

NEWS RELEASE

HRM Central Library moves into design phase.

(March 30, 2010) - Regional Council voted this evening in favour of two motions that will allow the Central Library to move forward.

Regional Council approved a funding strategy to finance HRM's portion of the cost to build the Central Library. Core funding has already been committed by the federal government through the Build Canada fund in the amount of \$18.3 million, and the government of Nova Scotia in the amount of \$13 million. HRM's funding contribution is \$23.7 million. Under the funding strategy, HRM's portion of the Central Library project will be primarily generated through the sale of lands adjacent to the Central Library site - parking lots on Queen Street and Clyde Street. Total project funding from all three levels of government is \$55 million.

This evening, Regional Council approved a recommendation to award the tender for Architectural Consulting Services to Fowler Bauld & Mitchell Ltd. - the highest scoring of four proposals reviewed by the selection committee.

"This is a vote of confidence in our downtown," said Mayor Peter Kelly. "It will boost revitalization efforts, increase the commercial tax base and ultimately stimulate growth of the local and regional economy."

Fowler Bauld & Mitchell (FBM) will be the primary point of contact for the project's design phase for staff from HRM and Halifax Public Libraries. They are a well established local architectural firm in practice in Atlantic Canada since 1917 with recent experience in public building architectural consulting including Citadel High School, Dalhousie University's new academic building and the Cobequid Community Health Centre.

The FBM team includes Schmidt Hammer Lassen, a highly regarded European firm with a history of on-time and on-budget delivery. Schmidt Hammer Lassen has designed libraries and public spaces of similar scope in Denmark, the UK, Norway and Sweden.

"With the contribution of other levels of government we have an unprecedented opportunity to build a library that meets the needs of its users and contributes to the vibrancy of the downtown," said Leo McKenna, chair of the board, Halifax Public Libraries. "With Fowler Bauld & Mitchell's emphasis on public and stakeholder consultation combined with a comprehensive design period, we are confident that we will build a central library to take HRM well into the future."

With the contract for architectural design services awarded, an in-depth public consultation and architectural design development process will begin. HRM, Halifax Public Libraries and the architects will immediately begin developing a plan. Details will be shared and implementation will begin this spring.

Visit halifax.ca or halifaxcentrallibrary.ca for more information.

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Contact:

Mayor Peter Kelly
490-4010

Shaune MacKinlay
Public Affairs
490-6531

Marlo MacKay
Halifax Public Libraries
490-5852