

The graphic features a large, stylized letter 'H' composed of several overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue. The top-right portion of the 'H' is a dark blue rectangle containing the word 'HALIFAX' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The rest of the 'H' is formed by lighter blue shapes that create a sense of depth and movement.

HALIFAX

Phase 1 Regional Museum Strategy

Presentation for Regional Council

April 12, 2022

Regional Museum Strategy - Origin

On January 28, 2014 Council directed, among other things:

- Consideration of HRM's support and investment in community museums, regional museums, and collection of heritage artifacts as part of the Cultural and Heritage Priorities Plan and return to Council with recommendations for an HRM regional museum consistent with the direction outlined in the Plan.

On October 6, 2015 Council directed staff to prepare a staff report that, among other things:

- Outlines a plan to work with stakeholders, including the Board of DHMS, to determine the size and scope of a municipal museum;
- Outlines the next steps in the completion of a municipal museum;
- Explains the relationships with and impact to other museums in HRM;
- Outlines potential short-term options, including opportunities for displaying the artifacts;
- Outlines potential cost sharing and fundraising opportunities.

Regional Museum Strategy Background

2019: HRM issued RFP 19-013 for consultation services to undertake a current state analysis of all regional museums both HRM-owned/operated and non-municipally operated.

AldrichPears Associates and A.L. ARBIC Consulting awarded the contract and consultant report represents Phase 1 of the Regional Museum Strategy.

2019-2020: Consulting team:

- conducted site visits,
- conducted SWOT analysis,
- updated museums on progress and findings.

2021: Final Phase 1 and Executive Summary completed.

Methodology

Overview of Collections and Museums conducted:

- HRM-owned collections, Municipal Archives
- Heritage buildings as museums and municipal operational capacity

Museum Profiles – 32 museums

Financial analysis of current funding

SWOT Analysis:

- Identify region-wide gaps, challenges, and opportunities

Gaps and Critical Needs Review:

- Relationships within the System, Collections
- Collaborations/Partnerships

Comparable models:

- Identify comparable municipal museum and archives and best professional practices

Recommend next steps for Phase 2 of the HRM Museum Strategy



Regional Museum Participation – 32 Sites

Municipally-owned sites with management agreements – 2 sites

Municipally-owned sites with long-term lease agreements – 2 sites

Provincially-mandated/supported sites – 5 sites

Federal and Canadian Armed Forces sites – 4 sites

Community sites – 13 sites

Institutional museums – 2 sites

Interpretive centres and heritage sites – 4 sites



Comparative Analysis

Municipal Museum Models: Stand-Alone

- Museum of Vancouver, Moncton Museum at Resurgo Place, Museum of Surrey

Municipal Museum Models: Multiple Site/Service or System

- Halton Heritage Services, City of Toronto, City of Edmonton

Municipal/Civic Archives Models

- City of Thunderbay Archives, City of Edmonton Archives, City of Ottawa Archives, City of Saskatoon Archives

Regional Museum/Cultural Site Projects: Within HRM

- Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Discovery Centre, Canadian Museum of Immigration Pier 21

Recent Museum/Cultural Site Projects: Within Atlantic Canada

- Black Loyalist Heritage Centre, Mi'kmawey Debert

Key Findings

- Over 30 community, institutional, provincial, and federal museums and the region are well represented both geographically and thematically in terms of specific community histories
- Community museums play an important role as stewards of community histories, buildings and artifacts and act as social and cultural hubs in their communities
- Gaps in the municipal collection from a regional perspective and lack of a regional framework to provide guidance
- Gaps in delivery and diversity of stories
- Limited resources for developing new exhibits
- Lack of regional framework or formal collaboration across regional museums
- Lack of interpretation about civic history of Halifax Peninsula
- Lack of City of Halifax artifacts in municipal collection
- Limited HRM staff in delivery of heritage support and collection management

Strategy Recommendations

Phase 2 Recommendations – New Initiatives

1. Undertake detailed evaluation of possible operational models and delivery mechanisms (Phase 2 Regional Museum Strategy)
2. Leverage and align HRM resources
3. Align with the Cultural Heritage Priorities Plan
4. Undertake a Regional Interpretive Master Plan (CHPP)

Phase 3 Recommendation – New Initiative

5. Undertake detailed Feasibility Study for the preferred museum model (Phase 3 Regional Museum Strategy)

Strategy Recommendations

Operational Recommendations - On-going and existing

6. Continue existing funding support to museums
7. Continue to rationalize and maintain the municipal collections
8. Maintain the Central Region Heritage Group (CHRG)
9. Freeze approval of heritage-related interpretive projects
10. Manage site profile data gathered through Phase 1 of the Regional Museum Strategy
11. Develop COVID-19 guidelines for the development of any proposed interpretive exhibits and program experiences within the region that support municipal, provincial, and federal-level guidelines

Phase 2 Deliverables – Operational Model Analysis

Funding and Limited Services

- Status Quo

Regional Museum Network

- Delivered Directly by HRM

Regional Museum Network

- Delivery Outsourced/Contracted

New Build Stand-Alone Civic Museum

- Directly Operated by HRM

New Stand-Alone Civic Museum

- Independently Operated



Conclusion

When it is finally realized, the completed HRM Museum Strategy—and, presumably, the vision for an HRM civic museum (or museum system), in whatever form it takes—will ensure that communities across the region have increased access to relevant content and programs that foster a deeper connection to the region’s history, that sparks engagement within the community, and that encourages a sense of belonging and pride in both young and old resident users. Furthermore, the completed strategy will also help showcase regional heritage for tourists who are eager to engage with this content.

Regional Museum Strategy



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HALIFAX

Recommendation

It is recommended that Regional Council:

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:
 - a. commence Phase 2 of the Museum Strategy by implementing recommendations 1-4; and
 - b. implement operational recommendations 6-11 as set out in the body of this report, and return to Council as necessary; and,
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to return to Council with a report on recommendation 5 (Feasibility Study – Phase 3 Regional Museum Strategy) based on the outcome of Phase 2.