



PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Halifax Regional Council**  
**May 9, 2006**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

**DATE:** May 1, 2006

**SUBJECT:** TRAX Street Opening Project

---

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

Item 9.3.1. raised at the February 21, 2006 meeting of Halifax Regional Council.

**BACKGROUND**

At the February 21, 2006 meeting of Halifax Regional Council, it was moved by Councillor Fougere, and seconded by Councillor Sloane, that staff provide a report on how HRM, on an ongoing basis, can provide logistic support to make the Ecology Action Centre's TRAX street opening project a weekly event during the fine months based on the success of the pilot project.

**DISCUSSION**

On February 15, 2006, TRAX representatives proposed a one time only “Open Streets Event” to the Special Events Task Force. This event was presented as a street festival which would close a street to motorized traffic on Sunday, April 23, 2006 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. for the dual purpose of allowing people to walk, run, skateboard, in line skate, etc. on a space normally not accessible to them and also to serve as an opportunity to promote active transportation issues with sponsored booths, safety clinics, contests, races, and various family-oriented activities including food and music. The potential street locations proposed by TRAX were as follows:

- Cogswell Street (between North Park and Robie Street)
- Argyle Street (between Blowers and Duke Street)
- Agricola Street (between Cunard and North Street)
- Queen Street (between Spring Garden and South Street)
- Lower Water (between George Street and Terminal Road)
- Connaught Avenue (between Bayers Road and Chebucto Road)

It was pointed out by SETF staff that Cogswell Street (between North Park Street and Robie Street) was the only street on this list which would not require the approval of abutting property owners to close the street and which was relatively easy to implement because there were no intersecting streets or driveways. In order to close any of the other proposed streets, it would be necessary for the event organizers to obtain signatures of consent from all abutting businesses or residents of the affected streets. TRAX was also advised that any municipal costs involved in implementation of the event would be the responsibility of the organizer. Although final costs have not yet been determined, the estimated cost of closing Cogswell Street for a day (based on cost recovery only, for the installation and removal of no parking signs and street closed detour barricades, as well as police presence at the event) was \$2300.

In order to implement the TRAX vision of a “two kilometer street route that is opened for active transportation on a weekly basis in HRM... by closing the street to motorized traffic” a location other than Cogswell Street would likely need to be secured. Cogswell Street is only 500 meters in length and is already closed for several other on-street events over the course of the summer (Canada Day Picnic, Bicycle Criterium, Play On-Street Hockey), all of which pay cost-recovery for implementation of the closure. There is also a substantial inconvenience to the other users of the facilities on the Commons with the further reduction of already limited available parking in the area during these closures.

TRAX vision of “a unique space that is flat, wide, safe and centrally located and inclusive to all community members” could be met, in staff’s opinion, by promoting the utilization of the Multi-Use Trail along Lake Banook/Prince Albert Road in Dartmouth, which has a 3 meter wide asphalt surface from Sullivan’s Pond to Graham’s Grove.

**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 recommended alternatives.

**ATTACHMENTS**

TRAX "Vision"

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.

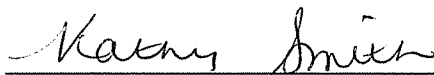
Report Prepared by: Vaughn Perrin, Traffic Analyst, 490-4822

Report Approved by:



Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Manager, Traffic & Right of Way Services at 490-6637

Financial Review:



Kathy Smith, Financial Consultant, 490-6153

## Vision

Our vision for the TRAX Street Opening project is to establish a two kilometre street route that is "opened" for active transportation on a weekly basis in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). This will involve "closing" the street to motorized traffic in order to create a safe community space for HRM citizens to walk, run, roller blade, skateboard, wheelchair, scooter, cross-country ski, snowshoe, skate, etc. We will start small, with a single event in April. Our goal is to secure sponsorship that will enable us to "close" a street every Sunday between the months of May and October. This street "closure" will provide a unique space that is flat, wide, safe, centrally located, and that is inclusive to all community members, without excluding those who may not otherwise be able to use park trails or corridors that are too narrow or bumpy. This will encourage people to participate in diverse activities—all in one location—so disparate community members can actively unite as a cohesive group.

Our vision dovetails with the TRAX goals to facilitate and encourage active living, physically active transportation and carpooling (with a corresponding decrease in the use of single occupancy vehicles). Our vision is supported by HRM's *Blueprint for a Bicycle Friendly HRM* "near-term implementation goal" to "close all or part of a street as a special event to promote active transport." Our vision is also supported by the Pathways for People Framework for Action (Nova Scotia Health Promotion), which suggests the use of events and festivals, including "street closures" to build educational tools which promote public awareness of active transportation