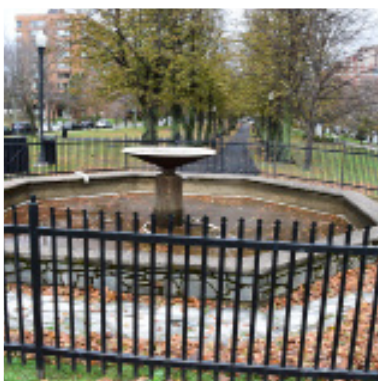


APPENDIX B

Background Report

This document contains preliminary background information that was prepared in 2018. It may not include information that was further considered in the development of the Halifax Common Master Plan.



HALIFAX COMMON MASTER PLANNING BACKGROUND REPORT

JANUARY 30, 2018

Prepared for:

HALIFAX



UPLAND

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Since 1763, the Common has been at the heart of civic life in Halifax. It is a special historic and contemporary place, recognized for its facilities and open space, and is much valued by the community. It has a long history that contributes to the unique identity of the region. Since its earliest occupation by Mi'kmaq people, to the establishment of defined boundaries and regulation of use by the later authorities, the form, function and variety of activities that take place there have undergone constant evolution, to continuously be a relevant public space “for the use” of the people.

Originally established outside the defended core of the old Halifax settlement, it was intended as common pastureland for the use of all citizens. Today, it is viewed as public parkland that serves the active and passive recreational needs of local neighbours and other residents from outside the immediate surrounding area. It contains a wide range of facilities for organized recreational activities and importantly contains the largest area of open green space in the core area. The current collection of significant heritage resources includes archaeological evidence, buildings, structures and landscape features that attest to different eras of civic activities in Halifax. As the needs and philosophies of public service changed with each era that came and went, the priorities of the time were expressed in the landscape of the Common. The resultant diversity of uses contributes to a vibrant and bustling city centre.

As pressures for use mount, the time has come, in our current contemporary context, to ask how the Halifax Common can best serve the public. Are our shared values being reflected in the policies, uses and spatial design? What are those values? Who is the Common for? Are certain groups of people inadvertently being excluded from their full enjoyment of the Common? What can be done to create a place that is fully inclusive and forges better community relationships?

1 INTRODUCTION



The historic city plans from 1878 show the streets and neighbourhoods that define the boundary of the northern and central sections of the Common.

(1878 Hopkins City Halifax Atlas Plate S and P)

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING

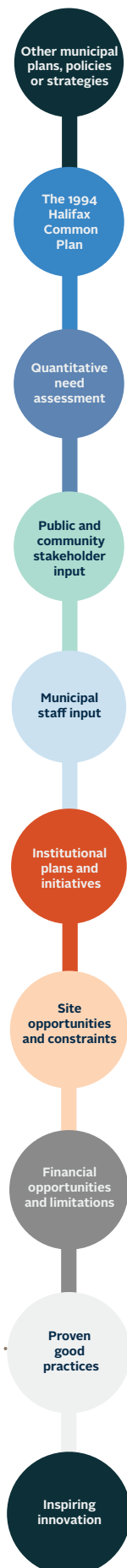


SITE

The Halifax Common Master Plan will be a blueprint for realizing improvements to the Common that are extremely valuable to the quality of civic life and recreation in Halifax. This is not a set of hypothetical ideas for potential new features; it is action strategy for revitalizing an essential public space, both in the short and long term. The deliverables will be financially realistic, with feasible steps to implementation that reflect the resources and limitations of the HRM, community groups and stakeholders, while also presenting an inspiring future for the Common.

There are many ways to analyze the future of the Common, and each lens is as important as another. The Master Plan process requires attention to layers of other strategic policies and directives of the HRM, the plans of major stakeholder institutions, site opportunities and constraints, quantitative needs assessment, proven practices, inspiring or emerging innovations and the opinions of the public. Additionally, the Master Plan process needs to involve points of view from a wide range of disciplines, from heritage, to aquatics, to architecture. In order to realize the best possible outcomes these various interests and ambitions need to be balanced. This Background Report is the first step in clarifying those layers of input, and setting the stage for the Master Plan itself.

The factors contributing to the Master Plan.



1.1 THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

There have been a number of trends throughout the history of the Halifax Common, and contemporary changes, that are important factors underlying the need for, and development of the Master Plan.

For The Public

Although the interpretation of what constitutes the best interest of the public evolves, it has been a driving force behind many of the changes to the Halifax Common. From noble institutions like churches, hospitals, schools, and a cemetery, to the humble necessities of streets, public works buildings, and even a trash dump, The Halifax Common has continually served the needs of the “commoner”. The Public Gardens, hospitals, schools, playing fields, and many other features are reflections of the priorities and lifestyles held among Haligonians at different times.

Open Versus Developed

These early good intentions for the public required sacrifice of open, public and green spaces, the loss of which would have felt worthy to most 150 years ago. So much of the Common was allotted as roadways, institutions and private residences. Today, as the urban centre continues to densify, open space becomes increasingly precious, and new developments are increasingly driven by the recreation and leisure functions of open space that the public desire.

Winds of Opportunity

Since the post-war era, the delivery of recreation infrastructure and programming has been a collaboration between community groups, sport organizations, and local government. In the mid and late 1900s funding for improvements largely came from community fundraising and small municipal budgets, with periodic windfalls, such as the Canada Games or Canada Centennial. In the contemporary context partnership with the private sector has also become relevant, to fund new investments and to deliver major public events.

1.2 TRENDS AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGES

Increased Recreation

Since the 1994 plan, the Halifax Common has informally grown to be a place that occasionally plays host to large crowds, for well-attended events and concerts. The Emera Skating Oval and the skatepark are relatively new permanent infrastructure, highly used by the community, and a seasonal stadium at the Wanderers Grounds is on the horizon. Although there are certainly many benefits from these uses and facilities, there is also a risk of eroding the open space or public place functions. This risk can be interpreted in different ways, and most challenging for decision makers, is the lack of clear direction about these types of opportunities. Clarity is needed about the appropriate balance between divergent uses, as well as understanding about what is deemed an acceptable use, and what is not.

Community and Solitude

As the early inhabitants of Halifax watched over their flocks at the Common, we can assume they spent time convening with community, connecting with their neighbours and acquaintances, discussing issues of the day and matters of life and livelihood. Or perhaps it was a time for quiet reflection and solitude in a busy day of work, taking in the sunset. Today, citizens head to the Common to experience the very same moments. Although the catalyst has changed from feeding sheep to chatting at a softball game or taking a solo spin around the skating oval, the Common still plays a huge role in bringing people together and providing a retreat. As a special and “forever” public space, it will continue to serve these social and personal purposes.

9000BP: For many centuries, the Mi'kmaq people occupied the Halifax area in a dynamic relationship to the land. The area known today as the Common, with its waterways and wetlands, was used for fishing and hunting, as well as ceremonial and overnight sites.

500BP - 1800: As European settlement progressed, Mi'kmaq continued to live in and around the area. Mi'kmaq ways of life were significantly impacted, and by the 19th century they had been pushed to the margins of colonial society.

1760-1763: Two hundred and thirty-five acres of land for a common was surveyed and granted “for the use of the inhabitants of the town of Halifax as Common for ever” The original Common grant was land was on undeveloped, largely swampy land west of the city. The Common was intended for pastureland and was a source of firewood.

mid 1760's: The North Common became home to a horse racetrack.

late 1700s: The wars and conflicts brought many British soldiers and loyalists to Halifax, and the Common was used for temporary encampments on the slopes of Camp Hill (now the QEII Health Sciences Centre and Common Roots Urban Farm).

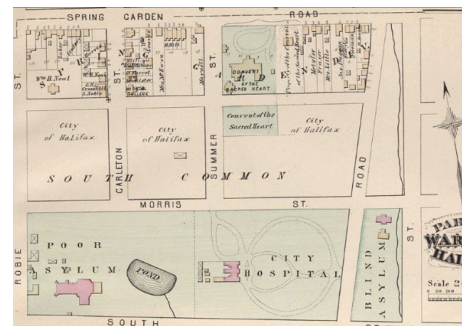
1800 - 1835: Separate interests influenced the Halifax Common. The British Military had dominion over the north part of the Common for use as exercise grounds prohibiting any activity, regulation or rule that would impede the use of the land by the troops. By 1897 contentions between the City of Halifax and the Commander in Chief came to a head over temporary gospel and circus tents erected within the 1800' buffer zone from the Citadel. It wasn't until after WWI that the military conceded that the North Common was no longer needed for the defense of Halifax.



Hibbert Newton Binney's watercolour of a Mi'kmaq encampment in Dartmouth c. 1812.



Wetlands (purple) and streams (blue) on Charles Blaskowitz's 1784 map, based on research and analysis by Mike Reid, 2012. The approximate location of the Common is bounded in red.



Hopkins' 1878 map of the South Common, showing the institutions along the south and private buildings along Spring Garden Road.

1.3 TIMELINE OF HISTORIC AND RECENT EVENTS

1818: New trustees brought new ideas with hopes to improve conditions of the Common, including the construction of Spring Garden Road and private leases of property on the north and south of the street to fund clearing, draining and filling of some portions of land.

1835 - 1865: The first institutions were built, including the Convent of the Sacred Heart and the City Hospital. Camp Hill Cemetery was also established.

1847: After a few years of incremental land allotment, the Horticulture Garden was amalgamated with the city garden creating the Halifax Public Gardens known today.

1851: A Committee of the Common was established and began tackling improvements with clearing, draining and filling in portions for use as gardens, horse races and military reviews.

Late 1800s: Institutional development continued to evolve on the South Common, including the Poor House and Asylum for the Blind. Land was leased to Wanderer's Amateur Athletic Club, and over many years of modifications, Freshwater Brook was channeled through underground pipes, becoming a sewer. Griffin's Pond located in the Public Gardens is the only part of the water system that is visible today.

1818: A portion of the Halifax Common was parceled into 51 half-acres lots to be leased to private citizens around Spring Garden Road.

1863: A covered skating rink opened in the Horticultural Gardens. This rink was initially accessible only to members and it was demolished in 1889.

1871: Formerly leased lands on Spring Garden Road were commuted, to encourage development and limit costs to the public.

1874: The city's garden and the Horticultural Gardens were amalgamated creating the Halifax Public Gardens known today.



Hopkins' 1878 map of the Common north of Spring Garden Road.



The interior of the Exhibition Building show the rink during rest of the year..



The exterior of the Exhibition Building on Tower Road.

1879: A publicly accessible rink was opened in the Exhibition Building on the main floor. This large room was also used for exhibiting displays, agricultural exhibits, craft shows, carnivals, concerts and events in the fall, summer and spring. In the winter the space was used as a public skating rink, where ice dancing, carnivals and masquerades were held. But it was short lived, and in 1906 the property was sold to the St. Luke's congregation for the construction of the All Saints Cathedral.

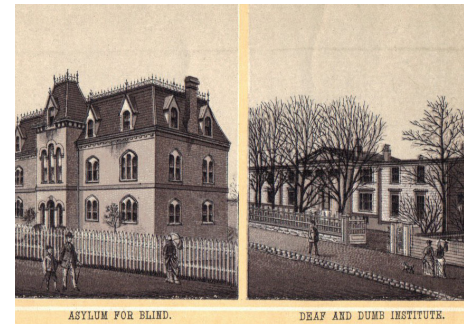
1886: Dalhousie University was granted land on the South Common in trade for the existing Dalhousie building, now the Halifax City Hall. In the same year, land is leased to "Wanderer's Amateur Athletic Club."

1897: Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee attracted about fifteen thousand people who crowded around the big square on the North Common.

1898: Earliest reference to Victoria Park appears in city minutes. By the early to mid-20th Century various statues and fountains added to the park. These include the Robbie Burns statue, Sir Walter Scott Statue and William Alexander Monument.

Early 1900s: The Halifax City Works Shops were located on Bell Road; the main building was transferred to the Halifax Junior Bengal Lancers in the '30s. The barn is now a municipally registered heritage property.

1890's to 1930's: – Egg Pond (now the skate park) was a popular location for boating and water play. It was improved with a stone retaining wall, boathouse and canteen. The Central Common was also a popular children's play space with swing sets.



The original building of the Halifax School for the Blind (left) viewed from Morris Street (today University Avenue) in an illustrated souvenir booklet from the late 1880s.



Keating's 1880 map of private lots at the south end of the Common.



Ruger's 1879 Panoramic View of the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia, north at right, showing military exercises at the North Common and the various institutions present at the south end of the Common.

1917: The Military used portions of the North Common as temporary accommodation and opened Camp Hill Hospital, during the Great War. These accommodations were expanded to accommodate citizens displaced by the Halifax Explosion.

1940s: Queen Elizabeth High School was built at the corner of Robie Street and Bell Road, on the area formerly known as Camp Hill, and the Halifax Country Vocational School was built soon after, on the current Citadel High site.

1970s: Older institutional buildings on the South Common were demolished, and multiple new medical buildings are constructed. In the central Common, the Museum of Natural History was built, replacing public works garages and sheds.

1960s: Pathways, landscaping and the softball fields were built on the North Common, and on the Central Common, the outdoor swimming and wading pools were constructed just north of the Egg Pond.

1967: The Centennial fountain was installed on the North Common to celebrate Canada's one hundredth birthday.

1969: The baseball diamond on the Central Common was built for the 1969 Canada Games.

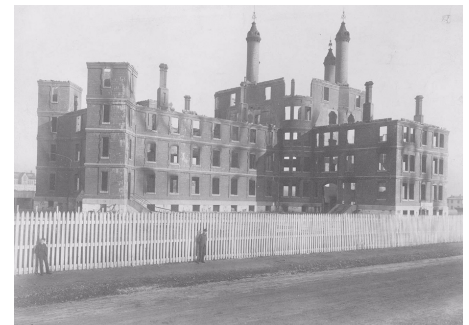
1984: Pope John Paul II visits Halifax for a youth gathering on the Common.

1992-1994: Through public consultation the City of Halifax develops a Plan for the Halifax Common. It is approved as a guiding document for decisions regarding the Common.

1990s: The existing Halifax Infirmary was built.



Temporary housing constructed by the Halifax Relief Commission at Bell Road and North Park Street following the Halifax Explosion



Ruins of the Poor House taken 2 years after the November 1882 "Midnight Fire", in January 1884.



Photograph of the Egg Pond dated to roughly 1923. Note the stone retaining wall with a north-facing opening directed towards an unidentified building. The later combination boat house and canteen would be built just out of frame to the right.

2000s: The North Common undergoes changes, with new lighting and maintenance, and installation of the skating oval. Common Roots Urban Farm was introduced, and two roundabouts were constructed.

2006: The Rolling Stones rock the Common. Then came Paul McCartney, KISS, Keith Urban, and the Black-Eyed Peas.

2008: The land for the QEII high school was traded to the Province for expansion of the hospitals. In return, the municipality got land on Spring Garden Road for the Halifax Central Library. Currently the Common Roots Urban Farm operates on the site now owned by the NS Health Authority.

2008: The Halifax Vocational School was demolished in 2005 and made way for Citadel High School. The Bengal Lancers corral was relocated across the street beside the Natural History Museum.

2010: Queen Elizabeth II visits the North Common to take part in the Mi'kmaq cultural event marking the 400th anniversary of the baptism of Grand Chief Henri Membertou.

2011: A temporary long-track speed skating oval built on the North Common for the Canada Winter Games

2012 to 2014: Public campaign to "Save the Oval" swayed Regional Council to make the skating oval a permanent venue. Subsequent years saw the construction of a plaza and Oval pavilion building.

2014-2016: North Park's intersections were improved with the construction of modern roundabouts. The street renewal included new paths, plazas entrances, lighting, public art and landscaping on the Common.



Some of the pathways that still remain from the 1969 Canada Games, seen to the right is the baseball diamond built for the games, and to the left new tennis courts.



The Halifax Common Centennial Fountain - Built for Canada's 100th Birthday.



The Common Roots Urban Farm is now operating on the site owned by the NS Health Authority.

2017: Canada 150 celebrations were held on the North Common attracting one of the largest crowds for Canada Day. The event included a free concert headlining DeadMau5.

2017: The Halifax Public Gardens extend their hours over the Winter.



The Emera skating oval is a very active destination on the North Common, Drawing thousands of visitors all year long.



Canada 150 celebrations on the North Common



The Halifax Public Gardens are extending their opening hours over winter for the first time in 2017/18.

In order to plan for the future of the Halifax Common, it is important that future changes respect the past layers of activity and exemplify current best practices for heritage conservation. The purpose of this section is to create a comprehensive understanding of the Common's history and to assess the current resources to determine their heritage value and significance. This information is an important initial phase in the work that will ultimately include the selection of the appropriate Conservation treatment or combination of treatments from a range of possible approaches, Preservation, Restoration or Rehabilitation.

2 CULTURAL AND HERITAGE RESOURCES

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Second Edition 2011, by Parks Canada, assists in providing information about conservation strategies. This document was produced in collaboration with the territories and provinces, including Nova Scotia and has now been adopted by most authorities as an important summary of best practices in heritage conservation.

The recommended approach expressed in this document is the basis for this report and for the continuing recommendations for the care of this important historic place.

There are several key definitions in the document that are relevant to the planning for the Halifax Common.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Conservation: all actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of an historic place so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. This may involve preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or a combination of these actions or processes.

Preservation: the action or process of protecting, maintaining, and/or stabilizing the existing materials, form, and integrity of an historic place, or of an individual component, while protecting its heritage value.

Rehabilitation: the action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of an historic place, or an individual component, while protecting its heritage value.

Restoration: the action or process of accurately revealing, recovering or representing the state of an historic place, or of an individual component, as it appeared at a particular period in its history, while protecting its heritage value.

2.1 STANDARDS, GUIDELINES AND DEFINITIONS

The term, Conservation, is concerned with safeguarding the heritage resources that have been evaluated and found to have value or significance. Most people associate heritage conservation with Preservation or Restoration. However, the term Conservation is inclusive of several treatments or interventions and the choice of the appropriate treatment is determined by the physical nature, significance and integrity of the heritage fabric. Preservation is primarily retaining the existing use and form of the heritage resources and not allowing further significant changes. Restoration involves returning the heritage resource to an earlier condition using documentation rather than speculation as a guide for work. Rehabilitation is an approach that incorporates changes for new uses in such a way that the original heritage resources and their values are safeguarded while giving the historic place a new and continued life.

The goal of these approaches used separately or in combination, is to ensure that the physical evidence of past activities is protected and retained. In addition to safeguarding the heritage values associated with the physical evidence, Conservation requires that intangible heritage values are also identified, respected and interpreted for the public.

Preservation and Restoration approaches are appropriate when the original use of the historic place has remained unchanged or where the new use requires only minimal modification to accommodate a new use. Rehabilitation is an appropriate treatment when the historic use has ended or when new uses require major changes in order to be accommodated. Rehabilitation requires a full understanding of the heritage resources and their values in order that planned changes are sensitive to these values.

This report section includes an assessment of the variety of the heritage resources on the Common and based on their heritage value and integrity, make recommendations for the appropriate Conservation treatment that should form the basis for decision making regarding their care and maintenance.

.....

CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada contains an overall definition of a Cultural Heritage Landscape and the different types: designed, evolved (including relict and continuing) and associative.

Cultural landscape: Any geographical area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people.

Designed cultural landscapes were intentionally created by human beings;

Organically evolved cultural landscapes developed in response to social, economic, administrative or religious forces interacting with the natural environment. They fall into two sub-categories:

- Relict landscapes in which an evolutionary process came to an end. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form;
- Continuing landscapes in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. They exhibit significant material evidence of their evolution over time;

Associative cultural landscapes are distinguished by the power of their spiritual, artistic or cultural associations, rather than their surviving material evidence.

In addition to this definition, the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act of 1989 Amended in 2010 also contains a definition of cultural landscape. It is defined as “a distinct geographical area or property, uniquely representing the combined work of nature and of people”.

According to this definition, the Common is an excellent example of a large scale Cultural Heritage Landscape having a boundary defined by the street pattern, showing evidence of human activity over time and is valued by the community.

It is in general a continually evolving cultural heritage landscape with two subcomponents; Camp Hill Cemetery and the Halifax Public Gardens National Historic Site, that are considered examples of smaller scale Designed Cultural Landscapes since they have been deliberately laid out according to well known design principles.

CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS

A character-defining element may also be known as a heritage attribute. The term refers to the key components of the inventory phase of planning work, the identification and evaluation of the variety of resources that have heritage value and that must be protected in the heritage conservation planning work.

Character-Defining elements: The materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of an historic place, which must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Standards and Guidelines contain a definition of Heritage Value that encompasses several components. Using the terminology included in the definition, it is possible to identify and describe the variety of criteria that may be used to determine heritage significance and thus their Conservation requirements. In practice, heritage value may exist for many reasons, the design, form or materials of the physical resources, the historical associations relating to the historic place or the contribution the heritage resources make to the context or setting.

Heritage value: The aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present or future generations. The heritage value of an historic place is embodied in its character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings.

Heritage values may be tangible, based on the architecture or landscape features of the historic place or intangible, values attributed to the historic place but without any physical evidence. These values are conserved when they are commemorated and interpreted for the public. An example of an intangible heritage value is associated with the Halifax



The formal design includes the diverse tree collection and ornamental beds accented by architectural elements.

Public Gardens National Historic Site, a prominent part of the Common. The Public Gardens have been preserved through the management and maintenance work that protects the architecture, form, layout and features of the original Victorian display garden. The integration of visitor amenities in the Public Garden has been planned so that the overall character of the site is not impaired.

The public continues to enjoy the picturesque composition of the ornamental gardens and structures, the heritage resources that remain essentially unchanged since the Public Gardens were first created. The intangible value of the Public Gardens is its representation of the nineteenth century spirit of global exploration and scientific experimentation that contributed to dramatic social changes and economic prosperity throughout Canada. These changes were a result of the introduction of new plants, their improvement through plant breeding and their use in horticulture and agriculture. The Public Gardens convey the Victorian approach to improving nature.

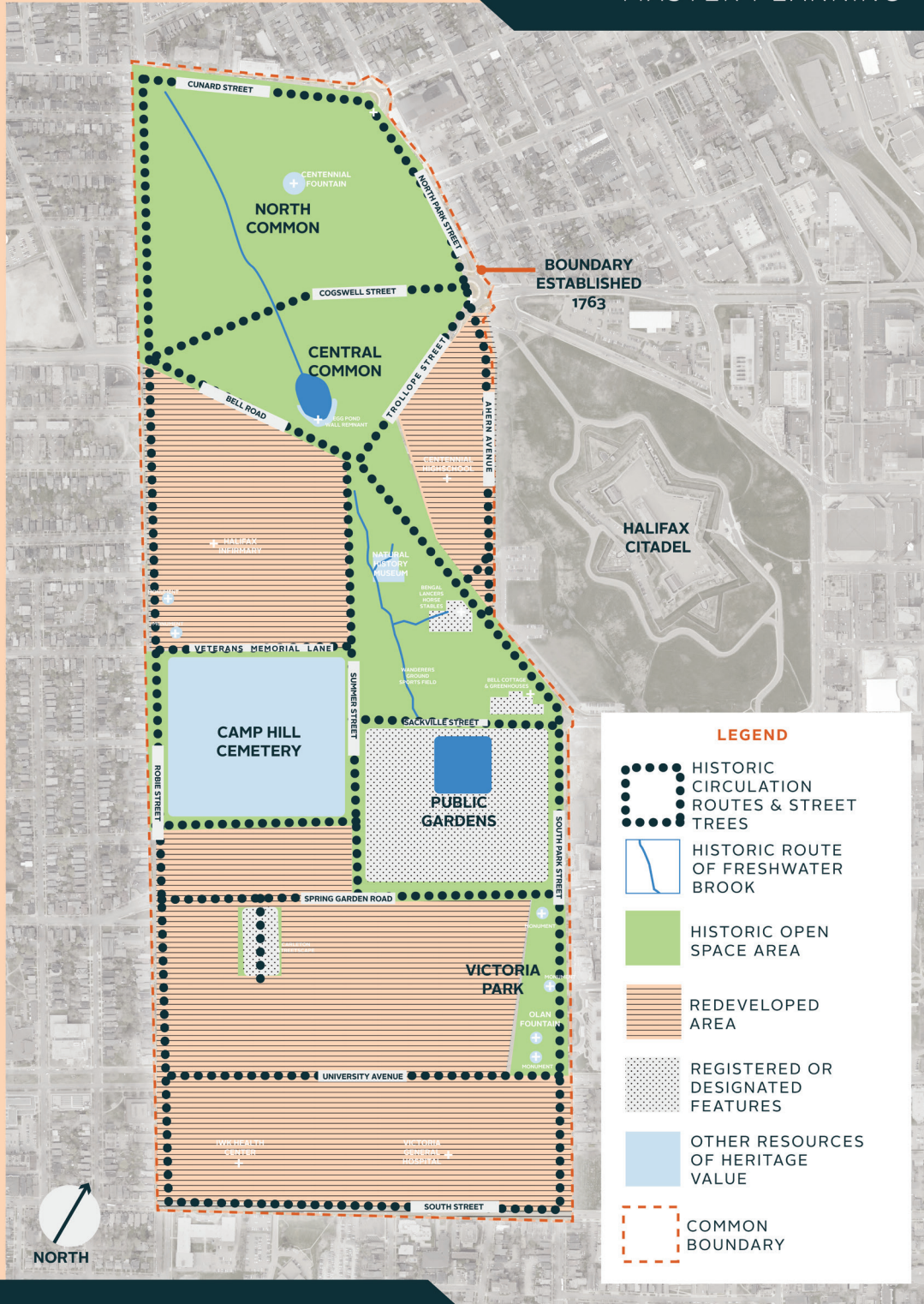
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This summary statement contains a description of the heritage components of the historic place and identifies its character-defining features and associated heritage values. The Statement of Significance, also known as a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value, is a convenient statement that conveys the description of the heritage resources, their tangible and intangible heritage values and the character –defining elements that must be considered when planning changes.

