SHARING OUR STORIES:

The Halifax Regional Municipality's Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan

HALIFAX

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Sharing Our Stories **was made possible through the support, dedication, expertise and commitment of individuals, stakeholders and organizations across the municipality. Many people offered valuable insight and time during the public engagement process and that input has directly influenced the framework and actions of this document. Municipal staff and consultants were also key in providing direction, advice and input.**

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is what gives people and places a **unique identity.** Collectively, it is the tangible and intangible features that define the Halifax Regional Municipality and its people, as well as create a sense of place that distinguishes it from other communities. Culture relates to the specific practices, traditions, art and expressions throughout our region. Heritage is the physical evidence of the municipality's past—the objects, buildings and landscapes that tell the story of how it all came to be. Residents are fortunate to live in a region rich with diverse cultures, artistic expressions and heritage resources – all of which should be supported and celebrated to convey Halifax's uniqueness to residents and visitors alike.

The Halifax Regional Municipality supports culture and heritage because it makes the region a better place to live. Culture and heritage connect us, create a sense of belonging and provide immense historical, social and economic value by enhancing the vibrancy of communities.

The municipality is a **steward, investor, collaborator and record-keeper** of local culture and heritage. The municipality owns and manages many cultural assets including more than 300 buildings, 1,200 parks and playgrounds and 40,000 artifacts and archival materials.

The *Sharing Our Stories* plan is about **people** who animate the municipality. Participation in cultural activities and events can increase personal skills, self-confidence and social cohesion while empowering communities, enhancing the quality of life and building community identity.

In order to enhance future stewardship, the municipality created this priorities plan to redefine the municipality's strategic role in culture and heritage. The aim of this plan is to guide how culture and heritage are integrated into the municipality's decision-making process and to better integrate cultural needs from surrounding communities into municipal operations.

OUR COMMUNITIES AT A GLANCE

Over the past several years, the municipality has experienced its greatest population growth in history. In 2021, the region saw a population increase of 2.1 per cent to 460,000 and an additional increase of 4.4 per cent in 2022. Shortly after, the municipality was named the second-fastest growing in Canada. Both international and interprovincial immigration were major factors leading to this historic growth, meaning the cultural make-up of the region has quickly become more varied and vibrant with every passing year.

According to a census completed in 2021, the municipality has the largest indigenous population of any municipality in Nova Scotia. In addition, the census showed a total of 72,950 visible minorities making up more than 15 per cent of the region's population. Nearly 10,000 residents identified French as their first language, with Mandarin and Arabic falling close behind as other top spoken languages in the region.

The region's post-secondary institutions continue to draw young people to the municipality, with an increasing number of international students choosing to stay after graduation.

Culture and heritage have a significant impact on the region's local and regional economy, the vibrancy and resilience of communities, and the social lives of residents. In 2021, more than 8,000 residents worked in the arts, recreation or cultural sectors. Many thousands of additional residents continue to take part in cultural activities such as music, art, theatre and dance.

Tourism is an industry that benefits directly from vibrant heritage and culture. Nearly 15,000 residents work in accommodation and food service industries, with a total of over 23,000 tourism-related jobs in the municipality. While tourism was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020 and 2021, visitor numbers saw a dramatic recovery in 2022, with an increase in hotel occupancy to eight per cent above 2019 numbers.

From January to October 2022, 1.6 million people visited Nova Scotia. This number is 20 per cent below 2019 numbers, but represents a 400,000 person increase over 2021. The rapid recovery of the cruise industry could help the sector return to growth in 2023, with the Halifax Port Authority forecasting 191 vessel calls and 325,000 visitors, which is on par with 2019 numbers.

These statistics show a rapidly growing, changing and evolving municipality, but just as the cultural makeup has changed in recent years, so too should the stories that are told and how the municipality supports cultural communities to tell their own stories in their own words and languages.

Many cultural communities have long histories in our region that need to be revisited and celebrated, particularly the original peoples of this land, the Mi'kmaq, who had their own connections to and names for these lands long before any other peoples.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN?

The purpose of this plan is to inform decisions regarding culture and heritage in the Halifax Regional Municipality for the next decade. It provides decision-makers, community partners and residents with a tool for setting priorities.

Sharing Our Stories also helps staff manage culture and heritage resources. The project's planning process helped identify the region's culture and heritage resources.

This plan defines the municipality's role in how to collaborate with other levels of government on culture and heritage matters. It creates a direction for advancing cultural assets, celebrations and support within the municipality.

In order to ensure the plan is shaped by the region's people and diverse cultural groups, the development process focused on a robust public engagement program. The project team heard from a diverse group of residents, creators and stewards to identify needs and priorities.

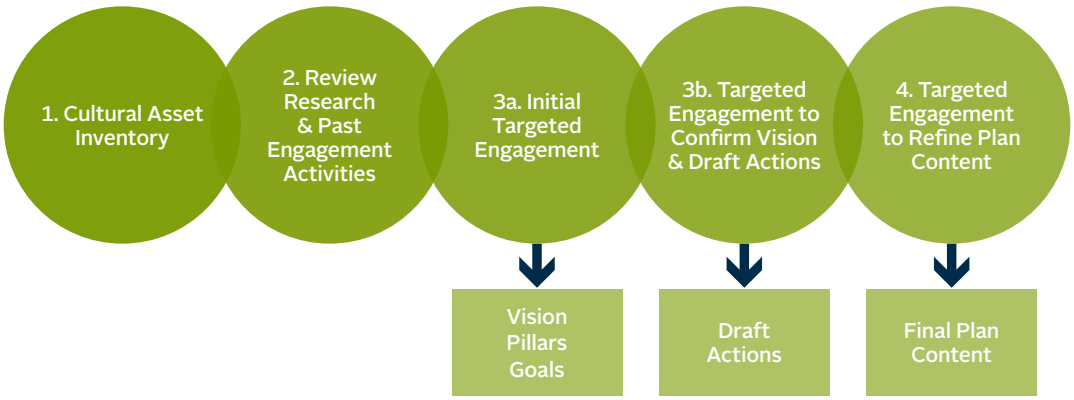
Sharing our Stories is strategic and action-oriented. The plan will identify projects, actions and timelines to guide internal operations, prioritize the work of the municipality, support creative industries and ensure that that region's unique stories, art, cultures and histories are preserved and celebrated (see Appendix A).

PLANNING PROCESS & STRUCTURE

This section outlines the strategic process used to create the structure and foundational elements of the plan. Prior to the project launch in 2018, staff created a planning process that relied on four phases of public engagement, with a focus on traditionally underrepresented stakeholder groups (see Appendix B). The input collected during the early phases of engagement, phases 1 through 3a, was used to create the plan's vision, pillars and goals. Subsequent engagement, phases 3b and 4, focused on creating and refining the plan's actions.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Sharing Our Stories was developed between 2018 and 2022 using four key phases of public engagement. The scope of this public engagement was tailored towards co-creation with the broader community and designed to produce three key deliverables at specific points in the engagement process. A summary of the four phases of public engagement is provided below and additional information can be found in Appendix B.



Engagement Phase 1: Stakeholder groups were consulted to identify local cultural spaces and facilities, which formed the basis of the municipality's cultural asset inventory including database and mapping. The inventory contains over 10,000 assets, including heritage buildings and sites, landscapes of cultural significance, museums, cultural infrastructure and ethnocultural facilities.

Engagement Phase 2: The project team conducted background research on the cultural and heritage best practices from other jurisdictions, demographics and past engagement efforts by the municipality. The past engagement findings were collected through various means, including municipal planning exercises, the former Arts Halifax Advisory Committee, surveys and youth engagement. Staff used these findings to identify the community needs, values and themes from a culture and heritage perspective.

Engagement Phase 3: To reach diverse voices and ensure that *Sharing Our Stories* reflects the community, the project team carried out a targeted engagement program to connect with specific stakeholders and traditionally underrepresented groups. Phase 3 was rolled out in two distinct parts:

> **Phase 3a:** Initial targeted engagement was intended to build relationships, clarify the municipality's role in supporting culture and heritage, refine previously identified community values and themes, and shape the plan's vision, pillars and goals.
>
> **Phase 3b:** Additional targeted meetings were held with a variety of stakeholder groups to expand and follow-up on phase 3a discussions. These meetings enabled staff to confirm previous feedback and fill knowledge gaps, confirm the plan's vision, pillars and goals, and identify potential actions and implementation strategies.

Engagement Phase 4: Staff co-created draft actions for *Sharing Our Stories* using the content provided during the previous stages of engagement. In a series of meetings, staff presented and refined plan actions and content to better meet the needs of stakeholder groups, diverse communities and of the municipality.

COLLABORATION

During various stages of the plan's public engagement program - specifically, phases 3a through 4 - the project team collaborated with various municipal business units, especially those with a role in implementing this plan. Furthermore, it was important to work with these business units to gauge how their ongoing work could be incorporated into plan actions or how actions would impact the municipality's ongoing work, programs or resources.

PLAN STRUCTURE

The following sub-sections describe *Sharing Our Stories'* foundational items – the vision, pillars and goals – which give the plan structure and shaped its priorities. These high-level items, which are a direct response to the input collected through public engagement, guide the sequential process that was used to co-develop the plan's actions and implementation framework. The plan's structure is summarized in a high-level graphic (to the right) to illustrate how each of these elements works together to inform the municipality's work plan and decision-making process regarding culture and heritage. This direction will be utilized when creating other municipal policies, programs or investments that affect culture and heritage.

VISION:
What we want to see for the future, including the qualities and elements needed to make this future a reality. Our vision is the driving force behind the plan; every outcome will contribute to achieving this vision.

WE WILL VALUE CULTURE AND HERITAGE

PILLARS
Core values of the plan, essential to success and factored into all decisions.

- STEWARDSHIP
- CONNECTION
- CELEBRATION
- ACCESS

GOALS
Define our role and the approach for achieving the vision.

- Express Culture through Place
- Developing Cultural Capacity
- Value Creativity

ACTIONS: Each action describes a commitment from the municipality; a project, policy, collaboration or initiative to enhance culture and heritage. Actions take direction from the pillars and goals: good actions contribute to achieving this vision.

WHAT IS OUR VISION?

Culture is what connects us to our ancestors, our past, each other and the future of the municipality. Culture also connects people to places through arts, expression, stories, traditions, language, craft and architecture.

Halifax will value culture and heritage – **protect, grow, and express it.**

We will:

- Celebrate culture to strengthen our sense of place and belonging.
- Support connection and inclusion through cultural expression.
- Create a region that reflects the diversity of the people who live here.
- Uphold the principles of Truth and Reconciliation.
- Be stewards of our heritage and cultural resources and look to the past to enrich the future.
- Value and support creators, artists and performers, in the region.
- Promote the cultures of the region and share our stories.

WHAT ARE THE PILLARS OF THIS PLAN?

These are the four key pillars that illustrate the municipality's collective values from a cultural and heritage point of view. These pillars are essential to the success of *Sharing Our Stories*. They guide the municipality's decisions on how to implement the three goals, and they must be reflected in each strategic action:

STEWARDSHIP is about taking care of our cultural resources. It means protecting and nurturing the culture and heritage assets - such as buildings, stories, places, programs or events - that are important to us. This value ensures that all of the municipality's actions are underpinned by the desire to maintain heritage, archaeological and intangible cultural assets at all times.

CONNECTION is about building bonds between people and encouraging diverse forms of remembrance, restoration and creation. This pillar involves: recognizing and valuing the unique, yet often underrepresented or untold, histories within our region; and celebrating the narratives of struggle, survival, resilience and perseverance to reflect underrepresented forms of culture actively. Connection can also relate to confronting painful truths of erasure and past harm while taking steps to address present-day institutional discrimination and inequities.

CELEBRATION is about expressing culture and heritage in a meaningful way. Our region should reflect people of all ages, abilities, geographies, religions and cultural heritage to create a welcoming environment. This value ensures that we will support culture and celebrate our differences in ways that build collective understanding, social connectivity and creativity.

ACCESS is about providing opportunities for everyone to participate in and enjoy culture and heritage. Enhancing access means reducing barriers, promoting participation in existing programs and events, and creating equitable access to resources (amongst diverse geographies and communities) so that everyone can celebrate and enjoy our culture and heritage.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS PLAN?

Goals are approaches to how the municipality develops and supports culture and heritage. For example, developing places that tell our stories helps to build cultural capacity, inspire artists and expand the creative economy. Each of these goals corresponds to a role the municipality plays in supporting culture, art and heritage.

EXPRESS CULTURE THROUGH PLACE

Placemaking speaks to how we build the municipality. The municipality has the ability to help strengthen communities and tell stories through community design and the built form, which includes the preservation of heritage buildings and structures. The physical environment reflects who we are as a municipality; it helps celebrate the stories of specific people and places by protecting public spaces, settlement patterns and the land. Placemaking can also help guide new development to reflect existing cultures, emerging cultures and environmental principles.

Municipal policies, land use by-laws and administrative orders shape placemaking, development and community design and influence how culture, art and heritage are physically represented.

SUPPORT CULTURAL CAPACITY

Cultural capacity is about how the municipality will replenish or develop cultural services, such as cultural facilities, events, programming and use of spaces. The municipality provides cultural support and services throughout the region in many different forms, including investments in institutions like libraries, museums and archival resources, community and recreation centres. By looking into the future and better defining the municipality's role in cultural capacity building, we can create a stronger network of resources through partnerships, collaboration and coordination across the region.

Providing the infrastructure that houses and supports cultural activities is a key municipal role. Through its annual capital and operating budget process, the municipality makes decisions that impact regional cultural capacity.

VALUE CREATIVITY

Valuing creativity relates to developing platforms for showcasing creativity within the culture and heritage sector. We value artists and creators because they play a unique role in developing culture. The municipality strives to encourage and support excellence in artistic expressions through measures such as events and providing funding to professional arts, non-profit and community organizations. By sharing resources and developing partnerships among arts, culture and heritage groups, as well as the municipal and private sector, we can enhance the vibrancy of the region.

Through partnerships, grants and community events, the municipality contributes to the cultural and artistic character of the municipality. Municipal support to organizations helps provide a platform for the many diverse voices that make up our municipality.

