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## Item No. 11.1.4

Halifax Regional Council  
September 30, 2008

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English".

**SUBMITTED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

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Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

**DATE:** August 28, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Site Selection for Satellite Transit Garage

### ORIGIN

- 5 year approach to Transit
- Staff evaluation of site options for the new Satellite Transit Garage within the western region to accommodate the Fleet Services operations associated with the planned expansion of Metro Transit Services as part of the 2008/09 Capital Budget.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approve the selection of Ragged Lake Business Park as the site for the new satellite transit garage (Attachment "B" - Site Location).

## **BACKGROUND**

Fleet Services operates 2 transit facilities, the largest is on 200 Ilsley Ave and has a operating range of 185 units. The second facility at 150 Thornhill Drive was purchased to operate and maintain 70 buses. The second location is a temporary centre until a permanent location is up and running. Currently, both facilities are operating above capacity which has caused a number of issues including a decrease in operational efficiencies. Operating these facilities above their operating capacity carries some risks due to the congestion and demand on the system.

HRM's public transit service is in a position of growth. The current fleet size (2007) is 265 units. The operations will grow by 10 Metro Express units and 15 Conventional units for the 2008-2009 Budget year, bringing the fleet to 290 units. Subject to planned funding being approved, it is projected that in 10 years the fleet could be 336 units. Therefore, there is a requirement for an additional facility capable and sized to accommodate the operations and repairs for 150 vehicles.

Current Metro Transit facilities are all located in Burnside, but there is a need for a Metro Transit operations/maintenance centre in the Halifax area. The facility should be located in the general area of Western Halifax, to minimize travel time to scheduled routes. That area would reduce deadhead distances that reduce the efficiency of Transit Operations. Also, a Halifax location will increase reliability of service by reducing the dependancy on the two harbour bridges to deadhead buses in and out of service. There will also be a savings in bridge tolls paid by deadheading buses.

The facility will be designed to LEED standards to accommodate operators, mechanics, service personnel and office staff. The facility will be required to meet all occupational health and safety standards. It will also be designed to supply a safe and secure area to park the vehicles owned by HRM.

- a. The facility will be set up to cover the day to day requirements of the operation for servicing vehicles, running repairs, preventative maintenance repairs. The facility will also be responsible for preparing the vehicles for daily service. The facility will be open 24/7 per week.
- b. The facility will not be responsible for major component rebuilding, major accident repair, bus rebuild, full bus painting. These functions will remain at 200 Ilsley Ave.
- c. The facility will accommodate buses of all designs, including Access a Bus, 60 Foot Articulated Buses, 40 Foot Urban transit buses, Service vehicles (cars and trucks).
- d. The facility will minimize environmental impacts such as noise, leaks, spills and exhaust emissions into the atmosphere or to the detriment of the commercial or residential neighbours.

- e. The facility will take into consideration the requirement of dealing with future use of alternate fuels, different configuration or size of vehicles, biodiesel, diesel/electric, etc.
- f. The facility will be designed and sited to minimize operating costs and maximize efficiency.

In preliminary research, staff have determined that the general sizing of the new facility should be calculated with a base requirement as follows (measured in square feet)

• Indoor bus storage	81,000
• 15 Maintenance bays`	25,800
• Bus wash & Service lane	4,800
• Body maintenance	3,600
• Operations/ driver support	7,500
• Parts/build maint/lunch rooms	8,000
Total	130,700

Exterior bus parking would be required for 120 - 135 bus storage. The balance of 15-30 units would be stored in the maintenance areas of the building. Therefore, a preliminary review would suggest a total site requirement of approximately 10.6 acres.

## **DISCUSSION**

Staff evaluated HRM owned property within the western region that had at least 12 acres of available land and were within close proximity to a major route. The following four possible sites for the new garage were identified:

1. Otter Lake
1. Ragged Lake Business Park
2. Bayne Street - MacIntosh Depot
3. Cowie Hill

The sites were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Site Accessibility/ Level of Service
- Sewer & Water Accessibility
- Natural Environment Impacts
- Community Impacts
- Traffic Implications
- Planning Implications
- Timing - based on an open date of April 10, 2010
- Deadhead Savings

Attached a Appendix “A” is a spreadsheet comparing the four sites against these criteria.

Based on the evaluation criteria, Ragged Lake Business Park is the preferred site as it is the only one to meet all of the criteria. Ragged Lake Business Park is positioned to allow Metro Transit meet the service needs of the growing surrounding communities from an industrial setting. Two of the key criteria considered is timing of the project and the deadhead savings for the new location.

Access to this site is currently limited to one point of entry and exit. In preliminary discussions with the province, staff believe an emergency egress can be established from Ragged Lake Industrial Park to the 103 off ramp allowing buses to exit the park if a major accident occurred at the intersection of Prospect Road and the St. Margaret’s Bay Road.