Statement of Significance (SoS): A statement that identifies the description, heritage value, and character-defining elements of an historic place. A Statement of Significance is required in order for an historic place to be listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

OTHER DEFINITIONS

In practice, there are a variety of other terms that are relevant to heritage conservation planning. One of the most important considerations is **integrity**. Integrity is generally defined as the degree to which the historic place is intact and the original form, materials and use, remain generally unchanged. If the historic place has heritage integrity, the character-defining elements will continue to support the heritage values.

Integrity is not the same consideration as condition which is generally viewed as reversible through appropriate repair and maintenance activities. A heritage resource with integrity will have a high level of intact features of heritage value even if some of them may be in poor condition.

When considering the heritage integrity of the Common, the original parcel of undeveloped land set aside for a public pasture has, over time, been dramatically altered with the addition of new institutional and private developments. The concentration of buildings occurs in three locations: in the south end of the original Common, between South Street and Spring Garden Road, in the centre of the original Common between Veterans Memorial Lane and Bell Road, and between Bell Road and Trollope Street. These areas have undergone the most change from the original use and open character of the Common. As a result, they may be described as having little remaining heritage integrity. Individual heritage features such as commemorative features and the street pattern, may require conservation but in general these areas are less sensitive to continued redevelopment.

This map shows, in addition to the redeveloped areas described above, large sections of the open space of the North and Central Common that are generally intact with new additions, such as the Field House and skating oval, inserted into the Common without removing earlier features. These new additions complement the public recreational uses of the lands.

Significance is a widely used term that is not specifically defined in the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. In practice, significance is attributed to the heritage resources if they make

an important contribution to our understanding of past people, events or places. There is an evaluation process implied in describing a place as having heritage significance. This may mean that not all individual historic resources that are more than forty years old will have significance especially if they are representative of a large and repeated pattern of past activities.

Typically once the evaluation of significance is completed and the property is determined to have local, provincial or federal significance, the property is a priority for protection and management. This may take the form of registration as a Historic Property or as a National Historic Site. The listing as a property with heritage significance should include sufficient information that the character-defining elements that embody its significance, and the heritage values, both tangible and intangible, associated with the property are described. Within the Common there are several properties that have been identified as having heritage significance and are registered as Historic Properties, or as a National Historic Site. The research and field work completed as part of this project has identified other properties that also warrant this level of recognition. These are listed in the Character-Defining Elements section.

.....

The Common is a living Cultural Heritage Landscape. It is not a museum but an active community place that has many layers of past activities. Each period has left evidence on the ground of its time. Understanding the heritage resources and the values of the Common will allow for its continued evolution by integrating its history in its future.

In general, each period of activity builds on earlier activities removing, altering or adding to earlier layers. For example, the original condition of the Common was a thin soiled, swampy, wooded area with several small water courses crossing it. Slowly, this early character was changed with the harvesting of the trees and filling and regrading of the land. The water courses were altered so that today, there is only a small remnant in the form of the stone wall that edged Egg Pond in the Central Common that reveals the former alignment of Freshwater Brook.

The character of the South Common began to change dramatically in the early nineteenth century when lots were created along Spring Garden Road for residential development as a means of raising funds. This change, along with the creation of the Halifax Public Gardens NHS amalgamated in 1874 from 2 early gardens created in 1837 and 1866, and the Camp Hill Cemetery established in 1844, permanently changed the nature of the south half of the Common. By the late nineteenth century many more institutional uses were added in large building complexes all sited along the historic street grid pattern that has remained intact.

The lands south of Spring Garden Road have continued to change as new buildings have been added and the original structures altered or replaced. The institutional uses, centred on education and health care, still dominate this area in the form of the Dalhousie University campus and the various hospitals and health centres. The lands north of the Camp Hill Cemetery and Public Gardens have also seen dramatic changes as large institutional buildings, primarily for education and health care, have been added.

The Central and North Common have also undergone major changes since the late eighteenth century when settler use of the area began. The open nature of the North Common is a legacy of past use for military exercises and the

2.2 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMON



Large scale residential development is located south of the Public Gardens.



The Centennial Fountain is highly visible within the sports fields of the North Common.



View from the Citadel NHS to the new roundabout at Ahern Avenue, Trollope Street and North Park Street. The historic armoury, single and multi-unit residential development define the boundary

1606 Bell Road built in 1902-1903 is a distinctive landmark at the intersection of Sackville Street and South Park Street at Bell Road.



The Bengal Lancers barn indoor riding ring and paddocks are significant heritage resources on Bell Road.

prohibition of permanent structures within six hundred metres of the Citadel National Historic Site to maintain defense sight lines. This regulation lasted until after the second world war and is a key reason why the lands remain open to view.

During the early twentieth century, the open space of the North Common was put to use as a location for temporary housing, especially for the victims of the Halifax Explosion. Continued change occurred and by the end of the century the North common was filled with ball fields, informal pathways, a commemorative fountain, a skating oval and Field House. The ball and skating uses were added as part of the Canada Games and Winter Olympic events. The open area has also been used as the setting for numerous festivals, celebrations and concerts. Its unencumbered open setting allows for visibility and access.

On the North Common, there have been many uses that left no footprint on the site. The military tent camps, the housing for the Halifax Explosion victims, and the Victory gardens are examples of these short-lived uses that took advantage of the open lands. These uses are not represented in the visible heritage resources but are known in the historic record. The heritage value associated with the North Common are based on its long-standing contribution to serving the community.

The Central Common contains a concentration of active recreation facilities in the form of the swimming complex, skate board facility, tennis courts, and ball and soccer fields. The recreational uses of the Common began in the early twentieth century when Egg Pond became a focal point for family outings and children's play. The facilities and activities that are currently found there are of a scale and form in which the overall open character of the Central Common remains visible.

Within the area north of Sackville Street, are located several built heritage resources that were added at different periods of time and are key contributors to the overall heritage value of this area. The former Richard Power house at 1606 Bell Road, a remarkable Victorian residence now used as office space, is a landmark dominating the intersection at Sackville Street and South Park Street. Adjacent to it on the west side, is the green house complex that supports the

horticultural activities in the Public Gardens, and on the north side, is the unique barn and indoor riding facility associated with the Bengal Lancers

On the corner of Sackville Street and Summer Street are the Wanderers Grounds, first established in 1880 by the Amateur Athletic Association for rugby and lawn bowling and now used by the local soccer organization.

North of this facility is the Museum of Natural History, built in 1970, an excellent example of the architectural style of the end of the twentieth century. The design uses massing and placement of windows to create an elegant composition and the manipulation of the grades surrounding it, mitigates the visual impact of its surface parking lot, and as well, creates a welcoming pedestrian plaza at its entrance.

The research has described human activities on the Common beginning with 9000BP uses by Mi'kmaq people and continuing to modern uses for large scale concerts and special events. The original Common landscape of 1763 has been completely transformed during the subsequent centuries. Key additions occurred in the early nineteenth century with the precedent setting sale of lots on Spring Garden Road for residential development, several institutional buildings and Camp Hill Cemetery. By the mid- nineteenth century, the creation of the Halifax Public Gardens National Historic Site, the greenhouses and former Richard Power House at 1606 Bell Road, added a significant number of built heritage resources. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a large part of the South Common was transformed by Dalhousie University and other institutions into a higher density area. During the early twentieth century, the Common continued to change with the addition of the Bengal Lancers centre, the recreation grounds around Egg Pond and continued expansion of the health care and education facilities. An extensive street tree planting scheme was undertaken along all streets around and through the Common, reflecting a priority for urban improvement. Late twentieth century additions included the Museum of Natural History, the Centennial fountain and more recreation facilities including the skating oval Field House, pavilion and ball fields.

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The following inventory identifies the specific heritage resources found in each section of the Common that together contribute to its heritage value. These are the character-defining elements that have been identified and as part of the ongoing planning for the Common must be considered in evaluating potential removals, alterations or additions.

NORTH COMMON

Land Patterns: The North Common is a large green space generally unencumbered by buildings. The exception is the Field House at the skating oval that is located on the south edge. The edges of the North Common are defined by buildings of a variety of heights and uses.

Visual relationships: The most common historic views associated with the North Common are across the open space towards the Armoury, that acts as a focal point in the background. The viewpoints are generally from Robie Street looking east and Cogswell Street looking north. Other views into the lawn areas of the North Common are open from Robie Street, Cunard Street and North Park Street. The Citadel National Historic Site also provides an overview of the North Common.

Circulation: The perimeter roads and Cogswell Street provide easy access to the North Common. They carry vehicular traffic around and through the Common. The pedestrian system includes perimeter sidewalks along the public streets and also a path system, both formal and informal across the lawn areas connecting the pedestrian with the adjacent neighbourhoods.

Vegetation: The North Common is predominately an open lawn without any vegetation except street trees along its perimeter and more recently added ornamental planting beds at the entrances.

Landforms: The North Common is generally a flat area with subtle changes in the topography in the form of low berms particularly in the north-east quadrant that were created by earlier construction projects.

Water features: There are no natural water features remaining in the North

2.3 CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

Common that are visible at the surface, although, in the nineteenth century Freshwater Brook crossed through the site.

Built features: The Centennial fountain was added 1967 to celebrate Canada's one hundred years since Confederation. The original fountain has been altered with a barrier fence around it.

CENTRAL COMMON

Land Patterns: The Central Common is generally an open area with a concentration of active recreational facilities clustered around the Pavilion.

Visual Relationships: Historic views into and from the Central Common are primarily from the North Common across Cogswell Road. There is also a view across the Central Common from Robie Street that overlooks the area from the Bell Road intersection.

Circulation: The Central Common is bounded on three sides by public streets. The sidewalks along these streets provide easy access to the facilities located here. There is a formal pedestrian route that crosses through the area linking lands south of Bell Road with the North Common.

Vegetation: The perimeter streets are lined with mature street trees planted at regular intervals creating a distinctive streetscape.

Landforms: The open area of the Central Common is generally flat sloping up to Robie Street on the west side.

Water features: There are no historic water features in the Central Common.

Built Features: The mortared-in-place natural stone retaining wall that has been incorporated into the skateboard park is a remnant of the earlier Egg Pond attraction that was a key part of the early twentieth recreational activities.

SOUTH COMMON

Land Patterns: The South Common is dominated by recent large scale institutional and residential developments that are within the original boundary of

the Common but differ both functionally and visually from the open character of the North and Central Common. Within this area are smaller open landscape areas of heritage value: Victoria Park, the Public Gardens National Historic Site, Camp Hill Cemetery, the Wanderers Grounds and the landscape surrounding the Museum of Natural History.

Visual Relationships: Views throughout the South Common are primarily street views that include the frontages of the adjacent buildings in the area south of Spring Garden Road. The street views on Summer Street, Sackville Street, South Park Street and Veterans Memorial Lane where they are adjacent to the sites identified above as heritage resources, are scenic glimpses of historic landscapes. The view east from along Bell Road is a panoramic view of the grassy west flank of the Citadel National Historic Site.

Circulation: The historic street grid includes east-west and north-south streets in the South Common. Bell Road has a different alignment that responds to the Citadel National Historic Site lands and in crossing the Common, connects the core area with the neighbourhoods on the west side of the Common. Pedestrian circulation is primarily by means of the public sidewalks along the streets.

Vegetation: The vegetation within the South Common is varied. There are mature street trees along most of the streets and in Victoria Park. There is a diverse collection of ornamental trees, shrubs and perennials in the Halifax Public Gardens National Historic Site. These trees are both coniferous and deciduous and are displayed to create a picturesque composition. The tree collection in the Camp Hill Cemetery is mature and consists of a variety of tree types, both native and ornamental, that is very early evidence of the Rural Cemetery Movement in Halifax. There are several weeping tree varieties that have been chosen for their form in order to create a quiet place of contemplation and remembrance in the Cemetery.

Landforms: The natural topography consisting of generally flat land has been retained in most of the heritage landscape areas. The exception is Camp Hill Cemetery that was planned and built on the natural hill following the design principles of the Rural Cemetery Movement.

Water features: There are several water features in the southern section of the

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Common. All are part of a designed landscape especially the ponds, naturalized water course and the architectural fountain within the Public Gardens National Historic Site. The ornamental design of the water features in the Gardens integrates the earlier Freshwater Brook alignment in the layout of the Gardens. In Victoria Park, the Oland Memorial fountain is another designed water feature installed in the late twentieth century.

Built features: It is in the South Common where the majority of built heritage resources from different eras are found. Several have been registered or designated and include:

- the Bengal Lancers barn, riding hall and paddocks;
- 1606 Bell Road, the former Richard Power residence, built in 1902-3 for the Superintendent of the Public Gardens;
- the Wanderers Grounds first established in the late 1880's;
- the Carlton Victorian Streetscape, a collection of Victorian frame residences;
- the Museum of Natural History built in 1970;
- and various commemorations, including sculptures of Robbie Burns, Sir Walter Scott and William Alexander, first Earl of Stirling erected in Victoria Park by the North British Society.

CURRENT RECOGNITION OF BUILT HERITAGE PROPERTIES

Many of the properties identified above as having heritage value are listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places. This list includes a national designation as well as properties municipally registered under the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act.

Canadian Register:

- Halifax Public Gardens (also has National Historic Site recognition)
 - Bengal Lancers Property
 - 1606 Bell Road
 - Carlton Victorian Streetscape
-

There are several different types of heritage values that are associated with the heritage resources found in the Common and expressed in the character-defining elements described above. In addition to the tangible value of original heritage fabric surviving from earlier periods, there are many intangible heritage values attributed to the Common. Viewing it as a Cultural Heritage Landscape allows a comprehensive view that considers the heritage value of the setting and the contribution of many individual features instead of focusing only on heritage buildings.

The types of heritage values can be grouped into three categories. The first category relates to the **physical** evidence remaining from an earlier time. There may be heritage value in the design, the original form, layout, use of materials, or construction methods.

The second category relates to the **associative** value of the resource. For example, the site may have associative value if it is connected with a significant designer or community leader, a historical movement, cultural activity, scientific achievement, or an important event such as a battle or celebration. The heritage resource may have **contextual** heritage value if it contributes to the understanding of its surroundings. It may reveal vernacular design or distinctive use of local materials.

The physical heritage values are found primarily in the concentration of heritage structures and designed landscapes in the central section of the Common, namely the sites of the Bengal Lancers, Wanderers Grounds, 1606 Bell Road, Camp Hill Cemetery the Public Gardens National Historic Site, the Museum of Natural History, the Carlton Victorian streetscape, the Egg Pond wall remnant, Victoria Park, Centennial fountain and other commemorative monuments. In addition to these places, the open green space of the North Common and the Central Common has heritage value since these places are rare examples of expansive and relatively flat open space within the urban fabric of the city.

Camp Hill Cemetery has design value since it is an early example of the Rural Cemetery movement in Canada. Although it does not use the distinctive curvilinear layout for the grave sites, it follows many of the other principles such

2.4 HERITAGE VALUES AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

as location on a higher elevation, the use of a perimeter fence and a defined circulation route that encourages contemplative strolling throughout the grounds. This pattern intends that the cemetery become a place for the living to come and remember their loved ones.

Similarly, the Halifax Public Gardens National Historic Site is unique in Canada, as the oldest public display garden created in the formal Victorian style with horticultural displays and circulation routes throughout that encourage visitors to stroll and enjoy the changing colour palette found in the ornamental plantings. The Public Gardens National Historic Site also has associative value, since it is a celebration of horticulture in a period when experimentation with new plant types was extensive and resulted in increased productivity in the field of domestic horticulture and agriculture.

The associative heritage values relating to the Common are many. It has a long history of community uses including creating spaces for health care, education, active and passive recreation. The Common is valued for its democratic access and its contribution to the identity of the city, region and of the immediate neighbourhoods that view it as their backyard, a place of relaxation and informal family activities. The Common is associated with the Mi'kmaq people who used the site for thousands of years, for the military who used it extensively for exercises and tent camps and a marshalling area for the housing of Halifax Explosion victims in the early twentieth century. At the end of the last century, the Common was associated with major events including the Canada Games and the Winter Olympics, as well as visits by Queen Elizabeth and other noteworthy figures. The organized and informal recreational activities for local and regional residents have continued to ensure that the Common is highly valued. The social uses of the Common have remained the priority throughout its history.

The contextual value of the Common is related to the contrast that it provides with the built-up urban form that surrounds it. The green open space of the North and Central Common complements the undeveloped lands of the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site and as a result, creates a unique place within the city. The street pattern and the street trees create an inviting pedestrian environment within the urban context.

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Statement of Significance Considerations

The Statement of Significance is a summary of the heritage resources, their character-defining elements and the associated heritage values of the Common. This Statement forms the foundation for future planning for removals or alterations to heritage resources or new additions to the historic place.

Halifax Common is a continually evolving Cultural Heritage Landscape with a long and rich history evident in the many heritage resources found throughout its borders. The Common continues to be a location for institutional uses for health care and education and for recreational activities, both passive and active. These varied uses support social benefits for the community. It is defined by the historic street grid, now lined with street trees, creating a unifying effect around the original survey of 235 acres established in 1793. The Common makes a significant contribution to the identity of the neighbourhoods that surround it and to the larger region since it is one of the largest flat green open spaces in the area that can accommodate temporary uses for civic celebrations and special events.

The density and visual character of the Common varies dramatically from the north to the south end with the majority of the recent large scale buildings located in the central area and the south. This pattern follows the nineteenth century creation of lots along Spring Garden Road that established private residential development within the boundary of the Common. The creation of the Dalhousie campus and other health care complexes located primarily in the south end began in the nineteenth century and continues.

The North Common is a significant flat green space defined by the perimeter streets and used for public recreational activities, both programmed and informal. Views across the Common are open since vegetation is limited to the perimeter street trees and small ornamental plantings at the entrances.

The Central Common is similarly flat green space defined by a street layout lined with street trees. A concentration of active recreation facilities are found in this area continuing a pattern dating to the early twentieth century.

The area south of Bell Road contains most of the built heritage resources including the properties of the Bengal Lancers, 1606 Bell Road, the Museum of Natural History, the Wanderers Grounds and the designed landscapes of the Public Gardens National Historic Site, Camp Hill Cemetery and Victoria Park.

The heritage values of the Common are in its long-standing use by the community and its transformation from communal pasture to maintained parkland. Its heritage resources come from various time periods and they represent past beliefs, styles and priorities.

As the planning for the future continues, the character-defining elements that have heritage value must be safeguarded and integrated in the plans: the street grid and street trees that define the original survey border, the flat landform of the open green space of the North and Central Common, the key views into and within the Common, the landscape settings of the built heritage resources, the designed landscapes in the Camp Hill Cemetery, Public Gardens and Victoria Park, and the numerous small scale commemorative features that add historic interest to the cultural landscape.

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The open spaces of the Halifax Common has a dual function. The North and Central Common are important neighbourhood parks, where commutes, childcare and other routines play out among nearby residents. But the Common also holds open space for the wider community, with numerous amenities and features that are a part of service delivery for “the people of Halifax” in a broader sense. The open space context section seeks to identify and understand these connections.

3 REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Halifax Common is a significant open space, both within the scope of local parks and as a regional recreation destination with a wide variety of open space functions. Other regionally significant open spaces generally have fewer existing features and amenities as compared to the Common. Together with the Dartmouth Common, the Halifax Common is the largest contiguous non-wilderness open space in the region's urban core.

The Common is also a component of a distinct cluster of other important regional public destinations located in close proximity. These include Citadel Hill Historic Site, the YMCA (currently under construction) and the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre - both the existing location and the proposed new location.

3.1 REGIONAL OPEN SPACES



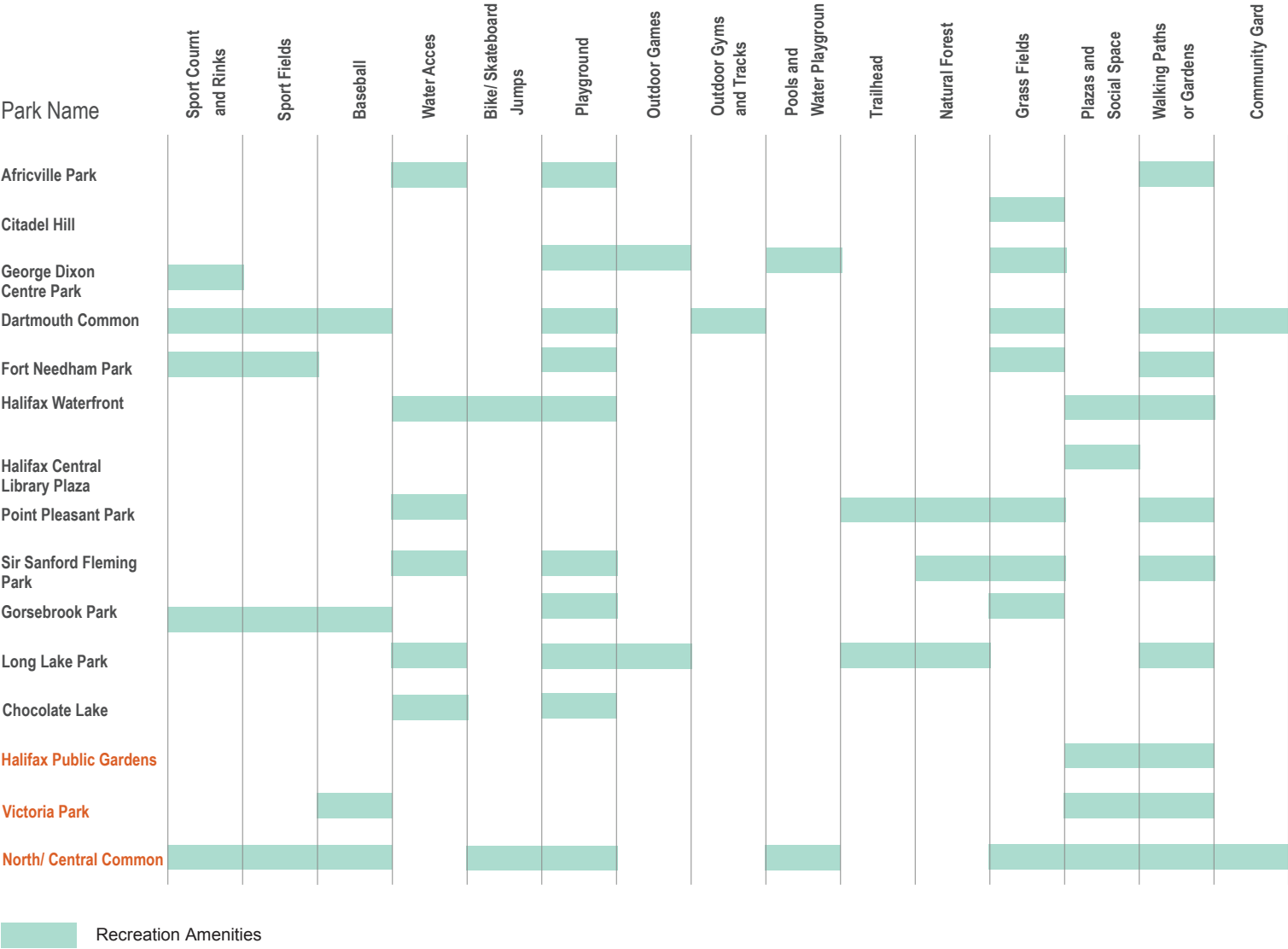
The Halifax Common is home to a number of regionally significant recreation amenities. The Oval plays host to participants that visit from throughout the HRM, and the Halifax Public Gardens is a keystone destination of downtown Halifax. On a temporary basis the Common is a venue for special events, such as festivals, tournaments, or concerts that attract attendees from throughout the region and beyond.

