



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 14.1.13**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**June 20, 2017**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** June 7, 2017

**SUBJECT:** **Temporary Stadium on the Wanderers Grounds**

---

**ORIGIN**

Motion of Community Planning and Economic Development Committee on April 5, 2017:

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Mayor Savage:

That the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee request a staff report into the feasibility of permitting a pop-up stadium on the Wanderers Grounds as proposed in the March 24, 2017 letter from Sports Entertainment Atlantic.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*

61(5) The Municipality may

...

(c) lease property owned by the Municipality at market value.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Authorize the CAO, or his designate, to negotiate and execute a rental agreement with Sports Entertainment Atlantic for the use of the Wanderers Grounds to host a professional soccer team and other events in a temporary stadium on the site with seating for up to 7000 spectators based on the Key Terms and Conditions outlined in Table 2 of this report and with such changes or conditions as may be deemed by the CAO to be in the best interest of the Municipality. This shall be subject to the consideration of any management issues with the sporting event(s) scheduled for fall 2017, as outlined in this report..

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A proposal has been submitted by Sports Entertainment Atlantic (SEA) to lease the Wanderers Grounds sport field on the Halifax Common for a 3 year period with an option for an additional 3 years. The purpose of the proposed lease is to erect temporary stadium seating for up to 7000 spectators to create a home field for a professional soccer team in the new Canadian Premier League starting for the 2018 season. SEA is seeking control and maintenance of the field, ability to accept sponsorship and naming rights, ability to erect temporary concessions, including the sale of alcohol, and manage the field bookings by other user groups.

Although part of the Halifax Common, legislation was passed in 1886 allowing the site to be enclosed and leased to non-public entities. This legislation enabled the establishment of the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club as well as the Bengal Lancers and Wanderers Lawn Bowling Club on the same block. This context distinguishes this site from other parts of the historic Common, which have different legislative frameworks. The proposal is generally consistent with the 1994 Halifax Common Plan in terms of the level of activity proposed for the field.

There may be merit in considering the site for a temporary stadium to host a professional soccer team. However, there are concerns about HRM relinquishing control of the site to a private entity, questions about the impact on other user groups, and a range of potential impacts and benefits to address. Therefore, it is recommended that an agreement be negotiated with SEA that retains HRM's control of the site, but permits the installation of the temporary seating and amenities to support the hosting of a professional soccer team.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Site & Surroundings**

The Wanderers Grounds is an HRM-owned natural turf sport field located on a 9.66 acre parcel on the block bounded by Sackville Street, Bell Road and Summer Street. The site is within the boundary of the original Halifax Common grant of 1763 that comprised 235 acres. The field accommodates several sports including tackle and touch football, rugby, lacrosse, and Ultimate Frisbee. HRM is currently completing capital rehabilitation of the field and through that process it will be fully reconstructed as a premiere Class A field that meets international standards. It will be able to accommodate existing sports as well as soccer, and is intended to host a full range of sporting events that are appropriate for the field. The field is scheduled to re-open in September 2017, and Soccer Nova Scotia is intending to host a large scale multi-day event on the site including a Canadian Soccer League game with up to 5000 spectators. Also located on the same parcel of land is the Halifax Lawn Bowls Club, the Bengal Lancers equestrian facility, municipal greenhouses and an operations yard, and the Power House, a historic HRM-owned home. The entire 9.66 acre parcel is a municipally registered heritage property (see Map 1)

Abutting the site to the northwest and on the same block is the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History. To the south across Sackville Street is the Public Gardens, and to the west across Summer Street is Camp Hill Cemetery. To the northwest are several hospital facilities that form part of the QEII Health Complex, and to the north is Citadel High School. All of these sites are also within the historic Halifax Common. To the east is Citadel Hill National Historic Site. Residential uses are located further away, with a low density neighbourhood 321 m away on the west side of Robie Street, the Garden Crest condominium project to the south 156 m away on Summer Street, and the residential redevelopment of the former CBC site 140 m away at the intersection of at South Park Street and Sackville Street.

### **SEA Proposal**

An unsolicited proposal (Attachments 1 and 2) has been received for use of the Wanderers Grounds from Sports Entertainment Atlantic (SEA). This private corporation is pursuing a professional soccer league franchise for Halifax in the newly announced Canadian Premier League, and is seeking to lease the Wanderers Grounds field. The league is anticipated to start with 6 teams in 2018 and expand to 8 for 2019.