HOW DO WE USE THIS PLAN

Sharing our Stories is designed to create action. The plan will be used in different ways by different groups to improve access to, support for and stewardship of culture and heritage in the municipality.

The plan's vision, pillars and goals create the structural framework upon which the strategic actions are crafted. This foundation is instrumental in directing how the municipality will begin a meaningful dialogue with cultural communities, preserve and protect our built heritage and cultural landscapes, diversify the region's concepts of culture and heritage, evaluate existing municipal supports for culture and heritage, and increase public access to culture and heritage.

Sharing Our Stories intends to create a new approach to culture and heritage, which focuses on fostering new working relationships to share and celebrate the region's unique stories. In addition to the plan's structural framework and internal collaboration with municipal business units, the project team also vetted potential actions through a culture and heritage developmental lens to ensure that actions can become a reality in practice. This lens served as a final test to evaluate action suitability. This lens has three components: cultural planning research, legislation and policy context and what we heard during the public engagement.

CULTURAL PLANNING RESEARCH

Sharing Our Stories should be informed by best-practice research pertaining to cultural and heritage planning. Prior to the launch of *Sharing Our Stories*, and again during phase 2 of the plan's public engagement program, staff conducted research to identify common features and lessons stemming from similar plans in other municipalities that achieved success. Staff also endeavoured to learn about shortcomings and approaches that created issues during comparable projects in the past.

The project team reviewed several reports outlining cultural planning best practices, in addition to cultural and priorities plans from North American municipalities. Staff incorporated several best practices into the planning process for *Sharing Our Stories*, such as mapping cultural assets and allowing the community to define culture. In terms of applying these lenses to vet actions, best practices suggested that the project team consider whether actions:

- Use plain language that is easily understood;
- Have unintentional adverse impacts on traditionally underrepresented groups;
- Bolster community organizations and grassroots efforts rather than expensive commercial organizations and spaces; and
- Address barriers that counteract inequitable practices.

LEGISLATION & POLICY CONTEXT

Municipal governments are not free entities; they are often referred to as "creatures of the province" because municipal powers and responsibilities are overseen by the provincial government. The Province of Nova Scotia creates legislation with clear parameters on how municipalities can operate, how they can create by-laws and regulations, and what local, and community issues they are responsible for (such as economic development, planning, policing, fire services, engineering standards, etc.). For the Halifax Regional Municipality, these responsibilities are primarily outlined in the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*.

The relationship between the provincial government and local municipalities influences what the municipality can do to support heritage and culture. The Province of Nova Scotia is responsible for addressing important issues that are outlined in Canada's *Constitution Act*. In short, provincial governments create laws relating to major issues in the province, including, but not limited to, education, health care, environment, social services and housing.

The Province of Nova Scotia also creates other legislation (or Acts) that may regulate specific powers of the municipality. For example, the Province of Nova Scotia has a *Heritage Property Act* that allows the municipality to protect heritage properties and create heritage conservation districts; however, the municipality can only do this in a manner that is consistent with provincial legislation. Regional Council can direct the Chief Administrative Officer, who in turn may direct staff to work on specific projects through plans, by-laws and administrative orders; however, these too must be authorized by the governing legislation.

Business units within the municipality have the ability to prioritize and initiate actions based on their own business planning; however, Regional Council may direct how many resources or how much funding is allocated to larger initiatives and may direct that certain actions be expedited. This plan provides a framework to ensure the municipality and its various business units are accountable for the actions in the plan and refer to its direction in future business planning and program development.

Sample of Applicable Legislation & Policy

GOVERNMENT OF NOVA SCOTIA	HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY	
LEGISLATION	**PLANS & STRATEGIES**	**BY-LAWS & ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS**
Halifax Regional Municipality Charter	*Regional Plan*	*The Heritage Property By-law*
Heritage Property Act	*Strategic Priorities Plan (2021-2025)*	*Heritage Conservation District By-laws*
Accessibility Act	*Accessibility Strategy*	*Heritage Incentives Program Administrative Order*
	Diversity & Inclusion Framework	*Community Museum Grants Program*
	Halifax Common Master Plan	*The Public Art Policy*

All work coming from this plan stems from and in some cases is limited by, overarching legislation and policies that staff must follow. Throughout this plan's development, many interesting ideas and initiatives surfaced that fall outside of what the municipality can manage or co-create with the community. This is not to say that these ideas cannot come to fruition, but that the municipality's role at this time is limited to collaborating with the province to influence legislative change or project initiation.

WHAT WE HEARD (APPENDIX C)

The *Sharing Our Stories* planning process relied on public engagement to foster discussions about culture and heritage in the region. This engagement process was designed to ensure that: residents feel a sense of belonging; traditionally underrepresented groups are invited to the table; the region's diverse cultures and heritage are protected; and relationships between the municipality and the public are strengthened. Furthermore, this plan will only reflect the community if all residents and appropriate stakeholders are invited to shape its content. When finalizing all actions, it was important that the project team also consider the degree to which actions reflected the community. Appendix C, the What We Heard Report, summarises the input collected during the *Sharing Our Stories* engagement, while a brief list of overriding themes is noted below:

- Make participation in cultural activities more accessible, affordable, inclusive and reflective of the municipality's diverse population.
- Recognize historically underrepresented communities, their stories, identities and community boundaries.
- Facilitate culture-led economic development in communities.
- Broaden and develop the municipality's role in cultural tourism and build partnerships in arts, culture and heritage.
- Promote cultural literacy and awareness opportunities through cross-cultural experiential learning, interaction and exchange.

- Establish inclusive central cultural hubs and creative spaces at community centres, public libraries and schools to offer arts and culture programs, to bring people together to exchange ideas, encourage participation in cultural activities and to provide resources and training in support of artists and arts and culture organizations.

- Foster more partnerships and strengthen collaboration with communities on sustainable community cultural festivals and celebrations – such as food, music and dance.

- Invest in arts and culture through accessible financial support and equitable grant application processes by exploring needs-based approaches.

- Diversify engagement methods used by in the municipality and adopt a cultural lens in engagement practices.

- Invest in the development of transportation infrastructure for marginalized cultural and heritage sites.

- Provide targeted support for digital transformation in the culture and heritage sectors, such as technology that offers a multitude of opportunities for supportive marketing, communications and increased visibility of underrepresented culture and heritage.

- Develop community-specific and culturally relevant programming for children and youth.

- Break down silos and facilitate collaboration across sectors, large and small organizations, municipalities and business units to help strengthen the sector and, in turn, enhance creative and economic benefits for the region.

- Provide sustained, reliable funding for artists and small cultural organizations.

- Increase access to and awareness of traditionally underrepresented cultural content, programming and signage.

TAKING ACTION

The actions outlined in Appendix A are the culmination of the *Sharing Our Stories* planning process. These actions were co-created by the municipality's project team and stakeholder groups; while the team led the development process, the plan content was verified by the stakeholder groups before *Sharing Our Stories* was finalized.

It's worth noting that some plan actions were identified by staff and designed to align with municipal initiatives which are already underway; however, in these instances, the project team ensured that actions aligned with the plan's structure (i.e. the vision, pillars and goals) and were ultimately supported by stakeholders. The plan's actions will support the municipality's work to enhance program delivery, update policies on culture and heritage, better address community needs and collaborate with other levels of government, community organizations, cultural groups and other stewards of culture.

FUTURE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Many stakeholder groups and communities were engaged during the *Sharing Our Stories* development, and as such, the plan's actions cannot be implemented by the municipality alone. A varying range of community involvement is required to implement each action; stakeholders also requested that the plan's actions be organized according to the community's level of involvement moving forward (see Appendix B). The breakdown of actions by involvement type illustrates the evolving relationship between the municipality and communities, with more emphasis on co-creation, empowerment and collaboration to build relationships and achieve mutually-beneficial outcomes. The nature and frequency of interaction between the municipality and communities will range from annual updates to frequent contact depending on the nature of the engagement and action. For example, actions within the 'empowering community' category may require monthly communication and updates to partners, while an action in the 'informing' category may only require updates within the publicly-available monitoring reports. The list of actions can be found in Appendix A.

Municipal staff identified four engagement categories, which are used to organize *Sharing Our Stories'* actions:

- **Empowering Community:** These actions are community-directed and the municipality plays a support role. The municipality may support communities by eliminating barriers to progress, providing funds for projects, or being an advocate to other levels of government.

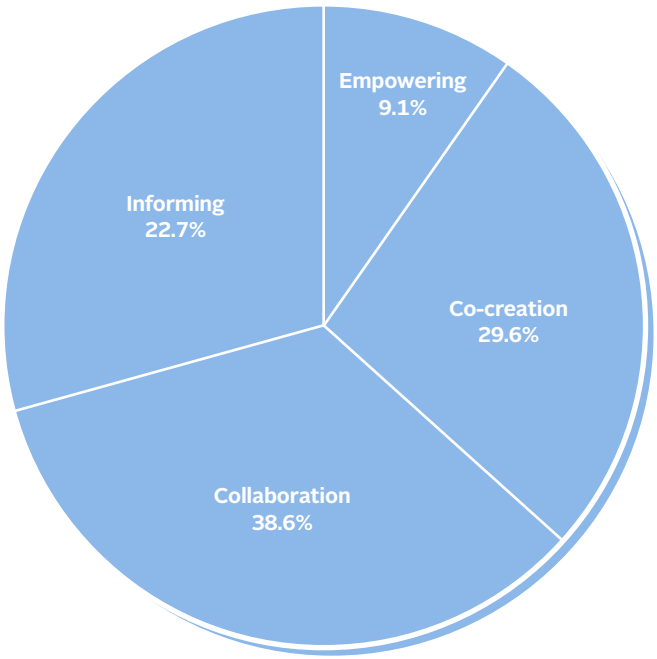
Empowering Communities	4 actions
Co-creation	13 actions
Collaboration	17 actions
Informing	10 actions

- **Co-creation:** These actions are about involving communities in action planning and implementation from the beginning. Decisions will be made by consensus between the municipality and the community and will require close working relationships between action leaders and communities.

- **Collaboration:** The appropriate community partners or the public will be given an opportunity to provide input. This may be a close collaboration with a specific group or broader public engagement. The scope of this engagement is higher-level, collaborators will be communicated with as required and decisions will ultimately be made by the municipality.

- **Informing:** These are actions with the most limited level of engagement. Many of these are focused on internal policy and workflow. These actions will be reported on regularly and that information will be made publicly available. In cases where there are specific groups or individuals that may be impacted by these actions, information will be communicated by the municipality to inform them of the change.

The graphic below provides a visual representation of the four types of engagement used in the action list (Appendix A):



IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

Sharing our Stories is a priority plan adopted by Regional Council to help guide municipal decision-making, investments and actions around culture and heritage. It is a long-range strategic plan, providing direction for the municipality's initiatives, programs and budgets over the next 10 years. Many of the plan's actions will be incorporated into the municipality's Regional Plan, which sets the overall vision for future development and growth, including how culture and heritage considerations will be incorporated.

Sharing Our Stories is intended to be a tool that supports the municipality's efforts around reconciliation, anti-Black racism and diversity and inclusion. Many of its actions will require further engagement with communities to shape them, and ongoing partnerships with communities to implement them. The creation of this plan and its actions is the initial step towards establishing lasting relationships between the municipality and those of many different backgrounds who call the municipality home.

The actions in *Sharing Our Stories* provide specific guidance and instructions for municipal business units. These actions will be part of the annual budget and business planning process and will be prioritized in the operational and capital plans that each business unit presents to Regional Council for approval. Several of the actions listed above are already underway as part of the existing Regional Council direction. Progress reports on plan implementation will be delivered to Regional Council on a bi-yearly basis (once every two years), in a similar framework to the municipality's *Green Network Plan* and other priority plans.

Actions may be adapted to accommodate input learned through ongoing engagement. Since this plan reflects the needs of the community and captures a moment in time, portions of the plan may become out of date. As a living document, some of the terminology, information about the community and actions may be reviewed if requested by the community, initiated by Regional Council or identified by staff.

TIMELINES

The municipality intends to implement *Sharing Our Stories* over a 10-year period following the plan's adoption, which means that staff will endeavor to have initiated all actions by the plan's seventh year (see Section 3). The scope and launch of these actions will respond to the reality of resourcing, budget and organizational capacity, as well as internal and external priorities. Some action items may require further inquiry, lead to the development of new programs or require strategic investments or legislative change. Any resulting budget implications will be considered through the business planning cycle or through staff reports proposing the initiation of a specific action. Reprioritization and additional resources will be required, especially for larger actions that result in program development or expansion of services. These resources may include additional staff, external consultants or program budget. Some actions have already begun and the current status is indicated in the table, as well as the immediate next steps. At this time, however, all actions have been assigned to one of the following implementation periods, also noted in the action table above:

- **Rapid Implementation:** Actions that can and should be implemented immediately or are already underway.
- **Short-Term Actions:** These actions can begin and be completed within two years. Some of the short-term actions are already underway.
- **Mid-Term Actions:** The bulk of the plan's actions are expected to launch and be completed within three-to-five years.
- **Long-Term Actions:** Some actions, especially those that include multiple phases or projects, will take roughly six-10 years to implement.

PLAN MANAGEMENT

The plan will be co-managed and monitored by the Planning & Development and Parks & Recreation business units. It is a collaborative role between municipal staff that have a primary and ongoing focus on the municipality's culture and heritage endeavors.

There are very few actions within this plan that will be advanced by a single municipal business unit. While actions typically have a single lead, most require various levels of collaboration between business units.

PLAN MONITORING, DATA COLLECTION & REPORTING

Monitoring progress and completion of actions will enable ongoing distribution and focus of resources. Monitoring reports will be overseen by the plan managers and completed through budget and business planning each year. Progress reports to Regional Council will be completed every two years and progress will be made publicly available.

Public accountability for the plan's actions is a critical component of making the project a success. Monitoring reports will be published on Halifax.ca, as well as presented to Regional Council. Since many of these actions were co-created with the community, this progress needs to be transparent and shared with those who are interested, which can be achieved mainly through communication using web or social media channels. Aside from monitoring reports, regular communication with partners and collaborators will also be completed on an ongoing basis.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is about systematically reviewing the plan's progress and impact of the actions during and after implementation to ensure that they have made positive contributions to the plan's pillars and goals. Quantitative evaluation can be utilized to review data and measure progress, while qualitative evaluation can support ongoing relationship-building with the community and provide insight into how municipal services work for the public accessing them. Evaluation doesn't have to happen as frequently as monitoring and can be completed at the mid-point of the plan's implementation period (around five years) by either internal staff resources or external evaluators.

