

Downtown Works

a regular update of what's happening in HRM's urban core

March / April 2011 Issue

A Renewed Economic Strategy for Halifax

On March 22nd, "A GREATER Halifax – the 2011-16 Economic Strategy for Halifax", was endorsed by Regional Council. In it, a five-year plan is laid out to help grow the economy of Halifax and the region and is the evolution of the previous Economic Strategy that applied to early 2011.

Action teams will be struck in each of the five goal areas beginning in early May. Teams will be comprised of volunteers with significant representation from the business community. The Steering Committee that led the review and renewal process of the strategy will continue on to monitor and assess performance. The Mayor's Economic Advisory Committee, HRM Council and the Standing Committee will also continue to be consulted for advice and to ensure alignment.

Find out more about "A GREATER Halifax" [online](#).

Barrington Projects

On April 12th Regional Council voted to send two proposed Barrington Street projects to public hearing. Both proposed developments - the Discovery Centre project, 1595 Barrington, and the Roy Building project, 1651-57 Barrington Street - are being considered under the approval process that predates the HRM By Design downtown plan because they were first proposed before the plan came into effect. Learn more about the proposals and read the staff reports [online](#).

Members Recruited for Strategic Urban Partnership

The Strategic Urban Partnership concept was first introduced in HRM's Capital Ideas discussion paper – a paper aimed at proposing concrete actions to revitalize the urban core. The idea of the Partnership recognizes that there is a need for like-minded public and private stakeholders to work together to help the downtown core reach its highest potential.

On April 27th a "Launch Pad" event was held for approximately 30 invited representatives from government, business and other key interest groups. They were

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Downtown Organizations

[Halifax Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Spring Garden Road Business Association](#)

[Downtown Halifax Business Commission](#)

[Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission](#)

[Waterfront Development Corporation](#)

[Halifax Port Authority](#)

[Greater Halifax Partnership](#)

[Destination Halifax](#)

[Quinpool Road Mainstreet District Association](#)





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asked to become members of the Partnership. In the coming weeks, the group will attend workshops and other events designed to engage attendees in developing and executing tangible approaches and activities to create a thriving and prosperous downtown.

FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show Coming to Halifax

From June 3rd – 6th, Halifax will host the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) annual conference and trade show at the World Trade and Convention Centre. Early registration numbers indicate that Halifax is on track to welcome more than 2200 delegates and guests to the urban core.

A recent impact study conducted by FCM suggests that HRM can expect an infusion of an estimated \$3 million into our economy as a result of the conference. FCM is described as the national voice of municipal government. For more information on the conference visit the [FCM website](#).

Downtown Halifax Community Officer

Constable Shawn Currie is Downtown Halifax's Community Response Officer. Constable Currie has more than 22 years of policing experience including patrol here in HRM, and five years with Metro Toronto Police in Patrol, Criminal Investigations and the Youth Bureau. You'll see Constable Currie covering his beat on foot, by bicycle or using Metro Transit. He is supported by three 24/7 beats who address calls for service in the area, conduct proactive patrols and ensure a strong police presence in the downtown core. He encourages business owners and their staff to stop him on the street to voice their concerns or just say hello.

Winning Bike Rack Design Revealed

Watch for a new bike rack at the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal this summer. Titled "Splash", the dolphin-shaped rack design was submitted by a student at the Halifax Independent School and judged alongside submissions by professionals. Sixteen submissions were received for the contest held by HRM's Sustainable Environment Management Office (SEMO). Splash's sleek and functional design will make a great addition to Downtown Dartmouth. Visit the [website](#) to see the sketch of the new bike rack.

Guaranteed Ride Home Provides Flexibility for Employees

Guaranteed Ride home is a cooperative program between HRM and local business. It provides employees who commute via public transit, carpool/vanpool, walk or bike with transportation home in the event of a personal emergency - so an employee will never be stranded at work.

There are a variety of ways to participate. Visit the [SmartTrip website](#) for more information.

Downtown Dartmouth Showcases Activity

On April 20th, HRM and Waterfront Development Corporation Limited (WDCL) hosted a public open house at Alderney Landing to highlight planning and design initiatives currently underway in Downtown Dartmouth. These included Dartmouth ViewPlanes, WDCL Lands behind the Royal Bank Building on Portland Street, Urban Design initiatives, parkland and trails planning including the Common, Sullivan's Pond and the Harbourfront Trail, the Shubenacadie Canal Greenway and information on the Dartmouth Cove Comprehensive Planning Study.

