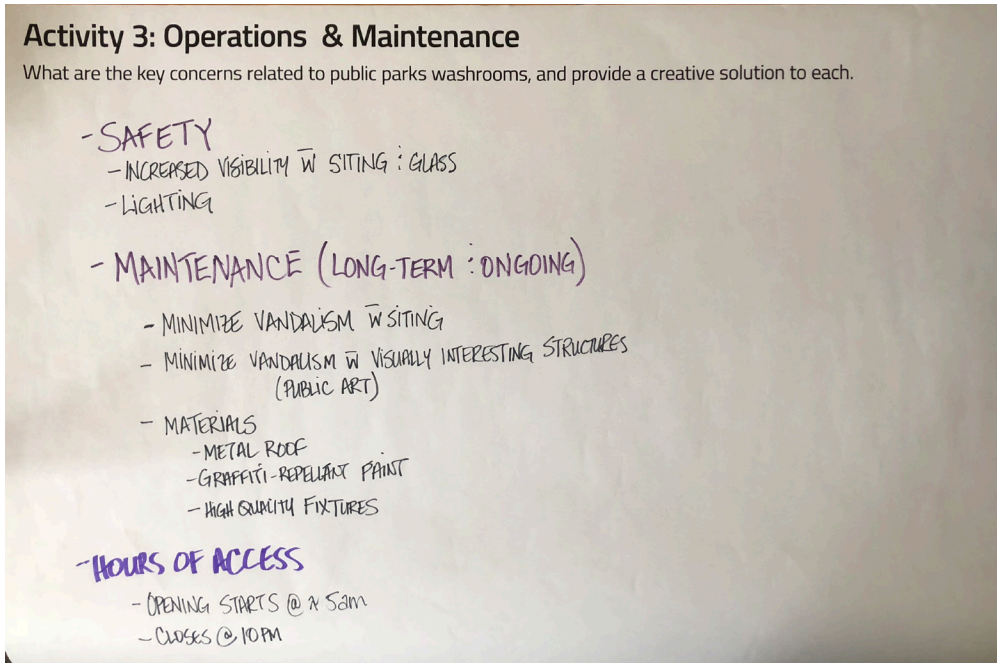
4.1 HRM Workshop - July 9th

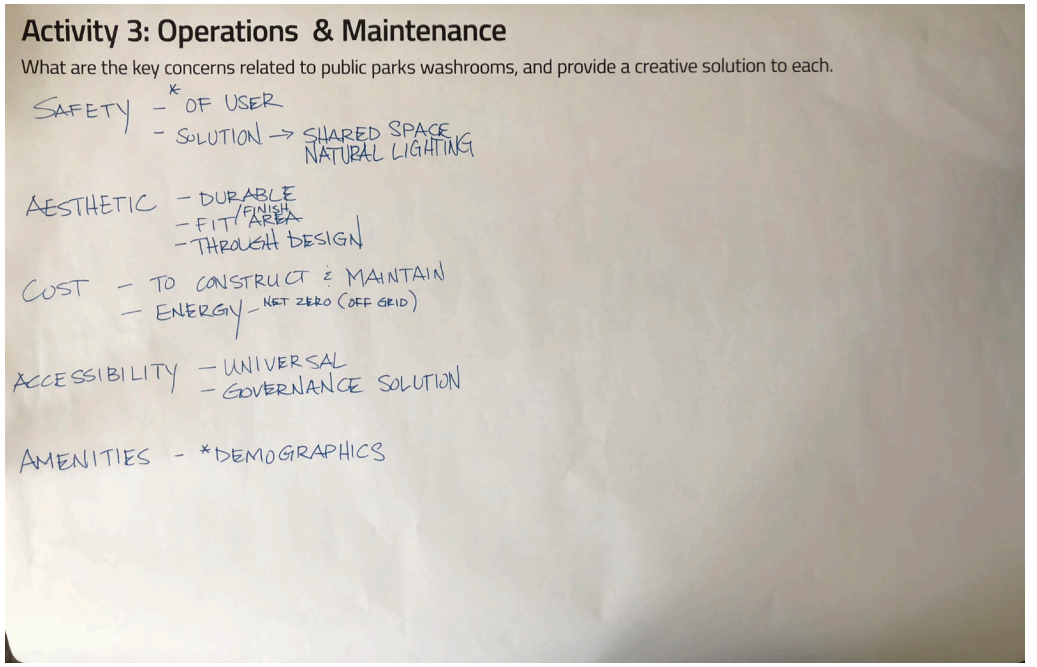
On July 9th, we held a workshop for HRM staff to engage with individuals and teams that work with the parks washrooms and drinking fountaints on a regular basis, including facilities planning and design as well as operations and maintenance. Eight HRM staff members attended, representing Parks and Recreation and the Corporate & Customer Services departments, including:

- Ray Walsh - Manager Parks, Parks and Recreation
- Jeff Spares - Construction Project Manager, Parks and Recreation
- Darren Young - Project Manager, Facility Design & Construction, Corporate & Customer Services
- Richard Harvey - Manager Policy & Planning, Parks and Recreation
- Alana Tapper - Superintendant, Parks West, Parks and Recreation
- Rob Mullane - Superintendent, Parks East, Parks and Recreation
- Shawn Johnson - Building Services Coordinator, Municipal Facilities Maintenance & Operation, Corporate & Customer Services
- Lori McKinnon - Coordinator, Director's Office, Parks and Recreation

After a brief presentation on the project background and some issues for discussion, we split participants into two groups to do some small-group workshop activities. The activities addressed siting, typology, and operations and maintenance, and the purpose of these activities was to engage those most involved with the siting and maintenance of HRM's parks washrooms.

In Activity 1: Siting, the workshop participants were asked to take 10 criteria on which siting washrooms could be based and rank their importance. Activity 2: Washroom Typology then asked participants to apply the ranked criteria to the identified washroom types. Finally, Activity 3: Operations & Maintenance provided the participants the opportunity to bring up key concerns and issues that public parks washrooms face, and present and discuss solutions to the problems.





The first activity produced varying results. Some criteria were ranked similarly, but there was also some variation. Generally, the top four criteria are the same, if not in the same order: dwell time, visitation, classification, and the type of park amenities. ('Presence of an alternative' was placed at the bottom by the group shown in the second photo not because it was the least important to them, but because they were not sure of where else to put it.) This activity was very helpful for creating future siting recommendations.

The results of the second activity varied as much as those from the first. Participants linked their ranked criteria to the identified washroom types based on how strongly they would influence what type of washroom should be sited. Both groups identified the top few criteria as the most influential over the permanent facility types. This activity also brought forward suggestions for modifications of the washroom typology; participants mentioned that going forward, washrooms should not be constructed as permanent type 2 or 3 but rather as more of a combination of the two, like what is seen at Gorden Bell Park - multiple gender-neutral stalls with a shared space for the sinks, mirrors, hand dryers, and drinking fountain or water bottle filling station.

The third activity allowed participants to freely bring forward issues that need to be addressed at public parks washrooms as well as come up with creative solutions to them. The issues that were brought up were:

- Safety
- Maintenance
- Aesthetic
- Cost
- Hours of Access
- Accessibility
- Amenities

While several issues did not have easy solutions, the discussion allowed some creative problem-solving to tricky situations. As the workshop participants identified, demographics play a key role in addressing the issue of what amenities need to be included in washrooms; the next step from this activity is to flesh out these problem-solving tactics.

The solutions that were discussed in activity 3 were largely related to siting and building design, especially with regards to safety and maintenance. Both groups identified lighting as an important component of safety, including incorporating natural lighting into shared spaces and orienting buildings to face public, bright, high traffic areas. Solving maintenance problems also involved working with siting and building

materials. Maintaining and cleaning the facilities falls to the Municipal Facilities crew or cleaning contractors, but to date, they have had no say in where the building goes or what materials are used; this is why it was important to have representation from Facilities Management at this workshop.

When discussing cost, the cost of building as well as maintaining facilities was brought up. Energy-saving tactics were discussed as being vital to reducing maintenance costs. Off-grid, net-zero facilities would greatly reduce the cost of keeping parks washrooms up and running.