Quantitative Evaluation of some actions could provide concrete evidence of progress towards these goals. For example, actions that include municipal investment, such as grants, may benefit from having an external evaluation to review the program to look at the distribution of funds, the impact of those funds and measurable outputs or impacts.

Qualitative Evaluation focuses on checking with the community to see if the plan is working for individuals. The co-created nature of many actions should support this ongoing feedback from the community. Qualitative evaluation may just mean considering and collecting regular feedback from the community or providing ongoing opportunities for feedback through an online survey with outgoing communication. Qualitative evaluation can take a conversational approach, which will allow for storytelling and other means of communication to provide authentic insight into the performance of actions in enhancing the expression of community identity, collaboration with community organizations and enhancing support for culture and heritage. This can be supported through discussions between internal business units completing ongoing engagement to learn from community feedback.

Selecting actions for evaluation will be completed by those staff who are implementing actions. While not all actions will be evaluated, selecting key actions to examine will help the municipality understand the impact and effectiveness of actions to support ongoing improvement and inform the next plan review. Evaluation doesn't have to be a formal and external process, it may mean holding a focus group, discussion, or survey with program participants or partners. Planning to complete some evaluation of this plan may require developing a funding plan to engage external consultants or assigning internal resources.

MOVING FORWARD

Sharing Our Stories should be seen as a product of its time and must be consistently reviewed and revised in consultation with stakeholders and the community. Like the plan itself, each action, once initiated, should be reviewed against current best practice and current community needs through appropriate engagement and consideration by advisory committees and Regional Council where necessary. The municipality has direct influence and oversight over many of the programs, regulations, supports and facilities that affect how our communities experience culture, heritage and the arts. The needs of the municipality's arts and cultural community and underrepresented groups can evolve over time. During the course of the plan's implementation, monitoring and evaluation, staff may determine that the plan's original actions and timelines may need to be adjusted or new actions are required to facilitate continual cultural and heritage advancements within the municipality.

This outcome wouldn't be seen as a disappointment but a reflection that this plan is a living document that is subject to change and an effective tool for the municipality's long-term cultural growth. If staff deem this outcome necessary, *Sharing Our Stories* may be amended prior to the end of its original decade-long timeframe.

HALIFAX

APPENDIX A:

Action Table

HALIFAX

1.0 EMPOWERING COMMUNITY

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
1.1	Explore the development of a regional archaeology strategy with the Province, Kwilmu'kw Mawklusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO), Band Councils from the region, African Nova Scotian communities and Acadian communities.	The 2014 Regional Plan contains policies related to the identification and protection of sites of archaeological importance. The Special Places Act of Nova Scotia maintains provincial jurisdiction over archaeological monitoring and protection, but the municipality regulates new development that may impact archaeological resources. Engagement with the Mi'kmaq and community groups as part of the Culture & Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP) has highlighted a need for the municipality to find ways to engage and be involved in mitigating the impacts of new development on archaeological resources, in partnership with the Province and commensurate with existing legislation.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**MID-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
1.2	Identify and conserve areas of historic and cultural significance in partnership with communities by: a) Working with the Province to advance proposed amendments to the Heritage Property Act to allow for additional requirements related to the designation of cultural landscapes; b) Exploring opportunities to support or collaborate on community-led mapping, conservation and asset-naming projects; c) Supporting engagement-driven approaches to land-use planning in collaboration with communities in areas of cultural significance and value; and d) Expediting the identification and recommendation to designate heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes, and ensuring that the built and cultural heritage of both rural and urban communities are conserved.	On May 14, 2019, Regional Council directed staff to work with African Nova Scotian communities to identify and protect sites of cultural and historic significance to their communities. Through engagement with stakeholder and rights-holder groups, including the Mi'kmaq, the importance of community-led identification of cultural and heritage assets was consistently communicated. Efforts such as community-led mapping and asset naming have already begun in African Nova Scotian communities including Beechville.	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**SHORT TO MID-TERM**	**Planning & Development**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
1.3	Support and implement projects in collaboration with communities for the identification, celebration, interpretation and protection of sites within the municipality, including initiatives supporting the following: a) Identification, commemoration and celebration of the significant history, events and stories of the founding cultures including, but not limited to, the Mi'Kmaw, African Nova Scotian, Acadian and Francophone and Gaelic communities, in collaboration with those communities/Nations; b) In consultation with Africville stakeholders, explore means to improve interpretation, commemoration and public access to Africville and Africville Lookoff Park through the Africville Visioning process; c) Identification, commemoration and celebration of the significant history of human rights and accessibility milestones, events, landmarks and history; d) Identification, commemoration and celebration of 2SLGBTQIA+ history and landmarks; and e) Identification, commemoration and celebration of other underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, immigrant and newcomer groups.	The updated approach to public engagement, endorsed by Regional Council on August 9, 2022, emphasizes community-based participatory approaches that see communities take on co-creative roles in planning and designing initiatives. This offers communities ownership of projects and involvement in implementing actions, as well as allows the municipality to benefit from local expertise and historic knowledge. Staff received emphatic and consistent feedback that communities need to be more involved in municipal work to identify and commemorate culture and heritage.	**Express culture through place**	**Celebration**	**MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
1.4	Develop programming that celebrates the diversity of the municipality (e.g. African Heritage Month, Asian Heritage Month, Mi'kmaq History Month, Halifax Pride Festival and other cultural acknowledgements).	Much of the input received through consultation focused on broadening the focus of municipal culture and heritage programming to showcase the diversity of cultures present within the municipality. This approach aligns with the CHPP vision, pillars and goals endorsed by the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee in 2020.	**Express culture through place**	**Celebration**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**

2.0 CO-CREATION

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
2.1	Improve municipal heritage conservation protection and support for a more diverse range of cultures and time periods within the region by: a) Diversifying the municipal inventory of heritage properties by working with communities to identify and protect significant assets; b) Developing a framework to guide heritage property, heritage conservation district and cultural landscape programs, which ensure the diversity of our communities is represented; and c) Reviewing and updating the heritage property and heritage site evaluation criteria to better reflect diverse communities, different time periods and intangible cultural value.	On May 14, 2019, Regional Council directed staff to review and update municipal heritage evaluation criteria to better reflect different eras and traditionally underrepresented communities, including African Nova Scotian communities. The evaluation criteria used in property registrations since 2006 contains few provisions to recognize diverse communities. A review of this criteria provides an opportunity to engage with stakeholders and communities to better reflect their unique cultures and expand our understanding of heritage and cultural value.	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
2.2	Support the creation of Mi'kmaq truckhouses (similar to a trading post offering Mi'kmaq crafts) in collaboration with Indigenous stakeholders.	The history of Mi'kmaq communities being promised waterfront lands that never materialized came up frequently and in detail during consultations. In 2022, the municipality worked with Develop NS (now Build NS) to build a permanent truckhouse (traditional craft market) on the Halifax waterfront for Mi'kmaq businesses and artists.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**
2.3	Consult stakeholders to determine community interests leading to the creation of a central and prominent space dedicated to African Nova Scotian history and culture.	Recognizing that African Nova Scotian (ANS) communities were historically located on the outskirts of urban areas, and that spaces that commemorate and celebrate ANS heritage are therefore not generally central or easily accessible, feedback received through consultation indicated a desire for greater ANS representation in the urban core (i.e. tourism areas). This will require further consultation with ANS communities and may be part of the *Regional Museum Strategy*, the Cogswell District or Africville Visioning projects.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
2.4	Develop a project scope for the identified interpretive plan for Point Pleasant Park, including reviews of work that have already been undertaken and engagement with Mi'kmaw stakeholders.	*The 2008 Point Pleasant Park Comprehensive Plan* identified opportunities for the commemoration and protection of sites, landscapes and artifacts associated with the traditional use by the Mi'kmaq of what is now called Point Pleasant Park and called for an associated interpretive plan. Engagement with the Mi'kmaq community as part of the CHPP renewed interest in moving forward with an Indigenous interpretive plan in consultation with their community.	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
2.5	Develop a *Friendship Accord* with Mi'kmaq communities, organizations, Band Councils and Grand Council, to enhance communication, explore areas for collaboration, opportunities to develop joint projects, funding proposals and to outline the government-to-government relationship.	While the federal and provincial governments have legislated or formalized means of engaging with Indigenous communities, few municipalities have adopted agreements or protocols that facilitate engagement on shared interests, service sharing or collaboration. Some municipalities, including the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have signed friendship accords with nearby Mi'kmaq communities. On June 29, 2021, Regional Council directed staff to explore the creation of such an accord for the Halifax Regional Municipality.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**RAPID**	**Government Relations & External Affairs**
2.6	Develop a corporate policy to outline Indigenous community engagement, collaboration, celebration and recognition protocols.	Consultations with Indigenous groups and communities as part of the CHPP highlighted the need for better staff training and resources to support culturally appropriate protocols when engaging with Indigenous elders, groups and communities. This action was developed directly from community engagement with support from the municipality's Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
2.7	Strengthen and expand the role of Municipal Archives in being stewards of our civic history. Specific measures to consider include: a) Reflecting the diversity of the municipality by actively acquiring community records or supporting stewardship in communities through shared storage and access arrangements; b) Strengthening the Municipal Archives mandate through revision of *Information Management and Archives Administrative Order*; c) Providing better physical access to the archives including reviewing hours of operation; d) Providing mentorship opportunities and internships for underrepresented youth; and e) Partnering with other archives, museums and libraries to preserve and share documentary heritage from our communities in public spaces.	Municipal Archives currently acts as a steward for historic community and municipal records. Engagement with community groups and academic stakeholders, especially those involved in heritage, have identified the importance of the archives to their work. Specifically, they mentioned how services could be strengthened and improved to allow better and easier access, additional services and collaboration or partnerships with other heritage resources such as libraries and museums.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Clerk's Office**
2.8	Partner with the Kwilmu'kw Mawklusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) and Band Councils by completing staff exchanges to support work on collaborative projects, sharing information and educating municipal staff.	Engagement with Mi'kmaq communities and organizations, especially KMKNO, has identified the need for, and importance of, collaboration, between staff to share information, broaden perspectives and allow for culturally-supportive training opportunities. The action is supported by the ongoing work of the municipality's Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**MID-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**
2.9	Support the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre's new centre at 1940 Gottingen Street (former Red Cross building) through a transfer of municipal lands.	In 2016, the property at 1940 Gottingen Street was declared surplus by the municipality and was prepared for sale. The Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, a non-profit group serving the Mi'kmaq and urban-Indigenous communities in the region, made a request to obtain the property at less-than-market-value under *Administrative Order 50, the Disposal of Surplus Real Property Administrative Order*. Regional Council has directed that the property be transferred to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre and that process has been outlined in a January 24, 2023 report to Regional Council.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**RAPID**	**Corporate Real Estate**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
2.10	Explore opportunities for 'land-back' investments through transfer of parcels of municipally-owned lands to Indigenous entrepreneurs or organizations to develop cultural and creative businesses on that land.	Engagement with Mi'kmaq communities and stakeholders, including engagement on the Cogswell District project and the CHPP, has consistently found a significant interest in the transfer of surplus municipal lands as a meaningful means of reconciliation with the Mi'kmaq. This process is unfolding as directed by Regional Council for 1940 Gottingen Street and has been explored at other opportunity sites to varying degrees.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**MID TO LONG-TERM**	**Corporate Real Estate**
2.11	Work towards community action plans and community-benefit agreements with African Nova Scotian communities, in accordance with the direction of the Road to Economic Prosperity report, contingent on enabling provincial legislation.	Historic African Nova Scotian communities continue to seek opportunities and solutions related to economic development, land titles and land-use planning that benefit their residents and local businesses. Specifically, actions 10 and 39 of the September 20, 2020, *Road to Economic Prosperity* report speak to these issues and have been raised as part of the CHPP engagement with African Nova Scotian communities.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
2.12	Support culturally relevant recreation programming that showcases diverse culture, food, sport and traditions from the region's diverse communities.	Engagement with diverse or underrepresented communities across the municipality as part of the CHPP found that many residents felt their cultures could be better represented by municipal recreation programming and that additional resources should be placed to diversify existing recreational program offerings.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Celebration**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
2.13	When reviewing, updating or creating new strategic plans within the Parks & Recreation business unit, increase engagement with traditionally underrepresented communities: a) When reviewing or creating strategic plans (i.e. parks master plans, regional strategies) consider planning and designing spaces that represent diverse cultures and communities, such as those identified through the "Sharing our Stories" engagement; and b) As identified in the *Municipal Accessibility Strategy*, work collaboratively to integrate functional design elements that support accessibility.	Engagement with traditionally underrepresented communities, accessibility advocates and other stakeholders identified opportunities for improvement regarding engagement on new infrastructure, strategic planning and capital projects to ensure that accessibility needs are being met and that diverse cultures and communities are being represented.	**Value creativity**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation** **The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**