SEA advises that a field in close proximity to downtown is required in order for its business model to be successful. The proposal includes the following:

- placement of temporary stadium seating around the reconstructed field which would hold up to 7,000 spectators (5500 seats and bleachers for 1000 with some standing capacity);
- SEA would lease the field for a 3-year period with an option for a further 3 years;
- the stadium would host 10 regular season games in season 1 and 14 in season 2 as the league expands, playoff games, and up to 6 other sporting and special events. This proposal would use up to 50 hours of field time per year. No concerts are proposed;
- the ability for SEA to sell naming rights to events at the stadium, and to erect temporary concessions for food and beverage sales including alcohol sales are cited by SEA as key to the success of the venture;
- maintenance of the field would be the responsibility of SEA; and
- rentals to other user groups would be managed by SEA in a manner consistent with current HRM practices, when the field is not required for the soccer franchise.

Soccer Nova Scotia is intending to hold a major event on the Wanderers Grounds in September 2017 when the field opens, and will bring in temporary seating for up to 5000 spectators. The seating will be removed following the event.

The motion requesting this report originated with the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED). As a result, typically, the report would be presented to CPED prior to consideration by Regional Council. SEA must in the very short term provide a confirmation to Canadian Premier League in order to be considered for a professional soccer team for the 2018 season. Therefore, there is a tight timeline in order for SEA to advance its planning. As a result, this report is being presented directly to Regional Council.

## **DISCUSSION**

While staff see merit in the proposal to install seating and to bring additional premiere sporting events to the Wanderers Grounds, several changes to the SEA proposal are recommended, as outlined in the remainder of this report.

### **Legislative and Historical Context**

The Wanderers Grounds form a small part of the original Halifax Common that was created in 1763 by grant of the Crown. Map 1 shows the historic extent of the Common. Each part of the historic Common has its own legislative and historical context.

In 1882, the Wanderers Amateur Athletics Club was formed to promote amateur sport, and began making improvements to the site that now bears the club name. Legislation permitting the site to be leased and enclosed, with extinguishment of the public right of passage over the land, was passed in 1886. The area was filled in and a fence was erected along the perimeter, with the "Wanderers Grounds" officially opening in 1888, extinguishing the public right of passage. The property encompassed by this legislation also contains those properties currently occupied by the Natural History Museum, the HRM operations yard and greenhouses, the historic Power House, the Wanderers Lawn Bowls Club, and the Bengal Lancers Stables. The legislation (*An Act relating to the City of Halifax*, S.N.S. 1886, c. 59) stated:

The city of Halifax upon the request of the commissioners of Halifax common may demise and let to such person or association, for such a period, at such rental, and upon such other conditions, as the said commissioners shall determine, the whole or any part of that portion of the Halifax common which is bounded easterly by Bell road, southerly by Sackville street, westerly and northerly by Summer street and Bell road. And the said commissioners or such

lessees may enclose the whole of such demised premises with fences, and shut up any streets or ways over the same, and any right of passage which the public or any person whomsoever may now have or claim over the same is hereby forever barred and extinguished.

The lease with the Wanderers Amateur Athletics Club ended in 1959, when the City of Halifax assumed the management of the property. This permitted the City to make broader use of the grounds. The property has subsequently been used by a number of organizations for both shorter and longer terms, including a senior citizens' club, the Halifax Rugby Football Club, and for numerous short-term special events. The site remains fenced with public access limited to those occasions where the field has been booked for a sporting or special event.

#### 1994 Halifax Common Plan

The Halifax Common Plan which was approved by Halifax City Council in 1994 deals extensively with the Wanderers Grounds. The plan anticipates the use of the Wanderers Grounds for continued sport field and public use, while accommodating medium sized outdoor events including athletics, special events, concerts, and public gatherings. Section 5 of the Plan establishes the following objective for the Wanderers Grounds and adjacent sites on the block:

Accommodation of existing sports, leisure and maintenance facilities in the short term with, over the longer term, subject to detailed design and acceptable accommodation of existing facilities, an all-season public activity area for athletic, cultural and special events.

Other relevant policies include:

- 5.1 The whole Wanderers Grounds and Bell Road block should, over the long term, remain under city control and be consolidated for a multi-purpose all-season public area which includes athletic events, special events, concerts, public gatherings, and general public use.
- 5.4 The Wanderers Grounds will continue to be used for athletic events, along with cultural and special events over the long term.
- 5.5 For the Wanderers Grounds the following policies will apply:
  - (a) The need for baseball fields should be reviewed before removing the field from the Wanderers Grounds.
  - (b) There should not be a competitive track and field facility on the Wanderers Grounds. Small public school field days on the Wanderers Grounds should continue. A jogging track should be considered for this area after the large baseball diamond is removed.
  - (c) A building to serve athletic and other events is needed. The Press Box building should be improved or another building provided.

The Wanderers Grounds are designated Open Space under the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, and zoned Park & Institutional under the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law. These enable use of the site for a public park, recreation field, sports club, or community facility and for accessory uses such as food and beverage vendors. Based on the 1994 Common Plan and the zoning, stadium seating in association with the sports field is permitted. Policy 5.1 of the 1994 Common Plan calls for the site to remain under municipal control, which is consistent with its status as a park.