In comparison to the rest of the urban centre, the Common has a very high concentration of ballfields (9 of 27 municipal ballfields in the urban centre are located on the Common). The Common are also home to the only public outdoor swimming pool, and one of six spray pools in the urban centre.



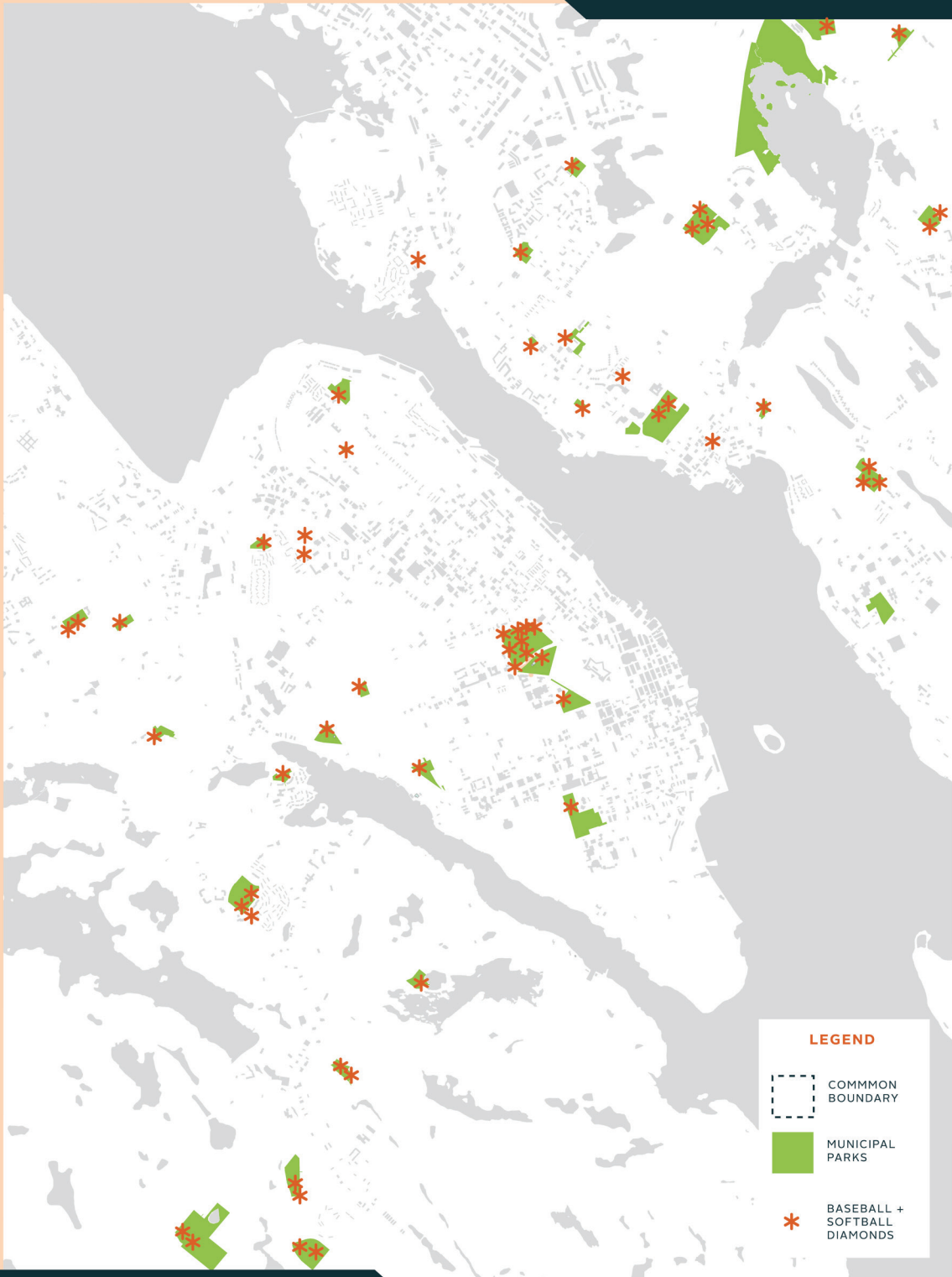
Pool, splash pad and playground on the Central Common

3.2 REGIONAL RECREATION SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMON

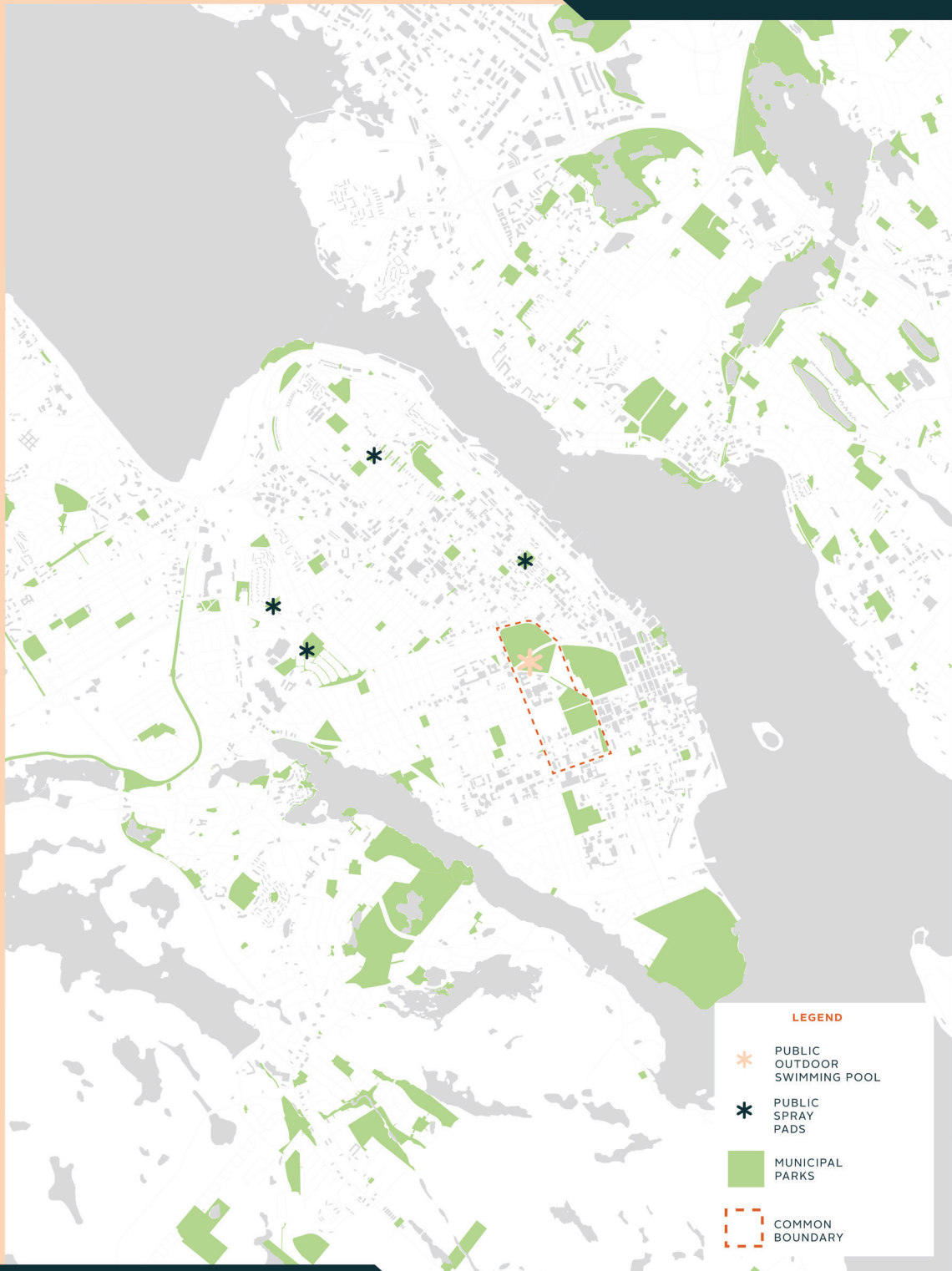


Recreation amenities in municipal parks on the Halifax peninsula and its adjacent urban fringe areas.

HALIFAX COMMON MASTER PLANNING



OPEN SPACE CONTEXT BASEBALL + SOFTBALL FIELDS



OPEN SPACE CONTEXT
OUTDOOR AQUATIC FACILITIES

This chapter articulates why and how recreation is valuable to communities; summarizes local, provincial, and national recreation trends and planning contexts; details local demographics and their implications to design; and evaluates site facilities with respect to usage. In addition, public engagement results enrich this section with a summary of user preferences.

4.0 RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Recreation can be a valuable tool to support both individual and community wellbeing. Its impact can be far reaching, affecting many aspects of our lives and neighbourhoods including:

- walkability
- active transportation use
- work performance and productivity
- business development
- property value and tax revenue
- mental and physical health,
- academic success.

When successfully integrated into the built and natural environment, recreation may also address sedentary lifestyles, isolation, and equity.

The Halifax Common Master Plan represents an opportunity to enhance The Common as a site for valuable recreation options – a healthy, active community that engages citizens of all socio-economic backgrounds and ages, fosters leadership, and builds and protects space vital for equity, inclusion and participation.

4.1 THE VALUE OF RECREATION

A review of federal, provincial and municipal planning policy provides a baseline of insight regarding recreation provision and prioritization:

- Federal: A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015
- Provincial: Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia (2015)
- Municipal: Parks, Recreation and Communities Strategic Framework (2017 Draft)

The HRM's Parks, Recreation and Communities Strategic Framework builds on the federal framework and the provincial framework with a more localized definition:

*"We work together to create a Halifax where everyone has access to meaningful recreation experiences that enable healthy lifestyles, vibrant communities and the sustainability of our natural and built environments. We make a difference."*¹

All three documents outline the need for recreation to support individual and community wellbeing – and provide high-level goals to work towards to ensure that recreation remains a public good (i.e. free and accessible to people of all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds).

Design Implications:

- Recreation should support active, healthy living
- Recreation should support inclusion and access regardless of age, gender, ability, and wealth
- Recreation should connect people with nature
- Recreation should serve as a community development tool (e.g. places for people to gather/socialize, to participate in arts and culture)
- Recreation should consider environmental protection and sustainability
- Recreation should be supported through innovative models: volunteerism, shared servicing agreements, and partnerships

4.2 POLICY REVIEW AND ALIGNMENT



Children's Participation in Sport

Participation in sport is influenced by factors like gender, age, household income, education, geographical location, and immigrant status.

A study in 2005 on participation in sport showed that the following children are more likely to access sports and organized recreation:

- Children from two-parent households
- Children from high-income households
- Children who have parents that hold a graduate or first professional university degree ²

Children of recent immigrants, as noted by Statistics Canada, are least likely to participate in sports (32%) than children of Canadian-born parents (55%). ²

As noted by Statistics Canada in 2005, low income neighbourhoods often experience increased disorder – and increased disorder limits the participation of children in sports and recreation. The desire to participate in recreation and sports often decreases in neighbourhoods that feel unsafe. ²

4.3 NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS



Adult Participation in Sport

Gender plays a significant role in participation in recreation. As determined by Statistics Canada, men tend to have more leisure time than women. Age also plays an important role in recreation participation – those aged 60 and over are noted to have higher active leisure participation rates than those aged 20 to 39 – 28% compared to 23%.³

Education plays an important role in the likelihood for active leisure participation. Those with higher levels of education are more likely to participate in active leisure.

Adults living with partners also have higher odds of participating, as it allows for greater ability to manage other time commitments.²

As noted with children's participation in recreation, limited income can present a barrier to adults accessing recreation. Adults with an income of \$60,000 have a larger likelihood of participating in sport – as they likely have more leisure time, and may have more money to spend on sports equipment and other memberships.²

Daily Average Time Spent on Recreation

For individuals aged 15 years and over, the daily average time spent per day on various recreation activities were reported as following: ⁴

- Active sports and events: 24 minutes
- Active leisure: 60 minutes
- Passive leisure: 144 minutes
- Socializing: 54 minutes
- Civic, religious and organizational activities: 6 minutes

Statistics Canada's analysis shows that Canadians' participation in sports (informal and organized) remained relatively the same rate from 1992 to 2005. The same respondents, during this time frame, often switched from organized to informal sports activity.⁴ Most individuals engage in Passive Leisure (50% of the population) whereas only 8% engage in Active Sports.

The study also found that 21% of the population engage in Active Leisure. In 2005, exercise (e.g. yoga, weight lifting, and working out) was rated as the second most likely active leisure activity – with an increase from 4.6% in 1992 to 6.5% in 2005.

Design Implications:

- Recreation at the Halifax Common should support and celebrate the diverse needs of people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity/immigrant status, education, family structure, and income.
- Halifax Common should support a balance of active and passive leisure and recreation opportunities.
- Facility design and programming should aim for flexibility to address large scale shifts in recreation trends and needs.

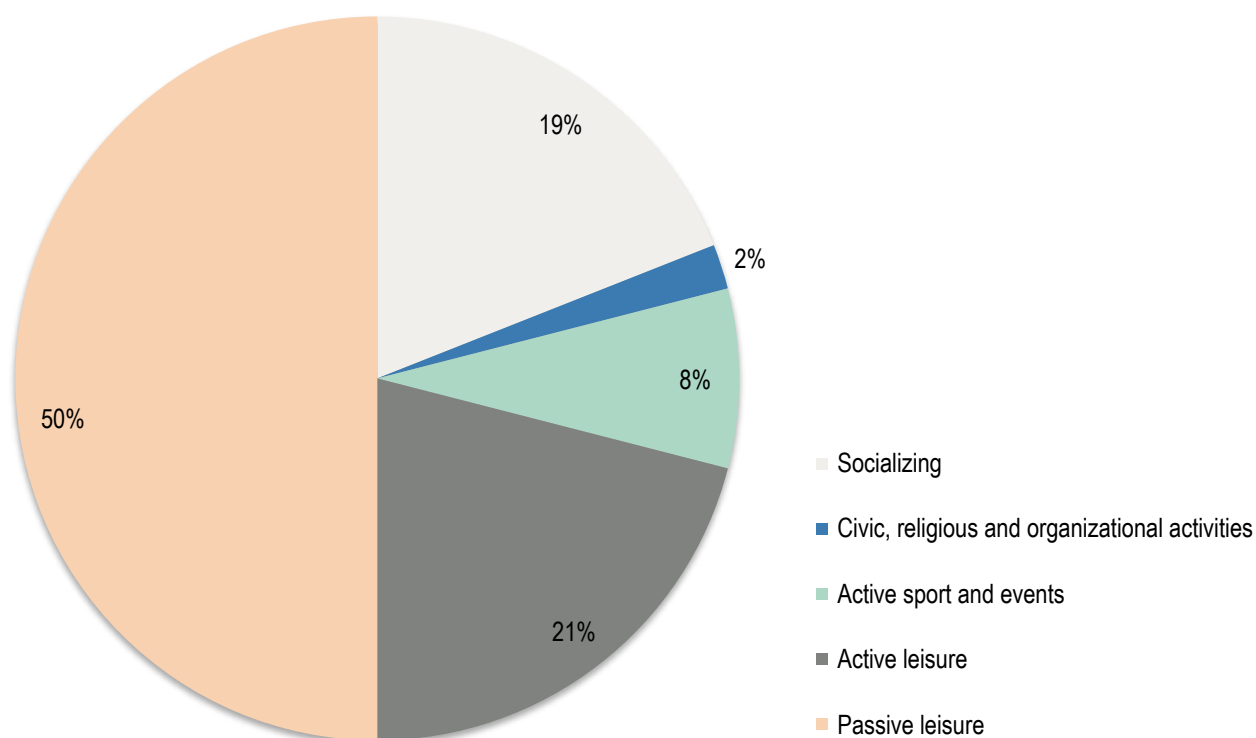


Figure 1: Daily Average Time Spent Per Day on Various Recreation Activities

Definitions:

Active sports and events include exercising, organized recreational sports, competitive sports (indoor or outdoor), outdoor sports (non-competitive) such as skiing, skating, swimming, tennis, football, baseball, outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, attending cinema, exhibitions, library, concerts, theatre, entertainment events, attending sporting events, visiting museums, art galleries, heritage sites, zoos, observatories.

Active leisure includes drawing, painting, crafting, playing an instrument, dancing, collecting, knitting, photography, board and card games, gambling, walking, pleasure driving, bird watching, writing such as letters, cards, books, poems, general computer use, video games, Internet, art or music production.

Passive leisure includes Reading online or paper version books, periodicals, newspaper, letters, watching television or videos, listening to music or radio.

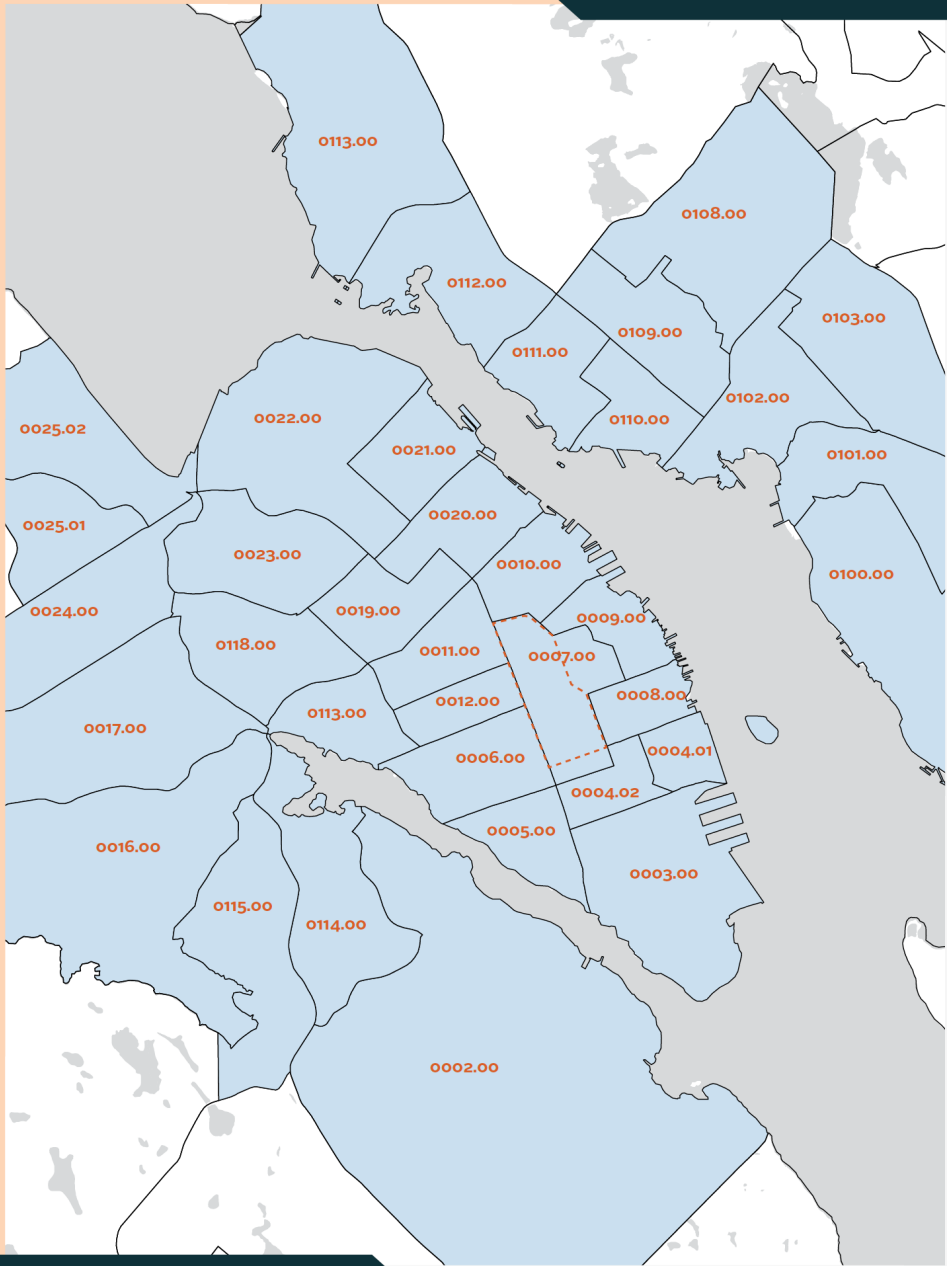
Socializing means communicating - in person or using any type of technology (phone, email, social media, Skype).

Civic, religious and organizational activities include voluntary work for an organization, religious activities, and voting, jury duty, coaching or administering sports.

This section, and the resulting design assumptions and implications, was compiled from a review of data from Statistics Canada (2016). The data boundaries are identified in Figure 2, inclusive of census tracts located in the Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe. Data related to Housing, Ethnic Origin, and Immigrant Status are 25% sample data – meaning 25% of households in each of the census tracts received a long form census with these questions on them.



4.4 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS



OPEN SPACE CONTEXT
CENSUS TRACTS

Figure 2: Data Boundary – Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe



Population

- A significant proportion of individuals aged 20-29 are concentrated on the Halifax Peninsula.
- More families are outside the Halifax Peninsula and in the Urban Fringe.

Design Implications:

- The younger demographic engages in a variety of passive recreation activities like geocaching and disc golf . These activities can be easily integrated into the existing site without extensive and new infrastructure.
- A majority of recreation options at the Halifax Common currently cater to a younger demographic. Inclusion of diverse recreational options (active and passive) and amenities may attract families and seniors who are seeking recreational activities elsewhere.
- Over time, there will be a significant growth of the aging population – which will shift demand for appropriate and relevant recreational programming and services.