It is out of the scope of this report to facilitate public engagement workshops, however this workshop could serve as a framework for future consultations. From interactions with a community member about the most rural park washroom, in Musquodoboit Harbour, it may be that some parks and communities require consultation with residents in order to decide upon an appropriate type of washroom to build.

5.0 Recommendations

5. Policy & Design Recommendations

Washrooms and drinking fountains are key programming elements in parkland planning and park programming and design/maintenance administered by HRM's Parks & Recreation Department. The Parks & Rec Department is charged with:

1. Developing strategic plans & policy frameworks that identifies expected outcomes and priorities regarding service delivery, fiscal sustainability, accessibility, and inclusion.
2. Acquiring and developing parkland in HRM with an increased focus on achieving Regional Plan parkland objectives.
3. Improving asset management through the provision of safe, reliable, and efficient physical environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities. There is an ongoing investment in maintaining a state of good repair for all Parks & Recreation assets.

This Washrooms and Drinking Fountain Strategy falls within the mandate of #1 and #3 above.

The Regional Plan has set out the 4 parkland classifications (Neighbourhood Park (NP), Community Park (CP), District Park (DP) & Regional Park (RP)) and the Regional Subdivision Bylaw sets out the criteria for accepting and developing new parkland through the subdivision process. The approved Green Network Plan has suggested some changes to the way the Regional Parks (RP) are classified but at this stage, any changes shouldn't effect the findings in this report.

The Parks & Rec Department also has the **Park Planning and Development Guidelines** which is used internally to rationalize the programming of new and existing parks through a understanding the Park Service Delivery Criteria needed for each park type. While this Washrooms study

may be considered a stand-alone document on a very particular and important park component, it will be important to incorporate some of the policies and design guidelines into future updates of the Park Planning Guidelines to ensure the full adoption of this report's findings into future budget and capital planning considerations. In fact, the Park Planning Guidelines should be significantly updated to create a more robust parks standard manual for HRM, complete with standard design details like the HRM Redbook.

The policy recommendations in this chapter fall under two main categories: design and planning.

5.1 Design

SITING

The decision to site a washroom or drinking fountain in a park should follow a process of addressing a set of siting criteria to minimize vandalism, maximize use by the widest cross section of HRM residents and enhance the overall park experience.

A.01 CO-LOCATE WASHROOMS WITH OTHER BUILDINGS (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE)

If existing municipal buildings already exist near a preferred washroom location, work to co-house the new washrooms in the already existing building.

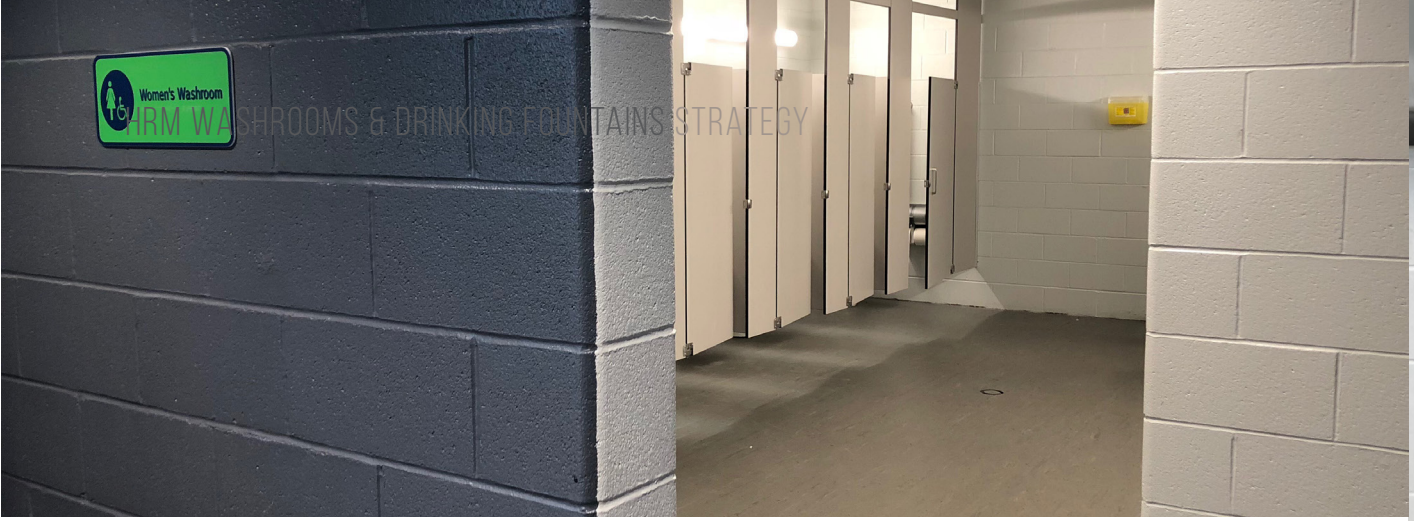
A.02 LOCATE WASHROOMS WHERE THEY ARE IN PLAIN VIEW OF THE STREET OR PARKING LOT OR ENTRANCE TO THE PARK

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is an approach to deterring criminal behaviour through environmental design. In a park setting with unsupervised washroom facilities, this is especially important; buildings that are open into evening and nighttime hours and have little visibility are vulnerable to being hosts to illegal activities.

CPTED employs principles of natural surveillance, access control, and territorial reinforcement through multiple different tactics. In the context of a public park washroom, maintaining a natural surrounding landscape while ensuring the safety of its visitors means using natural light, landscaping, and path design. Follow CPTED principles in siting new facilities to ensure vandalism is reduced and safety to users is maximized. Site the facility between the parking lot and park entrance where possible or in areas of the highest user concentration and highest public visibility. This principle reinforces the need for high quality architecture since the public facilities will naturally be highly visible.

A.03 WHERE OTHER POTENTIAL USES ARE POSSIBLE (OFFICES, MEETING ROOMS, VISITOR CENTRE, CANTEEN, ETC), COMBINE THE WASHROOMS WITH OTHER BUILDING USES

Instead of building multiple buildings, co-house washrooms with other park building uses whenever possible. If the buildings cannot be combined due to phasing, ensure that the building can be eventually expanded to add additional phases in the future.



A.04 ORIENT DOORS AND WINDOWS TO WELL-LIT AREAS

Good lighting, both natural and manufactured, helps to prevent anti-social behaviour. Washroom door orientation and type of illumination are factors of CPTED, and visitors' safety should be the first consideration when deciding on building orientation and lighting. Adding raised windows in washroom facilities provides natural lighting to interiors which is highly desired in public washroom facility design. Windows also provide natural ventilation if needed.

A.05 SITE WASHROOMS IN PUBLIC AREAS WHENEVER POSSIBLE TO ENSURE EYES

In remote or isolated parks, visitors' safety is an important and pressing concern. Facilities should be sited in areas that are as public as possible, to ensure that they are visible by other residents and not hidden away. Doors should always face parking areas or other well trafficked public pathways

A.06 SITE WASHROOMS NEAR EXISTING FACILITIES (PLAYGROUNDS, BALLFIELDS)

Parks with certain types of amenities will typically receive washroom facilities, and it is important to site these facilities near the amenities that bring higher counts of visitors to the park. Ballfields, playgrounds, and similar facilities have high visitation by children especially, who have greater washroom needs.

A.07 SITE WATER FOUNTAINS IN MANY PARKS WITH AMENITIES, WHERE WATER SERVICE EXISTS

Site drinking fountains where service exists, and where they are clearly visible and accessible to sports teams, or park users. Ideally, combined the water fountain with other park uses like wayfinding stations, park directories, parking areas, high volume trails, and away from areas where they can be damaged by plows or away from electrical infrastructure.

While bottle-filling stations are great, they assume that all users carry bottles with them, which isn't the case. All drinking fountains should allow users to drink directly from a spout, and any bottle-filling function should be a bonus add-on where appropriate.

STANDARDS

Design standards for washrooms are addressed in every case study addressed in this report. Design standards go hand in hand with the washroom typology, but these recommendations go into more detailed specifics in terms of materials, accessibility, and fixtures.

B.01 FOLLOW ACCESSIBILITY (CSA, NS BUILDING CODE, ETC.) GUIDELINES

As with other public areas, parks should be accessible for people of all abilities to enjoy. This extends to the facilities available in the park. When washrooms are located within HRM managed parks, they should be completely accessible to those with physical disabilities, following the standards set by guides such as the Nova Scotia Building Code, the CSA's Accessible Design for the Built Environment and other standards.

