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Halifax Regional Council
February 22, 2005

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Betty MacDonald
Betty MacDonald, Director, Governance & Strategic Initiatives

Mike Labrecque
Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., A/Director, Public Works and Transportation

DATE: February 10, 2005

SUBJECT: Extended Transit Service Requests

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council meetings of November 23, item 9.2.(ii), Petition - Express Bus Route from Exit 5 to Downtown Halifax and December 7, item 9.2.2, Petition - Increased Transit Service in Eastern Passage and Cow Bay - Route 60

BACKGROUND

The first petition requested:

“an express bus route during peak hours to Halifax from Tantallon and area”

The second petition requested that Metro Transit:

“increase the frequency of the Route 60 bus service that currently exists in Eastern Passage and increase service in the community of Eastern Passage/Cow Bay to include, but not limited to, all of Cow Bay Road and Dyke Road.”

DISCUSSION

The Proposed Regional Plan that has been recommended to Council relies on an improved and expanded transit network to play a more significant role in managing future trip-making throughout the region.

In both the current and upcoming budget year, transit investment is focussed on overcoming deficiencies within the existing network (primarily insufficient vehicles to handle the number of passengers) as well as creation of the region's first two bus rapid transit routes. A detailed study will also be conducted to develop a strategic plan for rolling out the expansion of the transit network expansion from the Regional Plan approved by Council.

The creation of an express transit route from Exit 5 on Highway 103 to downtown, as described in the first petition, is a recommendation in the proposed regional plan. The timing of this route, and its priority in relation to other transit projects, will be determined in the upcoming strategic plan.

At thirty minute service all day (seven days a week) and hourly service in the evenings, Route 60 meets the minimum services level recommended in the 2002 Metro Transit Strategy. The Regional Plan has determined that extending scheduled service to areas with lower density, such as areas farther out along Cow Bay Road and along Dyke Road, is not a prudent investment. Consideration is being given, however, to alternative types of transit service delivery, which may include systems such as dial-a-bus, shared taxi, or subscription commuter vans. Although street-by-street service in areas such as this is difficult to provide economically, the planned transit system will have better park-and-ride opportunities for commuter traffic generated by these areas.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time. Future initiatives mentioned in this report would be proposed and funded through normal budgeting procedures.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no recommended alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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