Despite the legislative framework of the site within the Common, a lease to a third party would reduce municipal control of the field and its infrastructure and is therefore not in keeping with the 1994 Common Plan or the property's status as a park. While additional infrastructure to support a broader use of the

property may be appropriate, an alternate arrangement would be necessary to continue municipal oversight of the facility.

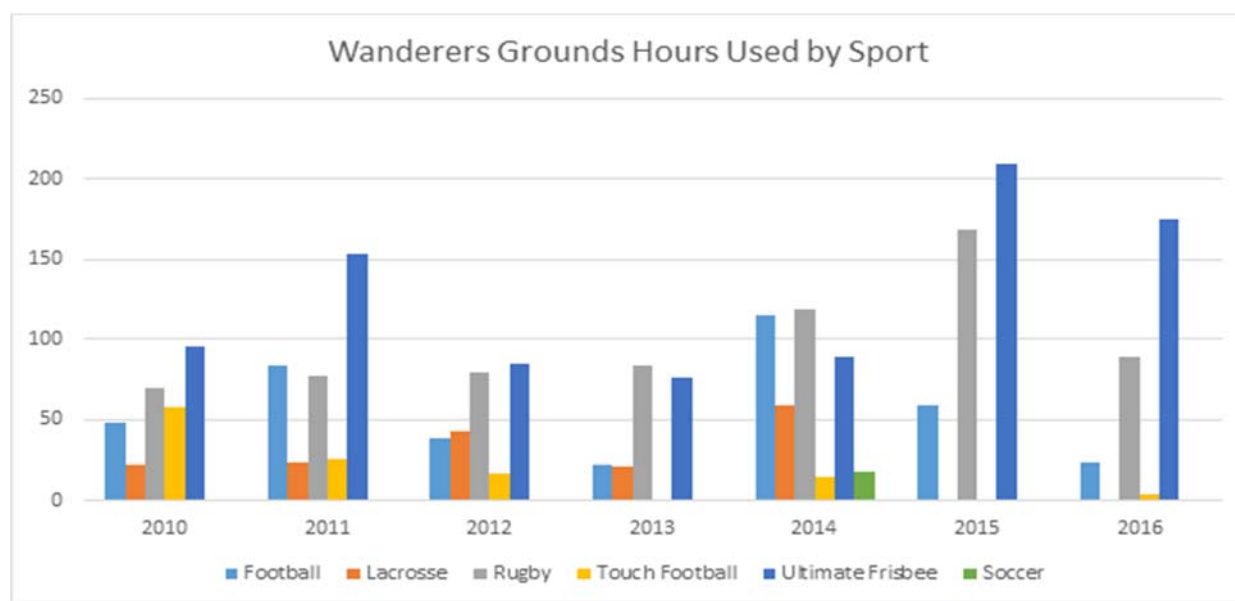
### Assessment of Proposal

The alteration of the Wanderers Grounds to include stadium seating for at least 3 years must be carefully considered regarding a range of potential impacts and benefits. Based on the initial submission by SEA, the following evaluation has been prepared that supports the concept of providing temporary seating on the field for a 3 year period, but on different conditions than those proposed by SEA.

#### Current Use

The Wanderers Grounds are heavily used by a variety of sports. Over the past 7 years, the field has been booked for practice and play for an average of 325 hours per year which is near the limit that a natural grass field can sustain. Table 1 shows the field usage by sport from 2010 to 2016.

Table 1: Use of Wanderers Grounds by Sport 2010-2016



The length of time since the field was last reconstructed and the heavy use has resulted in less than ideal field conditions which have led to the current capital project that will see full reconstruction of the field to a design that meets international standards.

With the upgrades that are underway, maintaining the field to a high standard could mean that the use of it may need to be reduced and managed to a greater degree, particularly with regard to sports that may have an impact on the condition of the field and its suitability for professional soccer and other premiere sporting events. It has been identified that this may have a distinct impact on tackle football, where there can be considerable field wear that concentrated in mid-areas of fields. HRM would need to work with various user groups to consider appropriate use and alternative field locations.

#### Community Use and Access

The Wanderers Grounds, unlike the Central and North Common, are permanently enclosed and not publicly accessible except during booked special and sport events that are open to the public. By comparison, the Public Gardens and Camp Hill Cemetery are also on the Common and are fenced but are regularly open to the public. The enclosure of, and limited access to, the Wanderers Grounds has been possible since the

legislation was passed in 1886 and the fence subsequently erected. With the fencing and gates in place, the field cannot be used for any sport without a booking, accessed for any other use, or even walked across. This enables the field to be maintained and used as a key facility for certain sports. Hosting a professional soccer team here would be consistent with the current use and not result in an area of parkland being lost to general public access.