B.02 EMPLOY PASSIVE SOLAR, AND DOMESTIC HW SOLAR WHERE POSSIBLE

Mitigating cost as well as environmental impact wherever possible means using renewable resources when possible. Solar energy employed in washroom facilities, such as what is already in place on the Halifax Commons, can mitigate cost and even bring the facility to net zero.

B.03 USE DURABLE, VANDAL-RESISTANT MATERIALS

Choose materials that are easy to clean and repair, keeping maintenance costs to a minimum. Nevertheless, fixtures and other design choices must not result in public washrooms which are difficult or unappealing for a wide range of users. Cheap looking “bunker style” cinder block washrooms should be avoided in favour of a vernacular design aesthetic for all HRM washrooms. The washrooms should look like they belong on the East Coast but they should also be vandal-resistant and easy to repair.

B.04 INTEGRATE INTO PUBLIC REALM

Washroom designs should relate in some way to the park or space they are in, and be a focal point of public spaces rather than something that is an utilitarian eyesore, or something that recedes into the background of a place.

B.05 REFLECT LOCAL CHARACTER

Public washrooms can strengthen the brand of a municipality, as well as bring a community together. Facilities that are built with a fortress mentality induce a "defensive" feeling in users, whereas facilities that are designed to be open, welcoming, and reflective of local character are typically less likely to be vandalized.

B.06 DO NOT OBSTRUCT ENTRANCES (WITH LANDSCAPING, ETC.)

When washrooms are open into nighttime hours, safety becomes a concern. In order to mitigate safety concerns and ensure visitors can be as secure as possible, entrances should be kept completely clear, with nothing available for someone to hide behind.

B.07 SIGNAGE MUST SHOW OPENING HOURS, PROVIDE CONTACT INFO FOR MAINTENANCE ISSUES, AND GENDER FACILITY AVAILABILITY

No park visitor should arrive to a washroom and find it locked with nothing to indicate its opening hours and days. Washroom facilities should have signs indicating gender availability, opening hours, and contact information for any maintenance or cleaning concerns.

B.08 ENCOURAGE ARTISTIC AND/OR CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

Buildings in any public space can be used to embrace the community's individuality and showcase the local atmosphere. While the bones of the building may be standardized, facilities may be skinned to suit special park or community contexts.

B.09 USE LOW-FLOW/DUAL-FLUSH TOILETS

Another tactic to mitigate cost and environmental impact is to again consider using efficient fixtures such as low-flow or dual-flush toilets.

B.10 USE NATURAL VENTILATION

Washrooms, especially those built only for 3-season use, should allow for natural ventilation wherever possible to increase the appeal of the space.

B.11 USE DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE TO ENSURE PARK USERS CAN FIND THE WASHROOM

Wayfinding helps make better use of existing facilities, by ensuring that park users: know a facility exists, know that it is available, and help them to find it. Several existing washroom buildings were not clearly identified as washrooms. Directional and identifying signs show users where to go and confirm that the they have reached the right place.

B.12 ENHANCE THE PUBLIC REALM WITH LANDSCAPING

Where existing washrooms are cold, utilitarian buildings, we recommend landscaping to better integrate the facility into the public realm. Buildings should be enhanced by landscaping, but never concealed.

B.13 EXAMINE DEMAND FOR ADULT CHANGE TABLES

An aid to weakened or disabled adults and their caregivers, adult changing tables provide a space for assisted changing. For adults who manage mobility limitations or incontinence, they may be indispensible. For caregivers, they provide a platform that reduces the risk of back strain and other injuries.It hasn't been within the scope of this study to examine the demand for these within park washrooms, but it is worth looking into. If there is a demand or if they are written into NS Accessibility regulations, such fixtures could be designed into new facilities.

B.14 PROVIDE NEEDLE DISPOSAL CONTAINERS

Needles are used by people with health conditions as well as people with addictions. Providing containers for safe disposal ensures that people who use needles can dispose of them easily, and that stray needles don't become a hazard to all.

B.15 INTEGRATE DRINKING FOUNTAINS INTO WASHROOMS

It would be less expensive, where a washroom is already being built, to include a drinking fountain into the design by default. Depending on the context of a washroom building, the drinking fountain may be placed inside (available only when the building is unlocked), or outside (available at all times).

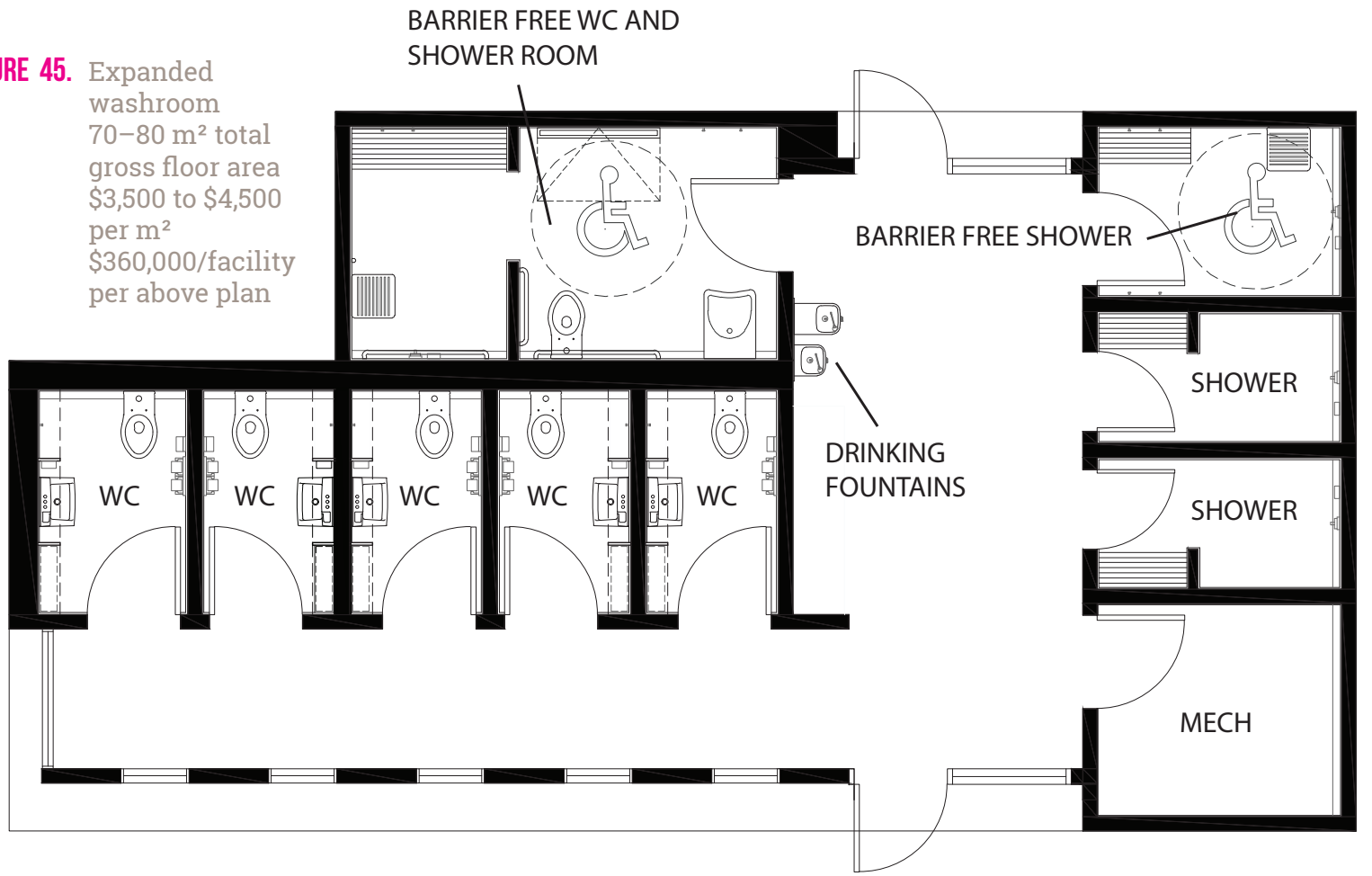


FIGURE 45. Expanded washroom
70–80 m² total gross floor area
$3,500 to $4,500 per m²
$360,000/facility per above plan

TYPOLOGY

There are a variety of washroom types that can be considered depending on demand, cost, tenure, and use case. We recommend that washroom types have design standards that are suited to demand and use of park categories, which can be customized to the specific park and context where each is being sited. Types appear with suggested floorplans on the following pages.