3.0 COLLABORATION

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
3.1	Develop an interpretive master plan to guide the municipality's role and investment in commemorative and interpretive initiatives, artifact and digital collections and cultural and heritage program delivery. The master plan will also provide direction on: a) A new procedure for processing external and internal interpretive project requests; b) Prioritizing potential public-facing and/or community-led interpretive projects; and c) A program to remove items with a problematic legacy, which is inconsistent with the diversity and inclusion practices of the present day.	The development of a regional interpretive master plan is a key element of the *Regional Museum Strategy*, Phase 1 of which was endorsed by Regional Council on April 12, 2022. Also, without an existing strategy or resources in place, there have been inefficiencies in prioritizing, budgeting, creating and maintaining cultural and interpretive signage requests from the community.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**LONG-TERM**	**Planning & Development** **Parks & Recreation**
3.2	Amend *Administrative Order 46, Respecting Asset Naming Policies*, to promote the increased reflection of Mi'kmaq, Acadian and African Nova Scotian history and culture by: a) Working with communities to identify a more diverse set of potential names; b) Representing other languages, including Mi'kmaw and French; c) Revising incorrect spellings of asset names and corresponding signage; d) Removing asset names that no longer reflect the values of the municipality; and e) Naming assets after culturally-significant events, places or people that reflect the diversity of the municipality.	Recommendations from the Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History (the Cornwallis Task Force) emphasize the need for increased diversity in municipal asset naming and commemoration, and direct the municipality to work with the Mi'kmaq community to achieve this. Expanding the municipal asset-naming process to reflect the broader diversity of the region was identified by a number of stakeholders during CHPP engagement, including Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian and Acadian communities.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
3.3	Enhance signage at all major entry points to the municipality, including by land, air and sea, to recognize Mi'kmaki as the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people.	Consultation with Mi'kmaq communities and stakeholders heard that the municipality should be recognized as part of Mi'kmaki at all entry points. In 2017 the highway signs at municipal borders were updated to include language in English, French and Mi'kmaq.	**Express culture through place**	**Celebration**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
3.4	Develop an equity lens for transit, active transportation and transportation planning that enhances access to geographically marginalized cultural and heritage sites. Prioritize access to Africville as an initial pilot implementation project, as part of the Africville Visioning process.	Improving access to historically marginalized communities and cultural sites was reflected in feedback received through consultation with African Nova Scotian communities. The municipality's *Integrated Mobility Plan* identifies a need for improved connections to Africville and a project to enhance active transportation connections to the site is underway.	**Express culture through place**	**Access**	**MID-TERM**	**Public Works** **Halifax Transit**
3.5	Continue a phased approach to produce the municipal *Regional Museum Strategy*, which will shape the municipality's role in museum operations and development.	An April 12, 2022, Regional Council motion endorsed Phase 1 of the *Regional Museum Strategy* and directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to commence Phase 2 of the strategy.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
3.6	Enhance awareness and support for events commemorating Indigenous History Month, Treaty Day, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and other significant events.	Consultation with Mi'kmaq communities and Band Councils emphasized the need for improved commemoration of Indigenous history and culture. The Cornwallis Task Force also recommends the municipality facilitate events showcasing Mi'kmaw history.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**RAPID**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**
3.7	Support Discover Halifax's implementation of the *Integrated Tourism Master Plan* strategic initiatives.	This action is reflective of a Regional Council motion from February 23, 2021, to endorse the *Halifax Regional Integrated Tourism Master Plan* and the municipality's related responsibilities, which was also echoed in stakeholder engagement.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
3.8	Strengthen the relationship between the municipality and the Acadian and Francophone community by implementing the *French Language Services Strategy*'s actions on meaningful partnerships and accessible information and communication. This action will allow the municipality to: a) Establish sustainable partnerships within municipal business units to support regular cultural events and programming for the community; b) Host regular events to provide information to Acadian and Francophone communities about available municipal resources and support for cultural events and community organizations; and c) Promote municipal cultural events and programs through French-community media channels and school systems, where appropriate.	On June 29, 2021, Regional Council adopted the *French Language Services Strategy* and directed the CAO to carry out its actions. These include improving service delivery and information sharing to Acadian and Francophone communities. Consultation with Acadian communities highlighted the need for stronger communication about municipal services in French and greater celebration of Acadian culture.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Celebration**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**
3.9	Complete a *Cultural Facilities Plan* to provide the municipality with a strategic, long-term approach to support, renew and invest in purpose-built venues that support professional arts and culture activities. This action involves: a) Exploring the context in which local cultural facilities operate; b) Identifying the facility needs of the region's professional arts and cultural community; and c) Providing direction to improve the municipality's cultural facility service-delivery model and guide capital investments in professional cultural facilities.	In 2014, Regional Council discussed allocating capital funds to produce a needs assessment and delivery-model study in support of a single-performing arts venue in downtown Halifax. Ultimately, Regional Council directed staff to study arts venues and cultural facilities at a regional scale to guide future action (formerly referred to as the *Cultural Spaces Plan*). At the time, the local arts community expressed concern about the scarcity of purpose-built venues where professional arts can be performed, displayed and taught. More recently, stakeholders advised the municipality to help facilitate access to arts and culture.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Access**	**MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
3.10	Enhance access to community gardens throughout the municipality and partner with cultural communities to create community kitchens and deliver cooking and agricultural support programs, including youth programming.	On March 7, 2023, Regional Council passed a motion to endorse Part A of the *JustFOOD Action Plan*, which has several recommendations on using municipal facilities and assets to grow food and support community food production. Consultation with immigrant and newcomer stakeholders noted a desire to access and share cultural cuisine and traditions.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Celebration**	**SHORT TO MID-TERM**	**Government Relations & External Affairs**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
3.11	Support the attraction and hosting of annual and non-annual events in the region through funding from the Marketing Levy Special Events Reserve and logistical support from the Special Events Task Force.	This action supports the *Integrated Tourism Master Plan* goal of increasing events to attract tourism in the Halifax region. Under the *HRM Marketing Levy Act*, the levy collected shall be used by Regional Council to promote the municipality as a tourist destination.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Celebration**	**MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
3.12	Implement the municipal *Accessibility Strategy* when planning civic events, including ensuring social and cultural accessibility, introducing quiet and low-sensory environments, developing accessibility standards for parking and public transportation, etc.	On May 18, 2021, Regional Council passed a motion to adopt the *Accessibility Strategy* and direct the CAO to carry out its actions.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Access**	**SHORT TO MID-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
3.13	Ensure culturally-appropriate services and programs are available when organizing engagement and collaboration sessions (i.e. providing food, inviting Elders).	The draft P*ublic Engagement Guidebook*, endorsed by Regional Council on August 9, 2022, updates the municipality's public engagement activities to better support diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility considerations. This includes identifying and delivering culturally-appropriate services that encourage enhanced community participation.	**Value creativity**	**Connection**	**SHORT TO MID-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO** **CAO's Office**
3.14	Adopt a diversity, equity and inclusion lens when creating, amending or updating all public and stakeholder engagement policies and protocols. Municipal staff will achieve this action by: a) Working directly with the municipality's Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO for advice and reviewing when engagement processes for major projects or departmental engagement protocols are updated; b) Considering updates to organizational and departmental engagement policies to ensure that all stakeholders and perspectives are heard and acknowledged; and c) Considering project-specific engagement protocols for comprehensive projects where multiple stakeholders may be involved or impacted.	On August 9, 2022, Regional Council passed a motion to develop a new administrative order (AO) on public participation. The updated AO is intended to incorporate current best practices on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**SHORT-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ ANSAIO**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
3.15	Create a public art master plan to guide the administration of the municipality's public art collection. This action involves: a) Formalizing operational public art procedures; and b) Prioritizing commissioning processes that promote the histories and cultures of underrepresented communities.	On September 1, 2020, Regional Council approved a report recommending updates to the *Municipal Public Art Policy*. This report describes the expectation that the CHPP will recommend a more detailed analysis of the *Public Art Policy*, which this action on a public art master plan is intended to address.	**Express culture through place**	**Connection**	**LONG-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**
3.16	Grow the creative economy and tourism industries through *Regional Plan* policies that support vibrant arts areas, home businesses and eco-tourism in rural and residential centres.	On February 23, 2021, Regional Council passed a motion to endorse the Halifax Regional Integrated *Tourism Master Plan*, which recommends creating districts that attract tourism and economic development (i.e. arts districts, entertainment districts, heritage conservation districts). The *Regional Plan Review* also explores supports to the creative economy and tourism in rural areas particularly.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
3.17	Explore potential provisions for in-kind municipal support for arts, culture and heritage which may include the following: a) Some grounds maintenance at heritage sites, museums and community centres to reduce operating costs; b) Support for organizations who require interpreters during events; and c) Enhancing staff resources for major event planning and logistics through the role of the Special Events Task Force.	Feedback received through consultation with heritage groups and organizations involved with events highlighted municipal in-kind assistance as a major success factor. Leveraging municipal resources and staff expertise allows smaller organizations and events, especially those relying on volunteers, to run successful events/operations and reduce costs.	**Value creativity**	**Access**	**MID TO LONG-TERM**	**Parks & Recreation**

4.0 INFORMING

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
4.1	When reviewing or amending the Regional Plan and other major strategic documents and policies (i.e. secondary plan reviews, priorities plans, AO amendments) the municipality will: a) Encourage the adaptive re-use of registered heritage properties and culturally-significant buildings through land-use and financial incentives; b) Work with community groups to identify opportunity sites for community-development projects. Take inventory and work to protect areas that are important to communities or that support cultural development and access; c) Inventory and work to protect areas that are important to communities, or that support cultural development and access; and d) Develop planning and heritage policies to encourage the conservation and re-use of culturally or architecturally significant educational and religious institutional buildings.	Through CHPP engagement, stakeholder groups expressed a desire to celebrate and protect important sites and spaces related to their communities. For instance, Mi'kmaw stakeholders wish to commemorate locations that offer value to Mi'kmaw culture and events; African Nova Scotian stakeholders want to preserve historic sites and structures and collaborate with the municipality to explore funding opportunities. These community desires also align with municipal long-term planning goals, *Heritage Property Program* and AOs regarding built heritage and community grants.	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
4.2	Develop conservation management plans for all municipally-owned heritage properties and cultural assets to ensure appropriate levels of conservation, maintenance and upgrades and meet accessibility, environmental and heritage conservation standards, including: a) Review the *CSA B651-18 Accessible design* for the built environment and the *Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)* program to determine how these can be integrated into heritage conversation; and b) Review *HalifACT 2050* for opportunities to integrate heritage conservation measures that complement sustainability objectives.	Engagement with stakeholders identified concerns that municipally-owned properties, including museums and heritage properties, have varying levels of maintenance, while others require accessibility upgrades. This action will help address these concerns by developing site-specific interventions for property maintenance, while also gaining alignment with *HalifACT* policies and the *Diversity & Inclusion Framework* (with regards to accessibility).	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**MID-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
4.3	Develop cultural and heritage-impact assessment criteria within planning documents and municipal by-laws to support the evaluation of new development in heritage contexts, including comprehensive development applications like large development agreements and secondary plan amendments.	Engagement with stakeholders identified significant support for protecting and preserving built heritage resources as development pressures mount. One effective way to facilitate this is to adopt and expand protective measures and criteria within municipal planning strategies to ensure that built heritage is a key consideration during the development review process.	**Express culture through place**	**Stewardship**	**RAPID**	**Planning & Development**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
4.4	Support inclusive digital access to municipal cultural and heritage assets by: a) Making the municipality's inventory of culture and heritage assets available to the public through the municipal Open Data Catalogue; b) Providing a detailed inventory of individual registered heritage properties and heritage districts; c) Developing virtual tours of heritage buildings that are not accessible, as well as visual descriptors for those with vision loss; d) Expanding the municipal online heritage registry and web presence to provide more information about heritage conservation and municipal supports, enhancing digital access to municipal culture, collections and heritage assets by creating interactive virtual tours and virtual exhibits; e) Upgrading digital storage resources for Halifax Archives; and f) Supporting the development of a virtual and audio tour of significant sites.	A key theme from the public engagement for CHPP focused on using technological and digital media to improve communications and increase the visibility of the municipality's culture and heritage assets. Removing barriers to these assets is consistent with the accessibility domain of the municipal *Diversity & Inclusion Framework*. The subpoints of this action were developed in tandem with input from external and internal stakeholders.	**Express culture through place**	**Access**	**LONG-TERM**	**Planning & Development**
4.5	Increase access to municipal services in languages other than English, in alignment with the Multilingual Policy and Procedures in development by the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO. Re-establish print communications for rural areas without reliable internet access.	Engagement with external stakeholders, especially those from Francophone and newcomer communities, identified a desire for the municipality to increase communication in multiple languages to reduce barriers to information, municipal services and heritage and culture assets.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Access**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Corporate Communications** **The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO**
4.6	Enhance municipal support for privately-owned registered heritage properties and properties within heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes.	Engagement with stakeholders and heritage property owners identified a desire to improve access to funding opportunities that can preserve registered heritage properties and sites with intangible heritage value. Further, stakeholders from the African Nova Scotian community want improved grants and support. This community need aligns with staff's interest in enhancing existing programs (including *Administrative Orders 014-002-ADM* and *2020-005-ADM*) and increasing funding amounts to reflect the present-day costs of repairs with traditional materials.	**Value creativity**	**Stewardship**	**LONG-TERM**	**Planning & Development**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
4.7	Strengthen the municipality's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by embedding inclusion advisors within all business units. This action will enable business units to: a) Filter all work though a diversity and inclusion lens; b) Require that all staff reports have a diversity and inclusion reviewer; and c) Ensure diversity and inclusion input guides all strategic projects, policy development, project implementation and service delivery.	Since 2018, Planning & Development has had an embedded diversity and inclusion (D&I) advisor, who has been an important resource for staff in engaging with, and considering the needs of, diverse communities through major projects. Creating additional D&I advisor roles across other business units will support goals of the *Diversity & Inclusion Framework*.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Connection**	**MID-TO-LONG-TERM**	**The Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO**
4.8	Implement the *Social Value Framework* for the procurement of diverse suppliers for cultural services including food, craft or entertainment: a) Diversify supply chain – work with suppliers, developers and businesses to ensure diversity in opportunities. Continue to grow the database of social value and diverse suppliers; b) Build a procurement scoring system that advantages small to medium local business, African Nova Scotian businesses, First Nations businesses and those from a traditionally underrepresented or racialized business community of interest; c) Ensuring all gifts from the municipality are made by local artists/artisans and considering a 'buy local' policy for artistic products; d) Consider using local musicians for telephone 'hold music' used by municipal service providers (e.g. 311); and e) Recommend that all catering for meetings and civic events be purchased from local social value suppliers when one is available.	On September 20, 2020, Regional Council approved a *Social Value Framework*, which sets guidelines that support social value in all municipal operations and a *Procurement Policy*. Public engagement efforts found that more focus should be placed on procurement procedures to better support African Nova Scotian communities and workers, as well as other traditionally underrepresented groups and communities.	**Value creativity**	**Celebration**	**SHORT-TERM**	**Finance**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
4.9	Conduct a review of municipal grant programs related to culture, art and heritage, with the goal of enhancing access to opportunity, efficiency, accountability and inclusivity: *(I) Access to opportunity* a) Enhance equitable access to municipal assistance programs across the municipality's diverse geographic locations and populations; b) Ensure access to grants programs considers literacy levels, language and accessibility; c) Review application requirements and develop any necessary navigational aids to help prospective applicants find appropriate municipal assistance program(s); d) Develop an at-a-glance calendar of assistance programs to enhance public awareness of program timelines; e) Evaluate the use of contribution agreements that have been used to respond to unsolicited funding requests; f) Reduce or eliminate overlap or duplication between programs to increase access to funding opportunities; and g) Integrate diversity and inclusion principles in all municipal assistance programs. *(II) Efficiency* a) Establish support services to assist program applicants and communication with unsuccessful applicants. *(III) Accountability* a) Assess the feasibility of a centralized approach to all grant programs and funding decisions; and b) Develop key performance indicators to measure the impact of municipal assistance in providing support across the municipality's diverse geographic locations and population groups.	Through stakeholder engagement, numerous groups stated that municipal services and grant programs were difficult to access and navigate. Many stakeholders, particularly those from Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian communities, felt that municipal grant programs should be reviewed and re-envisioned to develop ways to increase opportunities to support potential applicants, add transparency to the grant review process, support new organizations who have yet to obtain charitable status and consider needs-based evaluation criteria.	**Support cultural capacity**	**Access**	**MID-TERM**	**Finance**

