




Halifax Regional Council
January 8, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
George McLellan, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 8, 2002

SUBJECT: **Public Consultation--Proposed 2002/2003 Budget**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

In its presentation to Council on October 9, 2001, staff indicated they would seek public input through a survey and consider other opportunities for citizens to express their thoughts, ideas or other comments on fiscal matters prior to the Proposed 2002/2003 Budget being brought down.

BACKGROUND

As a result of the December 18, 2001, Council session, the original Public Input Survey has been altered according to the comments received by Council Members.

DISCUSSION

Public Input Survey:

The survey will be available to the public at HRM Customer Service Centres; branches of the Halifax Regional Library Services; and on the HRM Website www.region.halifax.ns.ca from January 10 to January 31, 2002.

Public Presentations:

Staff will also make presentations regarding the proposed 2002/2003 Budget at meetings of the various Community Councils in the next number of weeks. The Community Councils have regular meetings scheduled for:

- North West - meets on January 24
- Western - meets on January 28
- Chebucto - meets on Feb 4
- Peninsula - meets on January 14 and February 11
- Marine Drive - meets on January 23
- Harbour East - meets on January 10 and February 7

Written Submissions:

The public can make written submissions regarding budgetary matters and send to the Office of the Municipal Clerk, or, citizens may submit thoughts, ideas or comments on the HRM Website.

Schedule Change - Budget Presentation to Regional Council:

In light of the new schedule, the tabling of the 2002/2003 Budget will be postponed until February 12th in order to allow public input to be incorporated into the Budget process.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None. Work is being done internally by HRM staff.

MULTI-YEAR FINANCIAL STRATEGY IMPACTS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

ATTACHMENTS

2002/2003 Budget Process Public Input Survey

**2002/2003 Budget Process
Public Input Survey**

The Halifax Regional Municipality provides a broad range of municipal services to its citizens. The level of each service, and the ability to introduce new services, is largely determined by the amount of money allocated in the Budget for these services each year.

Your opinion, as a resident of the HRM, is important to us. In preparation for the 2002/2003 Budget, Halifax Regional Council wants to provide opportunities for public input into this process. The following questionnaire is designed to help identify the key issues and priorities for the coming fiscal year.

1. *Assuming there will be no additional downloading of costs by the Province of Nova Scotia or any other unforeseen financial challenges prior to the 2002/2003 Budget being approved, would you prefer:*

- to have the tax rate remain the same (and increase service slightly due to the overall annual growth in Assessment?
- to reduce the tax rate and have service remain about the same? or
- to increase the tax rate to increase/enhance services according to HRM priorities?

Other: _____

(Please note: Even if the tax rate were to remain the same, some property owners may see an increase/decrease in the \$\$\$ amount of their tax billing, depending on the assessment value of their individual property(ies), as determined by the Government of Nova Scotia)

2. *To better help Halifax Regional Council to ensure that funds are allocated to where the majority of citizens prefer the most, please indicate below in order of importance the top five (5) services you would like to see receive priority status in the proposed 2002/2003 Budget.*

- police protection
- fire protection
- streets/roads maintenance
- snow/ice clearing
- sidewalks (new)
- by-law enforcement (e.g. animal control, dangerous/unsightly premises)
- transit services (new routes)
- sewer/water services
- parks/open spaces
- recreation facilities
- solid waste collection (greater frequency)
- planning/development services
- library services

Comments: _____

3. *As a resident of the Halifax Regional Municipality, do you believe that you receive good value for the services, programs and other events/activities provided by the H-R-M?*

- Yes
- No

Other comments: _____

Comments or other feedback on any other matters of importance to you.

