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Halifax Regional Council
June 20, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Labrecque".

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: May 8, 2006

SUBJECT: Public Notification Process - Work in Street Right of Way

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 10.2.2 (i) raised by Councillor Fougere at the November 8, 2005 meeting of Regional Council.

BACKGROUND

A staff report was requested regarding a potential policy development around notification to residents when municipal work is done in the street right-of-way.

DISCUSSION

Residents can be adversely affected during construction and maintenance work on their street. Attempts are made to minimize, as much as possible, any inconveniences caused to residents; however, this is not always possible given the immediacy and required scope of some projects.

Examples of temporary issues which can arise during periods of on-street construction may include loss of on-street parking, loss of driveway access, disruption of water supply, partial street closure, one-way traffic flow, heavy truck traffic, noise, dust, etc. Every effort is made to minimize the length of time for which these temporary conditions are in effect.

In the case of planned capital works projects, residents may be notified twice by staff prior to the commencement of work. These notifications are done during the design stage and again just prior to the commencement of work. Such projects may include water and sewer line renewals, sidewalk renewals, street reconstruction, street resurfacing, and any major tree trimming or removal. Residents are provided with a brief overview of the scope and expected duration of the work and, a contact name and phone number. Sometimes property may have to be purchased and or expropriated in order to accommodate design features of the project. Examples could include required retaining walls and roadway widening. These elements of the project are negotiated with the property owner(s) before the tender is called. Public meetings can also be held whenever the magnitude of a project, such as intersection redesign, permanent street closure, etc., are being considered.

Construction which can impact the general public for prolonged time periods, such as phases of the Harbour Solutions Project, have also employed a wide range of media coverage, whereby newspaper, and radio have been utilized.

Emergency maintenance operations such as dealing with water main or sewer breaks, etc., do not always permit advance notification to be done. Also, weather may adversely affect adherence to schedules for certain types of work. These situations are, by their very nature, unavoidable; and, public notification is carried out in a variety of ways, including staff personally visiting residents, distribution of information leaflets in mail boxes, and or by public service announcements through the media, again pending the scope of work.

In the case of new development, it is the contractor/developer who notifies residents. The developer's notification is similar to that done by HRM in capital projects. Typically, an information leaflet with the scope of work, anticipated duration of work and contact information for the contractor is delivered to all affected properties. Public service announcements are also used in some cases. The developer/contractor is more aware of the scheduling requirements as the development proceeds and this approach helps the relationship between residents and the developer.

Staff believes that current practices employed by various HRM Business Units are sufficient to properly provide advance notification of construction projects to local residents and the general public.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

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 alternatives.

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.

Report Prepared by : Kevin McEachern, Traffic Analyst, 490-6133

Financial Review : _____
Kathy Smith, Financial Consultant, 490-6153