	ACTION	RATIONALE	GOAL	PILLAR	TIMELINE	LEAD
4.10	Consider the consolidation of all heritage grant programs under a single incentives program.	The municipality currently has one grant program to support the conservation of municipal heritage properties (*Administrative Order 014-002-ADM*) and a second program that supports conservation of properties within heritage conservation districts (*Administrative Order 2020-005-ADM*). Similar to Action 4.6. above, a review of these programs and potential consolidation may provide efficiency and prevent overlap between existing and proposed programs.	Value creativity	Stewardship	**MID-TERM**	**Finance**

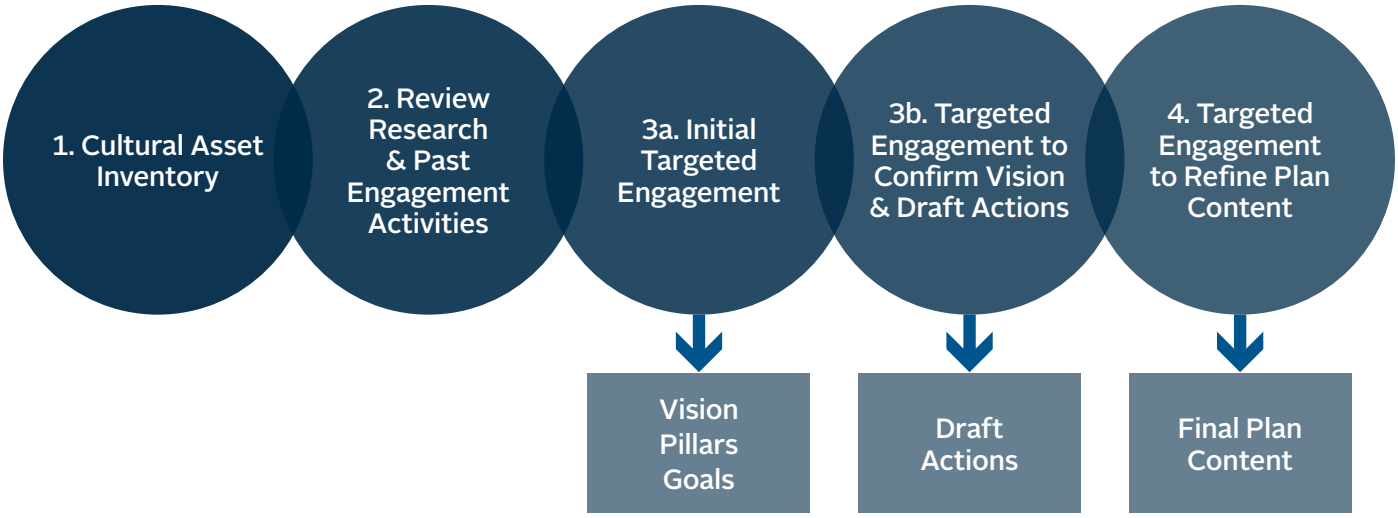
APPENDIX B:

Public Engagement Program

HALIFAX

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH AND PROGRESS

Sharing Our Stories: **The municipality's *Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP)*, which took roughly four years to develop, followed a four-phase public engagement program that is depicted below. The public engagement program was tailored to align with the scope of the plan's developmental process and facilitate co-creating plan elements with stakeholder groups and traditionally underrepresented communities.**



ENGAGEMENT PHASE 1: CULTURAL ASSET INVENTORY (2018)

An inventory of cultural assets was completed in partnership with Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. Stakeholders were consulted to identify cultural spaces and facilities throughout the municipality and build the inventory, which includes both database and mapping components. The inventory includes heritage buildings and sites, landscapes of cultural significance, museums, cultural infrastructure, ethno-cultural facilities, areas of archaeological potential, etc. The cultural inventory has over 10,000 cultural assets.

THE HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY AND ITS COMMUNITIES

ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2: REVIEW RESEARCH & PAST ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES (2018-2019)

Municipal staff conducted background research on cultural and heritage best practices from other municipalities, demographic trends and the results of past municipal engagement activities. The municipality's engagement records from the last decade were collected through various initiatives, including strategic planning projects, surveys, targeted youth engagement, interviews, focus groups and open houses. This information was used to identify general community needs, values and themes, which helped guide and inform the subsequent development of the plan's content. This review also helped the municipality find insights to inform subsequent engagement efforts to emphasize the priorities of various communities.

At the same time, the municipality was independently working towards recommendations that would benefit the local professional arts community. In 2013, Regional Council established a Special Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (SACAC), with membership from the professional arts and culture sector, to consult with stakeholders and advise Regional Council on administrative processes to support the region's cultural and arts sector. Recommendations approved by Regional Council in 2014 included establishing the Arts Halifax Advisory Committee, a professional arts and culture sector advisory committee, to continue ongoing consultations. Arts Halifax brought a final report to Regional Council in 2018. Rather than undertake further consultation with the professional arts sector, the work of SACAC and Arts Halifax was used to inform the plan. The professional arts sector was briefly re-engaged during Phase 4 of this plan's public engagement program.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE 3: TARGETED ENGAGEMENT (2018-2022)

Ample public engagement was needed throughout CHPP's development to allow staff to reach diverse voices and ensure that the plan is reflective of the community. Due to the importance of diversity and inclusion in the plan's ultimate success, targeted engagement was developed to connect with specific stakeholder groups, most of whom were traditionally underrepresented. Each group had a specific role in informing how culture and heritage is accessed, maintained and preserved in the region:

- **Mi'kmaw and Indigenous Communities:** As the original inhabitants of this land, engagement with Band Councils, cultural guardians, Grand Council members and the urban Indigenous community were prioritized. The municipality made a commitment to Reconciliation and many opportunities for actioning this commitment were identified within this engagement process.

- **African Nova Scotian Communities:** The municipality prioritized conversations and support for historic African Nova Scotian communities that have been here for hundreds of years. Deepening the conversation with these communities will support reparations and identify targeted actions to enhance participation in the municipal realm.

- **Acadian and Francophone Communities:** As descendants of the seventeenth and eighteenth century French settlers of Acadia, collaboration with Acadian and Francophone communities is critical to telling the story of the region. Concerns and opportunities raised by Acadian and Francophone communities also supports Francophone immigrants and newcomers.

- **Immigrants and Newcomers:** Newcomers and immigrants help diversify, invigorate and enhance culture and heritage assets in the region to make the municipality a welcoming and expressive place for everyone. These communities have specific needs and illustrate barriers to accessing existing municipal programs and supports.

- **2SLGBTQIA+ Community:** Inclusion and expression of all identities is critical to creating universal access for all residents. Targeted engagement with two-spirited, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans, queer, asexual, allies and questioning folks illustrates how we can celebrate our diverse identities, create safe spaces and inclusive investments.

- **Persons with Disabilities:** We want to create cultural facilities, celebrations and programs that are inclusive to everyone and as such, engagement targeted towards accessibility is a must. The municipality has developed an Accessibility Strategy, in alignment with the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, to provide standards around infrastructure, transportation, goods and services. From neurodiversity to physical barriers, this targeted engagement identified opportunities for universal design in policy and planning initiatives.

- **Heritage and Museum Stakeholders:** Municipal staff have close relationships with organizations and individuals that steward our heritage. Interviews with key collaborators helped staff evaluate ongoing municipal support and identify areas for improving programs, funding and relationships that contribute to the stewardship of heritage resources.

- **Arts and Culture Stakeholders:** A significant amount of engagement around arts and culture had taken place during the past decade and this feedback helped shape this plan's vision, pillars and goals. More specific engagement with this stakeholder group was incorporated into phase 4 of the public engagement program.

Targeted engagement rolled out in two distinct phases: initial engagement to build relationships and shape the plan's structure (i.e. the vision, pillars and goals); and follow-up engagement to confirm the plan's direction and guide draft actions. Overall, there were 38 meetings with stakeholder groups during both phases of engagement. These took the form of in-person meetings and, after March 2020, virtual meetings with staff presentations followed by open discussion.

As noted above, residents have been consulted extensively on several related initiatives and expressed a desire to be engaged once concrete plan details were available. Therefore, we drew on the results of past engagements to help inform this initial stage of plan development, including:

- *HRM Social Heritage Strategy* (2011)
- HRM Traditions Writing & Art Contest, ages 5-11 (2011)
- *Halifax Regional Plan* Review (RP+5) community engagement (2012-2013)
- Special Advisory Committee on *Arts and Culture Report* to municipal staff (2014)
- *Halifax Green Network Plan* (2015)
- *Centre Plan, What We Heard* report (2017)
- Halifax Local Immigration Partnership (HLIP) *Stakeholder Consultation Summary* (2017)
- *French-Language Services Focus Group Report* (2017)
- *Recommendations on the Structure of the Successor Committee* by Arts Halifax Advisory Committee (2017)
- *Accessibility and Inclusion Framework* public consultation (2018)
- Halifax Higher Education Partnership (HHEP) - Working group on higher education, arts and culture in Halifax (2018)
- Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History (2020)

A) INITIAL TARGETED ENGAGEMENT (2018-2019)

There was an emphasis on proactively engaging historically underrepresented groups to ensure that the CHPP reflects the municipality's commitment to diversity and inclusion. As noted above, targeted consultation was directed to prioritize Mi'kmaw and Indigenous peoples, descendants of historic African, Acadian and Francophone communities, emerging and new cultures arriving through immigration to Canada and to support anti-racism and anti-discrimination considerations when developing inclusive and equitable actions throughout the planning process.

Within each group, youth perspectives were specifically sought out to enhance the depth of the engagement. Initial targeted engagement was undertaken with historically underrepresented groups to refine the engagement process in a way that brings equity and considers diverse perspectives. These preliminary meetings, interviews, focus groups and municipal staff participation in community events provided insight into this plan's ideal structure and foundation, over-riding themes and potential actions, as well as scoping opportunities for future engagement. The outcomes of this initial engagement were:

- bringing the conversation to the community;
- clarifying the role of the municipality in supporting culture and heritage;
- refining the community needs, values and themes identified in phase 2;
- co-creating the plan's vision, pillars and goals through exploratory conversations;
- finding better ways to engage key stakeholders and communities; and
- being mindful of micro-communities with unique needs, such as language and accessibility.

Throughout 2019, the municipality used feedback through phase 3a to develop a framework for *Sharing Our Stories* that included a vision, pillars and goals. These items were shared at a presentation to the municipality's Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) in December 2019, which is available here.

B) TARGETED ENGAGEMENT TO CONFIRM VISION & DRAFT ACTIONS (2020-2021)

In the spring of 2020, staff were in the process of designing new targeted engagement sessions and developing preliminary concepts for draft plan actions, which would ultimately be vetted and co-created with the community. The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays and staff launched phase 3b during winter and spring of 2021. During this time, additional targeted meetings were held with the various stakeholder groups to deepen the conversation and follow-up on initial targeted discussions. The outcomes of phase 3b engagement were:

- confirming feedback that was already heard and addressing knowledge gaps;
- finalizing the plan's vision, pillars and goals;
- identifying ideas/concepts for draft actions;
- identifying specific thoughts on implementation pathways; and
- building relationships to support the plan's future implementation.

After phase 3b's targeted engagement concluded, municipal staff reviewed the collected input, vetted the potential draft actions through the culture and development lens (see Section 3), and created a full list of *Sharing Our Stories'* draft actions.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE 4: TARGETED ENGAGEMENT TO REFINE PLAN CONTENT (2022)

Once the draft actions were compiled, municipal staff conducted further engagement to elicit feedback on the draft actions to ensure they embodied the needs of stakeholders. These actions covered a variety of topics, including external regulations and legislation, internal policies and workflow and coordination with community organizations, cultural groups and other levels of government on culture and heritage projects throughout the Halifax region. Overall, there were 12 sessions with stakeholder groups, which comprised of in-person and virtual meetings, with staff presentations followed by open discussions.

Based on the feedback collected early in phase 4, stakeholders expressed a desired to organize the plan actions into four different categories, based on the level of community involvement/engagement required to implement each action. The community felt that this was the most effective way to bring forward meaningful change. These four categories are: Empowering Communities; Co-Creation; Collaboration; and Informing.

Municipal staff also developed a survey to gather public feedback for the draft action plan. This survey ran from August 22, 2022 to September 19, 2022 and garnered 81 visitors and 33 responses from residents. It was advertised through external stakeholders, municipal social media channels and the Shape Your City Halifax online engagement platform.

All input collected during phase 4 was used to finalize the CHPP.

