



DHBC ANNUAL REPORT 2004 – 2005

Mission Statement

The Downtown Halifax Business Commission exists to make Downtown Halifax a great place to live work and play through improving business conditions, promoting economic development, supporting the common business interests, and creating a positive image.

ADVOCACY

The Downtown Halifax Business Commission (DHBC) represents the voices and opinions of over 1,800 individual business members within the Downtown core. These members range from small entrepreneurs to large multinational firms. All have a vested interest in the economic prosperity of the Downtown core. Ensuring that these members have a voice in critical issues that affect the Downtown will remain a priority of the DHBC.

Barrington Street Revitalization

In 2001, the DHBC and HRM began a signature project focusing on the physical and economic revitalization of Barrington Street. The completed first phase of a study entitled "Barrington Street Revitalization District" began background work on establishing a legislative framework for development of the street and the identification of short and long-term initiatives to jump-start investment and property development. The report was completed by Ekistics Planning & Design and approved by Council. In the spring of 2004 the DHBC placed a representative on a subcommittee of the Heritage Advisory Committee.



The committee has worked with various stakeholders over the past 12 months to draft a new plan for Barrington Street, which will be the catalyst for the area's rejuvenation. It is the committee's hope that in the fall of 2005 HRM Council will ratify the plan and form the Barrington Street Historic District.

Planning and Design Exchange

The DHBC is one of the founding bodies of the Planning and Design Exchange – a group dedicated to making discussion of planning and design more accessible to the public of HRM. It is hoped that this group will serve to educate, promote and advocate for better design, particularly in the Downtown core. Other groups involved in this project are Dalhousie University, HRM, the Province, and the Greater Halifax Partnership.

New Development

Although the DHBC has no regulatory role in approving development in the Downtown core, the organization has continued to work with developers, offering advice and feedback on their proposed designs. In the past year the DHBC communicated with the developers of the Midtown Hotel, Texpark Development, and Salter's Gate (the Brewery Development).

REVENUE	ANNUAL BUDGET	
	2005/06 Budget	2004/05 Actual*
Members Levy	\$489,172	\$467,584
Event Sponsorship Revenue	\$ 40,000	\$ 32,603
Program Revenue	\$ 98,390	\$ 86,093
Curbside Waste Program	\$ 21,700	\$ 22,822
Interest	\$ 2,650	\$ 2,669
Merchandising	\$ ---	\$ 279
Miscellaneous	\$ 5,390	\$ 8,713
Total Revenue	\$657,302	\$620,763
OPERATING EXPENSES	2005/06 Budget	
	2005/06 Budget	2004/05 Actual*
Administration	\$125,065	\$127,141
Employee Wages & Benefits	\$214,340	\$191,685
Physical & Social Develop.	\$ 49,200	\$ 47,887
Vehicular & Pedestrian Serv.	\$ 46,205	\$ 47,419
Promotions & Marketing	\$152,400	\$130,478
Events	\$ 49,700	\$ 44,041
Economic Development	\$ 19,000	\$ 12,834
Curbside Program	\$ 17,965	\$ 15,278
Merchandise	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,136
Total Expenditures	\$675,375	\$618,899
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$18,074)	\$ 1,864

*based on audited Financial Statements March 31, 2005

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2004/2005

Executive

Trevor, Green, Chair
Suzanne Saul, Vice Chair
Sue MacMillan, Secretary/Treasurer
Colin Campbell, Member at Large
Greg Taylor, Past Chair

Stuart Blair, Chris Brown, Bill Campbell, Wendy Friedman, Jacqueline Hamilton, Susan Kidney, Denise McDonald and Councillor Sue Uteck

DHBC STAFF

Paul MacKinnon
Executive Director

Kimberly Dossett
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The Voice for Downtown

When there are issues that affect our members, the DHBC is the advocacy group who take it upon themselves to lobby government and other public or private stakeholders. The DHBC spoke out on a number of issues this year. Some of the key ones were: the relocation of the Halifax Mooseheads to the Halifax Forum; the elimination of the Business Occupancy Tax; the need for greater snow removal services and the raising of parking meter rates.