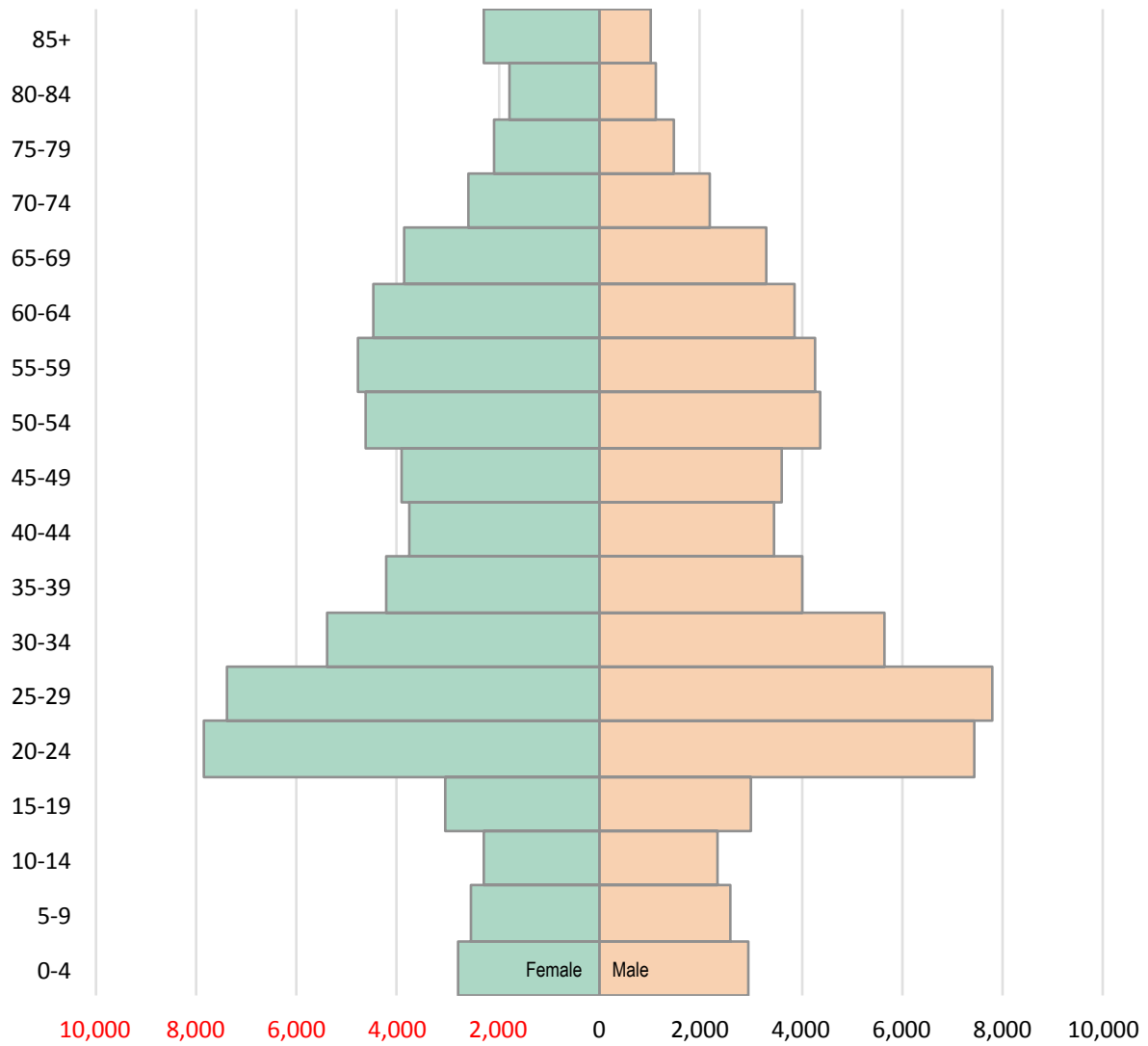


Figure 3: Population By Age and Gender of Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

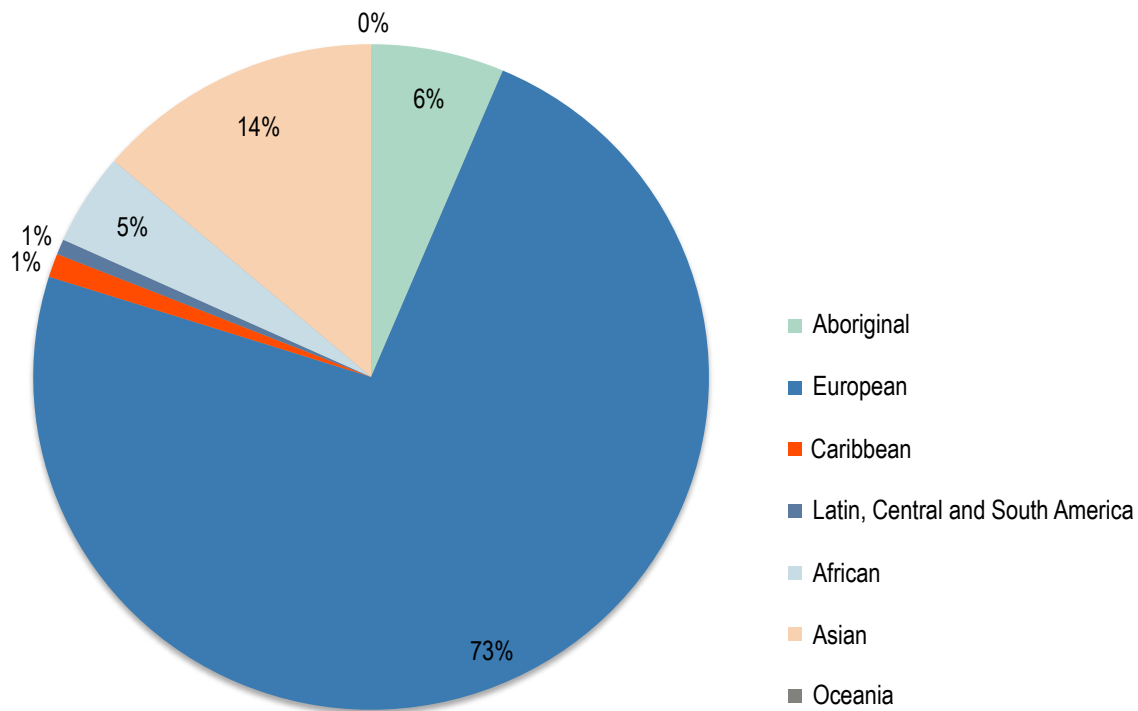


Figure 4: Ethnicity of Population in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

Ethnicity

- 27% of the population is non-European: Aboriginal, Caribbean, Latin, Central and South American; African; Asian; and Oceania descent.
- “The Aboriginal and African Nova Scotian communities are also growing at a faster pace than the rest of the population, presenting significant economic and cultural opportunities.” ⁷

Design Implications:

- Diversifying ethnicity may warrant the need for broader and more culturally sensitive recreational programming and options.
- The design of ancillary spaces, such as seating, spectator areas, and picnic sites, also needs to be culturally appropriate, inviting full family participation.

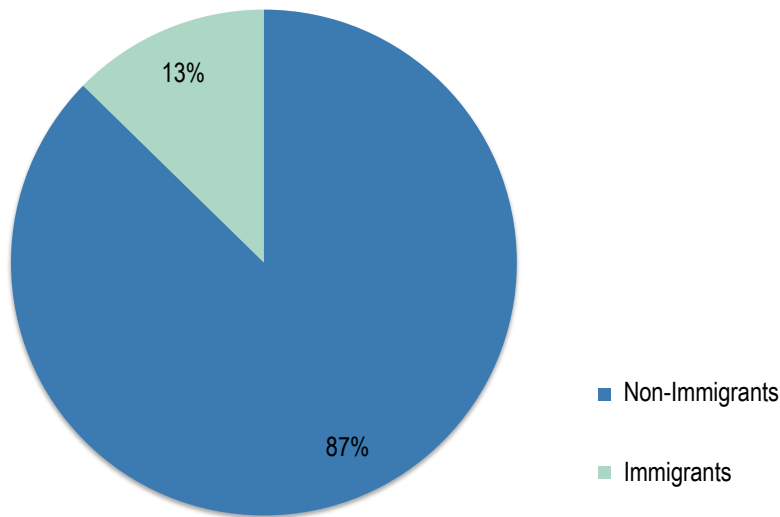


Figure 5: Immigration Status in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

Immigration

- 13% of the population are immigrants (6,470 immigrants are located within the Halifax Peninsula compared to 37,205 in the entire region).
- 70% of the population are Third Generation or more.
- “HRM is also becoming a magnet for foreign students, who numbered 3,000 in 2002 and 6,000 in 2011.”⁶
- “Projections from the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy forecast the addition of approximately 73,115 persons in the HRM from 2011 to 2031 (Halifax Regional Municipality 2014). The bulk of this growth (roughly two thirds) is expected to be international immigrants, making the HRM’s population increasingly diverse.”⁸

Design Implications:

- The influx of immigrants to Halifax is seen as a positive step toward inclusion.
- Explore recreational opportunities and services that respond to an increasingly diverse make-up of people. Programming tailored to new Canadians (eg. adult learn-to-skate) may become increasingly important to keep the facilities active and well used.
- There are deep roots in the community: people who may be interested in volunteering or giving back to the community.

Housing

- 61% are renters compared to 39% owners. On the Halifax Peninsula, there are 75% renters.
- Significant number of dwellers live in apartments (five or more storeys)
- The Centre Plan is designed to accommodate up to 40% of HRM's new housing units in the Regional Centre, or 33,000 new residents until 2031
- The proposed up-zoning and densification of many areas in the urban core will result in a significant increase of residents living in multi-unit dwellings

Design Implications:

- Renters and Condominium residents (in higher density development) have limited access to nature and green space areas
- The anticipated influx of multi-unit dwellers on the Halifax Peninsula will increase the demand for access to public open space



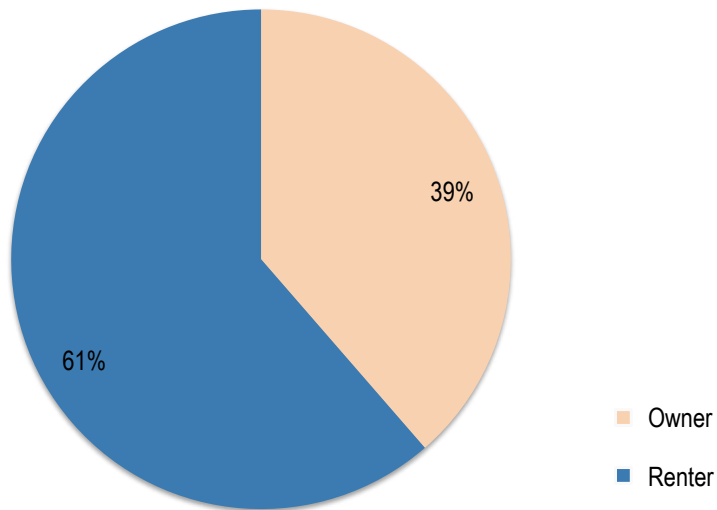


Figure 6: Generation Status in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

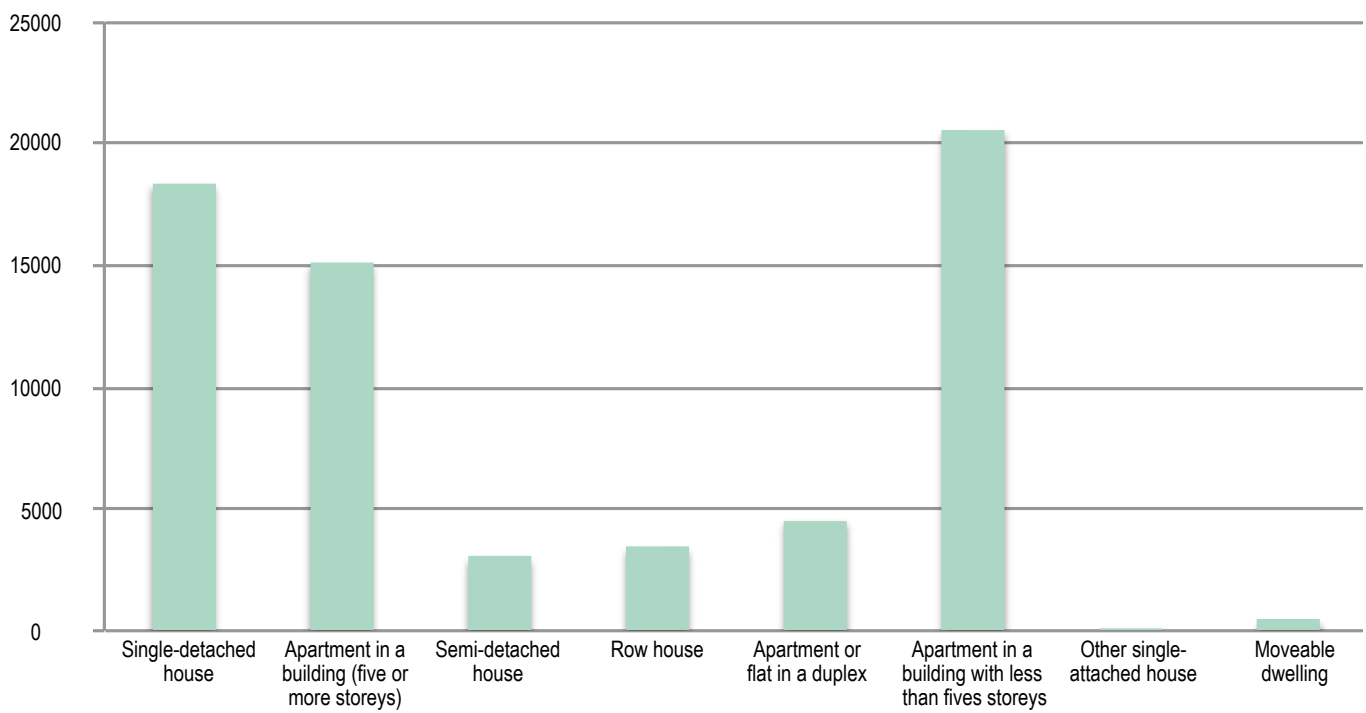


Figure 7: Housing Ownership in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

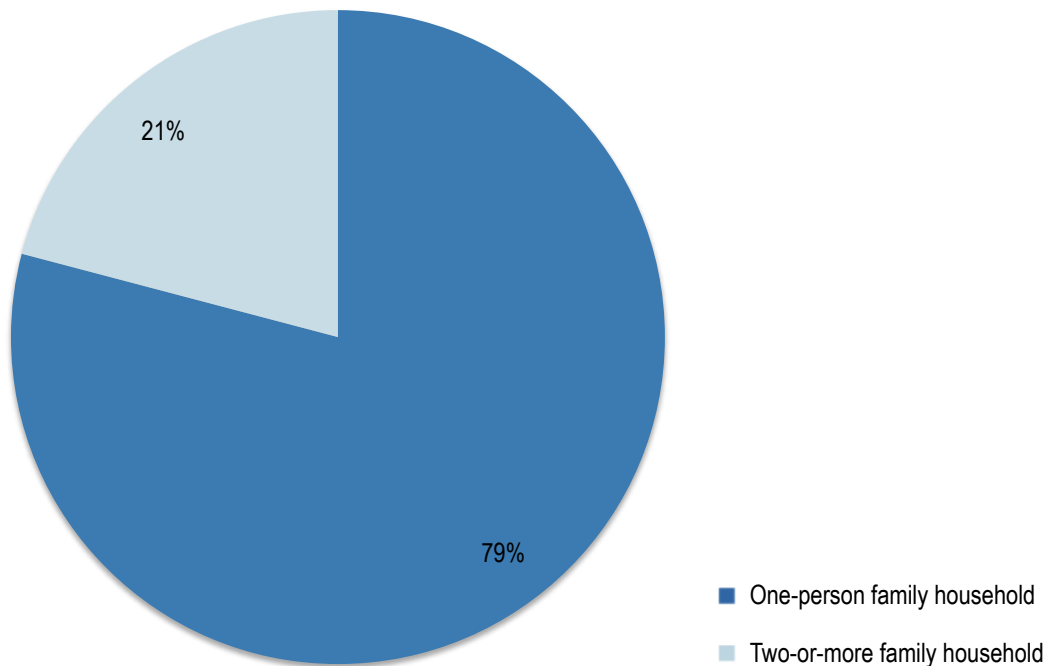


Figure 8: Housing Type in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

Family Structure

- 79% are one-person family households, and 21% are two-or-more family households.
- The number of individuals who have “Never married” outweigh the number of individuals who are “Married”.
- “In line with the rest of Canada, Halifax families are becoming more diverse in family structure. Lone-parent families, common-law couples, same-sex couples, adopted children, multi-generational living arrangements have changed the way we view the ‘traditional home’”⁹

Design Implications:

- Access to recreation is easiest for family structures that include two parents.
- There is less time for recreation for households of one-person as work and other commitments take priority – explore opportunities for extending hours of recreational services.

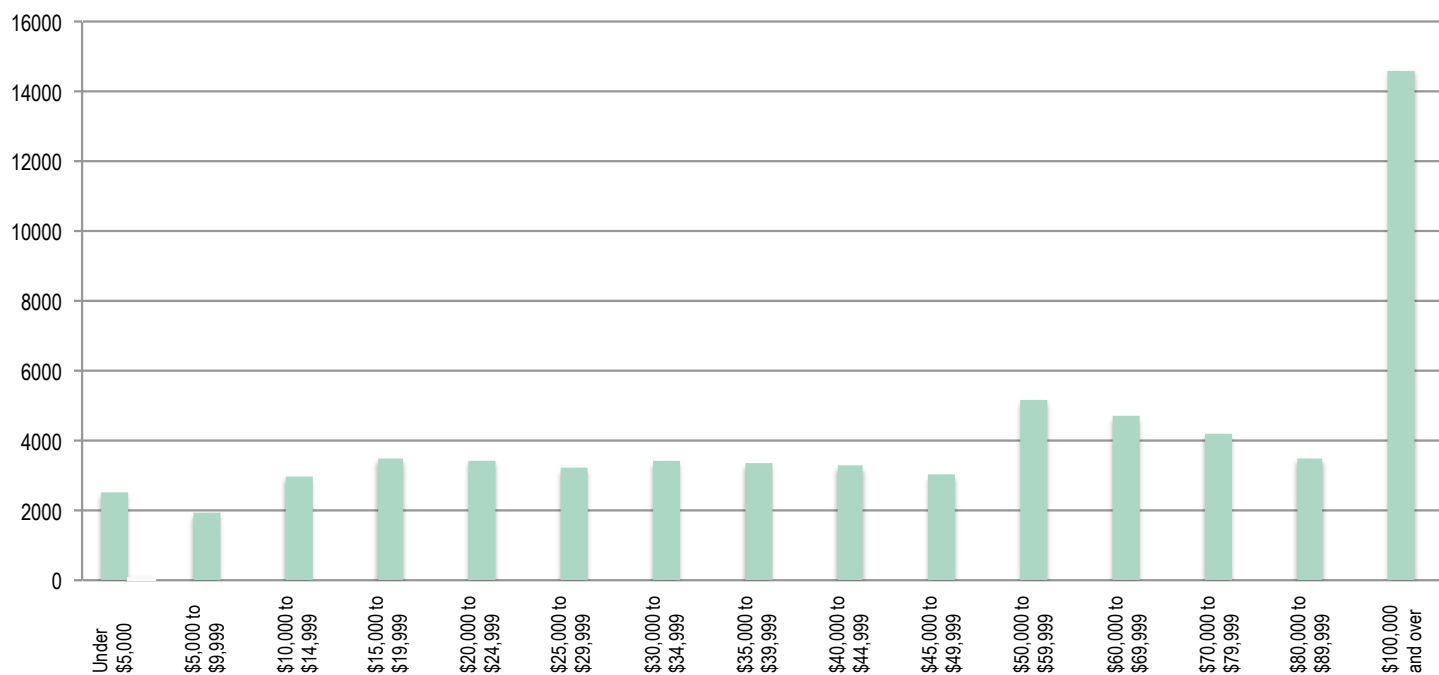


Figure 9: Household Income in Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe

Household Income

- 24% of the population make \$100,000
- 43% of the population make more than \$60,000.
- The remaining population have a broad spread of income levels.
- National recreation trends indicate that households with income of \$60,000 or more are more likely to participate in organized recreation – only 43% of the population make \$60,000 or more.

Design Implications:

- Free and open recreation should be a continued priority for access. Today, nearly everything in the Common is free.
- In any deliberation on user fees consider the impact on the Framework goal of inclusion.
- Offer active recreation opportunities that do not require expensive equipment or membership fees

Wanderers Grounds

The Wanderers Field is open from June 1 to mid-November (Monday to Sunday) from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

There are 3 recreation facilities, on-site parking, and outdoor lighting for evening play.

While the number of hours available at the Wanderers Field in a year is 2,745, it is only 30% booked (844 hours in 2015). Some of these activities include: football, rugby, special events, and ultimate Frisbee.

Interestingly, lawn bowling, which seemed to be on the decline,¹⁰ has begun to see an encouraging resurgence among Millennials in Halifax. Further monitoring of lawn bowling participation is advisable.

North Common

Recreational ball fields and cricket can be booked from May 19 to October 15, Monday to Sunday (8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.).

Softball (adult) is one of the top organized recreational activities at the North Common, followed by tournaments for minor baseball. Cricket (adult), baseball practice, slo-pitch (adult), touch football (adult), and tournaments for adult slo-pitch activities tie for third top activities.

For all sites within the North Common, the number of hours used is less than the number of hours available. The most used area contains cricket, diamonds 10 and 11, and sports fields 13 and 14 and is at 67% utilization. The popularity may be due to the area being a multi-use field. See Figure 10.

4.5 SITE INVENTORY AND CURRENT USAGE

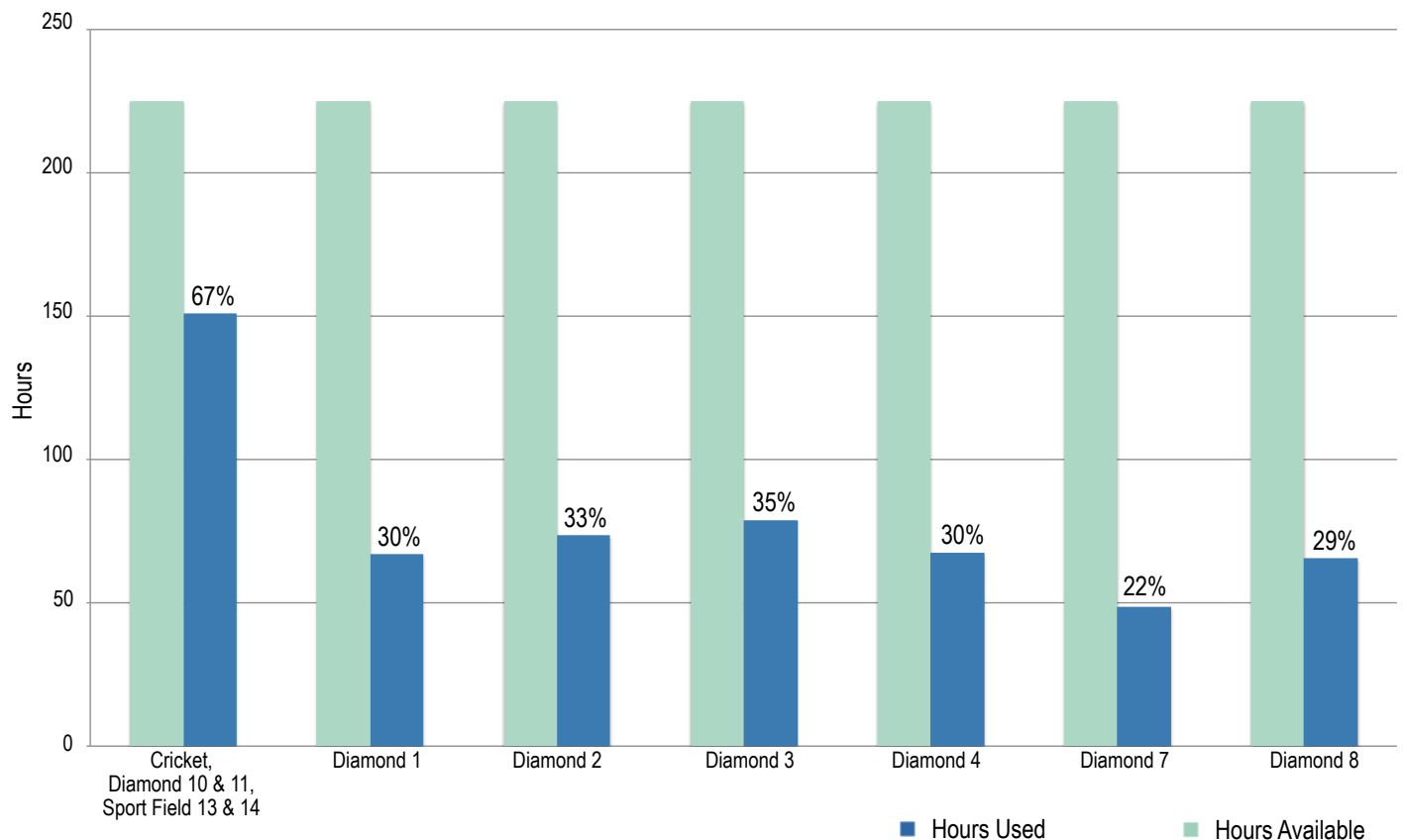


Figure 10: Hours Used/Hours Available of Sites within North Common

According to Halifax's *Community Facility Master Plan 2*, the average playing field should be used for about 175 hours: "If a field is used more than 200 hours per year it is not able to recover and will deteriorate rapidly."¹¹ The area that contains cricket, diamonds 10 and 11, and sports fields 13 and 14 demonstrates high demand (151 hours of play). This confirms the need to explore more multi-use fields and spaces.

The other fields at the North Common are approximate 22-35% utilization. Although these facilities appear underutilized, they are often fully booked during peak hours (e.g. 6 to 8 p.m. weekdays, 4 to 7 p.m. weekends). There is little or no capacity for unorganized "drop-in" use during peak hours. See Figure 10.