#### Community Development

The presence of a professional sports team in a downtown setting provides a wide range of benefits, especially in comparison to those that are located in suburban areas. HRM promotes the downtown area as the key cultural and entertainment hub of the region, while also seeking to concentrate a substantial portion of new development in the area. Another professional sports team based in the area, in addition to existing hockey and basketball franchises, would extend the sports draw to three seasons. This would have the result of drawing fans through a greater part of the year and thus boosting local business, and creating synergies with other entertainment and cultural facilities. The economic benefits of such a team could be considerable, while also fostering greater interest and participation in soccer at all age and skill levels.

The proposal is similar in scale with other events such as Soccer Nova Scotia's proposed multi-day event in September 2017 on the site that will include soccer games and focus on training and development of youth, and with a 5000 seat rugby event that was slated to be hosted on the site in 2015 but was moved due to field conditions. A small stadium, as proposed, will also serve as a market test for ticketed outdoor sporting events in HRM, and help determine the viability and appropriateness of some form of permanent seating and services on the site. A temporary stadium on the Wanderers Grounds will also help indicate the viability of a larger permanent stadium in the region, which would have to be located elsewhere in an appropriate non-parkland context, and where more land is available.

#### Traffic and Transit

Events of any size on the Wanderers Grounds already generate varying levels of traffic in the area depending on the number of participants and spectators. This is true for any event on the Common, in the Citadel or on the Garrison Grounds, at Scotiabank Centre, in the downtown, or along the waterfront. Such events are scheduled and held without the need for traffic studies, although transit scheduling and routes can be adapted as needed to increase service. Given that the downtown area is a major hub for cultural and civic events, and that HRM is encouraging continued revitalization and further emphasis on the area as a place to live, work and play, there is no concern with traffic that would be generated by a temporary stadium on the site. As well, the location of the Wanderer's Grounds makes it convenient for transit access due to the number and frequency of bus routes in the immediate area.

#### Parking

Any event on the Wanderers Grounds, like any other event on the Common or in the downtown area, creates demand for parking as a proportion of participants and attendees want to drive their own vehicle and park near the event rather than take transit or other modes. The downtown area contains a major concentration of parking to cater to the demands of residents, workers and visitors. No parking is available on the Common or the Wanderers Grounds, nor would that be appropriate. Generally, HRM encourages the use of transit and alternative transportation for those attending such events. A perceived lack of parking availability during peak events is desirable as it discourages use of cars and encourages other modes of transportation. Nova Scotia Health has expressed concerns over use of its parking garage at the Halifax Infirmary by those seeking to attend events on the Wanderers Grounds and the Common. This concern is reasonable and is based on the need for that parking to be available for staff, patients, and visitors. However, this concern exists for any events in the area and is not specific to this proposal, and there are steps that can be taken to limit use by non-hospital users.

#### Noise

Any outdoor event such as a sporting event, concert, festival, or fireworks causes a certain amount of noise, which is not automatically undesirable. The downtown area is the key focus of such activity and it is the goal of HRM to further increase such activities and events as part of a healthy urban core. However, the impact of such events on those not participating must be considered. Accordingly, HRM schedules outdoor sporting and special events such that they are finished by a certain hour, typically 11 pm. The use of the Wanderers Grounds for a professional soccer team should be subject to the same time limits as those currently used for the site, with game start times either during daylight hours or early enough such that the event can be finished and that attendees can disperse by 11 pm at the latest. The proponent has advised that games may be during the day and that evening games would start by 7 pm which appears to be able to meet that schedule. The limited number of events, up to 18, as indicated by SEA, which would be spaced from spring to fall, is not excessive. Should any concerts be proposed to be held in the temporary stadium, consideration would need to be given to the hours for such events. However, SEA has advised that concerts are not part of its business model as there would be concerns with impact on the playing surface caused by field-level seating.

Hosting soccer games on the site would have considerably less impact on residential uses and the Public Gardens, in particular, than concerts held either on the North Common or on Citadel Hill. There are, therefore, no concerns with the proposal relative to unreasonable impacts on any nearby land uses. Matters such as limits on the hours during which events could be held would be addressed as part of any terms and conditions.

#### On Site Services

As with any special event on the Common, it is necessary to bring in temporary washrooms and concession facilities to provide services to participants. The 1994 Common Plan recognized the need for a permanent building to serve events on the site, however, there is no intention at this time to construct any permanent facility for the purpose of changing rooms, washrooms or food and beverage service. The proponent has suggested that on-site concessions be allowed in the form of converted shipping containers, as have been used elsewhere such as on the waterfront on lands owned by the Waterfront Development Corporation. This may be an appropriate option, and food trucks could also be considered provided that they only operate during events.

By-law C-501 *Respecting Vending on Municipal Lands* does not apply to an event where the organizer has entered into a rental agreement with the Municipality for the use of municipal lands, and allows the event organizer to grant permission to a person to vend at the event. When no event is being held, the By-law would apply. As part of the proposed agreement framework, HRM would need to grant permission for the placement of shipping containers or other temporary structures on the property, from which the event organizer could grant permission for vending during the events.