C.01 EXPANDED WASHROOM TYPE

For parks with higher dwell times, and recreation and sports uses (such as a beach/swimming area, or where there are heavily used sportsfields or day municipal use parks), the expanded washroom facility may include amenities for park users beyond just washroom facilities. This type of washroom usually has multiple gender-separated stalls, universal changing areas, and/or showers for swimmers to rinse off. In some day use parks, temporary kitchen facilities and indoor picnic benches could be included. The facility below shows gender-neutral stalls and showers as well as barrier-free shower and combined washroom w/shower.

C.02 DEDICATED WASHROOM TYPE

Without the extra amenities found in expanded use washrooms, the dedicated washroom has multiple gender-neutral stalls with an open sink and mirror area, all within a single ungendered space. A current example of such a facility was built recently at the Cole Harbour All-Weather field. These washrooms are appropriate for parks or sports fields with high visitation, or moderate or high expected dwell times.

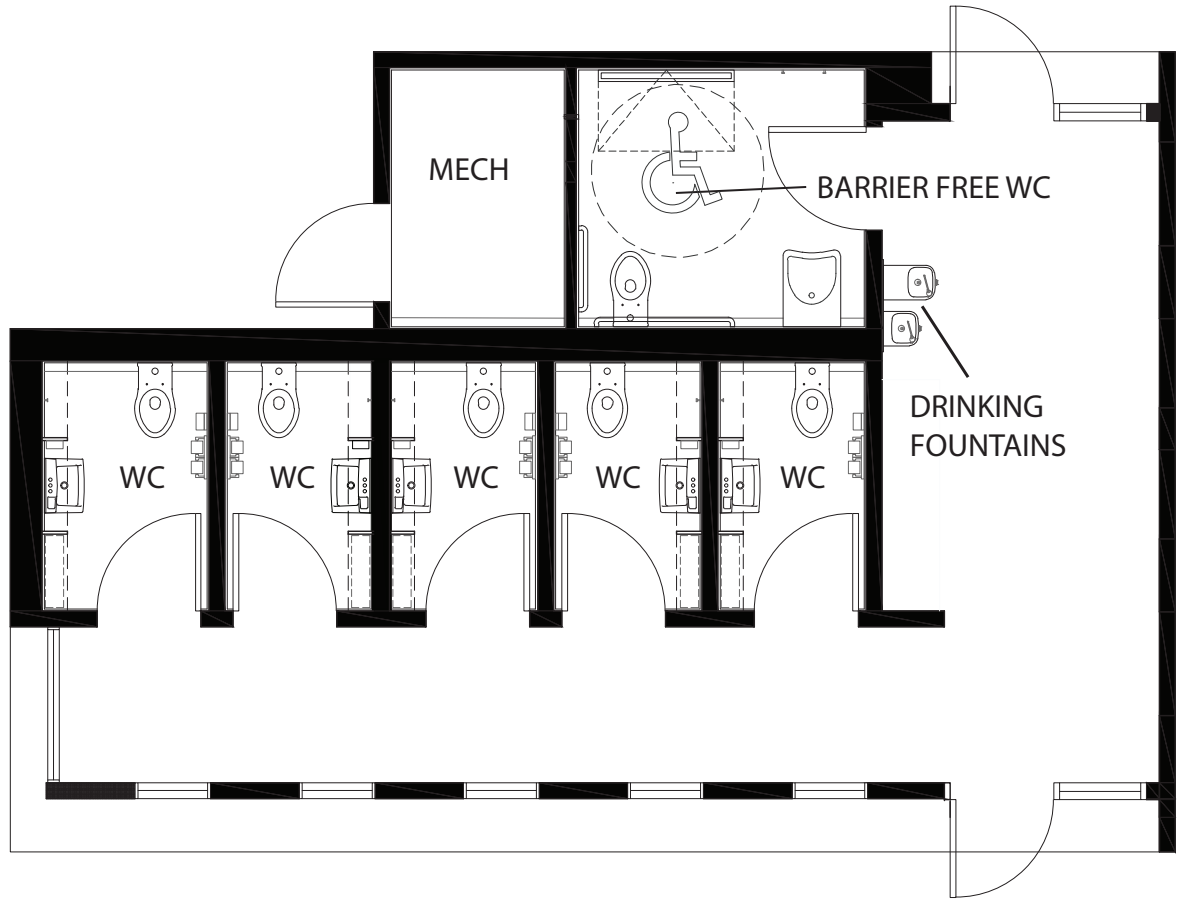


FIGURE 46. Dedicated washroom
50–60 m² total gross floor area
$3,000 to $4,000 per m²
$240,000/facility per above plan

C.03 PERMANENT MINI-WASHROOM

Permanent mini-facility feature two gender-neutral units that are self-contained, with toilet, sink, and hand drying fixtures within the small building, similar to what is found at Cable Road in Point Pleasant Park. Type 3 facilities may be considered for parks with lower than 200 persons per day demand, or with transient use such as along active transportation trails. Mini washrooms may use plumbed or composting toilet types.

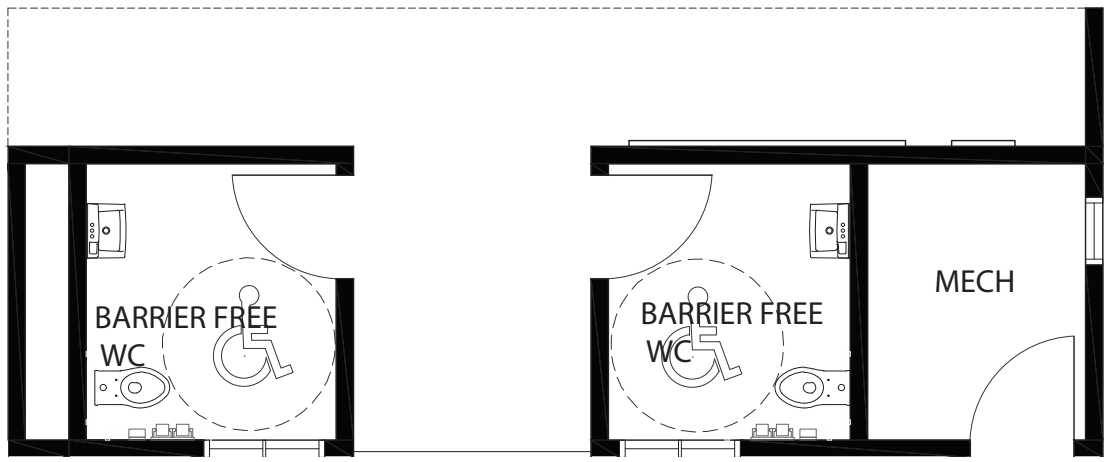


FIGURE 47. Permanent mini-washroom
25–35 m² total gross floor area
$2,500 to $3,500 per m²
$122,500/facility per above plan

C.04 TEMPORARY WASHROOMS

Where non-permanent or test pilot washrooms are needed, there are temporary washroom options which include porta-potties, trailers, or even container washrooms like those found on the Halifax waterfront. These washroom types are highly functional and they can be purchased by the city for temporary events or they can often be rented on a short or long term basis.

C.05 STANDALONE DRINKING FOUNTAIN

Drinking fountains come in a number of design types including bottle filling stations, hand or foot operated fountain, or even dog bowl fountain. Some are incorporated indoor in buildings (never in washrooms unless the washroom has a gender-neutral lobby), and many are outdoor standalone units. Accessible drinking fountains should always be considered except on wilderness trails, normally inaccessible to wheelchairs.

FIGURE 48. Standalone drinking fountain type
$4,000–7,500 total w/installation
$700 maintenance/year

5.2 Planning

Our recommendations for the planning context of parks washrooms and drinking fountains focus on discovering the need and context for future washrooms.

D.01 WASHROOMS SHOULD ONLY BE LOCATED IN FULLY SERVICED PARK LOCATIONS.