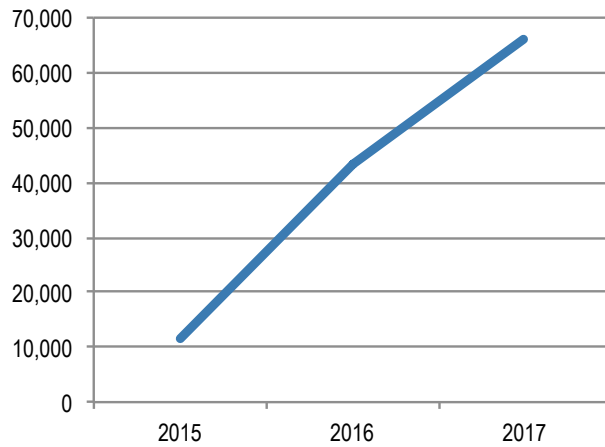


Figure 11: Attendance at Oval from Spring to Fall

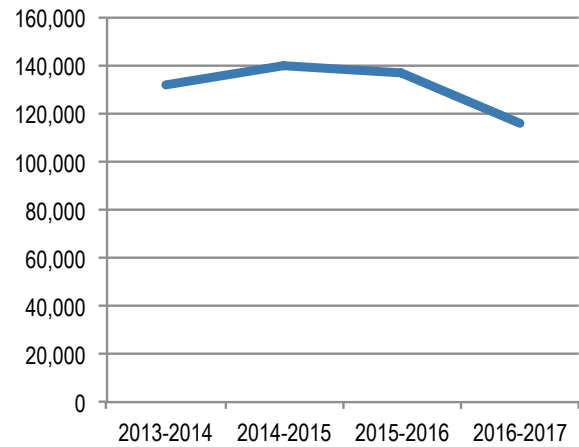


Figure 12: Attendance at Oval during Winter

Other uses at the North Common include: picnicking, walking, dog walking, biking, occasional concerts and events. No user data is available for these activities. Ball fields are regularly in conflict with pathways, leading to received complaints and potential safety concerns – issues that restrict the ability to offer a variety of uses on the site.

Oval

Hours of operation for the Oval vary throughout the week and seasonally. The lack of consistency may result in confusion about operation times.

Designed as a winter facility, the Oval is now seeing an annual increase in users from spring to fall, due to increased programmatic efforts, and longer periods where it is available without maintenance interruptions.

Oval Use during the winter, however, requires significant maintenance time: for every hour of skating logged in 2016, there was 33 minutes of ice maintenance.

School groups are an important user during the winter season. The decrease in usage from 2015-2016 (137,000 individuals) to 2016-2017 (115,804 individuals) is attributed to the reduction in school trips during a school strike. This anomaly makes it difficult to draw conclusions about trends in overall Oval usage at this time.

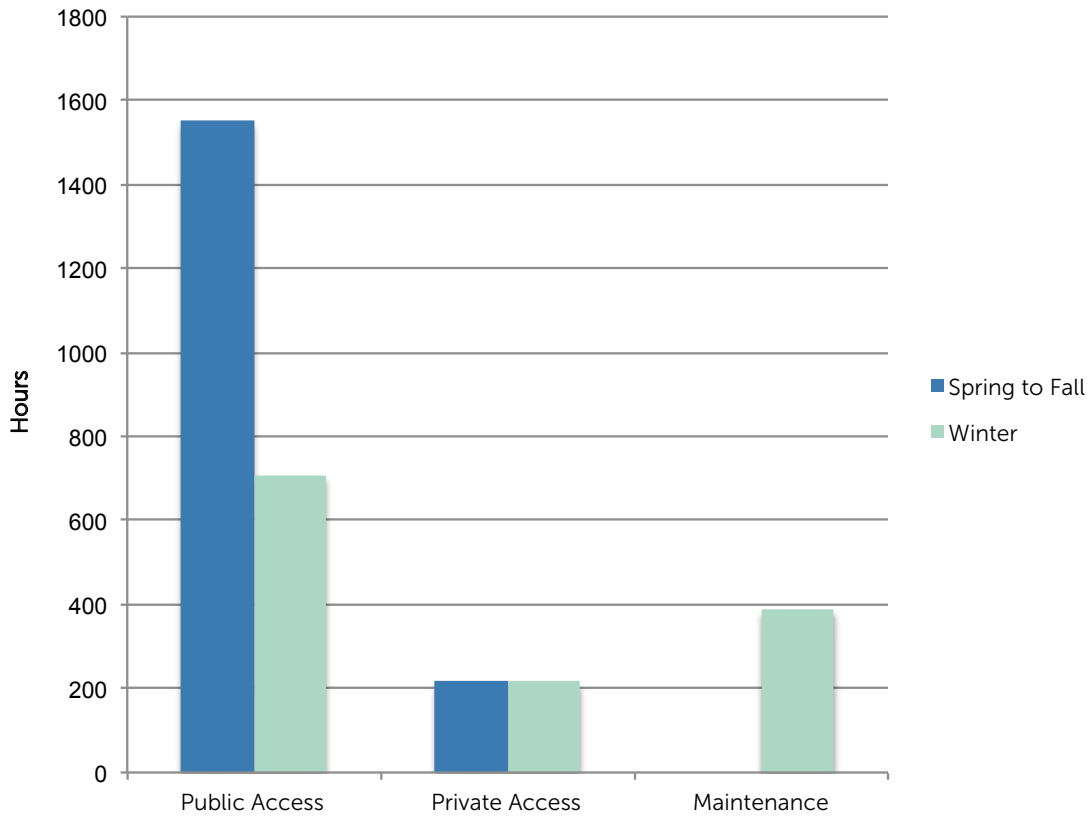


Figure 13: Hours Dedicated to Public and Private Access and Maintenance at the Oval

While Oval Use during the spring and fall provide more public access programming hours than in the winter, oval use during the winter sees more users per hour than during the spring and fall season. See Figure 13.

The Oval facility is considered fully utilized. Due to its popularity, the pavilion is servicing the needs of the Oval as storage for rental equipment, but could be used for interior seating.

Central Common

Hours of Operation:

Tennis – mid-April to end of October, Monday to Sunday from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Canada Games Diamond – May 1 to October 15, from Monday to Sunday (8 a.m. to 11 p.m.)

Playing Field: June 1 to October 31 from 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Triangle (event space area) – Monday to Sunday (8 a.m. to 9 p.m.) anytime from May 1 to October 31.

- The top organized recreational activities at the Central Common are tennis and adult softball (tournaments) – followed by adult slo-pitch, soccer and softball, and softball (minor). Some special events and community gatherings are hosted.
- As seen with the North Common, the number of hours utilized on each of the fields in the Central Common is less than the number of hours available.
- Utilization (hours used/hours available): Canada Games Diamond (38%), Sport Field (22%), Tennis (18%), and Triangle (7%). See Figure 14.
- For the Canada Games Diamond, all occurrences of play are in the evenings (as the field is well-lit) are at 0% utilization throughout the day. This field is fenced and locked and must be booked for use.
- For the Sport Field, there is activity throughout the day because of the nearby school, and in the evenings. This is an open field – there may be other uses by drop-in visitors.
- Tennis has low usage based on bookings but is also an open facility where drop-in users can participate.
- The HRM provides free lessons for tennis for all ages.
- The Triangle is the only true space within the entire North and Central Common that is free and open for passive leisure and has no conflicts with adjacent uses (e.g. fly balls).

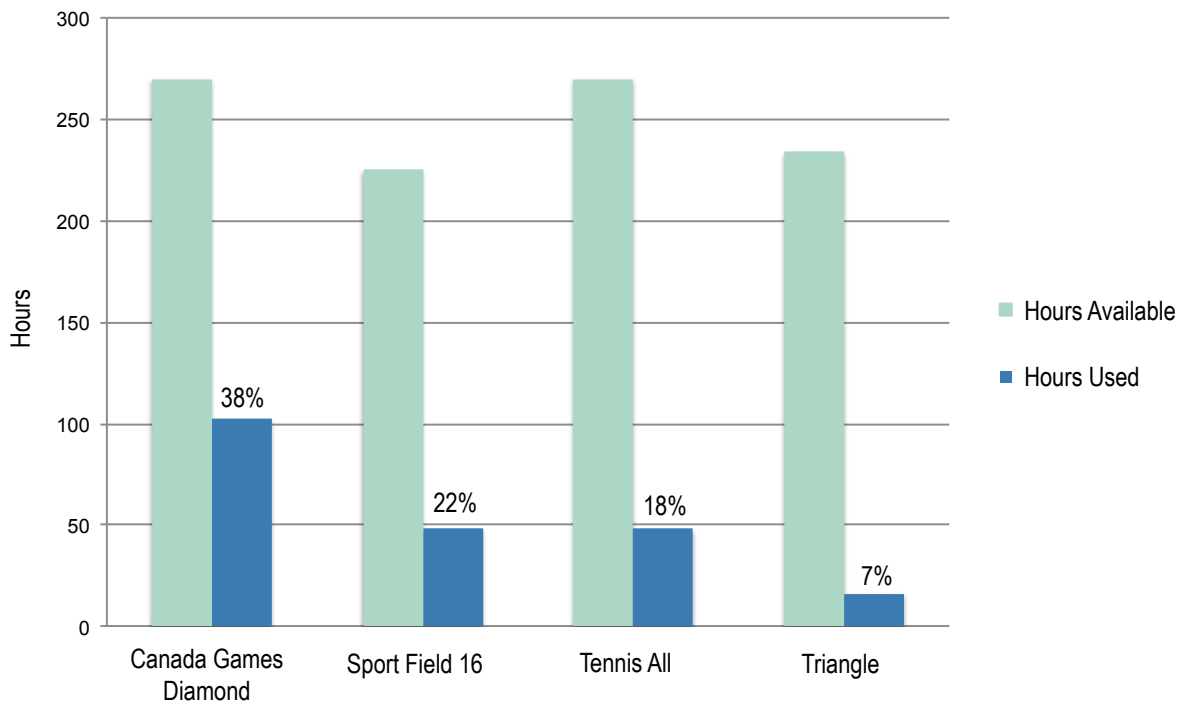


Figure 14: Hours Used/Hours Available of Sites within Central Common

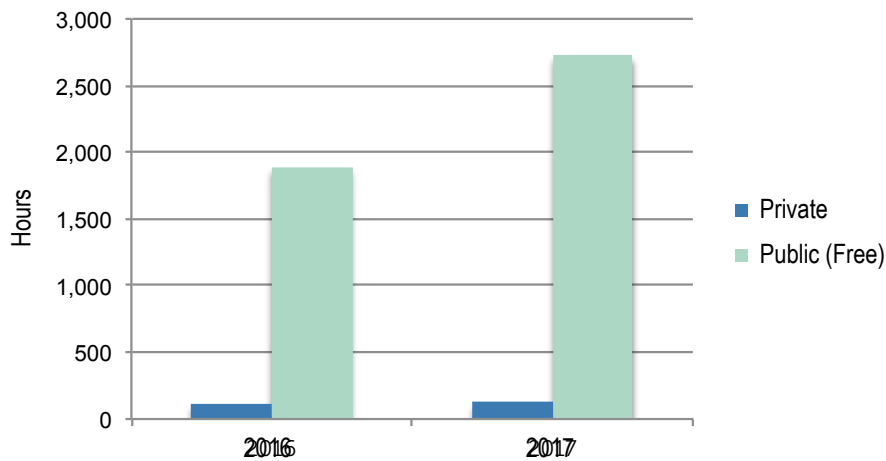


Figure 15: Hours Dedicated to Public and Private Access at the Pool

Pool and Splash Pool

The pool is open from July 1 to August 31, with lessons from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (Monday to Friday) and public access swim slots from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Monday to Sunday). The splash pool is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Sunday.

A Preliminary Needs Assessment performed on November 20, 2017 provided detail regarding pool utilization. The pool is estimated at greater than 75% utilization at peak times (e.g. weekends, on hot summer days, and during special events). The pool sees a total of 3,000 visitors during the summer period. As the report indicated, “Aquatic staff have indicated that the pool is periodically at full capacity (40 participants) with line ups.”¹²

The City’s Parks and Recreation department provides free access to swimming lessons at various municipal beach locations during the summer months through its “Beach Access Program”.¹¹ The Halifax Commons pool is the only “Beach Access Program” venue on the peninsula. Although there are many beaches on the peninsula, they do not provide swimming lessons.

The splash pool at the Halifax Common, meanwhile, is underutilized with only 56 participants per day – as it currently does not meet the contemporary standards for splash pads and is not deep enough to be a fully functioning wading pool.

A lack of investment in the splash pool is cited as one of the reasons affecting utilization. Splash pool usage has increased from 378 in 2016 to 396 in 2017 – while a marginal increase, it can hold more people.

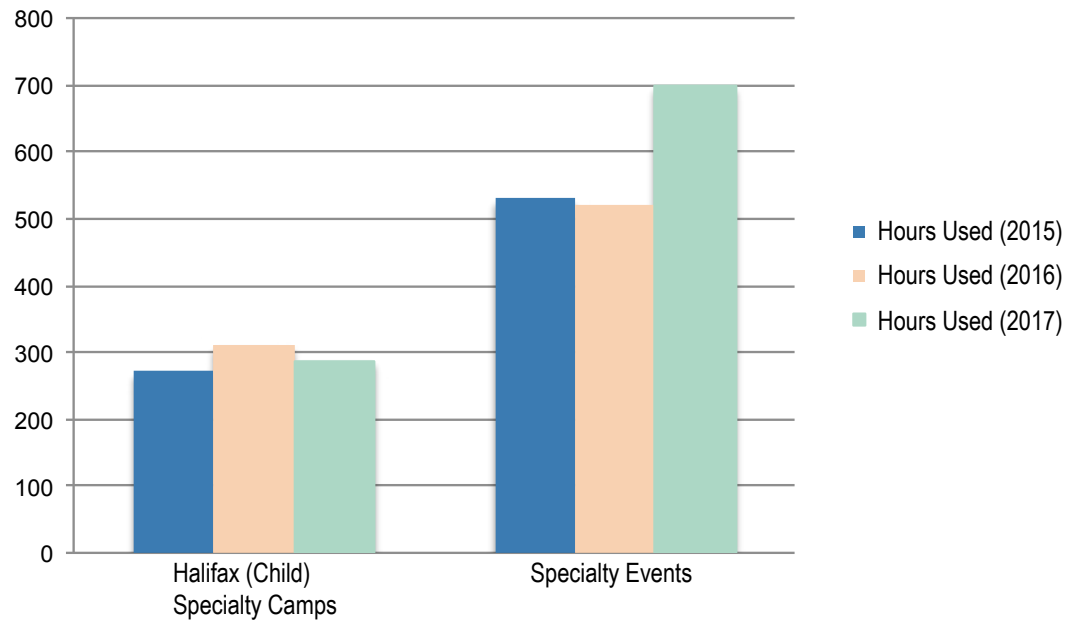


Figure 16: Hours Spent at the Old Common Pavilion

Pool Pavilion

The pavilion only opens during rental times (as such, hours of operation are unavailable). In 2017, the pavilion was rented for a total of 986.25 hours. Using the Citadel Community Centre's hours of operation as a comparison, the pavilion is at 72% utilization throughout the year. An improved pavilion may increase usage, easing programmatic pressure at the heavily used Citadel Community Centre (as described on page 27).

Top activities at the pavilion include specialty camps (e.g. skateboarding, youth programming, daycare) and special events (e.g. music, art programs) hosted by the Halifax recreational departments. Special events at the pavilion increased from 530 hours in 2015 to nearly 700 hours in 2017. While these uses are the most significant, the pool pavilion serves as change rooms and washrooms for the pool users, as well as storage for a variety of organizations.

The Old Common Pavilion (Music Venue) is one of the top facilities in poor condition.¹³ As a result of these current conditions, there is a perception that it is unsafe and dark, inaccessible, and needs renewal.



Citadel Community Centre

The Citadel Community Centre's hours of operations are Monday to Friday (8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.) and Saturday to Sunday (8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.).

The total number of hours available at the Citadel Community Centre in 2017 was 1,378 annually. A total of 1,454 hours are booked annually. The space is booked beyond capacity, and some programs occur in the same spaces at the same time. The Citadel Community Centre has a large unfinished space above the first floor – that is available for expansion. This facility demonstrates programming demand at the Common – as there are a plentiful variety of activities (e.g. martial arts, yoga, karate, tai chi).

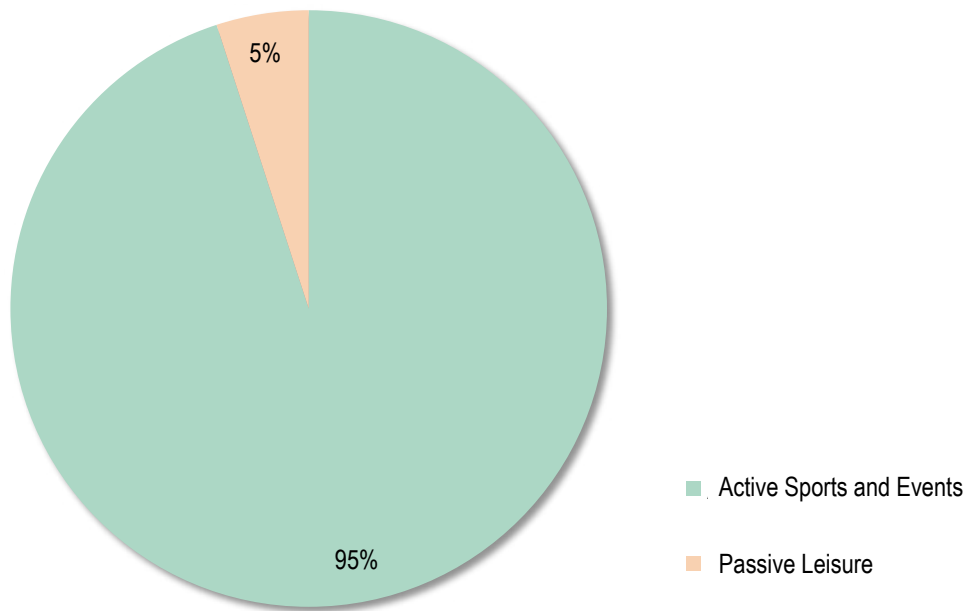


Figure 17: Proportion of Land Dedicated to Active Sports compared to Passive Leisure

Summary of Use: Active Sports vs. Passive Leisure

When looking at the percentage of land dedicated for various recreational uses, it was found that land at the North and Central Common was predominantly used for “Active Sports” – at 95%. This leaves 5% of land for Passive Leisure.

National trends show 50% of individuals engage in passive recreation (see Figure 1). A balance of passive and active recreation should be explored.

Seasonal Use Patterns

Active and passive recreation activities overlap significantly on site from May to October. Sites are overly programmed during these months.

Activities that occur at the Oval and Oval building are year-round, but need to be closed from mid-March to end of April and in November for maintenance transition. The same thing can be said for activities like skateboarding, biking, walking, and basketball – where year-round use is interrupted as a result of snow closures, primarily from mid-January to mid-March.

Tennis activity is restricted to May to October but the site becomes a place for other activities from November to April (e.g. ball hockey).

The absence of programming from January to March presents an opportunity for winter activities.

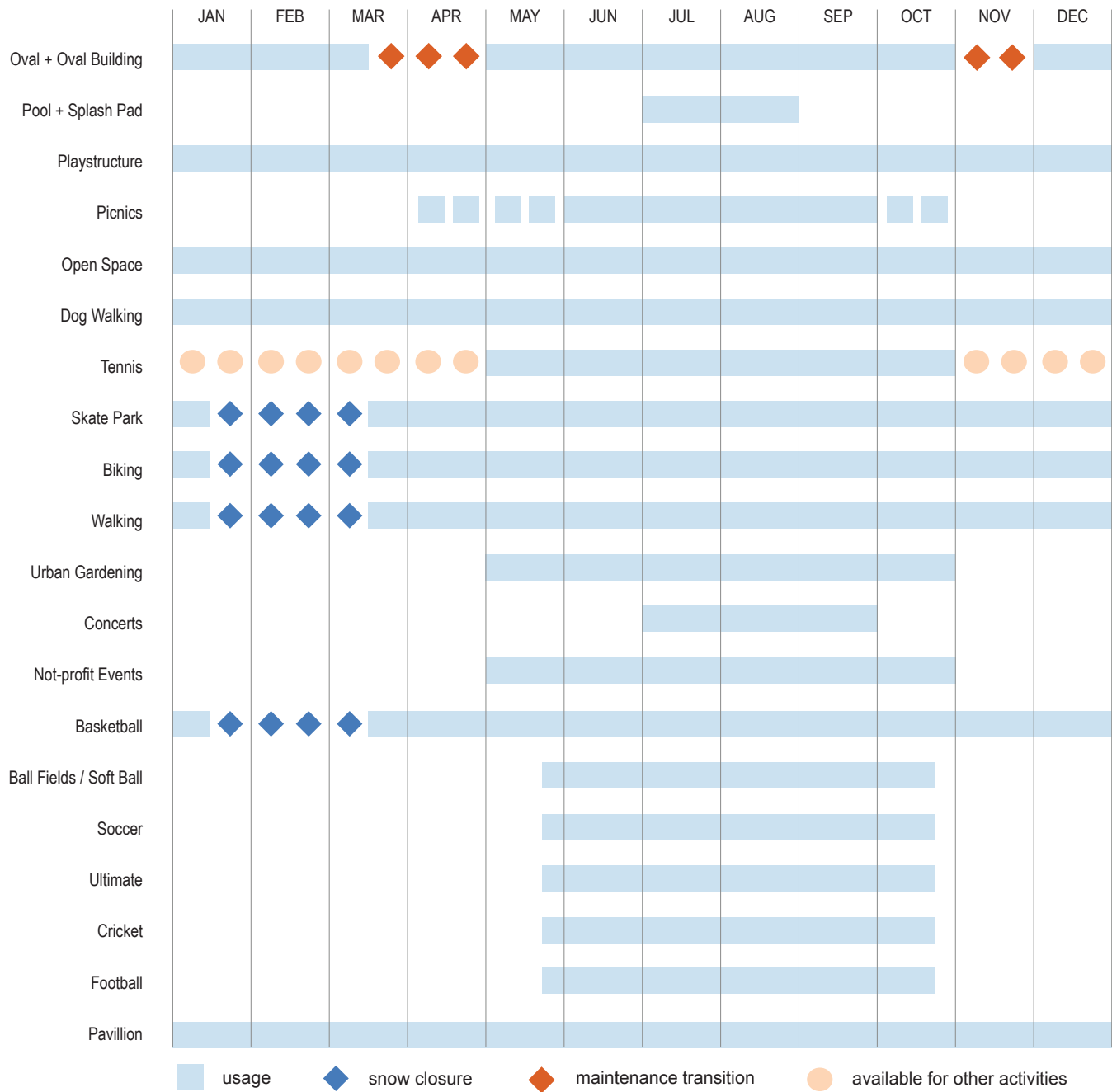


Figure 18: Seasonal Use Patterns at the Halifax Common

Daily Use Patterns

The pool and splash pad and play structure are utilized around the same times of day: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The same time period is popular for picnic-goers.

Biking, walking, dog walking, tennis, and skateboarding are recreational activities that start as early as 5:45 a.m.

Despite formal closure times ranging from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. (depending on day of the week), the Oval is used from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. as there is no fencing or barriers to entry.

Cricket, football, soccer, and baseball are regularly played from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (with peak times between 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.) – the time the facilities officially close. Despite the closure time, individuals continue to play these sports after 8:30 p.m.

Figure 19 seems to indicate many of the facilities appear to be largely unused, but they are actually fully booked during peak hours by various recreational organizations. The remaining available time slots are generally during work and school hours. Students, people working standard hours, and those without the resources to participate in organized sports can find it difficult to access these public fields.

Similarly, the pool and splash pool close at 5 p.m., which restrict their availability to many families.

Even if the hours and booking system are changed to broaden the accessibility of the sports fields and the pools, the slump in daytime usage will still largely remain. One option to more efficiently use these amenities is to develop programs that attract seniors. Seniors have more available time to spend on Active Leisure, as described by national trends earlier in this chapter.

