

VISION STATEMENT

The Halifax Common will continue to be a vital civic element of Halifax, inclusive and welcoming to people of all abilities and diverse backgrounds. It is distinguished by a wide range of public uses and open spaces that contribute to a shared sense of identity and serve the collective well-being of the people of Halifax. It is flexible and adaptable, continuously evolving to meet the needs of today and a changing future.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

COHERENT

Halifax Common is understood as one distinct place by being integrated, legible and orderly.

From hospital to playground, the Common should be understood as belonging to one cohesive place, within the original boundary. All the open spaces should feel connected and integrated within a rational structure that ties the Common together. Visitors should feel an inviting and clear sense of a place, available for the good of all.

CONNECTED

The Halifax Common links people and places through active mobility choices.

Links to the surrounding Halifax region and an internal mobility network connect people with their destinations in a way that creates more vibrant, livable and walkable neighbourhoods, while adding to the vitality of the Common.

The internal network should be accessible, enjoyable and efficient, realizing the recreational potential of mobility for all and maximizing the useable green spaces between routes.

GREEN

Park and open spaces are supported by infrastructure that incorporates sustainable and resilient living systems and processes.

There are numerous ecological services offered by natural infrastructure, including habitat creation, aesthetics, microclimate moderation, reducing runoff, and perhaps most important, preserving the quantity of vegetation of the Common.

"Green" options for management and design should be favoured over mechanical or structural options whenever feasible, working in concert with other landscape types (horticultural gardens, playscapes, heritage sites) to form an integrated system.

ENDURING

The heritage of the Common is safeguarded for future generations to enjoy.

Celebrating the heritage of the Common is the groundwork for protecting its future, but it cannot be frozen in the past. Into the future, as conditions and circumstances change, the Common can continue to evolve as an open space, respectfully integrating new activities and functions that are appropriate for each subsequent generation.

DIVERSE

The variety of activities, character and functions reflect the diverse needs of the community.

A diversified Halifax Common means broadening the notion of recreation and leisure to include a greater range of activities, a mix of passive and active, and a balance of structured and unstructured.

From the Victoria Park to the North Common, the look and feel of open spaces varies greatly, and the range of distinct types and atmospheres is a strength to be built upon.

INCLUSIVE

The Halifax Common's public spaces are for the enjoyment of everyone.

Providing equitable access to public space, recreation and leisure is key to sustaining a healthy community. Public spaces bring opportunities to interact among community, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding among people who might not otherwise interact. It is also important to recognize that for some individuals and families, public spaces like the Halifax Common are the only means they have to enjoy nature and fresh air, and participate in leisure and recreation pursuits.

PARTICIPATORY

The community is engaged in the planning, care and animation of the public spaces on the Common.

The Halifax Common is more than a typical municipal park. For many reasons, it is a vitally important place, and diverse groups have a stake in its future.

Through innovative new relationships and partnerships, stewardship groups and other citizens can play a vital role in the planning, care and animation of the open spaces on the Common.

OPEN

Free and accessible open space is safeguarded.

Unencumbered open space should be safeguarded so there will always be areas that are free and accessible for anyone to enjoy, at any time, alongside those limited open spaces that have formal booking protocols.

VERSATILE

Public spaces are efficient, adaptable and multi-functional.

A flexible and adaptable public space network should reflect the diverse needs of the community and support multiple uses, to see the Common achieve its full potential, with maximum public benefit. Spaces can be capable of adjustment to different circumstances or situations. While certain recreation functions may require dedicated space, the preference is for space that can serve multiple functions.

THEMATIC GOALS



CHARACTER & IDENTITY

To strengthen the shared sense of place, protect the unique character and foster a cohesive identity, that will establish unified meaning throughout the Common.



MOVEMENT & LINKAGES

To improve the mobility network with a focus on accessible, comfortable and convenient connections that encourage more active modes of transportation throughout the Common.



LEISURE & RECREATION

To broaden the range of leisure and recreation spaces and activities, to ensure more people can enjoy a greater diversity of experiences on the Common.



PUBLIC LIFE

To enrich public life, both in the observable ways in which people use Common public spaces, and in how those spaces are planned, implemented and maintained.



HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

To support human health and well-being with a sustainable open space system that minimizes environmental impacts and improves resilience to climate change.