In specific circumstances, consideration for composting toilets or porta-potties will be given where high-use cases warrant them, but permanent washroom facilities will only be considered where full water and sewer services exist.

D.02 USE TEMPORARY WASHROOMS TO TEST DEMAND

Denver's and Boston's washrooms master plans suggest the use of temporary washrooms such as portapotties or portable container or trailer washrooms to gauge demand prior to constructing permanent facilities. This approach would ensure that a park has the required demand before building an expensive permanent facility. This approach could also provide an opportunity to gauge the different types of washrooms needed to address any specific local park population's needs.

For locations recommended within this project, we suggest installing portapotties in advance of recommended new buildings. These may be used to test demand in the recommended locations.

D.03 ANTICIPATE WASHROOM USE FOR NEW PARKS

Parks that have an anticipated dwell time beyond 3-4 hours and an anticipated daily use of not less than 200 users per day average may be a candidate for a permanent facility.

D.04 EQUIP ANY ADJACENT MUNICIPAL FACILITIES WITH WASHROOMS IF POSSIBLE OR EXPLORE A PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH ADJACENT BUSINESSES RATHER THAN BUILD A STAND ALONE PERMANENT FACILITY.

Waterfront Development Corporation (WDCL) has worked closely with businesses and developers on the waterfront to develop creative partnerships for public washroom facilities on the waterfront. HRM should explore these different public/private partnership models in parks whenever possible. It may be cheaper and more efficient to partner with a local business to provide washroom services rather than build a dedicated facility.

D.05 DO NOT USE EXISTING CLASSES TO EVALUATE PARKS FOR WASHROOM PROVISION

After reviewing the parks and the classifications they currently fall under, it is clear that some need to be reclassified. Given that Halifax's approved Green Network Plan suggests redefining and reclassing parks (action 49), we do not suggest employing them to site washrooms in this strategy for HRM.

D.06 CONSIDER EVENTUALLY LINKING THE PARKS WASHROOM AND DRINKING FOUNTAIN STRATEGY WITH A WIDER STRATEGY FOR ALL MAJOR PUBLIC SPACES

While this strategic plan only addresses public washrooms in HRM parks, it would eventually be beneficial to address public washrooms in all public spaces throughout HRM, including public squares, important retail districts, downtowns, waterfront areas, and other active parts of the city outside parks. Creating a wider strategy would enable synergies between all kinds of public spaces, and make comprehensive wayfinding strategies between parks and any nearby public washrooms possible.

PARK SELECTION

An essential element of this report is providing a recommended budget by selecting the washrooms with the highest need, and earmarking them for future installations. Absent current park visitation data, we select parks based on a few preferential criteria to narrow the field to parks which are likely to have a high need for washrooms:

E.01 DO NOT CONSIDER SMALL PARKS, OR THOSE WITH FEW AMENITIES

We suggest giving priority to parks which are greater than 1.5 hectares, which have at least existing 3 amenities of some kind, and which are considered "developed". This is to ensure that we're giving priority to parks which have more than a neighbourhood-level of benefit.

E.02 DO NOT INCLUDE PARKS WITH NEARBY BUT OUT-OF-PARK WASHROOMS

Parks with washrooms in other public buildings nearby should, in most cases, not receive new facilities. Instead, use wayfinding to ensure users are directed to the existing washroom.

As mentioned elsewhere, hours of the nearby facility must be similar to those of the park. Washrooms in public buildings outside parks should be within 800 m walking distance of the park gate to ensure reasonable expectations. Sign designs may indicate the walking distance or a duration estimate to make expectations clear.

E.03 DO NOT INCLUDE PARKS WITH EXISTING (OR ALREADY PLANNED) WASHROOMS

Parks which already have washrooms should not be considered for additional ones except perhaps where a park is very large, or if the existing washroom has been identified as being routinely over-capacity. This has not been identified for any park washrooms at the time of writing.

E.04 PRIORITY PARKS SHOULD BE NEAR NEIGHBOURHOODS WITH CERTAIN ATTRIBUTES

For the purposes of this report, we prefer parks which:

- are near neighbourhoods with high residential density,
- are near neighbourhoods with a very high or very low average age,
- provide a major active transportation connection, or
- are near a transit terminal or major bus stop.

Absent park visitation data, which does not exist at this time, the above serves as a proxy for both park visitation and use.

The next page shows a map with an example park and the evaluation criteria. On the following pages, we identify new installations and upgrades based on the above.

FIGURE 49. Example case of Merv Sullivan Park: The park directly abuts a neighbourhood with a very high average age (blue shows areas with an average age more than 2 standard deviations above the average for HRM). The park also serves several neighbourhoods with urban densities (orange shows a high gross residential density). Data is derived from dissemination areas in the 2016 Census.

EXISTING WASHROOMS REQUIRING UPGRADES

The following 26 parks have washroom facilities now. Fort Needham has been included, as a park washroom is already being planned for the park prior to this study.

Highlighted parks require upgrades or replacement, based on the audit of existing facilities in "3. Existing Washroom Inventory" on page 30.

Park	Recommendation
Admiral Harry Dewolf Park	
Albro Lake Park	
Beazley Park	add wayfinding, renovate for gender neutral
Birch Cove Park	
Chocolate Lake Park	
Cole Harbour Commons	
Crichton Park Elementary School Park	
Dartmouth Harbour East Recreation Campus	
Eastern Passage Common	renovate for accessibility & gender-free stalls
*Fort Needham Memorial Park	
Gordon Bell Park	
Halifax North Common	fix vandalism, improve aesthetics and comfort levels
Kiwanis Grahams Grove Park	upgrade condition, add wayfinding, landscape for accessibility
Mainland Common	replace temporary with permanent mini washroom type
Maybank Park	needs accessibility upgrade, wayfinding & signage
Metropolitan Avenue Park	improve aesthetics
Musquodoboit Trail AT Greenway	
Penhorn Lake Park	demolish and replace building with expanded washroom type
Point Pleasant Park	replace lower lot building replace unserviced privies with accessible portapotties
Public Gardens	renovate for accessibility
Ravenscraig Drive Park	add wayfinding
Sandy Lake Park	improve weatherproofing
Shubie Park	renovate for gender-neutral
Sir Sandford Fleming Park	renovate for gender-neutral, accessibility
Tremont Plateau Park	demolish and replace building with mini washroom type
Wanderers Grounds	renovate for accessibility, add wayfinding & signage

* planned

PARKS WITH NEARBY WASHROOMS

The following 22 parks have public washrooms in nearby facilities, and may require only wayfinding to ensure that park visitors know that public facilities exist, and where they are.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, it's important that the opening hours of the facility with the washroom are reasonably close to those of the park. (Collecting and comparing opening hours was not part of the scope of this project.)

park	nearby washroom
Auburn John Stewart Park	Gordon Bell & Cole Harbour Commons
Beaver Bank Kinsac Elementary School Park	Beaver Bank - Kinsac Community Centre
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rec Ctr	BLT Rec Centre
Carrolls Corner Community Centre Park	Carrolls Corner Community Centre
Col John Stewart Elementary School Park	Cole Harbour Community Centre
Cunard Junior High School Park	Ravenscraig
Dartmouth Common	Dartmouth Sportsplex
Ferry Terminal Park	Alderney Ferry Terminal
George Dixon Centre Park	George Dixon Community Rec Centre
Halifax Central Common	Halifax North Common
Jason MacCullough Memorial Park	Dartmouth North Library / Community Centre
Kinap Canoe Club	within canoe club
Lake Echo Community Centre	Lake Echo Community Centre
Michael Wallace Elementary School Park	Fairbanks Centre
Northcliffe Recreation Park	Mainland Common
Park West School Park	Mainland Common
Sheet Harbour Elementary School Park	Sheet Harbour Public Library
St Andrews Centre Park	St. Andrews Rec Centre
St Marys Boat Club Park	St. Mary's Boat Club

HIGH-NEED PARKS

The following selections fulfill some or all of the criteria of a high-need park (per "Park Selection" on page 58), and should have priority for newly-built washrooms and drinking fountains.

Highlighted parks fulfilled multiple criteria, and should be addressed first. A type has been assigned to each recommended washroom based on expectations of visitation, and park amenities. All permanent washroom types should include drinking fountains.