APPENDIX C:

What We Heard Summary

HALIFAX

GENERAL THEMES AND SUMMARY

The following subsection identifies the big-picture themes that emerged during phases 1 through 3a of the CHPP's public engagement program. This information was compiled and consolidated using the individual meetings, conversations or focus groups that the municipality staff hosted, as well as the summary notes prepared for past municipal engagement exercises. The key themes that emerged are:

- make participation in cultural activities more accessible, affordable, inclusive and reflective of the region's diverse population;
- recognize historically underrepresented communities, their stories, identities and community boundaries;
- facilitate culture-led economic development in communities;
- broaden and develop the municipality's role in cultural tourism and build partnerships in arts, culture and heritage;
- promote cultural literacy and awareness opportunities through cross-cultural experiential learning, interaction and exchange;
- establish inclusive central cultural hubs and creative spaces at community centres, public libraries and schools to offer arts and culture programs, to bring people together to exchange ideas, encourage participation in cultural activities and to provide resources and training in support of artists and arts and culture organizations;
- foster more partnerships and strengthen collaboration with communities on sustainable community cultural festivals and celebrations – food, music, dance, etc.;
- invest in arts and culture through accessible financial supports and equitable grant application processes by exploring needs-based approaches;
- diversify engagement methods used by the municipality and adopt a cultural lens in engagement practices;
- invest in development of transportation infrastructure to marginalized cultural and heritage sites;
- provide targeted support for digital transformation in the culture and heritage sectors, such as technology that offers a multitude of opportunities for supportive marketing, communications and increased visibility of underrepresented culture and heritage;
- develop community-specific and culturally-relevant programming for children and youth;
- break down silos and facilitate collaboration across sectors, large and small organizations, municipalities and departments to help strengthen the sector and, in turn, enhance creative and economic benefits for the region;
- provide sustained, reliable funding for artists and small cultural organizations; and
- increase access to, and awareness of, traditionally-underrepresented cultural content, programming and signage.

TARGETED FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

The following subsection outlines the specific content that was collected from key stakeholder groups during the targeted engagement sessions that were held during phases 3a through 4 of the CHPP's public engagement program. Municipal staff captured all feedback, even if it does not relate to the municipality's jurisdiction or programming, or if it is not applicable to this project, but offers input into other areas of municipal operations. Targeted engagement activities were uniquely designed for each stakeholder group who has specialized expertise and interests in this plan.

WHAT WE HEARD: MI'KMAQ & INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- co-creation should be considered when implementing projects in the plan;
- the municipality should better coordinate and align engagement to reduce burden on individuals and organizations;
- provincial and federal governments have set a precedent in recognizing First Nations as an independent level of government. First Nations groups must be consulted when proposed activities have the potential to impact Aboriginal rights. Three First Nations groups hold reserve lands within the Halifax region and are therefore impacted by municipal policy and planning initiatives;
- do not lump Mi'kmaw and Indigenous people with other underrepresented communities. While the region is now a patchwork quilt of cultures, Mi'kmaq are original title-owners of the land. The municipality must pay significant attention to the history reflected in the plan;
- engagement should include follow-up. Some ideas get talked about over and over again and never actioned;
- the Grand Council is often an afterthought and deserve the same respect as elected Chiefs. Traditional decision making is consensus based, not based on democratic process like Band Councils which were a creation of the *Indian Act*;
- consider meeting with Grand Council from all seven districts to discuss space for collaboration and to get community direction. Many of the hereditary chiefs (Keptins) are also elected members of councils across Nova Scotia;
- explore development of a friendship accord to lay out relationship commitments and relationship between Regional Council and Mi'kmaq communities; and
- consider community and cultural protocols when holding completing engagement including opening and closing prayers.

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- *Social Heritage Strategy*, meetings with Urban Indigenous community, 2011

PRE-ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS AT NATIONHOOD CONFERENCE, KJIPUTUK:

- Executive Director and Board Member of Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre
- Chief Deborah Robinson – Chief of Acadia First Nation, Assembly of NS Chiefs, Portfolio Urban Indigenous and Women
- Chief Wilbur Marshall, Potlotek First Nation, Assembly of NS Chief, Portfolio Culture & Heritage
- Elders and Historians
- Chief and Band Council members for Sipekne'katik FN
- Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs
- Unama'ki College – Indigenous Affairs
- Chief and Councillor for Millbrook FN
- Several Grand Council meeting members

MI'KMAQ AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Sipekne'katik Band Council
- Acadia Band Council
- Millbrook Band Council
- Mi'kmaw Grand Council members from Sipekn'ekatik District
- Assembly of Mi'kmaw Chiefs
- Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO)
- Tripartite Committee on Culture and Heritage
- Elders/Storytellers
- The Nova Scotia Museum
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre Youth Group

KEY DOCUMENTS

- Cornwallis Task Force Report

STEWARDSHIP

- river systems and watersheds are important and reflect traditional land use as well as uphold traditional governance systems;
- there is an opportunity to collaborate with community leaders on protection of Shubenacadie River;
- protection of the night sky is important for Mi'kmaw astronomy and navigation;
- the municipality's role in controlling land use is important for protecting Mi'kmaq archaeological resources;
- develop a process for protecting land and sharing information on new or proposed developments to allow communities to respond to proposals and identify potential cultural resources at risk;
- Mi'kmaw history was oral, not written, so language is hugely important. It encompasses all their faith, medicines and history. Words are powerful and descriptive. If you are trying to compile stories, they will lose context if translated. Translation into English results in loss of texture and detail;
- language is the fabric of how we communicate and understand the world. If language is going to be represented, we need to be sure that it is fully represented for future generations;
- there are opportunities for the municipality to support community cultural resurgence of oral tradition and language through collaborative interpretation, events and signage;

- dedicated space for Mi'kmaq businesses and artists on Halifax waterfront and Peggy's Cove would support economic development. After the Halifax Explosion the Mi'kmaw were promised land on the water, near Halifax, but instead they were moved away to Shubenacadie and Millbrook. Dedicated land would honour the original promise;

- Mi'kmaq culture is ever evolving and adapting to new influences and technologies throughout time and should be supported in a manner that is flexible to change;

- traditional objects and artifacts have voice, consciousness and emotion and must be protected with that understanding; and

- Mi'kmaw street names or correction of incorrect street names would increase reflection of history and Mi'kmaq presence.

CONNECTION

- there should be an Indigenous seat on Halifax Regional Council (and youth council) to have better representation in decision-making;

- engage with Mi'kmaq communities beyond the Halifax region because as the economic centre of the province, the municipality is important to all Mi'kmaq communities;

- there is a real opportunity for hiring Indigenous people into the municipal workforce. An Indigenous employment strategy should be developed with the community;

- need to recognize the needs of all Indigenous people including those from other parts of Canada, while respecting Mi'kmaq as treaty holders;

- community would like to establish guidelines and share with the municipality on when and how to photograph and film Elders, performers and regalias. Actions of individuals are not always appropriate and there is a need to educate people. When discussing and developing these guidelines we should consider intellectual property rights of content shared by Mi'kmaw;

- should consider how you hire/work with Elders and dancers in a way that best supports them;

- the municipality needs to educate their staff and Regional Council on Indigenous culture and treaty education. Consider collaborating with band councils and experts identified by community to provide support on this education;

- the municipality should explore opportunities for land back initiatives and support Indigenous entrepreneurs to develop businesses on that land;

- all vacant municipally-owned land should be transferred back to Mi'kmaq communities;

- the land transfer from the municipality to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre for the site of the new Friendship Centre should be made at no cost;

- the municipality should promote and support development of Indigenous tourism of harbourfront/downtown;

- explore incorporation of two-eyed seeing, which means balancing traditional knowledge with western science, particularly on land-use projects with ecological focus;

- work with other municipalities and Mi'kmaq communities to support the development of a Consultation Terms of Reference that is directly applicable to municipalities;

- increase dialogue with Band Councils and commit to relationship building by enhancing information exchange on events and by ensuring invitations are sent to Chief and Councils for all civic events;

- create regular times for communicating with Band Councils on projects and initiatives; and

- consider supporting other businesses and organizations in receiving diversity and inclusion training by collaborating with the Halifax Partnership and organizations like the Chamber of Commerce.

CELEBRATION

- it is critically important that Mi'kmaq are telling Mi'kmaq stories. The municipality can support, but the stories need to come from and be told by the community;
- consider co-creating an interpretive nature trail with medicinal plants;
- place has specific meaning. The Halifax region has more place names than just Kjipuktuk, which just refers to the harbour and it is important to reflect these names and places. There is an extensive interactive place-name project that has been completed that can provide guidance;
- follow through on design and implementation of community-led Interpretation of Point Pleasant Park;
- after the Halifax Explosion, the Mi'kmaw were promised land on the waterfront to sell crafts, but they were slowly moved out. Establishing a waterfront truckhouse would keep that promise;
- commemorate significant locations and events to Mi'kmaw history like the site of burying the hatchet, treaty signings;
- upon entering every visitor should see recognition and public signage that this is Mi'kmaki;
- the municipality should do a better job of recognizing Orange Shirt Day;
- Indigenous History Month should include more engagement, celebration, events, lights and public art;
- more resources need to be provided for Mi'kmaq History Month to make it attractive to the whole municipality. Other cities have huge events where the entire municipality is decorated in Indigenous art for these events and all times of the year;
- interpretation should be respectful and the accurate history and traditional knowledge needs to be reflected. There is a lot of false history and information that needs to be validated through the correct channels;
- celebrate Mi'kmaq culture, particularly women, through streetscaping, naming and sculpture;
- there should be an Indigenous sculpture garden at the Public Gardens or another downtown park;
- potential to collaborate on a project that will build the visibility of Mi'kmaq people – possibly around the new Acadia Council office in Hammonds Plains;
- opportunity to honor and commemorate Chief Membertou who developed the Peace & Friendship Treaties; and
- consider development of a walk around the Public Gardens telling the story of how spring came to Mi'kmaki.

ACCESS

- seeing symbols and icons of cultural traditions (ie. medicine wheels, sweet grass, images) can help create culturally safe spaces within municipal facilities. Some work on creating safe spaces for Indigenous youth was completed by the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) team. Formalizing those spaces and increasing distribution within municipally owned facilities could be the next step;

- the municipality should require cultural awareness for non-Indigenous staff to create inclusive support and service for Indigenous residents;

- we need to connect both financial and human resources. There could be opportunities for mentorship and capacity building - especially around events;

- create an office of Indigenous affairs and continue to support a full-time municipal Diversity & Inclusion position;

- diversity advisor position needs to have more flexibility and funding to work collaboratively with the community;

- urban Indigenous community is growing and changing all the time, and many Indigenous people who are new to the Halifax region are not made aware of resources available to Indigenous residents. Consider better communication of resources available through media and website;

- develop public awareness campaigns to support anti-racism work, reflecting the range of Mi'kmaq and Indigenous appearances and identities in a public area such as the bus. Cultural awareness campaigns and corporate photography should depict a range of Indigenous identities and appearances;

- work with Band Councils and Mi'kmaq communities within the region to develop and prioritize routes to connect to culturally appropriate supports and services such as the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre; and

- prioritize investment in shelters, emergency or affordable housing for Mi'kmaw and urban Indigenous community.

WHAT WE HEARD: AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- develop community-specific and culturally responsive community engagement models that include 'closing the loop' and providing results and next steps of what is heard;
- consider more partnerships with organizations to complete engagement in underrepresented communities;
- recognize that municipal policies have not all been inclusive of African Nova Scotian (ANS) communities. Using the Regional Plan, consider community-benefit agreements, which communicate the level of intention with resources;
- the municipality is developing an anti-Black racism strategy that will also align and inform the plan;
- the municipality should consider better communication about the investments in heritage and cultural properties and initiatives. It is confusing to the public which elements are managed by the municipality versus the Province. Co-ordinate with other levels of government to enhance the impact of the work;
- general agreement that those engaged want to see the actions and draft plan once timelines and priorities are more established;
- participants were open to continued engagement and supporting implementation; and
- the municipality should give careful consideration when selecting images, photographs and language that are used in engagement materials to create more inclusive materials that better reflect the communities being engaged.

PAST ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- *Social Heritage Strategy*, targeted African Nova Scotian engagement, 2011

AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- African Nova Scotian community focus group that included residents, community groups and the North End Business Association (pre-engagement)
- Nova Scotia Decade for People of African Descent (NSDPAD)
- Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute (DBDLI)
- Black Business Initiative (BBI)
- African United Baptist Association
- Community focus groups from Beechville and Cherrybrook
- African Nova Scotian youth focus groups (sessions held in partnership with DBDLI)

KEY DOCUMENTS

- *African Nova Scotian Road to Economic Prosperity*

STEWARDSHIP

- identify potential ANS municipal heritage properties and provide funding to support preservation of heritage sites and structures;
- ensure that traditional ANS community boundaries are preserved in land-use planning and identify these boundaries with community signage;
- explore a process for the municipality's African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) to assist in circumventing and expediting the natural process of a land development application to make it equitable for ANS applicants;
- there should be a mechanism to give their communities preference in the tender and procurement process, specifically disposal of surplus properties in historic black communities. The surplus property disposal process should use a cultural lens;
- support community in completing a mapping exercise of ANS graveyards to protect cultural resources and artifacts; and
- support community in developing virtual or multimedia accessible representation of cultural sites to provide universal access to heritage sites and stories.

CONNECTION

- there needs to be ongoing and inclusive engagement and decision-making processes on matters of culture and heritage;
- consider working with the community to develop a definition of 'African Nova Scotian';
- work with tourism partners to develop more support for tourism initiatives including information dissemination on ANS cultural attractions;
- promote ANS community celebration days throughout the region (including Taste of East Preston, Beechville Days, Upper Hammond Plains Can Jam, etc.);
- connect and build better awareness between ANS organizations and municipal community developers. The community developers have been successful in proactively working with the community to enhance culture and arts such as through calls for artists;
- consider proactive approach to collaboration with community instead of expecting community to be reactive to the municipality and create more opportunities for community-led projects. Opportunities should be shaped collaboratively with community, rather than community responding to RFPs;
- consider how contracts and procurement are scoped on projects that impact ANS communities and develop opportunities at a reasonable scale and scope for community members to respond to RFPs and tenders. For example, break down contracts to allow for community engagement to be completed by someone from the community;
- explore methods of diversifying the supply chain by working with suppliers, developers and Black businesses to ensure diversity in products and services contracted by the municipality;
- work towards more equity and diversity in municipal hiring practices related to arts, heritage and culture; and
- develop a grant targeted to training ANS community historians and archivists to enable capacity development and enhance stewardship of cultural resources.