#### Heritage

The entire parcel on which the Wanderers Grounds is located is a registered municipal heritage property. This designation exists because of two heritage-significant buildings on the site. The Power House was constructed at 1606 Bell Road in 1902 as a home for the caretaker of the Public Gardens which are located across Sackville Street, and was designated as a municipal heritage property in 1989. The Bengal Lancers site at 1690 Bell Road, including the paddock, were registered in 2001 to reflect the significance of the building and the riding club. The current stables building was originally constructed in 1908 as a municipal operations building that was later converted for the equestrian use in the 1940's.

The Wanderers Grounds is enclosed by an iron fence which is considered a character defining element and, as such, needs to be maintained and protected. The field is lined by mature trees just inside the fence, along Sackville Street and Bell Road, and these are important both for their contribution to the site and in terms of contributing to the urban forest canopy on the peninsula. As such, any use of the site needs to include measures to protect the trees and their root systems. The two heritage buildings and the paddock are well separated from the proposed stadium site by the Wanderers Lawn Bowls Club and municipal

greenhouses. Municipal heritage staff therefore advise that based on the information provided to date, and with protection of the fence and trees, that installation of the proposed temporary stadium is acceptable and can be approved by the Heritage Officer without the need for either review by the Heritage Advisory Committee or approval by Regional Council.

#### Site Design and Visual Integration

Based on previous events, the Wanderers Grounds can accommodate the proposed seating as well as required support services. The placement of temporary tiers of seating does raise questions about the visual appearance of the site especially when viewed from public spaces outside of the existing perimeter fence. This concern is magnified given the heritage and cultural associations of the site and the Common. Further details will be required on the proposed seating tiers, and consideration given to their appearance as well as placement of supporting infrastructure. Some measures to help integrate the seating into the site may be possible, such as murals or some form of screen to be mounted on the rear of the stands facing streets. These design considerations will be addressed as part of the negotiation of an agreement with SEA.

#### HRM Alcohol Policy

Administrative Order 53, the Municipal Alcohol Policy, provides a framework under which the sale and service of alcohol on HRM properties can be considered in certain circumstances. The key goals of the policy are to reduce the exposure of children and youth to alcohol, and to promote responsible drinking. The policy lists HRM properties and facilities where alcohol sales and consumption are permitted within certain parameters. The Wanderers Grounds is listed as such a facility and, as such, events there can serve alcohol if a Special Events License has been issued by the Province. Therefore, the placement of concessions that sell alcohol is permissible on the site in conjunction with a temporary stadium and in accordance with provincial liquor licensing laws.

The Municipal Alcohol Policy also outlines regulations and restrictions with respect to advertising related to alcohol, including limiting the placement of alcohol advertising to areas designated in a Special Events License. SEA has indicated that sponsorship and naming rights are a significant component of their business case. Any advertising planned for the site would have to be in accordance with those regulations.

#### HRM Sale of Naming Rights Policy

Administrative Order 56, *Respecting HRM Sale of Naming Rights* (AO 56), provides a sponsorship framework whereby private sector funding to support and promote investment in HRM owned assets can be accessed in exchange for naming rights for a set duration of time. The policy applies to all HRM owned facilities including those operated by third parties and has been used on several occasions (BMO Centre, Scotiabank Centre, Emera Oval). A valuation of the proposed naming is required, and the negotiation of an appropriate fee.

SEA has asked for the ability to have naming rights for the temporary stadium., and this could be considered under AO 56. However, the funds received through the sale of naming rights would be used by HRM for infrastructure, and are typically re-invested in the facility being named. The policy does not apply to the naming of events, such as a sporting event. Pursuant to AO 56, a report on naming rights to the stadium is required to come back to Regional Council for approval, should the stadium proposal advance.

SEA has asked for the ability to have naming rights for the temporary stadium. However, this would be inconsistent with AO 56 and HRM's general approach the sale of naming rights. Staff note that there is no issue with private sponsorship that is associated with individual events and therefore suggest that this be the way in which sponsorship be addressed.

#### **Recommended Arrangement**



The concept of hosting a professional soccer team on the Wanderers Grounds for a trial period has considerable merit. However, the mechanism as initially proposed by SEA whereby that organization would lease the facility and have full control over maintenance, concessions, naming rights, revenue, and booking by other sports groups is not appropriate. Notwithstanding the legislative framework of the site within the historic Halifax Common, this proposed lease arrangement would reduce municipal control of the field and its infrastructure and is therefore not in keeping with the 1994 Common Plan or the property's status as a park: HRM requires a strong management position that allows the municipality to balance the needs of SEA and a professional soccer team with those of the broader community. On that basis, there is an alternative that enables the soccer franchise based on an alternative framework as outlined in Table 2. This will require detailed discussions with SEA in order to determine if the soccer team proposal is still viable. In addition, staff advise that prior to entering into any agreement with SEA that it is prudent to monitor the proposed Soccer Nova Scotia event in September to determine if there are any unforeseen or unacceptable impacts on either the site or the local community.