Naturally, not all park washrooms may be designed and installed immediately. Until permanent facilities are installed, we recommend installing a portable facility for each year prior to the permanent washroom is installed.

In the following chapter, we'll employ this list to provide a budget and implementation plan for the next 5 years.

Park	Recommended washroom type
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Trail Park	mini
Carl Morash Memorial Park	mini
Chain Of Lakes Trail Park	mini
Cole Harbour Salt Marsh Trail	mini
Connrose Park	mini
Eastern Consolidated Elementary School Park	mini
Glengarry Estates Park	mini
Gorsebrook Park	dedicated
Grosvenor-Wentworth Park Elementary School Park	mini
Hartlen Park	mini
Merv Sullivan Park	dedicated
Millwood Common Park	mini
Mount Edward Road Park	mini
PO2 Craig Blake Memorial Park	mini
Shearwater Flyer Trail Park	mini
St Catherines Elementary School Park	mini
St Margarets Bay Rail To Trails Park	mini
The Birches Park	mini
Upper Flinn Park	mini
Westmount Elementary School Park	dedicated

STANDALONE DRINKING FOUNTAINS

We recommend supplying the following moderate-need parks within HRM's urban service boundary with standalone waterfountains. Servicing a large number of drinking fountains spread over a very large area is not recommended, hence the geographical boundary applied here.

Park
Beaver Bank Monarch Elementary School Park
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea School Park
Caudle Park Elementary School Park
Ecole Secondaire Du Sommet Park
Gertrude M Parker Elementary School Park
Glenbourne Park
Graves Oakley Memorial Park
Portland Estates School Park
Range Park

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This page and the next show some of the recommended parks for new installations and upgrades.

recommendation

- new drinking fountain only
- existing
- new installation
- upgrade existing
- wayfinding only

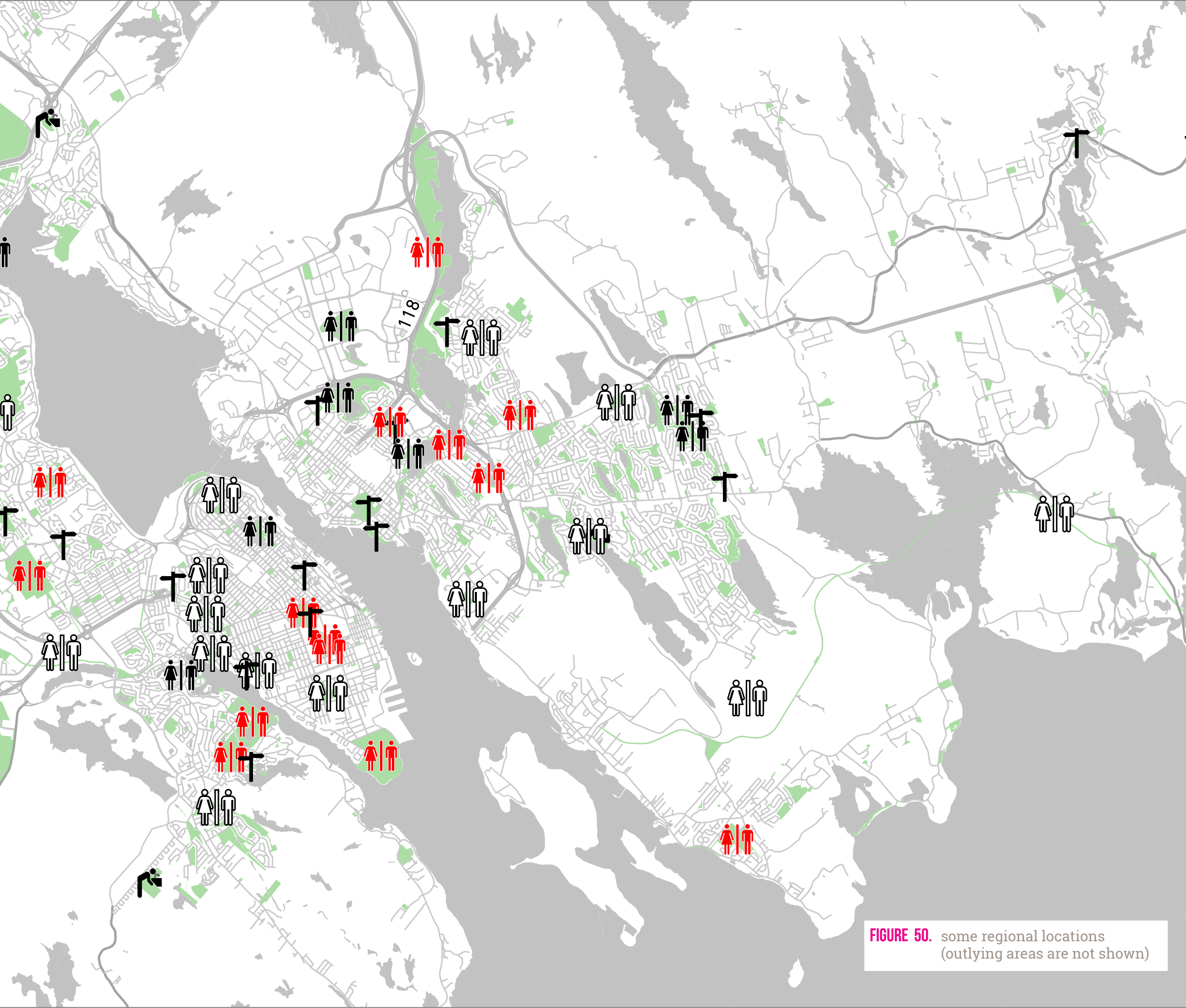


FIGURE 50. some regional locations
(outlying areas are not shown)