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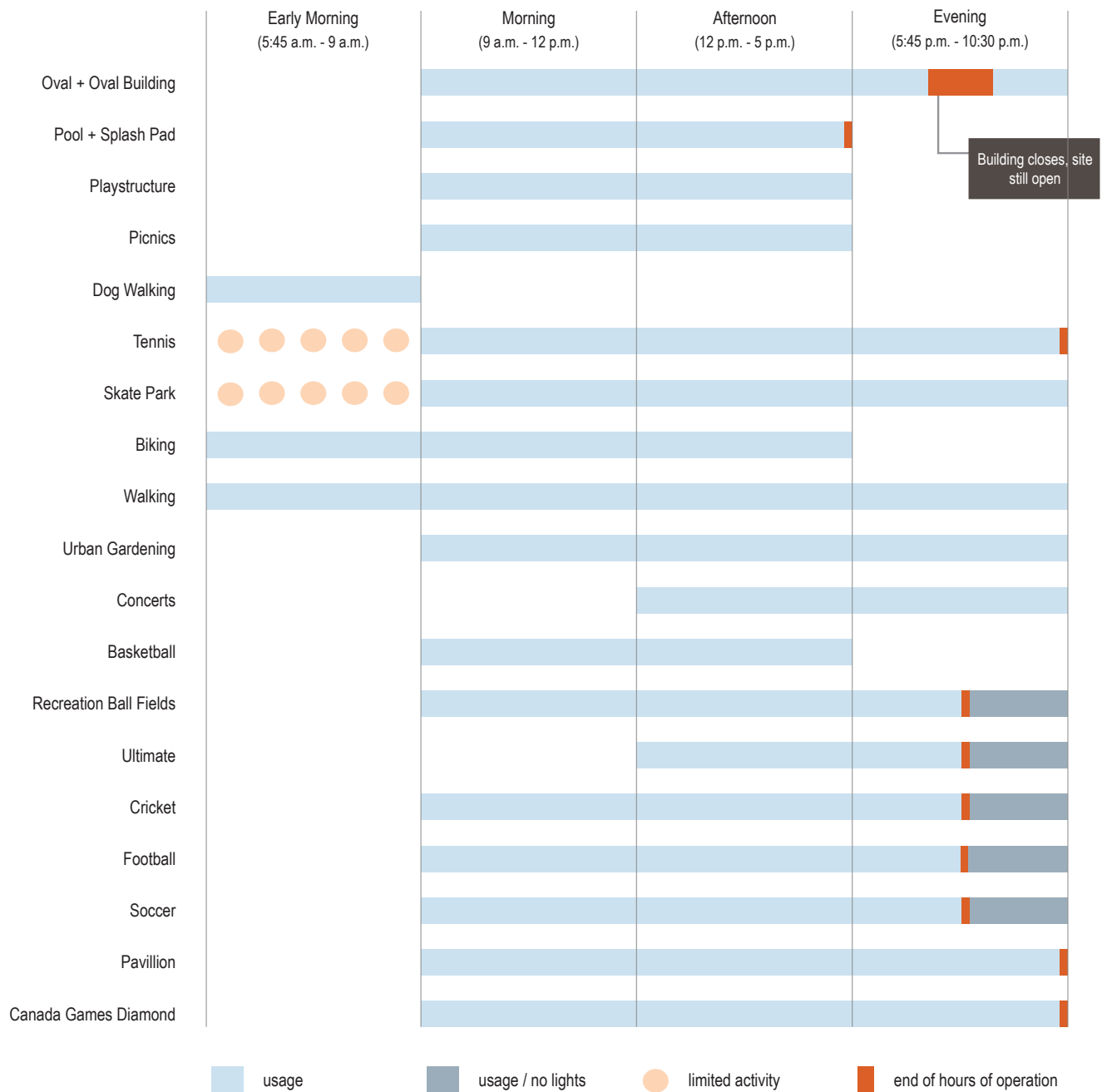


Figure 19: Time of Day Use Patterns at the Halifax Common

Below are some observations on the Common's regional recreation context.

Baseball

- There are many singular baseball and softball fields throughout the Halifax Peninsula and surrounding neighbourhoods, as depicted in the Open Space Context Map (See Page 41). However, only a few locations in Halifax group fields together – which are favourable for tournament play.
- The Facility Master Plan states, “Many softball diamonds throughout Halifax are currently underutilized. Users report field condition as the main barrier to increased use.”¹⁴ If the field repairs are not onerous, this is an efficient way to ease some of the pressure on the Halifax Common diamonds and open those fields to casual play and secondary uses.
- Apart from the Canada Games Diamond field, all fields lack lighting. Booking records demonstrate that use is limited in the late evenings (8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.). Lighting can extend the bookable hours throughout the HRM and reduce the demand on the diamonds in the Common.
- A detailed study on diamond usage, conditions, and consolidation opportunities within the HRM, coupled with focused public engagement can help confirm the quantum of baseball that is appropriate for the Halifax Common.

Multi-Use Fields

- Playing fields that combine activities like soccer, ultimate Frisbee, rugby, football are more vulnerable to overuse than ball fields, yet are the most efficient use of space and enable greater utilization rates
- The Community Facility Master Plan 2 identifies that there was no shortage of ball fields but there is a demand for additional playing fields. The plan also demonstrates how natural sports fields can double as park space for activities like picnics and dog walking when they are not in use
- There is only one cricket ground in all of Halifax.

4.6 REGIONAL RECREATION CONTEXT

- Halifax Common is approaching carrying capacity of recommended hours of play on the multi-use field (cricket, diamonds 10 and 11, sports field 13 and 14).
- There appears to be sufficient playing field space on the Common – public engagement will inform whether additional improvements are needed.

Pool and Spray Pad

- There are 5 spray pads on the peninsula, and 1 spray pad exterior to the peninsula.
- There is only 1 outdoor pool on the peninsula on the Halifax Common that is uniquely positioned next to a spray pool.

Open Space

- Based on the Open Space Context Map (See Page 41), there is a limited amount of open space in all of Halifax – and where there is open space, there are limited features and amenities. Open Space is any open piece of land that is undeveloped (has no buildings or other built structures and is accessible to the public). It may be parks, green spaces or other open areas that can range in activities – from playgrounds and playing fields to highly maintained environments to relatively natural landscapes.
- Based on the Halifax Green Network, the Halifax Common is considered to be one of the largest parks. As development pressure increases on the peninsula, the Halifax Common represents an opportunity to conserve some biodiversity and cultural heritage, while providing recreation and a diversity of landscape experiences.

Playgrounds

- The 1994 Halifax Common Plan identifies the provision of renewed playgrounds as an important priority. More recently, the Community Facility Master Plan 2 articulates the quantity of playground provision necessary for the community: “HRM’s current playground service provision is approximately 1 playground per 1,000 people.”¹⁵ Based on this target as a starting point, the Halifax Peninsula and Urban Fringe would require 134 playgrounds.
 - The Community Facility Master Plan 2 points out that funds should be used to allow for “replacement/renewal of each playground every 15-20 years”.
15 The Halifax Common playground was built in 2006, making it 12 years old – it is approaching the end of its lifecycle.
-



People shared why recreation is an important resource in their personal and professional lives, and how recreation can provide significant value to The Common's site.

People defined recreation at The Common as being a valuable community gathering space, with abundance of transportation options, and diverse, multi-generational, multi-use programming opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, and socio-economic status.

4.7 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Major Themes

The national policies, demographics and trends, in addition to the local trends and site usage, inform the following major themes with regard to recreational needs for The Common. Feedback and ideas generated from a variety of public engagement opportunities enrich and confirm the directions identified.

1. Active/Passive Imbalance

- A more balanced diversity of passive and active recreation options within the Common will better serve the recreational needs of Halifax.

2. Team/Organized Sport Dominance

- The predominance of formal 'booked' uses on the sports fields can be a barrier to open and equitable access to these public spaces. The broader community would benefit from more opportunities for informal, 'drop-in' uses during peak hours.

3. Spatial Opportunities

- The success of a multi-use field (cricket, diamonds 10 and 11, sports field 13 and 14) area shows that multiple sporting activities can share space, serving a broad range of interests, and improving utilization. This pattern can be used more generally through the Common, providing the same level of service with a much smaller footprint.
- Additional 'opening' of the Common may be obtainable through improvements and consolidation of existing sports facilities outside the Common.

4. Temporal Opportunities

- Analysis of annual and daily patterns of use show a number of slow periods. These are an opportunity to reprogram space and attract new users, enlivening the Common and wringing maximum value out of all facilities. Carefully tuning the hours of operation to the specific needs of the community can also help accommodate the modern lifestyles and commitments, satisfying the goal of greater inclusion.

4.8 INFORMING THE COMMON'S RECREATIONAL DIRECTIONS

Since the approval of the 1994 Halifax Common Plan, the Common lands have not only seen changes within its boundary, but also a resurgence of residential and commercial development in its vicinity that have heightened its importance as a largely publicly owned treasure in the middle of bustling city.

5 THE COMMON TODAY

Today, the Halifax Regional Municipality remains the largest land owner within the Halifax Common boundary. Virtually all of the municipal lands can be characterized as open space, with the exception of the portions that house the buildings of 1606 Bell Road and the Bengal Lancers barn. In addition, all roads traversing the Common are public streets.

Hospitals, schools and Dalhousie University are also dispersed by open space, albeit with a varying degree of access to the public. While the grounds surrounding Citadel High School or the Museum of Natural History for example are easily accessible to the general public, some of the hospital or Dalhousie University open spaces are much more private in nature.

In recent years, a number of land transactions have taken place. All of these changes in landownership occurred between the municipality and the Province, and the affected lands have remained in public ownership. The recapturing of land by the municipality that was envisioned in the 1994 Common Plan did not materialize. The lands formerly occupied by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at Summer Street and Bell Road were sold to the Province for a future hospital expansion. The former Community College site at Bell Road remained in provincial ownership for the construction of Citadel High School and the parking lot of the Victoria General Hospital has remained with the Province.

The lands formerly occupied by Queen Elizabeth High School were recaptured by the Municipality but transferred to the Province in 2008 in a land exchange that enabled the construction of Halifax's new Central Library on Spring Garden Road. The grounds of the former Queen Elizabeth High School have since been used by the highly successful Common Roots Urban Farm under an agreement that a forthcoming hospital master plan would potentially require the lands for a hospital expansion.

5.1 LAND OWNERSHIP

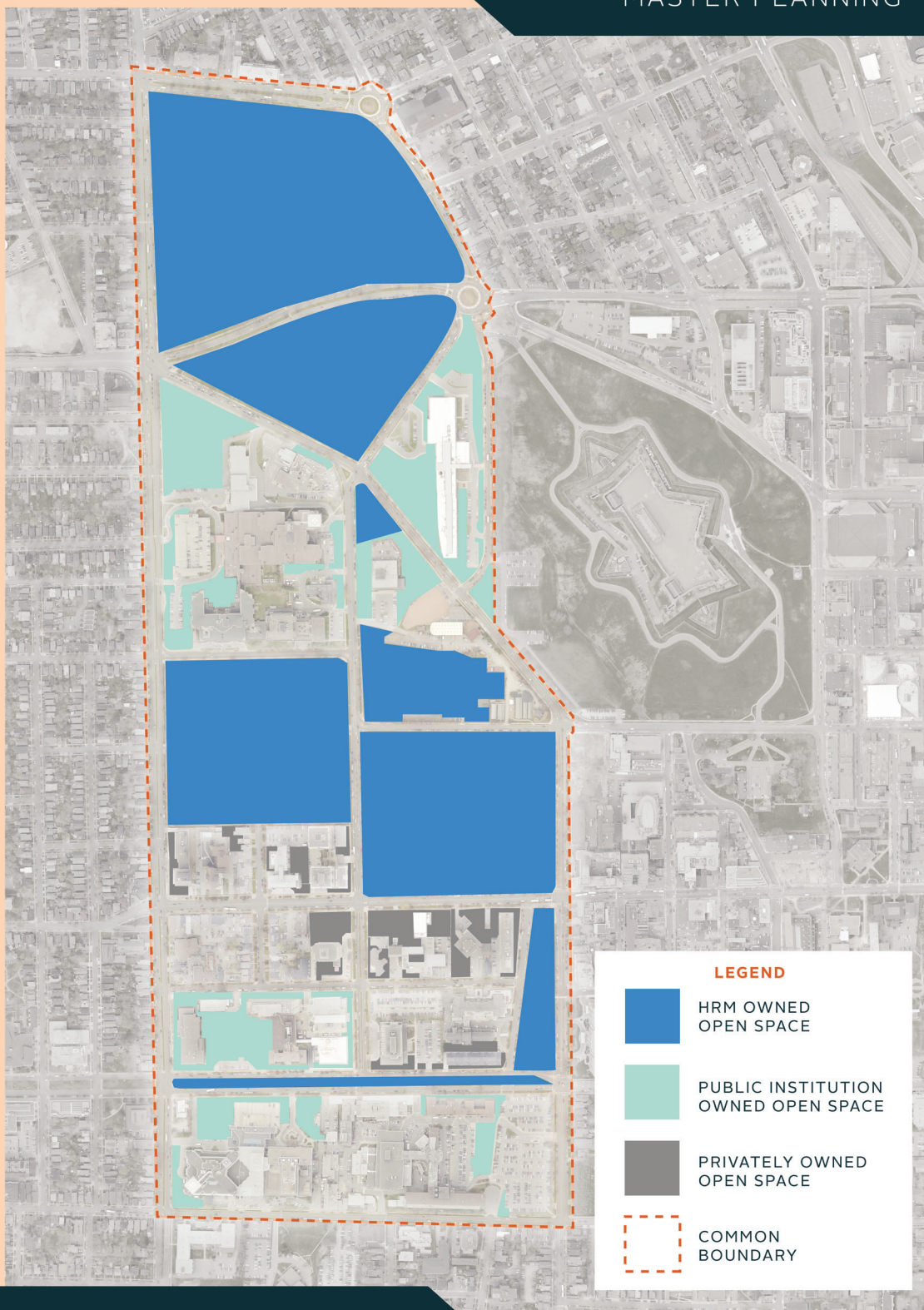
HALIFAX COMMON MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY OWNERSHIP

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

OPEN SPACE - OWNERSHIP

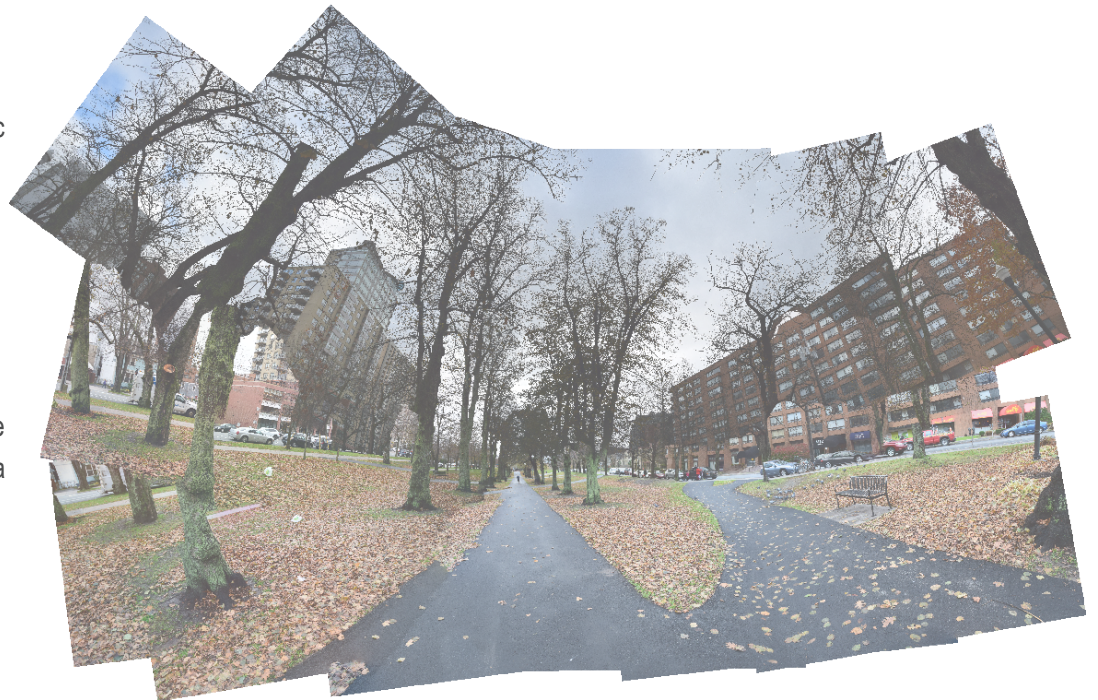
Much of the Common is characterized by an extensive variety of mature deciduous trees. They are abundant on streets boulevards, along edges of open spaces, and in large stands, creating a pleasant leafy canopy in the summer months. A variety of species and commemorative plantings are present in the Public Gardens and Camphill Cemetery. Many of these trees are aging, and will require continuous replacement in order to maintain tree cover throughout the Common.

Victoria Park Tree Canopy

Intensive horticultural plantings are concentrated in the Public Gardens and community gardening at Common Roots Urban Farm. Other horticultural plantings are clustered at the roundabout gateways at the North Common, at the Oval pavilion, and Victoria Park.

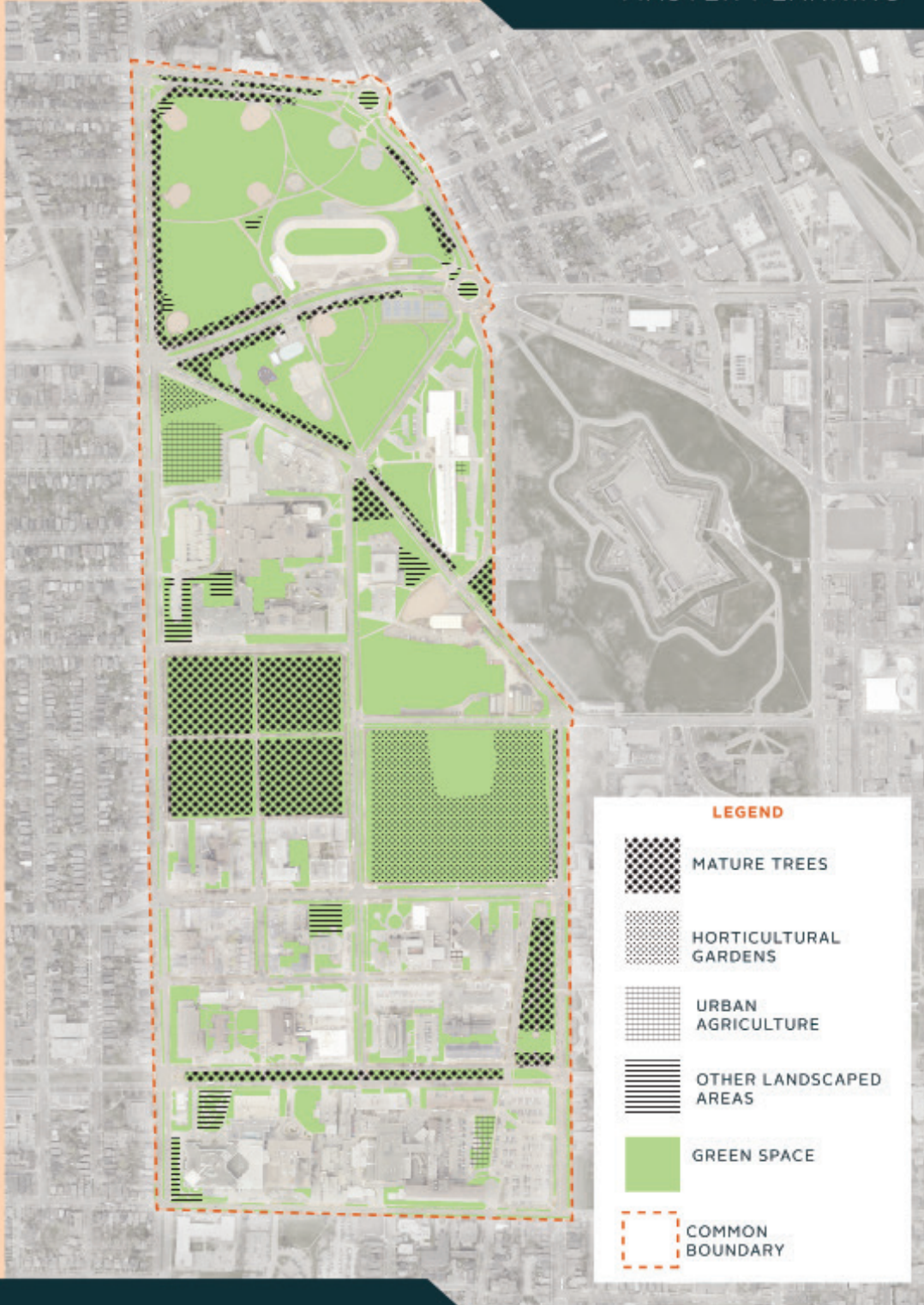
Grassy, wide open space interspersed by trees, buildings and other landscape features is the primary vegetative component of the Wanderers Grounds and the North and Central Common.

The network of public green spaces of the Halifax Common create a dense albeit somewhat disconnected pattern of open spaces in the heart of the Halifax peninsula. In its entirety, this open space pattern distinctly differentiates the Common from much of its surrounding densely built up residential areas.



5.2 OPEN SPACE CHARACTER

HALIFAX COMMON MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY GREEN SPACE & VEGETATIVE CHARACTER

A network of formal and informal pedestrian routes exists throughout the whole Common. Many of the streets have wide sidewalks, there are paved multi-purpose routes in Victoria Park, the North and Central Common, and crushed gravel pathways meander through the Public Gardens and cross Camp Hill Cemetery.

A set of informal dirt pathways traverse the North Common, representing the most direct pedestrian and cyclist routes from the north western corner of the Common toward downtown Halifax. A steady flow of walking or cycling commuters can be observed on these paths throughout Monday to Friday mornings and late afternoons. Depending on the weather conditions, the surfaces of these informal routes can be wet or icy, creating unsuitable conditions for individuals with limited mobility.

Pedestrian entrance ways to the Common, and to open spaces within the Common, are clearly delineated at two points on North Park Street, at the intersection of Bell Road and Summer Street, at the four corners of the Public Gardens, and at two sides of Camp Hill Cemetery. Informal and unresolved entry points are also being used at the corner of Robie and Cunard Streets, Robie and Cogswell Streets. In the south of the Common, institutional development has formed hard edges that limit entrance ways and serve to relegate pedestrians to linear movement along sidewalks.

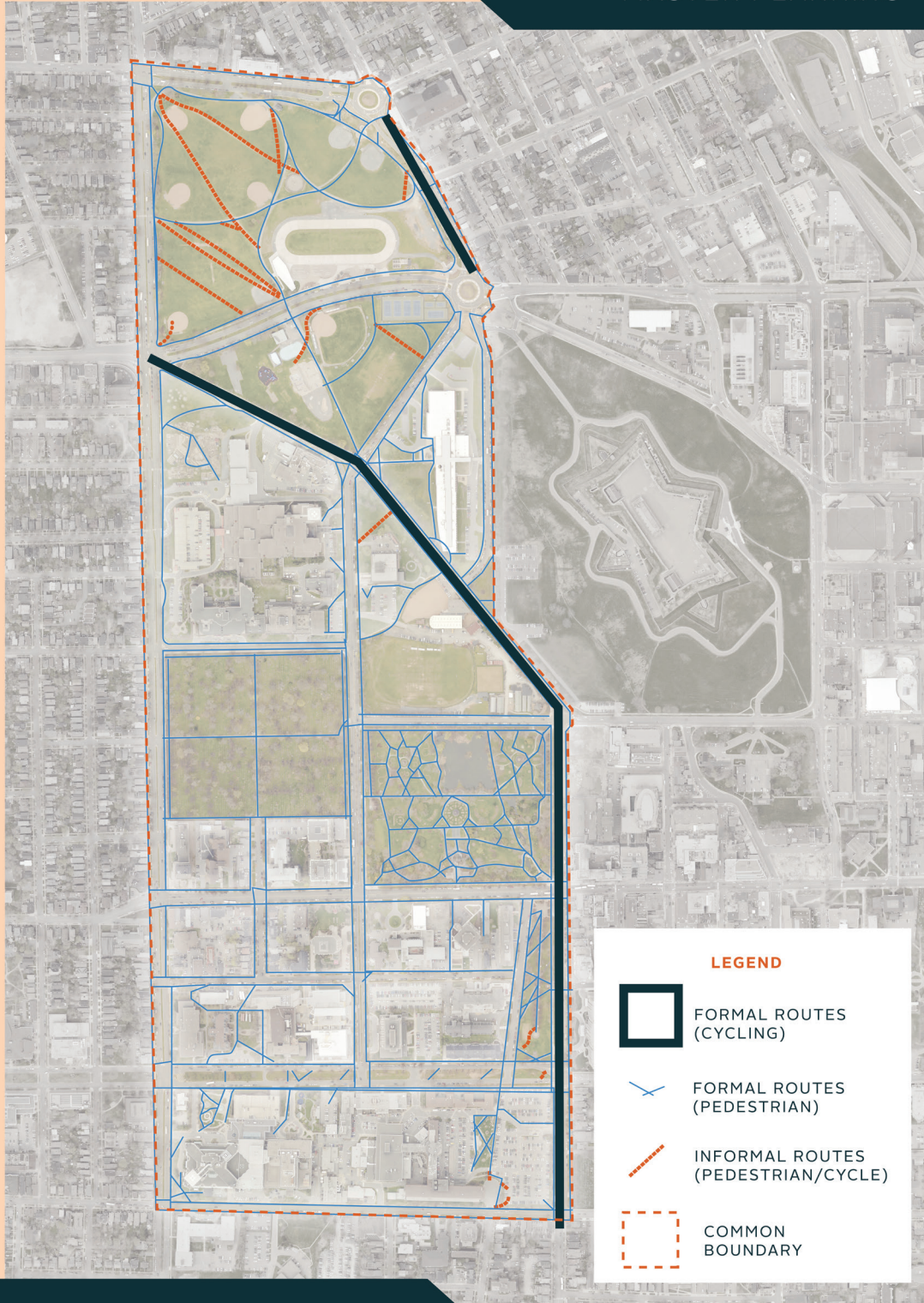
One formal on-street bicycle route intersects the Common and provides a north-south connection, via Bell Road and South Park Street. Links to this route are made from throughout the Peninsula and sometimes across the multi-purpose pathways of the north common, as a route to and from the downtown.