CELEBRATION

- the plan should prioritize connection to the 50+ historic ANS communities that have been here for 400+ years, while acknowledging African Canadians and communities of the African diaspora to capture the diversity of the region;
- the municipality should increase recognition and encourage sharing of ANS history and culture by:
  - supporting community-led interpretation and commemoration projects at important ANS sites (e.g. sites like the New Horizons Baptist Church; commemorating the 1796 recruits for Sierra Leone who were housed on the Halifax waterfront, Black Loyalist refuges in Preston or Preston baptismal river);
  - the municipality needs to understand ANS cultural history is often word of mouth; and community engagement is required to complete interpretation
  - recognize "Notable Nova Scotians" materials displayed in municipal facilities including Rocky Jones, Buddy Daye, James Robinson Johnston and the lawyers who followed in his legacy should be equally remembered;
  - protect rural ANS culture and heritage including stories and sites;
  - develop partnerships between the archives, museums or libraries to develop photo-sharing initiatives that preserve and share the wealth of photographic memories in the community; and
  - enhancing support for events such as an annual ANS festival, Black Arts festival or an event honouring Viola Desmond in north-end Halifax.

- develop a permanent legacy piece dedicated to Viola Desmond;
- consider support for the development of "Black Memory Lane" or a project that would capture 'what communities are known for' past and present, building off of https://blackhalifax.com/learning-tools/;
- support 'sites of black learning and cultural preservation,' especially those that produce intergenerational cultural transmission that might not fall into funding criteria such as family reunions and story circles;
- when completing interpretation or commemoration projects consider community consultation including talking with family of any historical figures and relevant community groups to fact check and provide input;
- develop community-specific and culturally relevant programming using inclusive engagement and decision making. This could include collaboration with local cultural associations to provide programming for youth such as day camps or an African dance program;
- cultural programing could also provide meaningful employment opportunities and a platform for exposure for cultural custodians from underrepresented groups in the creative cultural industry and an opportunity to share and interact with the public; and
- establish an artist cooperative/contemporary space or space within municipal facilities dedicated to creativity for non-traditional artists and consider use of this space for displaying community and youth projects.

ACCESS

Consider the following changes to the municipal grant programs and supporting website or documentation to simplify and tailor the process:

- targeted grant (proposal) writing orientation workshops for community organizations to learn how to navigate the grant application process;
- targeted engagement to create realistic deadlines as well as development of a mechanism for advance notification of opportunities;
- consider a needs-based approach to awarding grants;
- simplify the application process or support for community organizations applying for grants (capacity building, grant-writing support or funding for hiring support);
- consider multi-year funding for established events to reduce administrative burden for both the municipality and applicants including community day events;
- consider allowing applicants from religious communities because culture and spirituality are deeply connected;
- consider having a point-person to support navigation of programs available;
- provide publicly available grants reporting to enhance public accountability and transparency;
- consider developing an appeals process for the grants program and post information on debriefing and appeals for those that don't receive funding; and
- broaden grant requirements or develop funding for discretionary support for small or new community organizations that have not yet achieved charitable status.
- Improved access to ANS cultural sites such as Africville, both by promoting and increasing their visibility and through enhanced transportation connections;
- consider more representative photography and information on programming and services within municipal facilities and media; and
- have a neighbourhood improvement-type program (e.g. NIP of the 1980s) that assigns a coordinator in particular communities (e.g. Uniacke Square, the Prestons) to work with the community to advance community-led planning and opportunities.

QUOTES FROM MEETINGS:

"Land is integral to our culture – if we lose our land, we lose our culture"

"When financial resources are put behind projects, it makes a big difference"

"If you allow people to practice their culture without the pressure of economic benefit, it can actually have an economic spin off to it"

"HRM cannot sit down and make programing for people without including them. The people need to be part of the process"

"Through the current zoning and planning system, HRM is systematically re-arranging the boundaries of our communities"

"HRM needs to protect this community to ensure that we don't lose the heritage of our people"

"We need to have a sign that says 'Preston Township' the oldest Black Community in Canada and we don't have to fight for it"

"People don't want tokenism, they want real inclusion"

"We are losing our physical identity"

WHAT WE HEARD: ACADIAN & FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- the Acadian and Francophone community doesn't feel well represented or considered within the Halifax region
- consider the Acadian and Francophone community when completing engagement of all kinds and when making municipal decisions

ACADIAN AND FRANCOPHONE - PAST ENGAGEMENT RESULTS REVIEWED

- *French Language Services Focus Group Report, 2017* (43 people engaged in four focus groups)

ACADIAN AND FRANCOPHONE ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Acadian and Francophone Partnership of Halifax
- Conseil Communautaire du Grand Havre (CCGH)
- Students and staff of Ecole du Sommet (x2)
- Members of L'Acadie de Chezzetcook
- Students and staff of Ecole du Carrefour (x2)

STEWARDSHIP

- continue to protect and promote significant historical sites that reflect Acadian culture and history, such as Georges Island;
- provide interpretation, commemoration and public art to reflect the stories such as the deportation of Acadians in public areas and not just at historic sites;
- reflect the diverse traditions and folklore of the many Acadian and Francophone communities and protect objects and cultural resources that reflect this heritage;
- when planning lands, consider the unique heritage and character of Chezzetcook as the only Acadian community within the region;
- consider renaming and removal of names on public assets that can be considered toxic and harmful. For example, Lawrencetown is named after Charles Lawrence who was the lieutenant governor that ordered the deportation of the Acadians, which consisted of a cultural genocide;
- create space for Francophone conversation and connection (e.g. cafes);
- community gardens are important to the community. Consider supporting enhancements to the community garden at the Dartmouth Commons by providing access to water;
- ensure maintenance of the removed Acadian Monument at the waterfront; and
- recognize local and community heroes (e.g. Georges Cottreau, Claude Renaud).

CONNECTION

- concern around the disconnect between the municipality and the community which results in underrepresentation of the community on Regional Council and within the municipal workforce. Explore opportunities to employ and retain Acadian and Francophone community members;
- consider that Regional Council has a designated seat for the Acadian and Francophone community and promote participation on committees;
- consider partnering with organizations to better identify businesses that offer service in French within high-traffic areas such as the waterfront. Also consider creating space for Acadian and Francophone retail, business and merchandise;
- offer brochures in French about the municipality and a catalogue of services in French at the airport for tourists;
- support connection by establishing a partnership between Francophone groups to conduct tours to Chezzetcook;
- attract Francophone immigrants to settle here by providing more targeted support and services; and
- involve the Francophone community in all cultural festivals, not just the big events (i.e. Canada 150).

CELEBRATION

- support celebration and awareness of Francophone diversity and increase the visibility of the Francophone community;
- consider supporting celebrations for Tintamarre (Acadian Festival) on August 15;
- consider more targeted support for Acadian and Francophone theatre and live-performance artists, dancers and musicians;
- support development of a Francophone gathering space or cultural centre to provide gathering space and cultural programming to enhance the sense of belonging;
- advocate for the development of an Acadian school in Chezzetcook;
- create sustainable partnerships for development and support community in developing more festivals and events such as Grou Thyme, Tintamarre and the Acadian Games;
- celebrate strong Acadian food culture (e.g. Rappie pie) through support for community events and festivals and by promoting food businesses and restaurants. Consider supporting cultural resurgence through youth cooking classes of traditional recipes in community facilities;
- host different municipal Francophone cultural celebrations, performances and events in Grand Parade square (Halifax City Hall);
- create opportunities for youth to tell stories like the previous competition honoring Joseph Howe;
- celebrate the use of the Acadian Flag and Acadian Star as symbols in municipal facilities. The raising of the flag at the Grand Parade is a great example of opportunities; and
- prioritize funding and grant opportunities directed to the Acadian and Francophone community.

ACCESS

- increase access to and awareness of Acadian cultural content, Francophone programming, signage and language services;
- enhance quality of French materials and translation services by developing corporate policies to ensure that consistent financial and human resources are dedicated to French-language services. This may include a policy on French-language services establishing basic standards for French-language services delivery in the municipality, a French version of the municipal website, 311 and communication guidelines;
- when providing French services, protect and promote regional dialects specific to the area rather than standard French to help preserve linguistic heritage;
- increase availability of municipal information in French (e.g. on municipal website, flyers and brochures, etc.) to support inclusion and access;
- consider enhancing French-language collections and enhancing French programming through recurring events (i.e. monthly) at the public library;
- collaborate with community, such as the Conseil Communautaire du Grand, to develop French-language recreation programming such as swimming lessons. This programming should be distributed within the region, as the population is dispersed throughout the municipality;
- when recruiting employees, consider French language as an asset as well as consider ways of supporting Francophone youth in summer or co-op positions. Develop human resource strategy targeted at building French-language capacity within the Halifax region through equitable hiring and retention;
- use existing communication avenues to promote and identify Acadian and Francophone events. For example, promote a calendar of events and links to organizations on the municipal website;
- there are no French classes for Francophile immigrants. Immigration Service Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) only offers English classes, which shows a gap in French services; and
- continue to support the French Services Diversity & Inclusion Advisor, as this position has enhanced connection with the community.

WHAT WE HEARD: IMMIGRANTS & NEWCOMERS

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- the municipality is becoming more and more of a hub for immigration, which should be reflected in this document. Emphasize and complete deeper engagement with immigrants and newcomers in next consultations; and
- immigrants and newcomers are not a singular stakeholder or group. New immigrants have different needs and may wish to be engaged in different ways on a variety of cultural issues.

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT RESULTS REVIEWED

- *Halifax Local Immigration Partnership (HLIP) Stakeholder Consultation Summary, 2017*
- *Social Heritage Strategy, Focus Group with Immigrants and Newcomers, 2011*

IMMIGRANTS AND NEWCOMERS - ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Focus Group including representatives from the YMCA, Dalhousie international student associations, the Muslim community and African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes.

STEWARDSHIP

- develop community kitchens as part of the cultural and community facilities managed by the municipality; and
- consider developing or supporting the development of a multicultural centre and a community kitchen to support cultural activities and cultural organizations.

CONNECTION

- the municipality should partner with non-profit cultural organizations to explore ways to recognize the value of what immigrants bring and have to offer;
- consider developing targeted public workshops (meeting people at organized gatherings and events) to educate groups about what grants are available and co-create a system that reduces barriers;
- better connection with cultural communities and organizations will create more authentic celebrations;
- consider appropriate reflection of the diversity of cultures when developing festivals and events. For example, an "African Festival" is problematic, as Africa is a continent and should be represented as such by individual countries;
- expand and diversify culturally relevant programming and offer activities created and instructed by members of diverse communities;
- a model UN-style program could allow youth to learn about and represent other countries in an educational competition;
- consider increased engagement from the local immigrant and newcomer community in developing learning experiences and training for municipal staff around positive aspects of diverse communities; and
- promote connection between cultural communities (i.e. newcomers and Mi'kmaw) on creative or cultural projects.

CELEBRATION

- funding for community grants should increase and expanded as the municipality grows to reflect the diversity of our cultures;
- immigrants would like to have a sustained visible presence – the municipality should work towards enhancing the sense of pride and belonging in physical public spaces and the provision of language services and multilingual municipal signage (e.g. Arabic and French);
- consider hosting more multicultural events and festivals in the winter to better disperse events throughout the year and to support communities (particularly for those from warmer climates) with social connection through the harsh winter;
- community gatherings and traditional practices need a visible platform and promotional support through marketing. Consider developing a common platform for multicultural businesses to be marketed and made accessible especially for newcomers;
- enhance communication of services and opportunities for newcomers through information packages about municipal services and opportunities distributed through partner organizations;
- increase opportunities to creatively celebrate cultures in the public realm (e.g. through art);
- explore opportunities for indoor and outdoor public-gathering spaces for collective sharing of traditions and culture (e.g. international markets or a regional cultural centre or museum to display cultural objects from different cultures);
- consider developing a community garden to connect and share agricultural heritage and culinary traditions (e.g. farming and planting tips, recipe exchange);
- use stories to tap into cultural commonalities and continue to host *Sharing our Stories* events;
- work with cultural communities and museums to tell stories of ethnic communities and display cultural assets, artifacts and cultural expressions including performances; and
- consider creating a municipal cultural month to celebrate the diversity of cultures present in the region.

ACCESS

- condition that grant applicants must be an association/non-profit organization excludes many individuals, relevant initiatives and small organizations;
- the grant process is normally handled by volunteers and the process is a burden. Grant amounts do not currently cover administrative costs. One option would be corporate sponsorship instead of an application-based process for some smaller grants;
- funds should be directed to small and new organizations and should be monitored for repeated awards. In particular, small or emerging cultural organizations should receive support for providing culturally centred food as well as venues;
- the grants application process should be transparent; have frequent intake periods; evaluation should be needs based and equitable; and people should be aware of the process and resources available;
- reports on municipal investments into culture and arts should be easily and transparently accessible. Investments should be evaluated on performance (i.e. How successful was the event or project completed by the applicant? How many people did it reach?); and
- consider developing navigator staff positions and centralized information portals to help newcomers and those experiencing barriers to access municipal services, business opportunities and to participate in municipal committees and opportunities.

WHAT WE HEARD: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- seek input from community to help the municipality ensure that communication and documents (all media types) with citizens is more accessible and inclusive;
- there should be ongoing opportunities for engagement;
- need more engagement with immigrants and newcomers; and
- consider providing detail on jurisdiction of culture and heritage assets (i.e. which buildings are protected by the Province versus the municipality) to create clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities for residents and to reduce barriers to providing feedback.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- *Accessibility and Inclusion Framework* public consultation (2018)

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (2 Meetings)
- Nova Scotia League of Equal Opportunity (NSLEO)
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
- Canadian Paraplegic Association

STEWARDSHIP

- the region has a significant history of human rights champions and significant milestones in accessibility history. Consider collaborating with community to develop interpretation and commemoration expressing the history of the accessibility community;
- when adapting heritage buildings and sites consider lighting, obstructions, signage and tactile features that exceed minimum standards; and
- consider developing virtual tours of heritage buildings that are not accessible as well as visual descriptors for those with vision loss.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

- *HRM's Accessible Events Guidelines*
- *Nova Scotia Accessibility Act*

CONNECTION

- collaborate with accessibility organizations to create targeted and accessible recreation programming; and
- collaborate with accessibility organizations to identify acceptable standards and guidelines (i.e. CSA, Rick Hanson) to be utilized and reviewed by municipal staff when designing programs, buildings, spaces and events.