Once the site is determined, the following steps can move forward to ensure the project can stay on schedule for a spring 2010 opening:

- Program details including a determination as to whether the construction process would be a design and build or a design-build
- Consultations phase (mainly for site other than Ragged Lake)
- Tender for Design and/or Design-Build project

As all sites considered were HRM owned, an indicative land cost was used for evaluation only to compare location and the land would simply be removed from current inventory for the garage. As more detailed costing for the garage is determined, staff intend to recommend a contribution be made to the Business Park Program to offset lost revenue. This will be done as part of the 2009/2010 or 2010/2011 Business Plan and Budget.

### **HRM BUSINESS PARK FUNCTIONAL PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

The HRM Business Parks Functional Plan for Bayers Lake and Ragged Lake Business Parks states that Ragged Lake is intended for future growth following the priority build out of Bayers. The Satellite Garage at Ragged Lake would be a good fit with existing park companies and tenants, and a stimulus for growth. The Functional Plan also suggest that the construction of an overpass on Highway 103 and a connector road between Bayers Lake and Ragged Lake Parks should occur when development momentum in Ragged Lake is sufficient, and land sales can underwrite the cost of construction.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The decision on site selection has no immediate impact on the 2008/09 Operating or Capital Budgets. The site selection decision will have a future impact on:

- a. The overall Capital Cost of the Satellite Garage and;
- b. Revenue through lot sales at the Ragged Lake Industrial Park.

Once a more detailed costing for the garage is determined, staff intend to recommend a contribution be made to the Business Park Reserve Q121 to offset lost revenue due to HRM's usage of saleable land. This will be done as part of the 2009/2010 or 2010/2011 Business Plan and Budget.

### **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**

1. Council may choose not to build a satellite garage. This is not recommended as to do so would mean that Metro Transit could not proceed with the planned expanded services approved by Council.
2. Council could instruct staff to search for an alternate site either inside or outside HRM's current inventory of land. If Council picks an alternate site, the project time line will be delayed, delaying the launch of service expansion.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

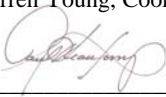
Attachment "A" - Site Selection for New Satellite Garage

Attachment "B" - Map of proposed site

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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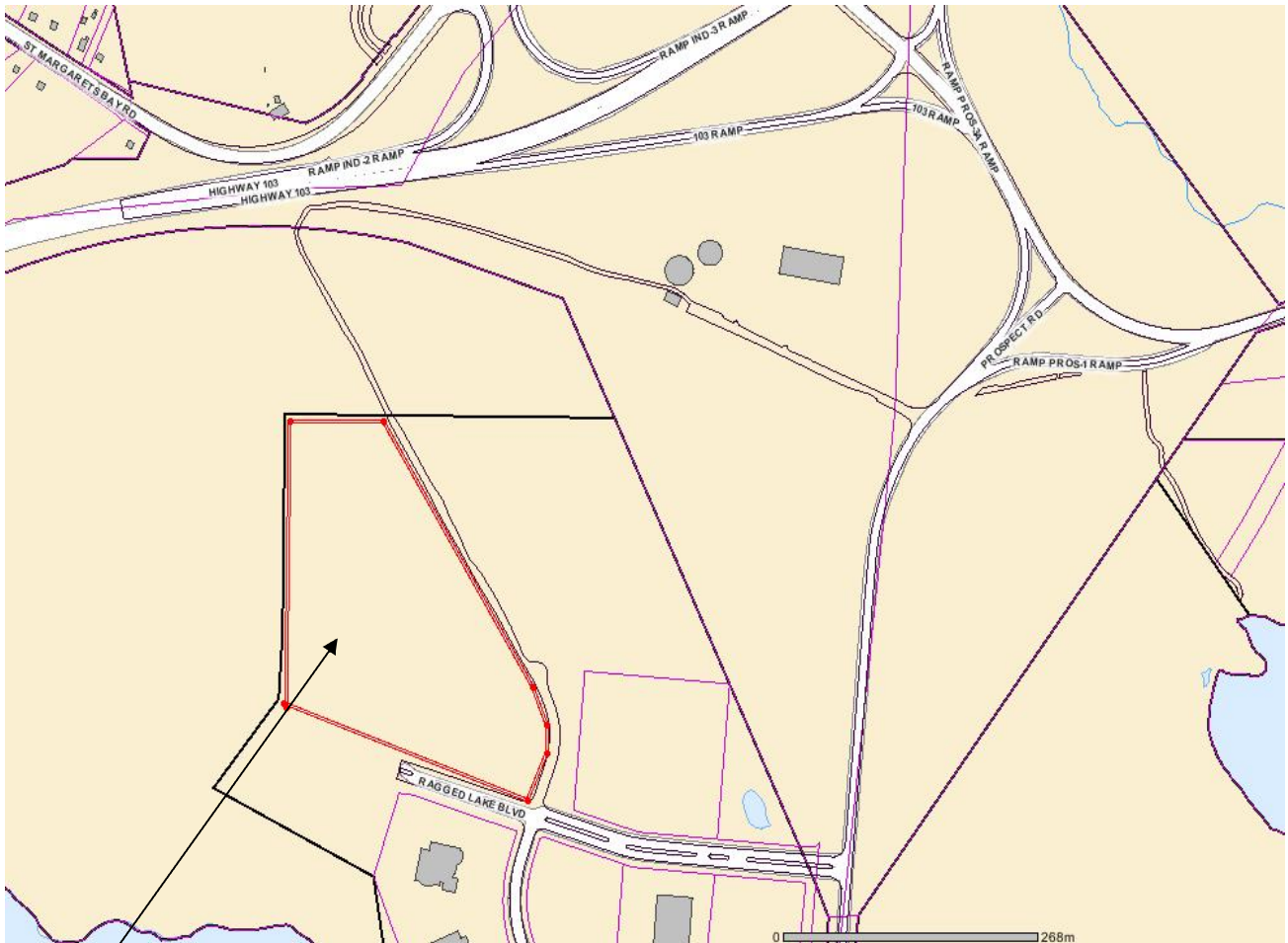
## Attachment "A"