More information on what was presented, including contacts, can be found [online](#).

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Central Library Activity Begins

Activity at the Halifax Central Library began to increase during the month of April. Construction managers EllisDon began mobilizing trailers and electrical services at the site on the corner of Spring Garden Road and Queen Street. Already trailers have been moved to the site and in the coming weeks fencing will be installed and archaeological exploration will begin. Upcoming milestones include the Central Library Public Art candidate selection, the final site plan approval, the sixth public open house to reveal the final library design and a formal ground breaking ceremony – all expected during the months of June and July.

Visit the [Central Library](#) website for more information.

An Impressive History at the Library Site

The Central Library site has a long and interesting history. Bellevue House, the home of the British Army's Commander-in-Chief for Halifax once stood near the corner of Spring Garden Road and Queen Street. Beginning in May archaeologists will monitor the removal of asphalt and earth to watch for signs of historic structures and/or artifacts. If these are discovered during the initial assessment, the archaeology

team will begin a more detailed excavation process to study, record and preserve the discovered items. All items become the property of the Province of Nova Scotia which assumes long term curatorial responsibility for all archaeological artifacts. More information on the history of the site can be found on the Central Library [website](#).

Sharing Solar

Renovations at the Centennial Pool continue with the addition of a district energy trench connecting the pool to Halifax Regional Police Headquarters. Police headquarters recently converted to natural gas and this link will allow a shared heating system. A total of 55 solar panels were installed on the roof of police headquarters and 48 panels on Centennial Pool. The panels will pre-heat the hot water for the buildings.

Phase 2 of the renovation work at the pool recently began. It is anticipated to finish in late October and will improve air quality and heating systems in the building. For more detailed information visit the [website](#).

Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Study Update

Metro Transit and IBI Group will conduct additional public consultation sessions as part of its Universal Accessibility Study in follow-up to initial sessions held in March. Part II public consultation sessions will be held as follows:


Wednesday, May 18 at St. Andrew's Community Centre – 4 - 6 pm

Thursday, May 19 at Dartmouth North Community Centre – 4 - 6 pm

The consultation will seek customer input on a number of accessibility-related issues around conventional bus and ferry services, including existing infrastructure, on-board wheelchair and scooter restraints, customer communication and information and transit guidelines and policies.

This consultation will help develop short and long-term recommendations to increase the overall accessibility of the transit system. The final report and key recommendations will be prepared for Council's review this summer. For more information visit the [Metro Transit website](#).

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Public Gardens open with Restored Bandstand

The first visitors of the season to Halifax's Public Gardens on April 13th were also the among the first to see the changes to the park's bandstand. The restoration took place over the past year and included replacing the red roof with copper, a material in keeping with its original era, replacing the gingerbread detail with Victorian patterns and new lighting fixtures similar to those on the original structure as seen in archival photographs.

To celebrate, "Friends of the Public Gardens" will be host a grand public celebration to re-open the bandstand on Victoria Day, May 23, 2011. For details on the gardens and the upcoming celebrations visit the [website](#).

Waterfront Work

The Summit Boardwalk repair project on the Halifax waterfront is now complete. The project included repair and replacement of decking, wheel guards and other substructure along the Halifax Harbourwalk seawall. Maintenance of the seawall, wharf and approximately 300 feet of replaced boardwalk allows the visiting public to continue to enjoy safe access to the Harbourwalk and extends the useful life of the structures.

Current work in front of The Cable Wharf building will result in the construction of a 100-foot timber boardwalk providing another link in the continuation of the Halifax Harbourwalk. Visit the [Waterfront Development Corporation website](#) for more information.

Disney Cruise Line to Visit Halifax in 2012

One April 6th Disney Cruise Line announced that for the first time ever, they will be calling at the Port of Halifax in 2012. The Port of Halifax will be one of a few new itineraries from New York City.

The cruise will allow visitors to explore Halifax and its surrounding areas as part of a five-night cruise up the New England Coast. The cruise will also stop in Saint John. The Port of Halifax is a marquee port in Atlantic Canada and currently has 19 cruise lines calling. The 2011 season is strong with a passenger range between 230,000 and 240,000 on board 126 vessels.

Learn more about the Disney Cruise Line [online](#). For more information on the Port of Halifax visit the [website](#).



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