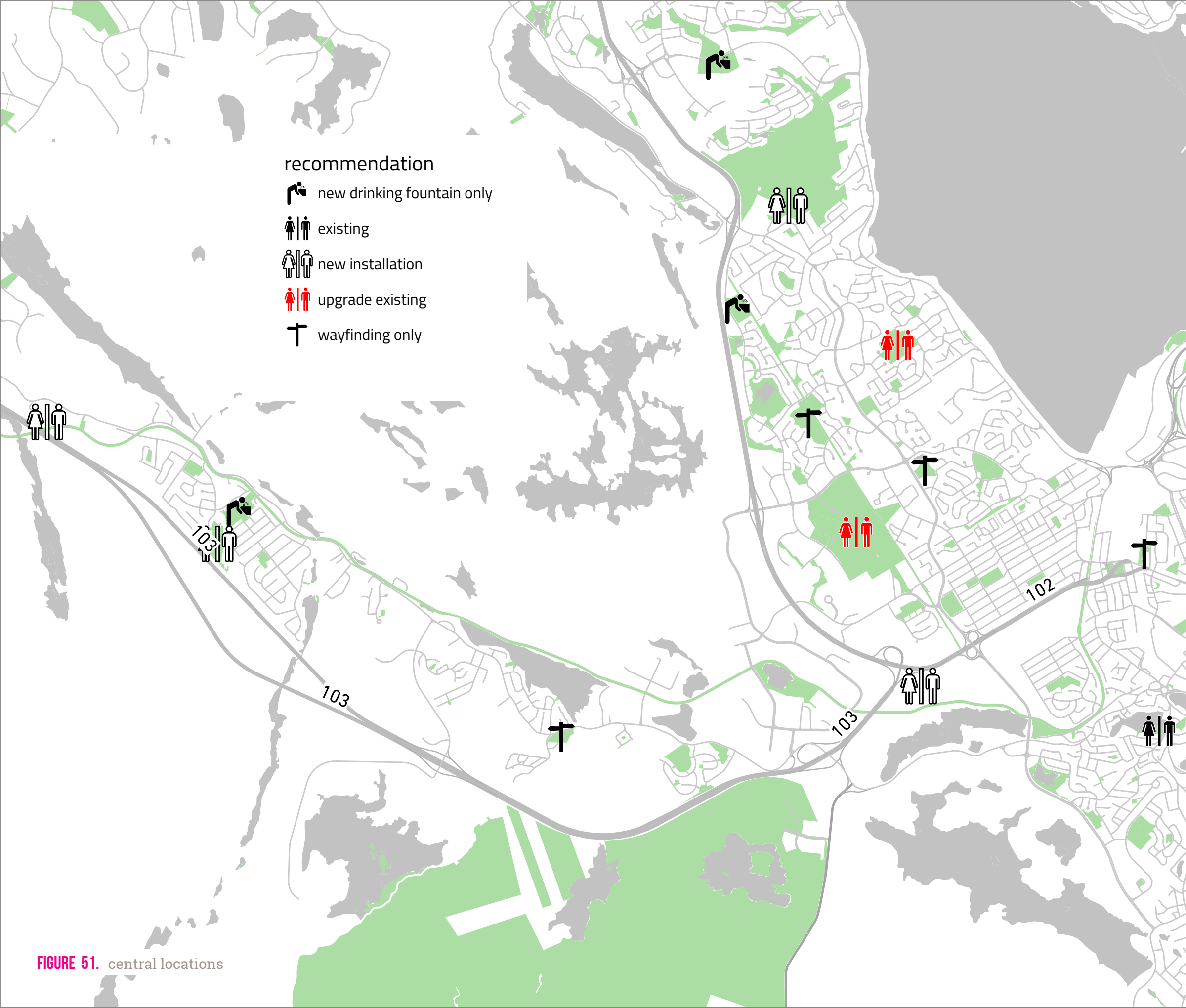
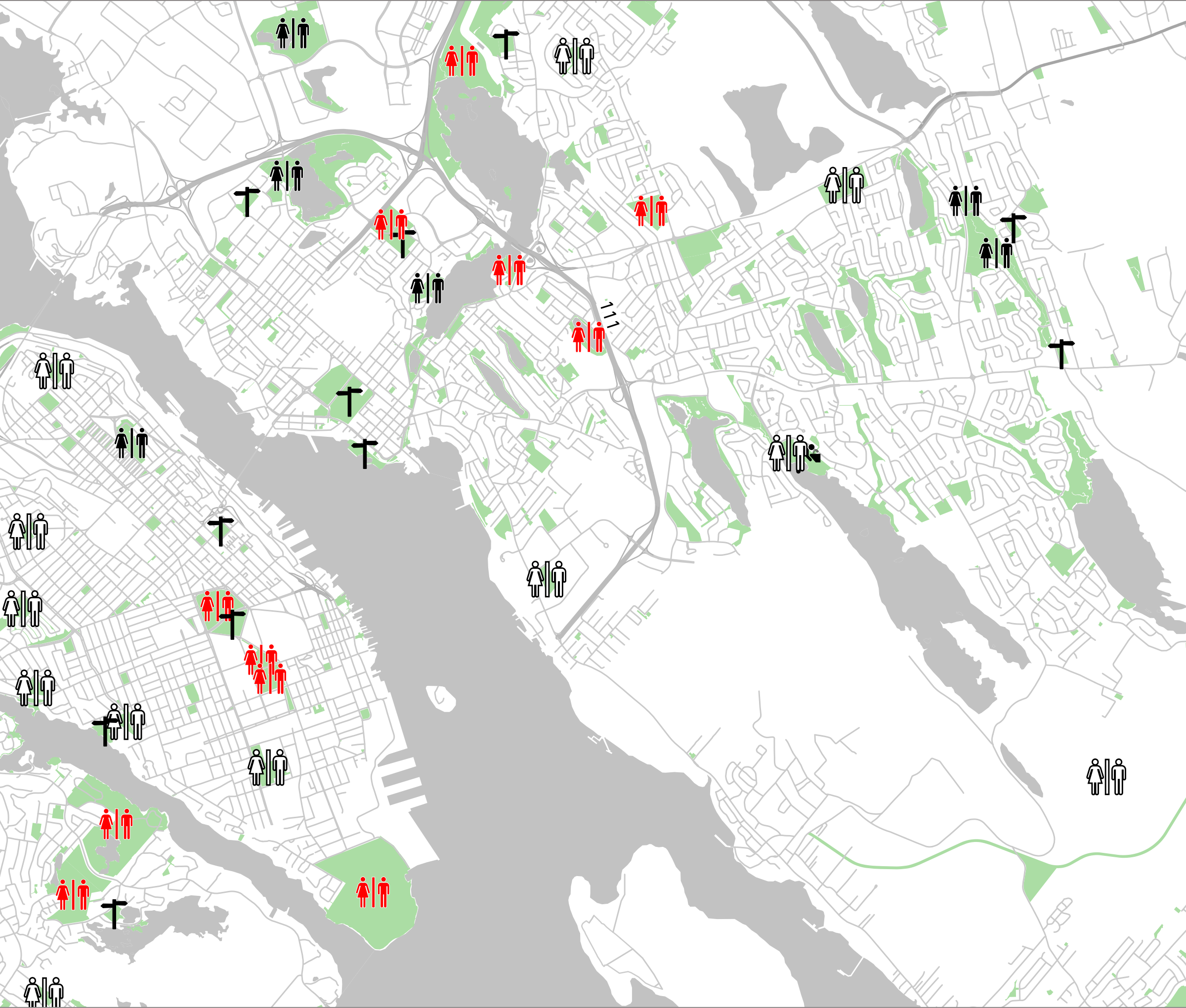


FIGURE 51. central locations


111

E.05 ENSURE DECOMISSIONED BUILDINGS ARE REMOVED

Lastly, washroom buildings which have been decomissioned but which remain in-place set up an expectation that a facility may be refurbished and restored at some future date. If the building is in especially poor shape, it can lead to a negative brand association between the community and the municipality.

Unless a decomissioned building needs to be kept for some other purpose, it should be demolished and removed as soon as possible. This is not currently the case for any facilities that we are aware of.

6.0 Action plan

6. Action plan

The recommendations of the last section ended with an assessment of which parks demonstrated the greatest need for new facilities, which existing facilities need improvement, and which parks are already nearby to other washroom facilities and just require wayfinding signage. In this section, we provide a phased 5-year budget for recommended investments, including all three approaches.

New installations and improvements have been cost estimated at a class D level. Estimates reflect a reasonable judgement of the cost of similar facilities, but without evaluating any context-specific details: structural, site, or specific design requirements. For example, estimates do not include evaluating servicing costs of sewer, water, or power to a proposed facility, nor do they include land acquisition costs. All of these have significant implications for cost which must be reevaluated individually when each facility is being designed or upgrades planned.

Cost assumptions in the following budgets are based on:

unit	cost assumption
wayfinding to nearby public washroom	$3,000
new facilities	
expanded washroom	$360,000
dedicated	$240,000
mini	$122,500
standalone drinking fountain	$6,000
portapotty rental (6mo per year)	$800
upgrades	
accessibility (building only)	$40,000
accessibility (building & landscape)	$100,000
aesthetic improvements (fixing walls, paint, doors, etc.)	$25,000
weatherproofing (Sandy Lake only)	$10,000
major conversion (accessibility and/or gender neutral)	$100,000

6.1 New installations

For parks with washrooms to be installed in year 2 or later, we have included a portable washroom rental for each year prior to the permanent installation.

park	installation type	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	subtotal
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Trail Park	mini	$800	$800	$122,500			
Carl Morash Memorial Park	mini	$800	$122,500				
Chain Of Lakes Trail Park	mini	$122,500					
Cole Harbour Salt Marsh Trail	mini	$800	$122,500				
Conrose Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$122,500		
Eastern Consolidated Elementary School Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$122,500		
Glengarry Estates Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$122,500		
Gorsebrook Park	dedicated	$360,000					
Grosvenor-Wentworth Park Elementary School Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$122,500		
Hartlen Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$122,500		
Merv Sullivan Park	dedicated	$360,000					
Millwood Common Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$800	$122,500	
Mount Edward Road Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$800	$122,500	
PO2 Craig Blake Memorial Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$800	$122,500	
Shearwater Flyer Trail Park	mini	$122,500					
St Catherines Elementary School Park	mini	$800	$800	$800	$800	$122,500	
St Margarets Bay Rail To Trails Park	mini	$800	$800	$122,500			
The Birches Park	mini	$800	$122,500				
Upper Flinn Park	mini	$800	$800	$122,500			
Westmount Elementary School Park	dedicated	$360,000					
subtotal new installs		**$1,337,000**	**$377,100**	**$374,700**	**$615,700**	**$490,000**	**$3,194,500**