### Site Selection for New Satellite Garage

Criteria	Otter Lake	Ragged Lake	MacIntosh St	Cowie Hill (Water Commission Land)
Site Accessibility/ level of service	Access ramps from both directions already exist. There is no deadhead savings from this location but allows Metro Transit to have buses located on both sides of the bridge. Currently, if the bridges are closed buses must drive around the basin to service the area.	Single lane access from Prospect Rd. Traffic signal would need to be installed at entrance to Ragged Lake Business Park. Congestions on Prospect Rd and the Bay Rd could delay buses trying to reach the 103.	Not a large enough parcel of land after street re-align is completed. Would require splitting site on opposite sides of the road.	Not a large enough parcel (8 acres) once split from the current Water Commission infrastructure and allowing for a road right-of-way for Cowie Hill to be extended.
Sewer & Water available	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Natural Environment Impacts	This site is in its natural state. Large rock bed that would require a great deal of blasting.	This site has been prepped for development. The site does not infringe on the Wetlands or the Watershed Boundaries near the Ragged Lake Industrial Park.	This site is currently home to Municipal Operations Depot and the Sign Shop	This site for the most part is in its natural state.
Community Impacts	The surround lands are all HRM.	Within the business park, compatible light industrial component.	There are a few homes within the area that would be required to assemble the land	Public Consultation would be required as there is nearby residential
Traffic Implications	None, access ramps already exist.	Congestion at Prospect Rd. Traffic Signals would be required. Adding an emergency lane/ramp to the 103 would help to ensure buses could be out even if a major accident occurred at Bay & Prospect Rd.	Given the existing road network, delays would be likely trying to get onto Lady Hammond Rd.	Traffic lights would be required at Cowie Hill & the Connector road to allow for the volume of traffic turning left heading to Northwest Arm Dr.
Planning Implications	The Western Common Conceptual Land Use Plan shows a small business park and a large natural park. The business park did not include plans to incorporate any light industrial buildings.	Zoned industrial (I-3)	Staff have conducted in-house planning for this are in conjunction with the port authority. After transportation road alignments, the conceptual plan does not allow for a large enough parcel to fit the garage.	Re-zoning would be required, current zoned RDD for residential Development District
Timing: Can the project be completed by April 2010 using this site?	Yes	Yes	No, the current depot would need to be relocated first before starting the garage.	No, a public consultation would be required on the re-zoning pushing it out past the project timeline
Deadhead (Km's)	0.00	(110000.00)	(183700.00)	(120000.00)
Annual Savings (\$'s)	0.00	(405900.00)	(677853.00)	(442800.00)
Savings valued over 10 yrs \$3.69 /km	0.00	(4059000.00)	(6778530.00)	(4428000.00)
Access Road Indicative costs \$1000/Linear Foot	\$1,640,417	\$2,788,708	\$0	\$1,968,500
Traffic Light Costs	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Indicative Land Cost 15 acres	\$3-5 /Sq. Ft. \$2,613,600	\$3-5 /Sq. Ft. \$2,613,600	\$15-20 /Sq. Ft. \$13,068,000	\$3-5 /Sq. Ft. \$2,613,600
Site Prep Costs	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000
Demolition & environmental impacts of			\$5,000,000	
Overall Site Costs	\$7,404,017	\$2,993,308	\$12,939,470	\$2,304,100

## Attachment “B”

### Site Location



**Proposed  
Site**