BEAUTIFICATION

The DHBC plays a role in planning, advocating for, and undertaking maintenance and beautification efforts.

Capital District Task Force

The DHBC is a stakeholder on the Capital District Task Force and continues to provide a voice for Downtown Halifax in the effort to strengthen the Municipality's urban core. The DHBC played an integral role in establishing the vision and guiding plan for the Capital District and will continue to ensure that the best interests of Downtown Halifax are met through its initiatives.

Curbside Collection Service

The Curbside Waste Management program is the first totally user-pay service in North America and works as a cost-effective means for businesses to pay for collection of just the garbage they generate. This outstanding service is available to all businesses, institutions, and apartment complexes, (with more than six units), in the greater Halifax region. The program sells garbage, recyclable and organic tags and collection takes place once a week.

Enviro Team

The Downtown Halifax Business Commission hires ten students to act as ambassadors in the Downtown during June, July and August. The Enviro Team's responsibilities include maintaining and enhancing the Downtown sidewalks by removing graffiti and posters and painting public realm items



such as garbage cans and lamp posts. The students also serve as a valuable resource for tourists and visitors looking for directions or

wanting advice as well as giving historical tours on Fred the Bus. This program has been extended, on a user-pay basis to Spring Garden.

Clean Sweep

The 10th annual Clean Sweep event was held in June in Grand Parade. Over the last few years, corporate and volunteer involvement has grown and many Downtown businesses have taken part by entering their own teams and issuing challenges to competitors and friends. Over 100 volunteers participate annually in this long-standing DHBC event.

Banners

DHBC manages requests for hanging street banners in the Downtown to promote special events and programs. Last year the East Coast Franklyn Graham Festival, Nova Scotia Tattoo, Neptune Theatre ("Cats"), Art Gallery of Nova Scotia ("Cats"), Children's Wish Foundation and Metro United Way all used the Banner program to promote their activities/events to tourists, residents, and visitors in the Downtown and Spring Garden Road area.

Cooperative Maintenance Program

DHBC partners with HRM Capital District and Waterfront Development Corporation to ensure that the maintenance of Downtown is coordinated and maximized given limited resources. This service gets enhanced every year, as the need for greater maintenance in the Downtown increases.

Kiosks

In an attempt to keep posterage to a minimum, the DHBC constructed 5 poster kiosks and 10 pole collars throughout the Downtown core. These public bulletin boards are cleaned twice monthly. During the summer months, the Enviro Team aggressively removes posters from utility poles where posterage is not legal.

MARKETING AND EVENTS

The DHBC promotes the Downtown core as a place to work, shop, dine, be entertained, and reside. Our marketing programs will promote existing businesses, as well as promote the area as a place for location, making it attractive for developers, as well as business occupants. The DHBC also works with event coordinators to ensure that all events held in the Downtown core are successful.

FRED - "Free Rides Everywhere Downtown"

The DHBC, in partnership with Metro Transit and other sponsors, runs the FRED (Free Rides Everywhere Downtown) program. This free shuttle makes getting around in Downtown Halifax easy. From June to September, FRED shuttled 40,000 Haligonians and visitors (many of them cruise ship passengers) throughout the Downtown — 7 days a week, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Enviro Team students ride along with FRED, providing commentary on historical highlights in the Downtown and other visitor information as well as recording rider counts for the season.

Holiday Parade of Lights

The Downtown Halifax Business Commission held the 9th Annual Chronicle Herald Holiday Parade of Lights November 20, 2004. It continues to be the largest Parade in HRM, regularly drawing in excess of 70,000 people to the event. The Parade included approximately 45 entries.

