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Halifax Regional Council
July 3, 2007

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Jennifer Church, Intergovernmental & Corporate Affairs

DATE: June 27, 2007

SUBJECT: MRIF Prioritization Process

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

As has been recently reported in the media, staff anticipate that details will soon be available regarding additional MRIF (Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund) funding, that was announced in the most recent federal budget.

BACKGROUND

With respect to a process for recommending projects for infrastructure funding, staff have existing Council direction by which to develop a proposal for Council consideration.

- A Stormwater and Wastewater Priority Rating Process was approved by Regional Council February 1, 2005.
- On October 11, 2005, Council approved general infrastructure criteria.
- At the time the general infrastructure criteria was approved, it was agreed that additional layers of criteria would be considered to meet specific program requirements when opportunities come available.
- Additional MRIF criteria were approved October 25, 2005 and includes:
 - 80% of MRIF funding be allocated to rural projects and 20% elsewhere.
 - rural is defined as in the proposed Regional Plan definition for rural and rural commutershed, rural resource and agriculture. Herring Cove and Kinsac were agreed to by council to be considered as rural for the purpose of MRIF criteria consideration.
- On November 22, 2005 Council approved the direction on the projects relative to the 80% rural allocation
 - the motion included the statement that projects that are underway or phased are to be considered as alternatives should the projects (as were outlined) not be accepted.
- On March 28, 2006 - Council motion approved that Halifax Regional Council will respond to any requests for support to MRIF applications indicating that: Halifax Regional Council will not consider, or make a formal resolution, indicating support for any MRIF application other than those already approved by Council.

Most recently, Council was provided an Information Report on May 15, 2007 respecting Federal/Provincial Infrastructure Program Updates.

DISCUSSION

Should any further detail on additional MRIF funding be made available within the coming weeks, at the earliest opportunity staff will bring to Council recommendations that meet the above noted Council direction and any additional program criteria that may be applicable to the funding. In developing a recommendation for Council consideration, staff will utilize the series of Council approved criteria (as noted) as follows:

- projects recommended will be consistent with specific funding program parameters
- 80% of MRIF funding be allocated to rural projects and 20% elsewhere.
- general infrastructure criteria include (as approved):
 - Strategic Importance
 - Risk
 - Fiscal Considerations
 - Capacity
 - Success Likelihood

- for stormwater and wastewater projects, the Stormwater and Wastewater Priority Rating Process will be an additional layer of criteria

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None - information only.

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.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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