CELEBRATION

- consider tactile sculptures and interactive public art that provide for multi-dimensional experiences for all residents;
- within the Halifax region there has been a long history of disability advocacy and milestones that should be celebrated. For example, the first Canadian school for the blind was established in the municipality following the Halifax Explosion;
- during celebrations and events, provide free passes to support workers for persons with disabilities to reduce financial burden. Consider requiring this as part of criteria for receiving events grants;
- consider collaboration with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and other organizations to create a training module for municipal event volunteers and staff to improve guiding experience for residents requiring assistance;
- seek input from accessibility organizations when completing interpretation and commemoration strategy to develop standards and solutions that work for those with low or no vision including larger type, high-contrast signage and audio recordings;
- consider providing described events for those with low vision at parades or highly visual events; and
- include quiet or low-sensory environments or areas during crowded events and functions to support neuro-diverse residents.

ACCESS

- consider providing support for culture and heritage organizations to provide interpreters during events;
- consider accessible parking and transit access when planning events and create opportunities for accessible routes to and from event sites;
- provide advance notice on accessibility features for events so that residents can make informed decisions on whether to attend;
- continue to provide accessible online opportunities for participation in events, heritage, cultural celebrations and learning from the pandemic experience;
- consider translation services through QR codes on interpretation materials as well as frequency of spoken languages such as Arabic when creating cultural interpretation;
- consider developing a cultural-service navigator to support those that have challenges navigating policies and programs;
- consider developing quiet spaces and low-sensory spaces at community, cultural and heritage facilities managed by the municipality; and
- provide grants specifically to ensure events and infrastructure are accessible.

WHAT WE HEARD:
2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- there should be more engagement with 2SLGBTQIA+ community on this project going forward and we should be informed of projects regarding culture and heritage in the initiation stages; and
- consider using an intersectional lens when completing engagement.

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Halifax Pride
- Youth Project

STEWARDSHIP

- consider supporting a collaborative project for a queer interactive and audio walking tour as a placemaking project;
- consider enhancing interpretation and protection of the Khyber and Turret, which are critical cultural assets to the queer history of Halifax; and
- many queer social and cultural spaces have shuttered and the municipality should consider how to support businesses providing accessible safe spaces.

CONNECTION

- there needs to be space for community-led celebrations, projects and programs. This means the municipality would take a support role and provide mentorship, experience and resources for youth to lead;
- youth would like to work with the municipality in a more pro-active manner and there should be more opportunities for youth leadership through better communication and co-creation;
- there should be better links between school events and celebrations and municipal events to create a better sense of belonging for youth and to enhance participation;
- consider creating program officers or enhancing communication and relationship building. There should be a municipal contact to discuss collaboration and opportunities; and
- enhance communication with event organizers with respect to large construction or street projects that might interrupt or cause a need for re-routing parades and celebrations. Consider providing in-kind staff donations such as transportation planners or events staff to support three to four months in advance of events such as Halifax Pride to enhance collaboration and reduce operating costs for non-profits.

CELEBRATION

- the plan should look at ways to create safe spaces to celebrate diversity. Safe spaces need to be developed by community, with support from the municipality;
- Youth should have ownership of the spaces that they use, which could include youth participation in mural making, storytelling or place-making projects; and
- consider in-kind donations for festivals and celebrations to meet provincial requirement for costly police services for street closures.

ACCESS

- expansion of the grant program should include a central website for grant programs with better access and connection to youth, including better searchability by theme and criteria and regular communication with organizations about the criteria and opportunities available;
- integrate and centralize the grants applications and allow organizations to partner on applications including development of categories that support organizations that are not yet registered as non-profits;
- in support of community-led and youth-led programs, the language, application requirements and communication of opportunities should be youth friendly and accessible;
- willingness for support and collaboration with the municipality on volunteer training to promote diversity and inclusion, including provision of described events (i.e. verbally describing visual experiences) and support for persons with disabilities; and
- the lack of accessible spaces is an issue for events and organizations trying to be sustainable.

WHAT WE HEARD: HERITAGE ORGANIZATIONS

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- Heritage organizations range in scope and interest from local community archives and museums, to province-wide NGOs with a broad mandate. Funding and volunteer resources can vary widely, and engagement efforts should consider this.
- Local heritage organizations often feel left-out of consultations or project planning affecting their areas of interest or their local communities. These organizations are a wealth of information on local and regional history and culture.

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- *Halifax Green Network Plan*
- Regional Plan +5 engagement

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Dartmouth Heritage Museum
- Rockingham Heritage Society
- Mainland South Heritage Society
- Waverley Heritage Society
- Cole Harbour Heritage Society / Cole Harbour Farm Museum
- Fort Sackville Foundation

STEWARDSHIP

- heritage sites and museums should be seen as catalysts for cultural renewal as they provide educational opportunities, gathering space and programming that encourages sustainable cultural transmission;
- there is a gap between what is considered for collections at provincial museums vs. community museums. This may support the need for a regional museum. The municipality provided limited support in the past, though the establishment of the Municipal Archives has resulted in some improvement;
- there is some inconsistency between the level of maintenance support that the municipality provides for various municipally owned properties;
- consider providing in-kind support for grounds and garden maintenance at heritage properties and museums;
- protect the built and natural heritage within their community and especially along the Bedford Highway. Birch Cove Lakes, Hemlock Ravine and views into the Basin along the Bedford Highway should be protected;
- continue to implement the cultural landscape program and consider additions of Hemlock Ravine as a designated cultural landscape as one of only two English landscapes in Nova Scotia. Mount Uniacke is the other one;
- the Bedford Highway and Basin should be considered as a cultural landscape (roadway and seascape);
- Municipal Archives provides in-kind donation of storage for some heritage and arts organizations to reduce insurance costs;
- Fort Sackville was established in 1749 on the same site as the Scott Manor House, which was constructed 30 years later. A portion of the Pissiquid Trail leading to Windsor passed through this site. Moirs Mill, the Fish Hatchery and Paper Mill Lake are all testament to the story of Bedford as one of the first industrial areas of the region. These sites should be part of cultural landscapes in the Bedford area and invite municipal programs and policies to interpret and protect the industrial and recreational heritage of these areas;
- implement idea to create a Heritage Conservation District in "Olde Bedford," though the boundary should extend to First Avenue, "Irishtown" (area around Scott Manor House), Fish Hatchery Park and several other areas; and
- 10 Mile House is a very important heritage resource but not registered as a heritage property.

CONNECTION

- the municipality can be a more proactive partner in helping to achieve reliable and stable operating grants, capital grants for building maintenance and repair, help in attracting volunteers and help with communications and marketing;
- the municipal Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO is a very helpful resource for supporting initiatives and events and this support should grow;
- heritage organizations seek support in connecting with Mi'kmaq communities as well as cultural communities and the municipality could support this connection and relationship building;
- there should be public awareness in the area of the opportunities available through heritage registration and heritage conservation districts; and
- there should be more money directed towards heritage and heritage programming.

CELEBRATION

- place names are eroding with new development and should be protected through signage. For example, Bedford Highway has a great deal of historical significance and the municipality has just committed to expressing that through signs placed to identify neighbourhoods along the Bedford Highway including Rockingham, Birch Cove, Kearney Lake and others;
- consider more interpretation signage in public parks and not just specifically at historical sites;
- heritage sites and museums can fill social programming needs through gatherings and events that address social isolation and bring people together;
- focus new investments on continuing to use technology to tell stories to create more accessible experiences within the municipality;
- create an easily accessible website dedicated to festivals and events in the region and creating a platform;
- continue to acknowledge and celebrate heritage groups and projects through heritage awards; and
- municipal facilities, including recreation centres, should include heritage programs and activities for community gatherings where diverse cultural groups can share common experiences.

ACCESS

- consider streamlining the grants process. Much of the time of volunteers and board members is spent applying for grants and funding through three levels of government. Funding applications are onerous and take time away from programming;
- admissions fees cover only a portion of operating expenses and heritage organizations museums and sites rely heavily on grants and funding;
- it is difficult to determine who to contact at the municipality. Consider assigning program navigators to community groups;
- consider accessibility when developing heritage events and making investments;
- the municipality could support heritage organizations in creating a travelling heritage museum that could be transported and installed in different venues around the region;
- community and volunteer-led heritage organizations find it difficult to keep up with the increasing professionalization standards in the province;
- recipients of interim museum program funding cannot receive further grants from the municipal Community Grants Program;
- consider multi-year grant applications for property tax exemptions, particularly for organizations operating out of municipal heritage assets; and
- requirement for property ownership and volunteer capacity is a barrier to receiving museum grants.

WHAT WE HEARD: ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

ENGAGEMENT & PROJECT PATH

- Arts and culture organizations, whether professional or not, often feel heavily engaged with little in the way of results from that engagement;
- This sector relies heavily on funding, venues and support from three levels of government. Coordination between levels of government on identifying needs and revisiting past engagement results should be a first step in future projects and programs; and
- In such a varied community, more effort should be placed on identifying a wide range of stakeholders and ensuring a broad section of the community is engaged.

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- *Halifax Higher Education Partnership Arts and Culture sub-committee Engagement Report (2018)*

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Special Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (SACAC) 2014
- Arts Halifax 2015-2017

STEWARDSHIP

- consider increasing funding levels for grant programs to achieve levels consistent with the national averages for similarly-sized Canadian municipalities consistent with the recommendations of the Special Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (2014);
- consider the development of a multi-year funding program for operating assistance to professional arts organizations;
- consider centralizing all funding decisions pertaining to professional arts in the municipality under a single municipal unit (grants to professional arts organizations, tax relief, capital and small capital grants) with commensurate transfer of funding from existing programs;
- develop a gap analysis for arts and cultural facilities to determine priorities for upgrade, replacements and new facility construction further to the development of a cultural facilities masterplan for the municipality; and
- continue to consider ways in which the municipality might adopt an arms-length arts council model, or similar, (e.g. ArtsNovaScotia) as the governance and administration model for provision of funding to the professional arts sector.

CONNECTION

- the municipality could support broadening the reach of the arts and culture community in the area of event ticket sales. Should tickets not sell out, is there some way the municipality could support the cost of those unsold tickets so that tickets could be given away as a means of encouraging involvement; and
- work to develop formal links with and further its engagement activities with current and emerging youth networks including HRCE arts-in-school programs in order to cultivate artistic interest in youth and a framework to develop youth audiences for local arts and cultural organizations.

CELEBRATION

- consider makerspaces at other institutions, as well as more publicly accessible spaces to do any sort of work (like the spaces available at libraries);
- consider ways in which the municipality can, through its practices, promote the work of local artists by:
  - ensuring all gifts from the municipality are made by local artists/artisans and considering a 'buy local' policy for artistic product;
  - using local music in municipal campaigns, as 'hold music,' etc; and
  - naming streets and places after significant artists and culturally important events/people.
- consider ways in which the Office of the Mayor might develop formal recognition programs to celebrate the contribution of the arts to the quality of life in the municipality (e.g. the municipal Poet Laureate Program); and
- consider ways in which the municipality can identify opportunities to incorporate the diversity of the municipality's arts and cultural offerings into marketing and promotional activities that support tourism, business and recreation sectors.

ACCESS

- support creation of a mobile gallery, perhaps on buses, showcasing artwork and local artists;
- mentorship might be offered to artists applying for grants, or a forum organized for young artists to meet and work on their applications together;
- consider the development of grants programs for individual artists; programs currently only accessible to registered not-for-profit professional arts organizations;
- consider the establishment of a new and easy-to-navigate municipal arts website that will include:
  - information regarding funding programs;
  - links to applications, forms and guidelines;
  - information about artist opportunities within the Halifax region;
  - a comprehensive, centralized online events calendar; and
  - a gallery of the municipality's public art collection.

WHAT WE HEARD: FOURTH ROUND ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

- consider developing a clear lead for CHPP implementation. Municipal staff need to ensure the plan is resourced if it is to deliver results;
- consider making access to Africville a priority, since it has been often identified multiple times in previous engagement sessions;
- consider improving transit services to ANS communities. Improved transit can be beneficial for both residents and tourism;
- Grand Council should be notified about engagements/consultations first, before Band Councils, as protocol. Same with Friendship Accord – Grand Council should review and provide input first;
- the municipality should consider looking for ways to support businesses' awareness of tax exemptions. This could involve the Business Improvement Districts, the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations/government bodies;
- consider a grant program review to expand/improve outreach. This item was also a Cornwallis Task Force recommendation;
- consider working on a social procurement strategy. Examples of this are already underway, including Cogswell, which has a social-benefit agreement with representation from the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre;
- consider tax and development incentives for heritage properties in Downtown Halifax and Dartmouth;
- consider wayfinding, historical signage and connecting communities to heritage initiatives in the north end; and
- consider connecting to heritage organizations for downtown Halifax and Dartmouth heritage conservation districts.

FOURTH ROUND COMMUNITIES—ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS ENGAGED

- Sipekne'katik Band Council
- Acadia Band Council
- Millbrook Band Council
- Mi'kmaw Grand Council members from Sipekn'ekatik District
- Assembly of Mi'kmaw Chiefs
- Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO)
- Tripartite Committee on Culture and Heritage
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre
- NS Decade for People of African Descent (NSPAD)
- Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute (DBDLI)
- HRM Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Regional Business Improvement District directors

SURVEY RESPONSES:

"Where is the Municipal Archaeological Management Plan? Where is the virtual and physical civic museum required by the Cornwallis Task Force Report?"

"Museums and heritage... There is so much potential for growth and accessibility, but a large lack of funding and support to achieve this."

"Work with newcomer/immigrant communities to showcase their culture in HRM facilities or at park events, i.e. the Arabic or African communities in Clayton Park"

"Once a CHPP Accessibility Standard has been set, apply it as a condition to all organizations."

"Funding levels for grants to artist programs need to be increased (both operating assistance and project)."

"More engagement with diverse, local communities and grassroots leaders/cultural memory holders, not just professional consultants!"

"Community-based events held in culturally significant spaces such as parks, museums and historic sites. The HRM should improve funding for the organizations which host programs and events in such facilities."