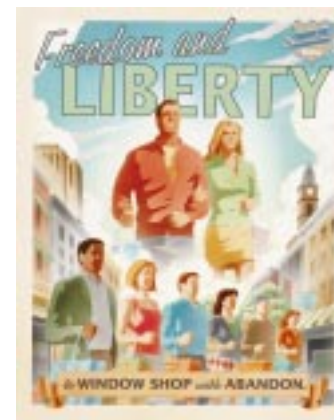


Event Promotion

2004 saw many significant events in the Downtown, including the Halifax International Buskers Festival, Shakespeare by the Sea, Atlantic Jazz Festival, Atlantic Film Festival/Al Fresco Film Series, Acadien Congres, Bluenose International Marathon, Tall Ships, as well as the most successful season in Mooseheads hockey history. The DHBC coordinates with the event organizers to assist in promoting the events, and ensuring maximum resulting spin-off for DHBC members. The DHBC was also a sponsor of Buskers Festival and the Joseph Howe Initiative.

Advertising Campaign

In the spring of 2004, the DHBC officially launched a brand new advertising campaign. This was created by the Marketing Committee, with award-winning Extreme Group, and will see an extensive 3 year campaign which utilizes radio, television, and print media to promote the Downtown to area residents. The campaign will be accompanied by marketing research to measure the



effectiveness of the campaign, in changing residents' perceptions about the downtown as a place to shop.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Communication internally with 1,800 members as well as external communication to the community remains a priority to the DHBC.

Downtown Update/Quarterly Newsletter/Website

These communications give the DHBC membership an in-depth look at what is currently happening in the Downtown. Features include inside information on planning, articles on our membership and details on events in the Downtown. In the Fall of 2004 the DHBC launched a brand new website - www.downtownhalifax.ns.ca, geared towards improved communication with members as well as promotion of the area.

Online DHBC directory

In order to help members communicate with one another, as well as to increase business-to-business transactions, the DHBC created an online directory (which is also available in hard copy for members who wish it), which was launched in the winter of 2005.

Annual Carmichael Lecture

The DHBC hosted the 4th Annual Carmichael Lecture in January 2005. This year's inspirational speaker was Anthony Tung, former New York City Landmarks Commissioner, and author of the acclaimed book, "Preserving the World's Great Cities". Mr. Tung spent 5 days in Halifax, giving a supplementary public lecture, as well as a private talk for Halifax Regional Municipality Council and Staff. Mr. Tung joins a line of distinguished Carmichael alumni, including Phyllis Lambert, Roberta Brandes Gratz and Glen Murray.

Joint Initiatives

DHBC continues a strong relationship with the other business commissions, representing Spring Garden, Downtown Dartmouth and Quinpool Road. The Directors meet on a regular basis, and the business commissions partner on a number of cooperative projects.



SEVEN THINGS TO WATCH FOR IN THE UPCOMING YEAR

In the spirit of Nostradamus, or the Great Criswell, here are, in no particular order, seven things for Downtown aficionados to keep their eyes on over the next 12 months:

SEAWALL DEVELOPMENT

If anyone has ever been to the Distillery District in Toronto, or the Custard Factory in Birmingham, England, or any other place where old warehouses have sprung to life as centres for art and culture, you will see the potential of the space around Pier 21. The area is already home to many cultural groups, and will soon be joined by NSCAD University and Garrison Brewery (making beer is an art, isn't it?). Over the next several years, the Seawall project promises to be a great neighborhood addition to Downtown.

TEXPARK

United Gulf's development (euphemistically known as "The Twisted Sisters") will spark quite a debate in the public eye, as well as in the press and at Council as the issues of height and design continue to be a hot button. Will the project go forward? Stay tuned....

BARRINGTON STREET

Is anyone sick of hearing about pie-in-the-sky ways to fix Barrington Street? Certainly the merchants are, who have been subjected to DHBC and HRM studies that have analyzed the street to death since the 1980s. Finally a concrete plan of revitalization is coming forward to HRM Council in the fall of 2005. The plan will see new money injected into the street, marketing initiatives, and development guidelines. Barrington has come a long way in the past ten years, but it is our hope that over the next several years, Barrington Street will again become the crown jewel of the city.