Major vehicle and transit arterials are present throughout the Common. Off-street parking on the Common is primarily associated with institutional or residential land uses. Users of the municipally owned open spaces largely rely on on-street parking around along the Common perimeter or in surrounding residential neighborhoods.

5.3 CIRCULATION

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

CIRCULATION

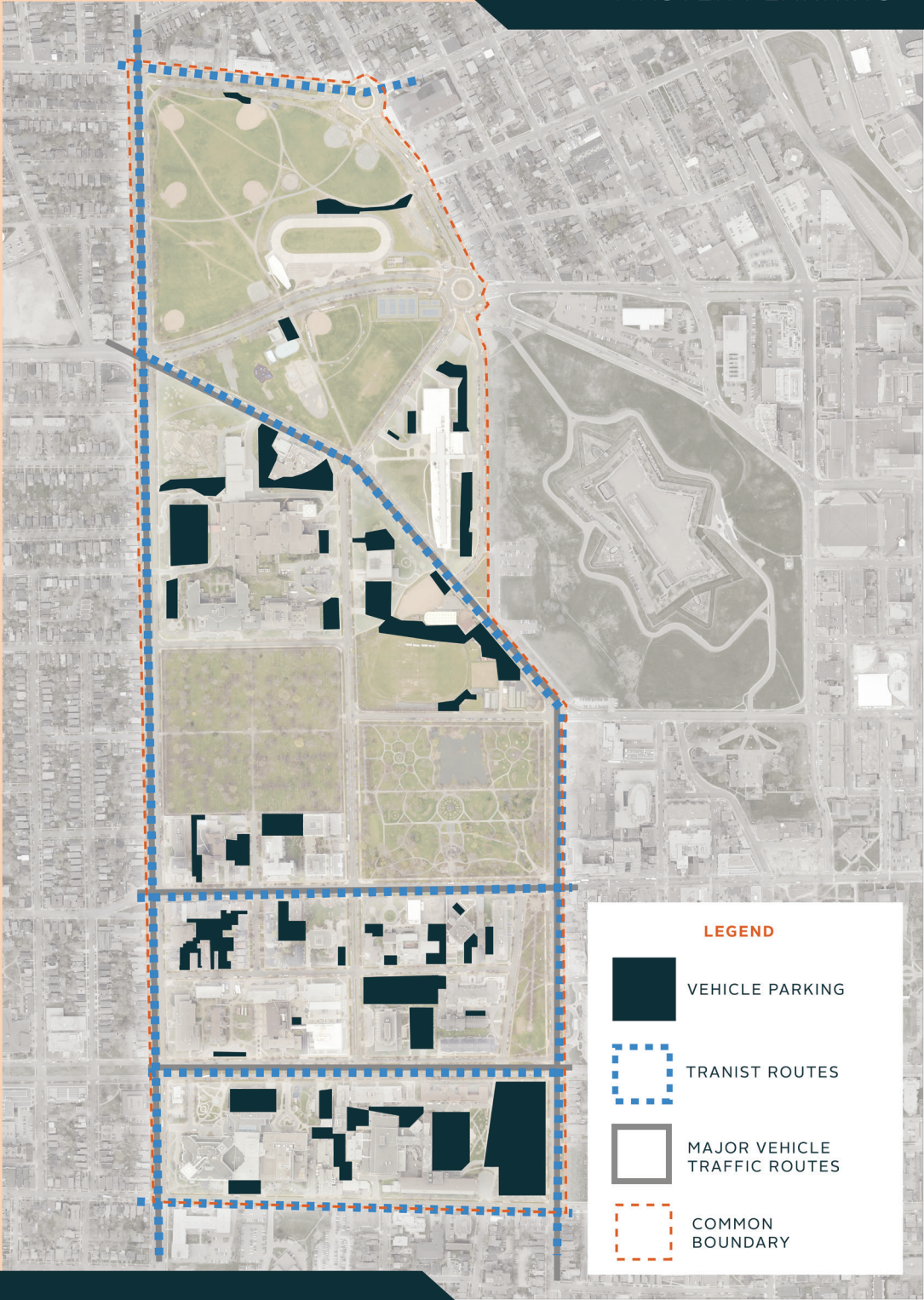
HALIFAX COMMON MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY CROSSINGS & CONVERGENCES

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

TRANSIT, TRAFFIC & PARKING

Passive recreation includes many types of leisure and recreation activities. The similarities among all passive recreation forms are that they are low in cost, equipment and organization. This includes children playing, games like frisbee and bocce ball, picnicking, reading, walking, socializing, exercising, sun bathing or people watching. Certain types of open spaces and features enable these forms of recreation, by providing meaning or visual interest, and especially an atmosphere that feels safe, friendly and suitable for the desired pursuit.

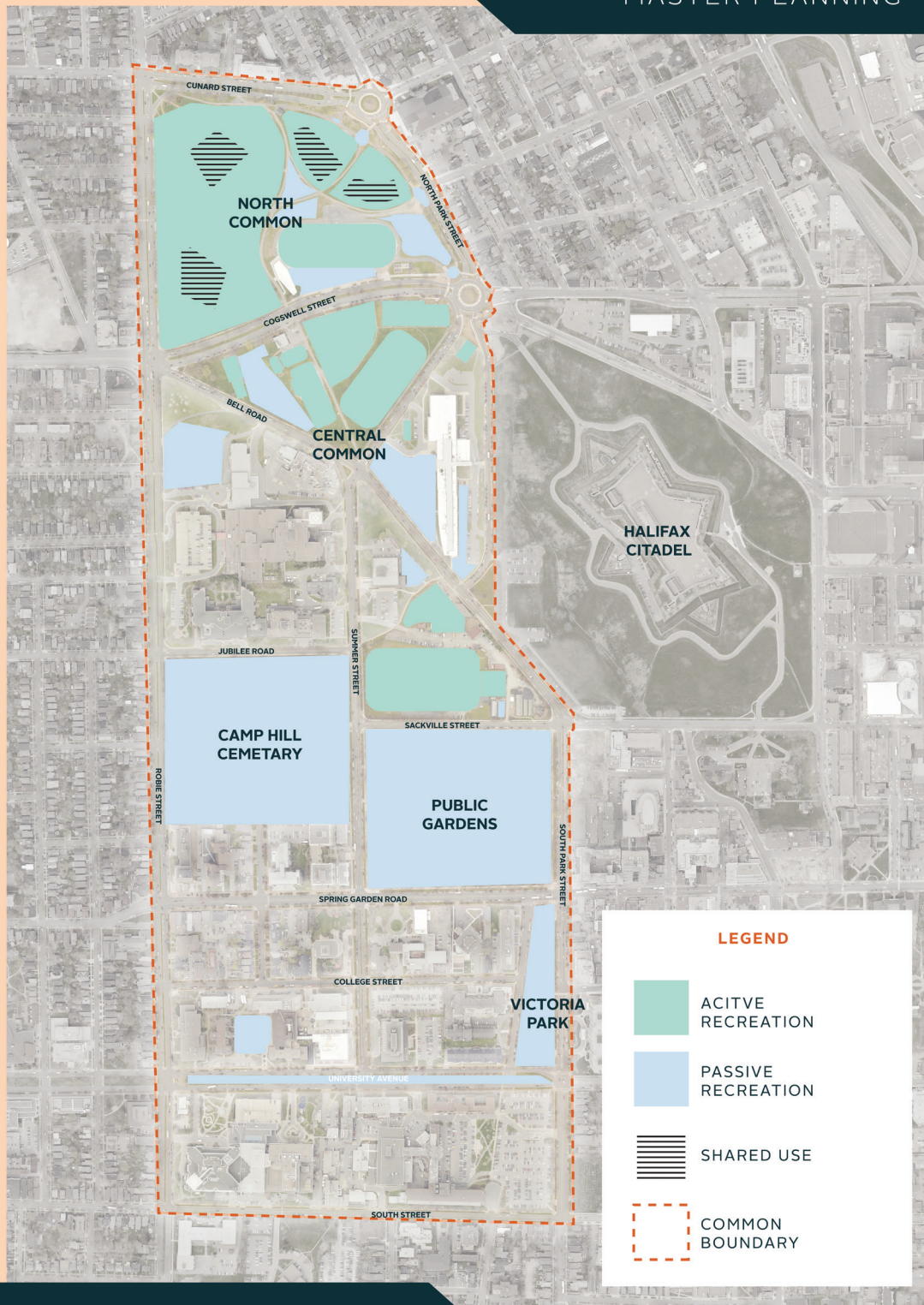
Passive recreation features are often understood as landmarks, such as monuments and fountains. These denote places, events or people of significance to the public. Most of these features commemorate celebrations of confederation or British leaders. More recently, public artwork that centres Mikmaq artists and culture has been introduced on the North Common.

There is an absence of meeting places and social spaces that provide the amenities to support passive recreation. The wide, windswept openness of the North Common limits opportunity for interactions at a human scale, and discourages lingering. Users trying to put down a picnic blanket on the North Common are typically relegated to small residual lawn spaces between the ballfields and the trails crisscrossing the Common. Formal and informal seating opportunities or suitable picnic areas virtually do not exist on the North and Central Common.

5.4 PASSIVE VIS-A-VIS ACTIVE RECREATION

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

RECREATIONAL USE

Active recreation and sport include a wide variety of activities that are typically forms of physical activity, like softball, basketball, swimming, and ice skating. The similarities among the different forms are that they require specific types of field, playing court, equipment or other infrastructure, are often organized by teams or schedules, and usually have some associated cost.

Some forms of active recreation require considerable field area, especially when compared to passive recreation. During warmer times of the year, this is particularly true for softball and baseball, which occupies the majority of the North Common during peak evening hours. During the day and after dark, these play areas revert to passive uses.

Other major active recreation and sport features include the Oval, two multi-purpose sport fields and the Wanderers Grounds. Tennis courts, basketball courts and a cricket pitch are also well used.

The condition of active recreation and sport features varies considerably. The Oval and tennis courts are at the beginning of their life spans and are in great condition. The pool and splash area are past the need for replacement and are in extremely poor condition. Softball fields are mixed. Bleachers provide single-purpose seating but are sometimes used for casual seating and as outdoor lunch seating.

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

RECREATION FEATURES

An urban structure analysis reveals the following urban characteristics:

Barrier: A Physical separation which impedes the natural flow of movement through the common. Barriers in this context can be represented by impermeable building design, large fences, or roads that are dead ends.

Node: A point at which lines or pathways intersect or branch; a central or connecting point between two or more ley areas.

Edge: Linear elements that become the boundaries between two kinds of areas, in this case all the edges on the Halifax Common where the built environment meets open spaces of the Halifax Common.

Gathering Point: A square or plaza – that has a dominant function of hosting people, including areas of seating and good visibility.

Landmark: A distinct, and historic feature, unique only to Halifax.

Major Crossing: A primary crossing route for pedestrians that creates an access link between one part of the Halifax Common and another.

Path: A formal Pedestrian route that has been designed to direct people through the Halifax Common.

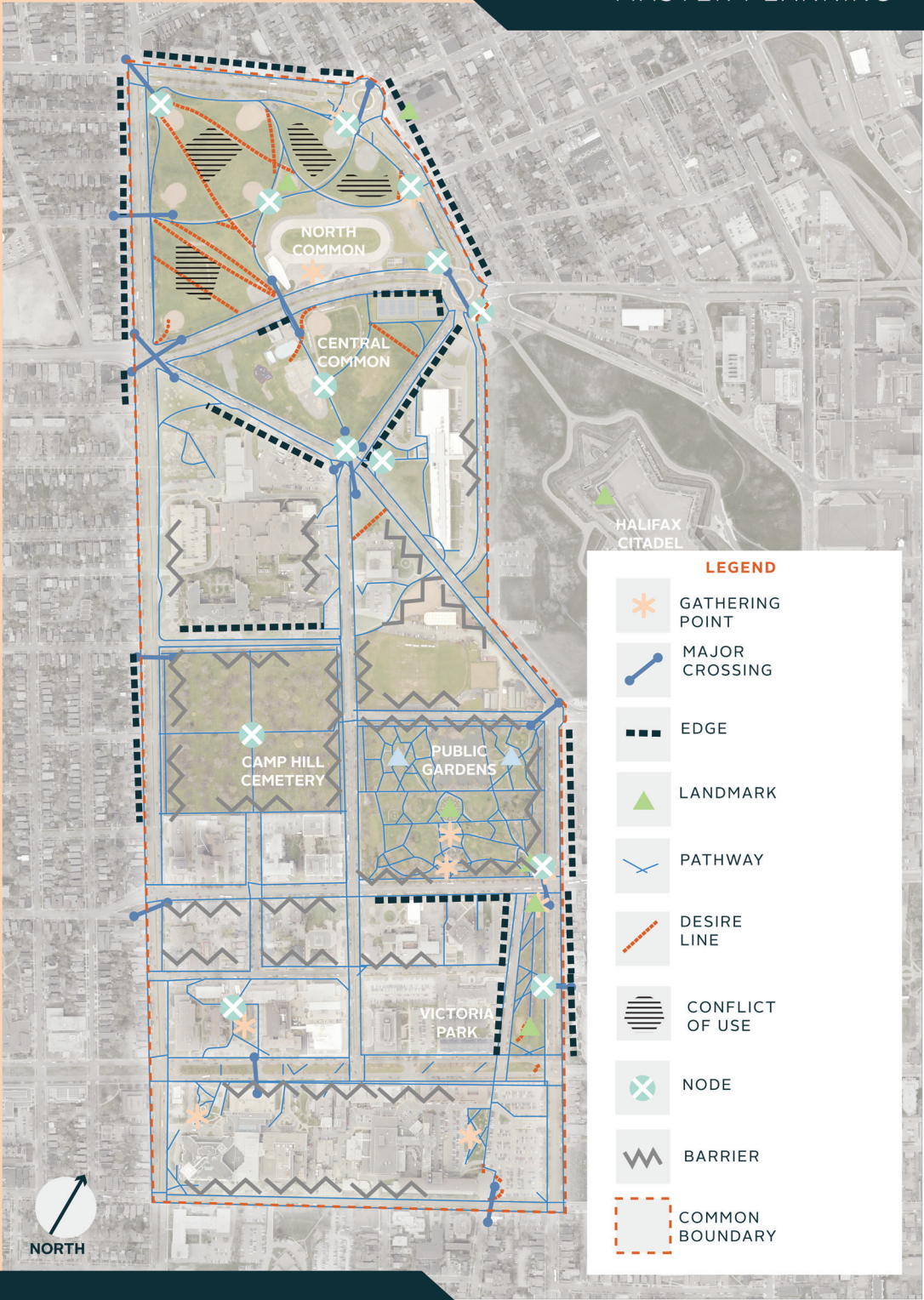
Desire Line: A more direct route. Desire lines are formed where the formal pedestrian paths do not meet the resident's needs. It is an area usually carved out of existing infrastructure by repeated movement through.

Conflict of Use: These areas are unique to the North Common. As the majority of the Open Space is designated to active recreation, there is often a conflict of use as there is a higher demand for passive recreation on that particular Common field, due to its proximity to surrounding neighborhoods.

5.5 URBAN STRUCTURE

HALIFAX COMMON

MASTER PLANNING



SITE INVENTORY

SITE ANALYSIS

The Halifax Common are a premier location the region for hosting events that draw participants and spectators reaching from HRM to the entire province of Nova Scotia as well as beyond from all of Atlantic Canada.

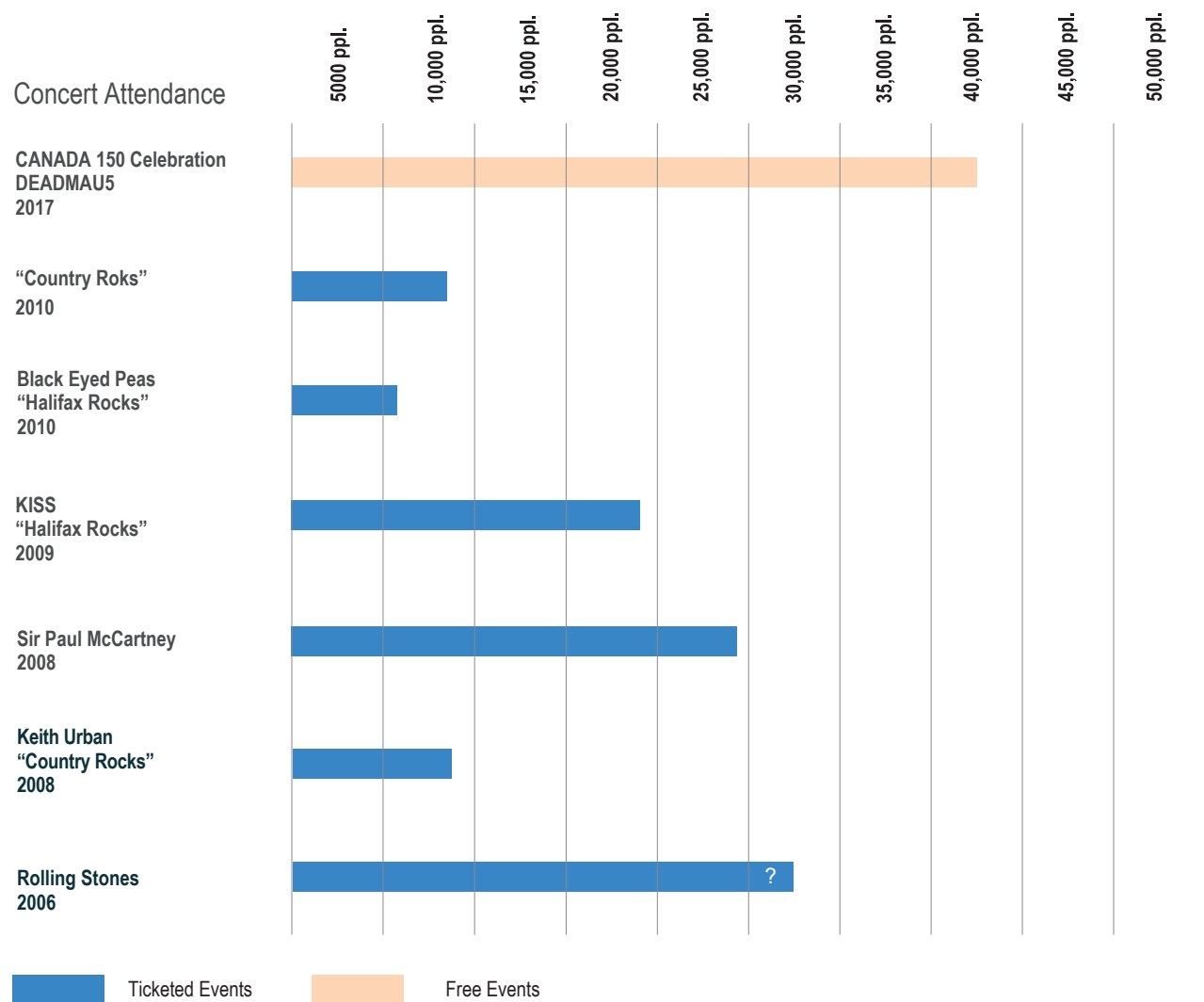
While most of these events are hosted by not-for-profit organizations, there have been sports events and concerts hosted by private organizers on the Common. The last big concert on the North Common for the Canada 150 celebrations headlining Deadmau5 was generally considered a success and drew approximately 40,000 viewers to the site.

Initial feedback from the HRM Special Events group is that the future of large scale concerts is questionable. Trends around the world show that there are fewer bands touring and bringing in big stadium crowds of 50,000+. More popular are smaller music festivals like Stanfest or the Winnipeg Folk Festival. Past ticket sales, in general, have been lower than promoters' projections. It is inconclusive that Halifax is a good market for major concerts.

A Use of the North Common Memorandum of Understanding with Events Halifax Regarding Major Outdoor Concerts (March 6, 2007) is today still used by HRM staff for decision making. The associated staff report outlines the approach used to evaluate requests for future concerts on the North Common. The five principles established in the report are:

1. The Common is used for the common good
2. Uses of the Common reflect the values and needs of the day and the future
3. Balancing use
4. Protection of the Common
5. The Common cannot be considered in isolation

5.6 EVENTS PLANNING



Attendance at major concerts

In 2017, the large multi-purpose spaces of the Halifax Common were booked for a total of 2,219 hours for festivals and events. Assuming that demand for these events bookings primarily exists on weekend day hours, the percentage breakdown of how these spaces were utilized for events in 2017 is:¹

Wanderers Grounds

Total bookings: 6 hours

Events:

- Halifax Celtic Festival



Emera Oval

Total bookings: 165.5 hours

Events:

- Kids Help Phone Walk So Kids Can Talk
- Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank Hali-ditarod
- Arthritis Society Walk to Fight Arthritis
- Halifax Cycling Coalition
- Hockey Night In Canada – Play On! Halifax Street Hockey Tournament
- 902 ManUp/Arts Association – Family Fun Day/BBQ
- Montionball for Special Olympics Marathon of Sport
- Heart and Stroke Foundation Big Bike Tour
- Youth Running Series 0 Glow on the O
- Sacred Heart School Terry Fox Run



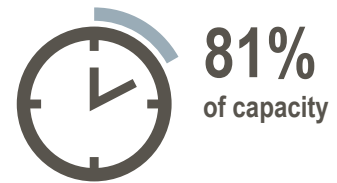
¹ Assuming a total capacity of 1,248 daytime hours from 8am to 8pm on 52 weekends

Central Common

Total bookings: 1011 hours

Events:

- Dalhousie Tamil Student Association Support to Save Indian and Tamil Nadu Culture
- HRM Community Rec. and Culture Winter by the Sea
- Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia Road to Recovery Walk
- Manulife Financial Dragon Boat Community Charity BBQ and Fun Day
- Hockey Night In Canada Play On! Halifax Street Hockey Tournament
- The Welcome BBQ Association 12 Annual Welcome BBQ
- HRM Canada Day Events
- Business Is Jammin - Business For a Day
- Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia Mad Pride Tea Party
- HRM Natal Day Events
- Jamaican Culture Association of NS 4th Annual Caribbean Diaspora Multicultural Celebration
- Bench Bullying Basketball Family Fun Day
- ParticipACTION ISO Play List
- University Children's Centre Parent Meet and Greet
- Aids Coalition of NS Scotiabank Aids Walk
- CIBC Wood Gundy Save Second Base Event

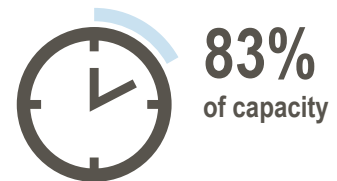


North Common

Total bookings: 1036 hours

Events:

- Ronald MacDonald House Charities – Pajama Walk
- PPSC Office Picnic 2017
- National Aboriginal Day – Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre
- Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre – Mawitn'nej or Let Us Gather
- HRM Canada Day Events
- Motionball for Special Olympics - 2017 Marathon of Sport
- DND Sea Training PD Day
- Bladder Cancer Canada – 4th Annual Walk
- DND 36 Canadian Brigade – National Open House



Major Themes

The analysis of the Common today inform the following major themes with regard to design improvements for the Common. Feedback and ideas generated from a variety of public engagement opportunities will enrich the directions identified.

1. Location

- The central location and ease of access to the Common to a growing Halifax Peninsula population will increase the demand for diversified passive and active recreation opportunities.

2. Open Space Connectivity

- The dense but somewhat disconnected pattern of open spaces on the Common presents an opportunity for increased connectivity and integration of these open spaces. This could be achieved by either establishing direct connections between open spaces or by utilizing urban greenway opportunities in public street right of ways.