6.2 Upgrades

park	installation type	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	subtotal
Admiral Harry Dewolf Park	nothing needed						
Albro Lake Park	nothing needed						
Beazley Park	needs wayfinding, upgrade to gender neutral		$3,000	$100,000			
Birch Cove Park	nothing needed						
Chocolate Lake Park	nothing needed						
Cole Harbour Commons	nothing needed						
Dartmouth Harbour East Recreation Campus	nothing needed						
Eastern Passage Common	upgrades needed: accessibility, gender-free stalls?		$100,000				
*Fort Needham Memorial Park	planned only						
Gordon Bell Park	nothing needed						
Halifax North Common	fix vandalism, improve aesthetics	$40,000					
Kiwanis Grahams Grove Park	upgrade condition, needs wayfinding, landscape for accessibility		$3,000	$75,000			
Mainland Common—Canada Games Centre	nothing needed						
Mainland Common—temporary @ soccer fields	replace with permanent		$122,500				
Maybank Park	needs accessibility upgrade, wayfinding & signage		$3,000				
Metropolitan Avenue Park	improve aesthetics	$25,000					
Musquodoboit Trail AT Greenway	not HRM maintained						
Penhorn Lake Park	replace building			$360,000			
Point Pleasant Park	replace lower lot building nothing needed for Cable Road replace unserviced privies with accessible portapotties	$246,000	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000	
Public Gardens	needs accessibility upgrade	$40,000					
Ravenscraig Drive Park	wayfinding		$3,000				
Sandy Lake Park	upgrade to improve weatherproofing		$10,000				
Shubie Park	convert to gender-neutral				$100,000		
Sir Sandford Fleming Park	renovate to gender-neutral, accessible				$100,000		
Tremont Plateau Park	replace building					$122,500	
Wanderers Grounds	needs accessibility upgrade, wayfinding & signage	$40,000	$3,000				
subtotal upgrades		**$391,000**	**$253,500**	**$541,000**	**$206,000**	**$128,500**	**$1,520,000**

6.3 Wayfinding to other washroom facilities

Budget assumes that all wayfinding will be planned, designed and installed at once, in year 2.

park	installation type	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	subtotal
Auburn John Stewart Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Beaver Bank Kinsac Elementary School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Rec Ctr	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Carrolls Corner Community Centre Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Col John Stewart Elementary School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Cunard Junior High School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Dartmouth Common	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Ferry Terminal Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
George Dixon Centre Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Halifax Central Common	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Jason MacCullough Memorial Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Kinap Canoe Club	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Lake Echo Community Centre	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Michael Wallace Elementary School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Northcliffe Recreation Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Park West School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
Sheet Harbour Elementary School Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
St Andrews Centre Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
St Marys Boat Club Park	wayfinding to outside public washroom		$3,000				
subtotal upgrades			**$57,000**				**$57,000**

6.4 Drinking fountain installations

Budget assumes that new waterfountain installations will be done at once, in year 5.

park	installation type	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	subtotal
Beaver Bank Monarch Elementary School Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Beechville Lakeside Timberlea School Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Caudle Park Elementary School Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Ecole Secondaire Du Sommet Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Gertrude M Parker Elementary School Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Glenbourne Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Graves Oakley Memorial Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Portland Estates School Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
Range Park	drinking fountain					$7,000	
subtotal drinking fountains						**$63,000**	**$63,000**

6.5 Budget totals

category	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	subtotal
new washroom installations	$1,337,000	$377,100	$374,700	$615,700	$490,000	$3,194,500
upgrades	$391,000	$253,500	$541,000	$206,000	$128,500	$1,520,000
wayfinding to other washroom facilities		$57,000				$57,000
drinking fountain installations					$63,000	$63,000
total budget	**$1,728,000**	**$687,600**	**$915,700**	**$821,700**	**$681,500**	**$4,834,500**

6.6 Alternative budget

Applying the same recommendations but constraining the budget to HRM's current capital investment expectations for park washrooms (ca. $400K/ year), would result in the budget being spread over 14 years instead of 5.

The washroom installation subtotal is higher below due to additional portable washroom rentals in the extra years leading up to construction of permanent facilities.

category	year 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
new washroom installations	$375,200	$136,900	$14,400	$373,600	$372,800	$256,200	$376,300	$130,500	$8,000	$251,400
upgrades	$40,000	$271,000	$180,000	$10,000	$9,000	$134,500	$0	$181,000	$360,000	$106,000
wayfinding	$0	$0	$57,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
drinking fountain installations	$0	$0	$63,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
total budget	**$415,200**	**$407,900**	**$314,400**	**$383,600**	**$381,800**	**$390,700**	**$376,300**	**$311,500**	**$368,000**	**$357,400**

11	12	13	14	subtotal
$249,800	$369,900	$367,500	$0	$3,282,500
$100,000	$0	$6,000	$122,500	$1,520,000
$0	$0	$0	$0	$57,000
$0	$0	$0	$0	$63,000
$349,800	**$369,900**	**$373,500**	**$122,500**	**$4,922,500**

7.0 Appendix

7. Appendix

7.1 Image sources

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Attachment B
Washrooms & Drinking Fountains Strategy Staff Addendum

This staff-developed addendum contains additional information and corrections for inclusion as part of the Washroom & Drinking Fountain Strategy. Information within this addendum shall supersede information contained therein.

Updated Information and Additional Washrooms for Inclusion in the Inventory

Park Type	Detail
Regional Parks	
Point Pleasant Park	• The Strategy notes a bunker style washroom at the Lower Parking Lot – this building has been removed and the water/sewer line has been capped. Temporary portable washrooms are currently in place in the parking lot • A publicly accessible washroom at the back of the Shakespeare by the Sea building should be included in the inventory • Privies and outhouses are in the process of being decommissioned
Africville Park	• The inventory should reference a bunker style washroom building that is no longer in use that has been replaced by a portable washroom
District Parks	
Graves-Oakley Memorial Park	• The inventory should reference an existing washroom building that is now closed and is to be replaced by a washroom that is to be within a new fieldhouse
Kearney Lake Beach Park	• The inventory should reference a bunker style washroom building that is no longer in use that has been replaced by a portable washroom
Community Parks	
Neighbourhood Park	
Other	
Fairview Lawn Cemetery	• The inventory should reference an existing washroom at this park

Park Section Guidelines

Include the following as additions to the Park Selection guidelines:

D.07 Place an emphasis upon the capital refurbishment of facilities that are in poor condition and that continue to be required for municipal needs
D.08 Consider opportunities for funding from other sources

Updated List of Prioritized Washroom Upgrades and New Installations for Implementation through Annual Business Planning and Subject to Regional Council Approval

Upgrades	Detail
Beazley Park	Assess the need for renovated washrooms (gender neutral, accessibility, and signage) following the completion of a new washrooms as part of the park's bleacher refurbishment project in 2020
Eastern Passage Common	Renovate for gender neutral, accessibility, drinking fountain, signage
Halifax North Common	Improve aesthetics
Kiwanis Grahams Grove Park	Replacement – as outlined in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 Capital Project
Mainland Common - Soccer	Replace temporary washroom with permanent, drinking fountain, signage
Metropolitan Avenue Park	Improve aesthetics, drinking fountain, signage
Maybank Park	Improve condition, accessibility, signage
Penhorn Lake Park	Replacement – approved 2019/20 Capital Project
Point Pleasant Park	Demolish and replace lower parking lot washroom with permanent mini, replace privies with accessible porta-potties, implement signage
Public Gardens	Renovate for accessibility
Ravenscraig Drive Park	Signage, drinking fountain
Sandy Lake Park	Improve weatherproofing
Shubie Park	Renovate for gender neutral
Sir Sandford Fleming Park	Renovate for gender neutral, accessibility, signage
Tremont Plateau Park	Demolish and replace with permanent mini, gender neutral, accessibility, drinking fountain, signage
Wanderers Grounds	Renovate for accessibility
Graves Oakley Memorial Park	Demolish and replace with dedicated, gender neutral, accessibility, drinking fountain, signage as part of rugby club building

New Installations	Detail
Gorsebrook Park	Dedicated washroom
Merv Sullivan Park	Dedicated washroom
Chain of Lakes Trail Park	Permanent Mini washroom
Shearwater Flyer Trail Park	Permanent Mini washroom