The Urban Thinker

Paul MacKinnon



RETAIL RECRUITMENT

Who is responsible to bring a Pottery Barn to Downtown? How do we attract the next entrepreneur to open a fabulous boutique Downtown? In the past no one has used a cohesive strategy to lure business here. The right business mix is too important to allow it to happen haphazardly. So the DHBC, this spring, is launching its first ever retail recruitment information package and we will be targeting specific retailers to make Downtown their home. It is time that Canada's best kept secret was no longer kept.

METRO CENTRE / CONVENTION CENTRE

A feasibility study is being undertaken to determine the costs and benefits of building a new convention centre and larger Metro Centre. It has been surmised that, despite the success we've had attracting events, we are missing out by not having better facilities. Other Downtown projects vying for funds, and the public's attention are a new main branch of the library and a performing arts centre.

THE JUNOS

The likes of Avril Lavigne, Barenaked Ladies, David Usher, Sarah McLaughlin, and others of the Canadian music elite will grace the stage at the Metro Centre for the 35th annual Juno awards. Just ask Saint John's or Winnipeg about the economic spinoff of this event!

SKATING RINK IN GRAND PARADE

The dream isn't dead yet. HRM is working on a year round management plan for the Grand Parade. The DHBC will be working with the consultants to make the case for an annual January - April skating rink in front of City Hall.

The Downtown Halifax Business Commission (DHBC) is pleased to offer these and other programs and events which are made possible by the generous and continued support of our members and through both sponsorship and volunteers.

FRED Rides Again

Our good friend FRED (Free-Rides-Everywhere-Downtown) will wait until July 1st before returning to the streets of Downtown. The late start means FRED will continue to run daily until the end of October to accommodate the rush of visitors that arrive at the end of each summer. FRED shuttles locals and visitors alike around Downtown Halifax from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. This convenient, free shuttle service is an essential link in our vibrant Downtown.

From Pier 21 Fred runs along Lower Water Street to Ferry Boat Lane, past Historic Properties to the Casino. FRED then heads up to Barrington Street to Spring Garden Road to Brunswick and then up Sackville Street past the Citadel. FRED turns left on South Park Street past the Public Gardens and then down Spring Garden Road to Barrington Street. FRED follows Barrington Street until Cornwallis Park and turns passing the Superstore, Via Rail Station and the Westin before proceeding back to Pier 21.

Thanks to FRED partner, Metro Transit and to FRED supporters, the Casino and the Casino Nova Scotia Hotel, Scotia Square, Barrington Place Shops, Parks Canada (Halifax Citadel), Spring Garden Area Business Association, HFX The Daily News and ATV.

Out To Lunch - Summer Music Series

For your lunch time listening pleasure the DHBC will be hosting five lunch time concerts throughout June and July on Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. For more details check your local newspaper entertainment listings or visit www.downtownhalifax.ns.ca.

Clean Sweep

Dedicated citizens will once again take to the streets in an ongoing effort to address the litter problem in the Downtown. For 11 years, the event has helped spruce up the city for the busy summer season and has offered a great experience for participants.

Keep an eye out for volunteers and our new 2005 Enviro Team from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 2.

Enviro Team

A cleaner Downtown is on the way! The ten member Enviro Team will hit the streets the first week of June when they join in on the Clean Sweep event. The team acts as Downtown ambassadors and clean-up crew throughout the summer. Armed with brooms and dustpans, the Enviro Team cleans over 75 blocks on a daily basis.

The Enviro Team works from early June to the end of August and provides necessary additional cleaning services throughout our district. The Enviro Team sweeps sidewalks, removes graffiti and posters, maintains poster collars and kiosks, provides historical commentary on FRED the Bus, and provides assistance and information to visitors on the street level.

Swing Into Summer - July 11

BMO Financial Group, the Royal Canadian Golf Association and the Downtown Halifax Business Commission invite you to *Swing Into Summer* on Monday, July 11 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Put a team of volunteers from your office into this year's Downtown BBQ event and see who really is the best on the grill or just join us, along with some pro and junior golfers for a fun-filled event that includes: interactive golf games, great prizes, a summer BBQ and live music with Evans and Doherty.

In celebration of the BMO Financial Group Canadian Women's Open July 11-17, 2005.