Table 2: Key Terms and Conditions

HRM continues to maintain direct control and management of the facility.
HRM to enter into a rental agreement at market value with preferential bookings for SEA for soccer league-mandated dates for a period of 3 years, to a maximum of 14 events per year each of which must end by 11 pm
HRM has full control over the booking of the Wanderers Grounds for other groups.
HRM continues to maintain the field, and would commit to keep the playing surface in a condition that meets league standards. Alternatively, field maintenance could be a shared responsibility.
SEA would provide the stadium seating with appropriate insurance coverage, with the ability for the seating to be available for use at HRM's discretion during all events on the field.
Rental agreement between HRM and SEA would permit SEA to install and operate temporary structures on the site for concessions purposes, including alcohol sales in accordance with the Municipal Alcohol Policy, during soccer games or other events.

With the arrangement for SEA to bring in seating to the field, HRM would continue to provide access to community sports groups at nominal rates. For other events that might be ticketed and include spectators, a new level of facility rental rates would be adopted to reflect availability of seating.

#### New Halifax Common Plan

HRM is initiating a review of the current Halifax Common Plan. Questions regarding the eventual desired use of Wanderers Grounds will be included as part of this project. Work on the project has already been initiated and public consultation is expected to commence this summer and extend into the fall.

The temporary nature of the seating does not predetermine any ultimate use of the Wanderers Ground. Rather, it provides a trial period under which HRM can assess the desirability of such a facility either at the Wanderers Grounds, or an alternative location.

#### Conclusion

There is merit in negotiating an agreement with SEA to permit placement of temporary seating on the Wanderer's Grounds, subject to the terms and conditions outlined in this report. The provision of seating and hosting of events at the Wanderers Grounds is a traditional use of this area of the Commons. Any potential impacts regarding matters such as noise and traffic are viewed as normal for this area and can be addressed through event management.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under the recommended key terms and conditions, the costs to install the temporary seating and amenities would be the responsibility of SEA, along with a license fee for the use of HRM land. HRM would receive revenues from the booking of the space by both SEA and other users. Funding to maintain the site is currently included in HRM operating budget and any increased maintenance requirements would be addressed through the negotiation of costs for SEA to use the property..

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are no significant risks associated with the recommended key terms and conditions for an agreement with SEA to install temporary seating on the Wanderer's Grounds. The risks considered rate Low. To reach this conclusion, consideration was given to operational, financial, strategic and reputational risks.

The key terms and conditions have been recommended in order to address some of the risks which would be associated with the original SEA proposal.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement has been held on this matter to date although numerous written submissions have been received, with mixed positions. The Friends of the Halifax Common state that HRM cannot legally lease the site to SEA and that the proposed use is inconsistent with the 1994 Common Plan and the intent to maintain public access to all Common lands. Other points raised relate to the need to limiting private use of the Common to temporary events, potential noise impacts on the Public Gardens and residential uses, increased traffic, and sufficiency of parking.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environment implications.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

- Alternative 1: Regional Council may choose to direct staff to enter into an agreement to lease the Wanderers Grounds as initially proposed by SEA. For reasons that are outlined in this report, there are significant risks associated with this and it is therefore not recommended.
- Alternative 2: Regional Council may choose to not consider the proposal from SEA to host a professional soccer team on the Wanderers Grounds on any terms.
- Alternative 3: Regional Council may choose to direct staff to negotiate an agreement with SEA and return to Regional Council. This is not recommended due to timeline required to confirm the use of the site for the professional soccer team.
- Alternative 4: Regional Council may defer entering into an agreement until following the completion of consultation on the Halifax Common Master Plan. This is not recommended due to timeline required to confirm the use of the site for a potential professional soccer team.
- Alternative 5: Regional Council may direct staff to seek alternate sites that may be appropriate to accommodate the proposal. This is not recommended as SEA has advised that only the Wanderers Grounds is suitable for the initial 3 year period.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Map 1: Wanderers Grounds and Surrounding Area  
Attachment 1: Proposal by Sports Entertainment Atlantic  
Attachment 2: Rendering of Proposed Stadium

---

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Mitch Dickey MCIP LPP, Policy Coordinator, Parks, Recreation & Community Services  
902.292.3207

---

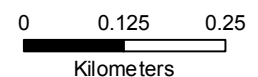


**Map 1 - Location Map**

Produced by Parks and Recreation  
Policy and Planning

- Parcels
- HRM Parks
- Historic Common Boundary

**HALIFAX**



The accuracy of any representation on  
this plan is not guaranteed.



