

Item No. 2
Halifax Regional Council
June 24, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by Director
Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning & Infrastructure

DATE: April 29, 2014

SUBJECT: Community Engagement in Support of Traffic Improvements Budget

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

The approved 2014-15 Project Budget for Traffic Improvements.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Clause 79 (1) (aa) of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter provides that Council may expend money required by the Municipality for streets, culverts, retaining walls, sidewalks, curbs and gutters. The Motor Vehicle Act (section 90) allows the Traffic Authority to mark lanes on a street and control their use.

BACKGROUND

The HRM Community Engagement Strategy states that “Community engagement is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people to enact positive action. It includes information sharing, consultation, and active involvement in decision making.” The Traffic Improvements section of the approved 2014-15 Project Budget contains a number of projects related to transportation ranging from transportation demand management programs to active transportation, road projects and traffic signals. Many of these projects flow from Functional Plans that involve extensive public engagement as part of their development. Some of these projects require additional **consultation** to help better define the project and/or gauge the level of acceptance in the community while others require only **information sharing** so that the community is aware of the project and its implementation plan and timing.

Several projects approved in the 2014-15 Project Budgets for Active Transportation require different types of public engagement. The need for each of these projects was identified in the 2006 Active Transportation Plan and their priority is confirmed in the approved RP+5 Policy T-4 and in the upcoming 2014-19 Active Transportation Priority Plan.

An approved project related to the extension of Margeson Drive also requires public engagement related to the engineering design.

DISCUSSION

The two types of community engagement that will be used, as defined in the HRM Community Engagement Strategy, are:

Information Sharing – involves sharing information to build awareness of issues and projects that may affect the public or specific communities. HRM’s responsibility here is to provide objective, reliable, timely, easy to find and easy to understand information. For the Traffic Improvement projects, information sharing will involve localized mailout of postcards describing the project and advising of a public open house session to be held in the community. Additional information on the project is provided at these open house sessions along with staff in attendance to answer questions.

Consultation – is typically part of a regulatory process where the public’s input on matters affecting them is sought. Its main goals are to improve the efficiency, transparency and public involvement in projects, laws and policies. It may include simple testing of ideas or concepts to build knowledge or it may include a two-way collaboration to develop solutions and build community buy-in. For the projects identified in this report, consultation will open house or workshop-type sessions.

The following table lists public engagement sessions intended to support projects approved in the 2014-15 Project Budget (and in some cases previous budgets) along with the type of engagement and the target audience. In cases where only the local community is involved, staff will work closely with the area councilor(s) to ensure that the proper venue and notification method is used.

| Project | Type of Engagement | Target Audience | Approximate Timing |
|--|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Sackville River Active Transportation Bridge | Information Sharing | Local Community | June |
| Macdonald Bridge Bikeway Halifax Connection | Consultation | General Public | July |
| Hollis Street Bike Lane | Consultation | Downtown Businesses and Bicycle Stakeholders | July |
| Windsor/Vernon Connector | Consultation | Local Community | September |
| Chisholm Avenue Active Transportation Bridge | Information Sharing | Local Community | September |
| Pine Hill Drive Active Transportation Bridge | Information Sharing | Local Community | September |
| Margeson Drive Bridge Final Design | Information Sharing | Local Community | October |
| Mt. Hope Greenway | Information Sharing | Adjacent Property Owners | October |

| Project | Type of Engagement | Target Audience | Approximate Timing |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Porter's Lake Active Transportation Connections | Consultation | Local Community | October |
| Highfield Park Active Transportation Connections | Information Sharing | Local Community | October |
| Local Street Bikeway for Seymour-Vernon | Consultation | Local Community | October |
| Regional Centre Bikeway Network | Consultation | General Public | November |

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of providing public information has been built into the overall budget already approved for each project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is discussed above.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

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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Original Signed

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