3. Circulation

- Pedestrians and cyclists have voted with their feet and established a number of informal pathways along desire lines in various parts of the Common. Rethinking circulation and potentially formalizing these connections presents an opportunity to improve connectivity and reduce conflicts with other Common users.
- Clearly marking and formalizing all important entry ways into the Common can help improve circulation and reinforce the identity of the Common.

5.7 INFORMING THE COMMON'S PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

. 4. Passive vis-a-vis Active Recreation

- Active recreation uses dominate the balance of the Common's open spaces.
- The Public Gardens are a well maintained and inviting passive recreation open space that has recently seen its seasons extended.
- Camp Hill Cemetery is an under utilized green oasis in the city. While the cemetery might not readily lend itself as "recreation" space, it could offer an opportunity for quiet reflection and relaxation in the middle of a busy city.
- The Master Plan will have to address the imbalance and segregation of passive and active recreation spaces.

5. Urban Structure

- The urban structure analysis reveals a number of barriers that obstruct pedestrian circulation throughout the Common. The quality of new urban edges facing the Common resulting from hospital expansions will need to be carefully considered as they will inadvertently either improve or diminish the character of Common open space. Landmarks, gathering spaces and major crossings require aesthetic and functional improvements.

6. Events Planning

- Investing in permanent infrastructure to support concert events on the North and Central Common does not seem needed. However, the sites should be kept flexible and open to potentially hold large crowds. Large free of charge public concerts are typically inclusive events for a large cross section of Haligonians.

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Master Planning for the Halifax Common should be embedded in an awareness of the legislative changes that have shaped the Common since the original land grant in 1763. For over 250 years, these changes have facilitated the erection of new buildings, land transactions, construction of utilities and general improvements.

6 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Halifax Common was granted to a group of trustees “to and for the use of the inhabitants of the Town of Halifax as Common forever” on July 30th, 1763. The trustees were incorporated by an Act of the Nova Scotia legislature in 1833 as the Trustees of Public Property in Halifax, to manage lands granted “in trust, and to and for the common and public use and benefit of the Town of Halifax”. The words of the 1763 grant are:

“I Jonathan Belcher, Esquire, Lieutenant Governor of His Majesty’s Province of Nova Scotia or Acadie, by virtue of the power and authority given to me by his Present Majesty King George the Third, grant land lying and being in the Peninsula of Halifax containing in the whole two hundred and thirty five acres for a Common for the use of the inhabitants of the Town of Halifax forever.”

According to the 1851 Charter, the City of Halifax was the owner, by operation of law, of all lands previously conveyed to other individuals or corporations “to and for the use and benefit of the town of Halifax, or of the inhabitants of the town or peninsula”. Amongst others, this included specially “the common on the peninsula”. This ownership was “in fee simple, for the public and common benefit of the City of Halifax, according to the true intent and meaning of the original grant...”

6.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

HALIFAX CHARTER

The Halifax Charter contains the following section that enabled the erection of the Oval building on the North Common:

66A (1) The Municipality may erect on the North Common of Halifax a permanent building to be used exclusively to support the Oval on the North Common.

(2) A building or structure on the North Common used at the time of the coming into force of this Section or erected pursuant to subsection (1) may continue to be used for its original purpose but no change in the use of that building or structure may be made unless approved by the Governor in Council and, when the building or structure is no longer required for that purpose and the Governor in Council has not approved its use for another purpose, the land occupied by that building or structure must revert to public open space. 2012, c. 59, s. 1.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The MPS generally defines the mechanism under which how park lands and public open space can be released.

7.10 Except when the interests of the City would clearly be better served, the City shall not release park lands or public open spaces for uses other than recreational in nature, unless such parks have been designated by the City as temporary, or unless alternative recreational space within the neighbourhood has been provided.

Furthermore, the MPS guides development in the following sub-areas of the Halifax Common:

8.1 SPRING GARDEN ROAD SUB-AREA

8.1.1 The City shall amend its zoning by-laws to include a height restriction on development in the vicinity of the Public Gardens so as to ensure a minimum of shadow casting on the Public Gardens.

6.2 MUNICIPAL PLANNING

8.1.2 The City shall consider an application under the provisions of Section 33(2)(b) of the Planning Act for a development in the Spring Garden Road Sub-Area north of Spring Garden Road which would exceed the height precinct so established through Policy 8.1.1 above, and, in so doing, the City shall require that any proposed development not cast a significant amount of shadow on the Public Gardens during that period of the year during which the Public Gardens is open to the public.

8.1.3 The City shall consider an application under the provisions of Section 33(2)(b) of the Planning Act for inclusion of office uses in an apartment building, provided that: (i) the said uses are located on the ground floor of the building; (ii) access is separately accessible to the said use; and (iii) parking spaces associated with said uses are separately accessible for spaces associated with the apartment uses.

8.1.4 For the area designated “High-Density Residential” on the southwest intersection of Spring Garden Road and Summer Street and extending to College Street, the City may consider applications for residential developments under the development agreement provisions of the Planning Act beyond the height precincts established pursuant to Policy 8.1.1, provided that no development shall be permitted which would cast shadows on the Public Gardens any day between February 21 and October 21 each year.

8.4 CAMP HILL SUB-AREA

8.4.1 The City shall amend its zoning by-law, as it applies to the property of Camp Hill Hospital, to include: (i) a requirement for a setback equivalent to the facade of the existing building from the Robie Street street line for any building fronting on Robie Street; and (ii) a height limitation of six storeys at the setback line identified in (i) above for any building fronting on Robie Street.

8.4.2 The City shall discourage the use of Jubilee Road as a main thoroughfare to and from the institutional areas on Robie Street.

8.4.3 In any development of the Camp Hill Hospital Complex, the City shall consider as access requirement that the primary access to the site be located on Summer Street and that the primary traffic egress from the site be located on Robie Street with right turns only permitted at that point.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

In a MOU between the Halifax Regional Municipality and the Capital District Health Authority, which was signed in 2010, both parties agreed upon urban design principles and site planning provisions for the future redevelopment of portions of the Victoria General and Halifax Infirmary sites. Specifically, the MOU includes provisions regarding:

- mutual planning
- good urban planning and urbanity
- a Green Corridor
- pedestrian realm
- porosity
- site use
- respect for the Halifax Common Plan
- building treatments
- setbacks
- street widening

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The Halifax Common Master Planning process exists within the context of numerous plans, strategies and policies, many of which apply throughout the region. These background documents, starting with the 1994 Halifax Common Plan, provide overarching directions and in some cases, legislated regulation, for the direction of the Common, its natural, heritage and recreation features, and development of surrounding neighbourhoods.

As a component of master planning for the Common, these documents provide considerations for defining site-specific role and characteristics, as well as the broader role of the Common as it pertains to municipality-wide visions and aspirations, or long term planning for land use, transportation, environment, and public service delivery.

7 DOCUMENT REVIEW

HALIFAX COMMON PLAN, 1994

HRM staff developed the Halifax Common Plan in response to policy outlined in the 1991 Parkland Plan. Two sets of objectives emerged from this plan. The first set guides the Halifax Common as a whole while the second set guides city-owned land and public open space. Objectives guiding the Halifax Common as a whole deal primarily with maintaining the character and beauty of the site as well as its diversity of uses, ensuring that the future uses of the Commons remain in the interest of the public good. The plan defines the character of the district with regards to:

1. Open Green Space (The plan identified landscaping the Victoria General Hospital parking lot to extend Victoria Park),
2. Views and Landmarks (Emphasis is placed on identifying significant views and developing future landmarks),
3. Trees (emphasis is placed on maintaining and enhancing the abundance and variety of trees),
4. Historic Significance (Both built and environmental, specifically Freshwater Brook, Victoria Park and the Public Gardens including the black iron fences that surround it),
5. Public Buildings (Emphasis is on continued beautification of these buildings),
6. Streets, Block Form, Sidewalks and the edges of the district (Emphasis is placed on the orientation of streets in this area compared to the grid network of the surrounding neighbourhoods).

Additionally, the plan contains objectives regarding improvement of multi-modal access to the Common lands, specifically by developing a continuous open space and pathway system, and strengthening the relationship between the Common, Downtown, and the surrounding neighbourhoods. The document highlights the safety of future users as a high priority, especially after dark. The plan recommends better lighting and design to improve this.

The plan places particular emphasis on the North and Central Commons' open spaces. It suggests incorporating more landscaping on the North Commons and

creating a better balance between organized sports and passive use. Additionally, the plan calls for no future loss of public open space and the reclamation of past city-owned land to increase the amount of public open space.

HALIFAX COMMON SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF PUBLIC MEETING AND WORKSHOPS AND SUBMISSIONS, 1993

This document provides a summary of results from two workshops and one public meeting held November 27-29 1992 discussing the Halifax Commons. Sixty-seven individuals attended the workshops over three days including eighteen persons representing interest groups. Additionally, seven people provided written submissions. The report notes that very few people from the surrounding neighbourhoods attended the workshops. Key considerations include:

1. Protection and Planning – Participants felt that a clear vision, principles and policies should be adopted by the city covering all aspects of the future of the Halifax Common.
2. Vistas and Views – Participants favoured the open vista of the North Common but felt it should be improved with more landscape features. Additionally, participants suggested that the Victoria General Hospital parking lot be made into a park.
3. Active and Passive Opportunities – Participants advocated for more passive (casual) activities in the North Common.
4. Recapture of Open Space – Participants asserted that there should be no further decrease in the amount of open space in the Halifax Common.
5. Private Use – Most participants supported, in principle, private use of the Common provided traffic, noise and safety guidelines were established.
6. Safety and Accessibility – participants expressed concern about conflict between active and passive uses and being hit by balls while walking. Additionally, the consensus was that the Common is unsafe to walk after dark.
7. Centennial Fountain – Participants generally agreed that the fountain

should be maintained in some form.

8. Pathway System – participants suggested that pathway improvements were needed, including stronger connections to the Citadel and public buildings.

9. Beautification – A number of participants suggested further beautification of landscaping around public buildings.

10. Special Events – Most participants supported the idea of holding special events on the Common.

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY (RP+5)

The RP+5 provides broad objectives that direct land use and development in HRM. The Halifax Common falls within the Regional Centre and the RP+5 defers specific objectives to that plan. The RP+5 categorizes the Halifax Common under two generalized land uses: Urban Settlement, and Park and Open Space. Relevant strategy actions for the Halifax Common site include: Park and Open Spaces, Community Facilities, Mobility, and Culture and Heritage.

Park and Open Spaces

The park and open spaces objective that is most relevant to the Halifax Common is to preserve and enhance the viability of cultural and heritage resources in HRM and develop policies, programs and regulations to protect and enhance them.

Community Facilities

The RP+5 defers to the Community Facilities Master Plan to provide guidance for needs assessment, planning, management and financing of community facilities in HRM.

Mobility

Future land settlement patterns and urban design approaches should support fiscally and environmentally sustainable transportation modes.

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Culture and Heritage

Preserve and promote cultural and heritage resources in HRM and develop policies, programs and regulations to protect and enhance them. The RP+5 defers to the Cultural and Heritage Priorities Plan to provide greater direction for strategic planning and investment in culture and heritage.

HALIFAX GREEN NETWORK PLAN: STATE OF THE LANDSCAPE REPORT (HALIFAX GREEN NETWORK PLAN CURRENTLY UNDERWAY)

The Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) will establish a planning and land management framework for open space to help advance the multiple environmental, social, cultural, and economic objectives of the HRM, as well as a means to inform future development and growth patterns. This plan is currently in the process of completion. The State of the Landscape Report is an initial step in the development of the HGNP. The report provides a summary of the current state of the open space system and an overview of the key issues and opportunities that will influence and guide the plan's development.

The report asserts that connected parks, wilderness areas and trails with a wide range of recreational opportunities can help promote active lifestyles and stimulate economic investment. In reference to urban open spaces, the report suggests that they can contribute to quality of life by reducing the sense of 'crowding' and claustrophobia. The report recognizes that there is an opportunity to provide more naturalized parks within urban centres, and that these can provide both ecological and social benefits. The report also identifies the Halifax Commons as a potential cultural landscape, a distinct geographical area or property uniquely representing the combined work of nature and of people, and recommends that the area be given that designation through provincial legislation.

CENTRE PLAN (CURRENTLY UNDERWAY)

The Centre Plan will guide the development, use, and form of the Regional Centre (Halifax Peninsula and Dartmouth within the circumferential highway). The Regional Plan identifies the Regional Centre as a desirable location for future growth. The Centre Plan is intended to serve as a development blueprint for additional housing, businesses, and amenities within the Regional Centre. The plan identifies growth areas around the Halifax Common site and includes several other relevant sections related to open spaces within the Regional Centre. Additional sections of the plan of particular importance to the Halifax Commons site include: 'Public Spaces and Places', 'Open Space Networking and Programming', and 'Sustainability'.

Development Around the Site

The Centre Plan identifies the Halifax Common as a potential cultural landscape. The site is abutted by a 'downtown' growth area to the Southeast which represents a location of high density infill (maximum heights of 20 storeys). Two 'Centres' abut the Common on the West (Quinpool) and North (Gottingen) sides and one 'Centre' resides within the site (Spring Garden Road).

Individual lots within the 'Centres' have varying height restrictions, but the maximum height within 'Centres' is 20 storeys. The maximum building heights within the Gottingen Street Centre are relatively low compared to the other two with the majority of lots are slated to be zoned between one and six stories. The Quinpool Road Centre is anticipated to be zoned at a moderate height compared to the other two Centres, the majority of the density within this Centre is located at the tangent with the Halifax Commons. The Spring Garden Road Centre is the smallest of the growth centres, but the densest. It encompasses four blocks along Spring Garden between Robie Street and Summer Street. The majority of the lots are anticipated to be zoned a maximum of 20 storeys.

The Centre Plan also identifies 'corridors' around the Commons. 'Corridors' share many of the same attributes as 'Centres', however they are linear in nature and

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oriented along a single local or arterial road. Three corridors abut the Halifax Commons: Robie Street, Cunard Street, and Agricola Street.

The remaining areas around the Halifax Commons are slated to be zoned Established Residential and Higher Order Residential. Established Residential neighbourhoods have lower densities and are largely characterized by detached homes while Higher Order Residential areas are characterized by clusters of multi-unit apartment and condo buildings.

The Centre Plan identifies several employment areas in the Southern part of the Commons under two categorizations. The first is Institutional Employment that allows for regional institutional uses and residential uses associated with institutional uses. The second is Small Scale Institutional Employment that allows for local level institutional uses to serve the needs of residents in the community.

Public Spaces and Places

The Centre Plan outlines several public space strategies that are relevant to the Halifax Common. The plan suggests the need for more, better connected, and evenly distributed open spaces and that new open spaces should consider emerging forms of recreation, like urban agriculture. The plan asserts that access to, and safety of, high quality public spaces is a priority, and recommends that public space planning should consider improvements to socio-economic, cultural and physical accessibility of public spaces. Design and redesign of parks should consider incorporation of Community Planning Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Open Space Networking and Programming

The Centre Plan recommends connecting Regional Centre parks through trails and active transportation routes that consider both recreation and mobility needs, and ensuring that parks within the Regional Centre are flexible and support a variety of functions.

Sustainability

The Centre Plan identifies three sustainability recommendations that impact the Halifax Common Site:

1. Tree retention and planting with the goal of an average of 40% canopy cover in HRM parks and other open spaces. The Plan places special emphasis on creating edible landscapes.
2. Promote the retrofit and refurbishment of surface parking lots to incorporate Low Impact Development parking lot features.
3. Improve biodiversity by incorporating small natural areas and features like butterfly gardens, constructed wetlands and bird habitats into design and redesign of park spaces.

HALIFAX URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN (UFMP)

The UFMP provides a detailed overview of the environmental and economic benefits provided by HRM's urban forest, articulate a UFMP management framework, and provide information on future challenges, opportunities, and priorities for managing the urban forest at community and neighbourhood scales. The overall goal of the UFMP is to ensure a sustainable future for the HRM's urban forest. The plan identifies a target of 20% canopy cover for the North Commons (currently 7%) and institutional areas located in the South Commons (currently 15%). It also identifies a broader goal of 40% canopy converge for parks in the downtown core (currently 14%).

The plan recommends reaching those growth targets by planting Old-Growth Acadian forest species (red spruce, hemlock, white pine, sugar maple, yellow birch, and red oak) and that future planting should target the North Common, Central Common, and Wanderer's Grounds in particular. Additionally, the plan recommends strengthening the treed corridors along Robie Street, Summer Street, and the perimeters of Halifax's Common and Citadel Historic Site.

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HALIFAX COMMUNITY FACILITY MASTER PLAN 2 (CPMP2)

The CPMP2 provides guidance for the provision of indoor and outdoor community facilities throughout HRM. The aim of CFMP2 is to expand service, improve quality and accessibility, increase collaboration and define a strategy for locating recreation facilities across the municipality.

Aquatics

The plan states that the replacement of the Halifax Common Pool, which is nearing the end of its useful life, will be considered as part of the Halifax Common Master Plan. New pool construction should be more accessible for all users including physical access (beach entries and ramps) and support for diversity of culture, religion, gender, ability and age (appropriate change facilities, policies and programming to support self-identified groups). Splash pads are identified as a low-impact aquatic amenity, compared to pools.

Play Fields

The plan recommends developing policies and implement practices to improve the quality of natural turf fields, including further restricting the use of the fields and adopting best practices in field construction.

Tennis Courts

The plan recommends HRM continue to provide public tennis courts, however, to focus usage, HRM should consider consolidating tennis courts and providing lights. This will improve the ability of residents to access courts later in the day.

Skate Parks

The plan calls for the collection of objective data on skate park use statistics, and to include BMX parks in future parks planning exercises.

Lawn Bowling

The plan indicates that participation in lawn bowling seems to be on the decline,

but any recapitalization of lawn bowls facilities should be put on hold until the completion of a comprehensive review of facilities and participation.

INTEGRATED MOBILITY PAN (CURRENTLY UNDERWAY)

The Integrated Mobility Plan stems from municipal policy direction in the Regional Plan for public transit and transportation, land use and growth centres. The Integrated Mobility Plan's goal is to direct future investment in transportation demand management, transit, active transportation, and the roadway network to improve the links between residents and their communities.

The draft plan identifies the Halifax Common as a main component of a proposed active transportation network with Bell Road and South Park Street as potential protected bikeway corridors. Additionally, the plan identifies Robie Street and Spring Garden Road as potential Transit Priority corridors.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FUNCTIONAL PLAN AND 2014-19 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES PLAN

The Active Transportation Priorities Plan provides a review and update to HRM's 2006 Active Transportation Functional Plan and proposes priority initiatives for the next five years. The purpose of this plan is to identify the means by which the municipality will work to double the number of residents who chose to walk or bicycle for trips to work, school, shopping, and services.

The AT Priorities Plan recommends that AT routes should be accessible for 8 to 80 year olds and AT infrastructure should be connected to attract more users. Additionally, future AT initiatives should work to make active school travel more appealing and convenient for students, and should consider CPTED in facility location.

Lastly the AT Priorities Plan envisions a greenway running from Bell Road to Spring Garden Road along Summer Street. This should be considered as part of the Commons Master Plan.

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PUBLIC ART POLICY

The purpose of the Public Art Policy is to facilitate the creation and acquisition of quality public art, and to ensure that professional artists be involved in its creation. The primary aim of the policy is to foster innovation and quality works of art.

HRM place a priority on public art in major public places like the Halifax Common. The Public Art Policy establishes a Public Art Jury to oversee the creation of each new work of art. The Jury system does not apply to community art projects.

The policy requires that the capital planning process for any new or renovated publicly accessible facility occupying 25,000 square feet total area or more must integrate public art. Specifically, 1% of the total capital cost of a new or renovated publicly accessible facility in excess of the first 25,000 square feet would be allocated to fund new public art projects for that facility.

DALHOUSIE CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

The Campus Master Plan anticipates development until 2020. The Plan affects a small area of the Halifax Common, and identifies two projects that should be considered for the Commons Master Plan. The first is streetscape improvements along University Avenue. The streetscape plan proposes two major changes to University Ave. The first is an active transportation corridor. This is a dedicated travel way that runs parallel to the vehicular traffic lanes and central green, reserved for pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, etc. The second is addition of a building frontcourt zone. This is private space that extends from the building face to the public right-of-way and designed in such a way that it seamlessly blends with the design of the corridor's public realm. The second is a proposed health sciences complex on the Carlton Campus consisting of two 20 story buildings and three 6 story buildings.

HEALTH AUTHORITY MASTER PLAN (CURRENTLY UNDERWAY)

The Nova Scotia Health Authority is currently undergoing a master planning process to transform health service delivery. It will involve expansion, relocation and redevelopment of both hospital sites on the Halifax Common.

HRM MUNICIPAL CHARTER

The Municipal Charter enables HRM to enact a Municipal Planning Strategy and subsequent secondary planning strategies.

Key Considerations

The HRM Municipal Charter enables the HRM to create secondary planning strategies that apply, as part of the municipal planning strategy, to a specific area of the Municipality. The purpose of a secondary planning strategy is to address a particular part of the planning area that may not be adequately addressed in the Municipal Planning Strategy. Additionally, the Charter enables council to zone privately owned land for future public use if it is consistent with the municipal planning strategy. Recently, an amendment to the Municipal Charter was made to enable the erection of a building supporting the skating oval on the North Common (Halifax Charter, Section 66A (1) and (2)). Similarly, an amendment to the provincial Dartmouth Common Act was made to enable the construction of a new Metro Transit bus terminal on Dartmouth Common land, prior to the enactment of the HRM Municipal Charter.

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IMAGE SOURCES IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

- 1 Image 1: HTFC Planning & Design, Grant Park Recreation Campus Plan & Feasibility Study
- 2 Image 2: HTFC Planning & Design, Grant Park Recreation Campus Plan & Feasibility Study
- 3 Image 3: HTFC Planning & Design, Grant Park Recreation Campus Plan & Feasibility Study
- 4 Image 4: <http://www.mcmbagsoutletonsale.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Watch-cricket-live-free.jpg>
- 5 Image 5: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/50513581@N04/8889321514/>
- 6 Image 6: Halifax Regional Municipality
- 7 Image 7: https://www.places4students.com/P4SFiles/Blog/3044_socializing.jpg
- 8 Image 8: <http://humoroutcasts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/baseball-field-at-night.jpg>
- 9 Image 9: <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DRwM3YtW4AEi-ky.jpg>
- 10 Image 10: HTFC Planning & Design, Grant Park Recreation Campus Plan & Feasibility Study
- 11 Image 11: <http://sunnydaysinhomecare.com/wp2/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Sunny-Days-In-Home-Care-Consumer-Blog-Activity-Approved-9-28-17.jpg>
- 12 Image 12: <https://bowlswestmount.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Sarisha-Polder-at-the-Wanderers-Bowling-Club-Halifax.jpg>
- 13 Image 13: https://www.teamsideline.com/Assets/716/2015_RBI_Baseball_10U_NCommons_05_27_15_dsc_0249.JPG
- 14 Image 14: https://s3-media2.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/Z4Ogyi_sw1mL990KWbWVQ/348s.jpg
- 15 Image 15: http://thechronicleherald.ca/sites/default/files/imagecache/ch_article_main_image/articles/B97224915Z.120130911092226000GGQ3N719.11.jpg
- 16 Image 16: http://thechronicleherald.ca/sites/default/files/imagecache/ch_article_main_image/articles/B97453372Z.120150504204604000G3C9ETDG.11.jpg
- 17 Image 17: <http://www.metronews.ca/content/dam/thestar/uploads/2016/12/12/hill-13.jpg>
- 18 Image 18: <https://pcacdn.azureedge.net/-/media/lhn-nhs/ns/halifax/Carousel-Citadel-aerial-2.jpg?modified=20170302155603>

END NOTES

- 1 Parks, Recreation and Communities Strategic Framework Draft, p.3
- 2 <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2008001/article/10573-eng.htm#a1>
- 3 <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2009001/article/10690-eng.htm>
- 4 <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=1130004&&pattem=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=31&tabMode=dataTable&csid>
- 5 <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2009001/article/10690-eng.htm>
- 6 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 15
- 7 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, p. 15
- 8 Halifax Green Network, p. 32
- 9 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 15
- 10 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 89
- 11 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 78
- 12 Preliminary Needs Assessment, Nov. 20, 2017
- 13 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 21
- 14 Halifax Community Facility Master Plan 2, p. 77-80
- 15 Halifax Green Network, p. 6

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