March 24, 2017

ITEM 10.1.1

Councillor Wayne Mason  
Chair  
Community Planning and Economic Development Committee  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
PO Box 1749  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 3A5

Councillor Mason,

Thank you for the opportunity to present our plan for a "Pop-Up" Stadium at the Wanderers Grounds to the members of the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee.

As outlined in the presentation, Sports & Entertainment Atlantic is proposing the following:

1. S|E|A wants to return the Wanderers Grounds to its historical position as THE outdoor sports and entertainment hub for Halifax and leverage the investment the city is already making in the field surface.
2. S|E|A will assume all costs associated with the installation and management of a temporary 6,000 capacity stadium structure for a 3-year term, with an option for S|E|A to renew for an additional 3 years.
3. S|E|A will secure a professional soccer team and pursue additional events for the city of Halifax to be hosted at the venue.
4. S|E|A will provide community access to the Wanderers Grounds field in a manner consistent with the current rental policy.

We welcome the opportunity to work with HRM staff to complete a report for the consideration of Regional Council and look forward to adding a valuable new asset to our wonderful city.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

Derek Martin  
President  
Sports & Entertainment Atlantic



# REVIVING THE WANDERERS GROUNDS



## An Opportunity to Add Another Community Asset





## The Wanderers Grounds – An Ideal Location





## The History of the Wanderers Grounds



# The Wanderers Grounds Parking – 2,639 spaces within 500 meters



Star	Place	Location	# of Spaces	Type of Parking
★	NS Museum of Natural History	Summer St.	48 + 2 wheelchair accessible	Not covered
★	QEII Lot 3	Summer St.	30 spaces	Not covered
★	QEII Lot 2	Summer St.	10 spaces	Not covered
★	Veteran's Memorial Building	Veterans Memorial Lane	292	Underground
★	QEII Health Sciences Centre	1901 Robie St.	671	Parkade
★		Sackville St. Parkade	45	Not covered
★	Parkade	Abern Ave./ Bell Rd.	130	Not covered
★	Citadel High School	Bell Rd/ Abern Ave.	104 + 9 wheelchair accessible	Not covered
★	Park Lane Mall	Amundale St.	440 spaces	Parkade
★	City Centre Atlantic	1535 Dresden Row	200 spaces	Parkade
★	Universal Properties	1531 South Park St.	300 spaces	Parkade
★	Imperix	5991 Spring Garden	215	Underground
★	Pavilion	South Park St.	Unknown	Unknown

Line	Location	Spaces	
—	Sackville St.	27	Metered
—	Summer St.	59	Metered
—	Spring Garden Rd.	34	Metered
—	South Park St.	21	Metered
—	Abern Ave.	Unknown	Free
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,639 + Pavilion &amp; Abern Free Parking</b>	



# Scotiabank Centre Parking – 1,807 spaces within 500 meters



Star	Place	Location
★	Scotia Square	2000 Barrington St.

Line	Location	Spots
—	Brunswick Street	32
—	Carmichael Street	10
—	Argyle Street	16
—	Albemarle Street	30
—	Market Street	6
Total:		1,807





# Outdoor Sports & Entertainment Opportunities

---

## **Soccer**

- Soccer is the global game, the global language.
- More countries in FIFA then there are in the UN.
- Over 400,000 youth registered in the Canadian Soccer Association - 25,000 registered in Nova Scotia, 2/3 in HRM
- 100,000 fans attend the games and the MLS finals were watched by over 1.5 million in Canada.
- Lack of summer competition in the sport and entertainment landscape.
- 3,000 season ticket target. 15 regular season games from May-October
- Single game ticket prices from \$10 - \$35

## **Rugby + Other Field Sports + Concerts**

Rugby has a strong and vibrant core fan base, proven by the sell-out crowd for our "Battle for New Scotland" test event featuring Rugby Canada vs the Glasgow Warriors. We see tremendous opportunities to host national and international events in Halifax such as the Women's World Rugby Seven Series. Additional field sport event opportunities would be Field Lacrosse, Ultimate Frisbee. Through our research we also believe there is a gap in the marketplace for a 2,500 – 5,000 seat music venue and we believe our stadium infrastructure would provide Halifax with an outdoor, seated concert venue.



# SIEIA PROPOSAL



- SIEIA will assume all costs associated with the installation of a temporary 6,000 capacity stadium for a 3 year term with option to renew for an additional 3 years.
- SIEIA will assume all liability for the temporary infrastructure and provide engineer approval for all temporary structures.
- SIEIA will assume all costs associated with the management of the facility and control all marketing/ sponsorship assets.
- SIEIA will continue to provide access to the field for the community through field rentals, when available.
- SIEIA will secure a professional soccer team and pursue additional events for the City of Halifax to be hosted at the venue.



## The Pop-Up Stadium Concept





# The Stadium at the Wanderers Grounds



# The Stadium at the Wanderers Grounds





## The Stadium at the Wanderers Grounds



# Community Support

**NOVA SCOTIA**  
 Communities, Culture and Heritage  
 Office of the Deputy Minister

For more information  
 call 902-424-6666 or  
 visit us online at  
 novascotia.ca

For more information  
 call 902-424-6666 or  
 visit us online at  
 novascotia.ca

HALIFAX, N.S.

Mr. Derek Martin  
 President  
 Sports & Entertainment Atlantic  
 1000 Spring Garden Rd.  
 Halifax, Nova Scotia  
 B3H 2C4

Dear Mr. Martin:

I would like to thank you for sharing with me your vision for re-vitalizing the Halifax waterfront sports grounds and creating a professional soccer team in Nova Scotia. The potential economic, sport, and culture benefits that a premier venue for hosting events in the heart of Halifax could have for the city and province are exciting.

A new venue will add to Halifax's capacity to host regional, national and international field sport events. Hosting major events brings a positive economic impact that sport tourism and provides opportunities to showcase the city and the province to national and international audiences. A professional team has the potential to inspire young soccer players and create new opportunities for Nova Scotia's to pursue high performance sport.

The Province of Nova Scotia is supportive of Sports & Entertainment Atlantic's efforts to partner with the City of Halifax to revitalize the Halifax waterfront sports grounds. I wish you the best of luck with this initiative.

Sincerely,

Tracy Tavel  
 Deputy Minister



**SOCCER**  
 ATLANTIC

Executive Director  
 1700 Spring Garden Rd.  
 Halifax, NS, B3H 2C4  
 902-424-6666 or  
 novascotia.ca

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

Dear Mr. Martin:

We are very excited and honoured of your efforts to revitalize the Halifax waterfront sports grounds. The revitalization of waterfront grounds will provide a exciting new area that would serve the area as a professional soccer team in Halifax.

A new venue will add to Halifax's capacity to host regional, national and international field sport events. Hosting major events brings a positive economic impact that sport tourism and provides opportunities to showcase the city and the province to national and international audiences. A professional team has the potential to inspire young soccer players and create new opportunities for Nova Scotia's to pursue high performance sport.

The Province of Nova Scotia is supportive of Sports & Entertainment Atlantic's efforts to partner with the City of Halifax to revitalize the Halifax waterfront sports grounds. I wish you the best of luck with this initiative.

Sincerely,

Tracy Tavel  
 Deputy Minister

**RUGBY**  
 NOVA SCOTIA  
 1000 Spring Garden Rd.  
 Halifax, Nova Scotia  
 B3H 2C4

To Whom It May Concern:

Rugby Nova Scotia would like to formally voice our support for the redevelopment of the waterfront grounds in Halifax, as a multi-use (rugby included) outdoor facility as proposed by Sports & Entertainment Atlantic. The waterfront grounds was originally a rugby facility and we would fully support the redevelopment of the site into a modern facility, capable of hosting multiple events in the heart of the city.

The Olympic Women's rugby vs Canada in 2017 drew more than 4,000 fans and was a success despite the bad weather at the time. A facility built on this proposed development would allow for similar events to be hosted in Halifax in the future.

We support this development for the above reasons.

Bob Hensley  
 Rugby Nova Scotia  
 Provincial Coach

Don Cowie  
 Rugby Nova Scotia  
 President



# Community Support



## Halifax Wanderers SG

@Wanderers\_SG FOLLOWS YOU

Chan eil a h-uile fheadhainn a tha a' dol air seachran air chail #CanPL first East Coast supporters group.

📍 Halhwood, Halifornia

📅 Joined September 2016

TWEETS 120 FOLLOWING 113 FOLLOWERS 297 LIKES 107

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

Pinned Tweet



Halifax Wanderers SG @Wanderers\_SG · Mar 11

2nd mtg of Halifax Wanderers soccer supporters group—another success. N scarves! #CanPL 🇨🇦🔥

Do you think a pro soccer team in Halifax is viable?

Yes 86% (436 votes)



No 14% (71 votes)



Total Votes: 507

Like Share 361

Tweet

Comments (0) Return To Poll

Create Your Own Poll



# Proposal Summary



1. SIEA wants to return the Wanderers Grounds to its historical position as THE outdoor sports & entertainment hub for Halifax and leverage the investment the city is already making in the field surface.
2. SIEA will assume all costs associated with the installation and management of a temporary 6,000 capacity stadium structure for a 3 year term, with an option to renew for an additional 3 years.
3. SIEA will secure a professional soccer team and pursue additional events for the city of Halifax to be hosted at the venue.
4. SIEA will provide community access to the Wanderers Grounds field in a manner consistent with the current rental policy





Thank You





Attachment 2 Rendering of Proposed Stadium

