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**Committee of the Whole
Halifax Regional Council
February 11, 2003**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Paynter", written over a horizontal line.

Rick Paynter, P.Eng., Director, Public Works & Transportation

DATE: February 3, 2003

SUBJECT: Principles of the Residential On-Street Parking Policy

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Referred to Committee of the Whole by Halifax Regional Council at its meeting of January 7, 2003.

BACKGROUND

At the November 12, 2002 meeting of Regional Council, the Residential On-Street Parking Policy was approved in principle. By-law P-1000 Respecting On-Street Parking Exemptions and Permits was approved by Regional Council on December 10, 2002. This by-law replaced City of Halifax Ordinance 179 and City of Dartmouth By-law R-200.

At the January 7, 2003 meeting, some Councillors questioned the principles of the policy and requested that it be reconsidered at Committee of the Whole.

DISCUSSION

Issues raised by Council are discussed below:

1. Inequity between the exemption fee paid by residents and the permit fee paid by non-local parkers

Principle 6 of the Policy states that “rates for non-local parking permits must be set at fair market value so as to not compete unfairly with off-street parking provided by the public sector.” To charge the general public a rate more appropriate to residents on the street would result in permits being available for well below market value. Staff anticipates that, over time, a 'permit brokering' industry would immerge whereby permits would be 'transferred' to those willing to pay the going rate. Eventually, non-local parkers would be paying market rates, the Municipality would be collecting a low fee, and brokers would be pocketing the difference.

It is not clear to staff whether equity between residents and non-local parkers is intended to include equal access to available permits. If permits are being offered for well below market value, the demand will far exceed the supply. For full equity, residents should not be given preference over non-local parkers and they may have to go on a long waiting list for a permit to park on their own street.

One alternative that was provided to Regional Council when the policy was originally presented was to adopt the policy as provided, but without allowing residents to choose the parking by permit only option for their street. With this option removed, only timed parking restrictions are used to manage parking demand and there would be no such thing as a permit for non-local parkers. One important benefit of leaving this option in the policy is that it preserves the availability of all-day parking (albeit no longer free) which might otherwise disappear with expansion of timed parking controls. Staff learned from consultation with non-local parkers who participated in the Williams Street pilot study that parking by permit only is beneficial to them because it provides a service to those who otherwise have to seek out all-day parking.

Staff suggests that adoption of this alternative by Regional Council would require rescission of its approval of the Residential On-Street Parking Policy and amendments to the recently passed By-law P-1000.

2. More clarity on parking areas and reconsideration of permit fees

To reflect market rates for parking, Administrative Order 15 defined four parking zones labelled 'A' to 'D'. Although the \$100 per month charge proposed for area 'A' does reflect market rates for parking, there are few residential streets within this area and the need to apply the parking policy is not likely. Therefore staff suggests combining areas 'A' and 'B', and further reducing the parking rate below market rates in acknowledgement that the parking spaces are not guaranteed to be available 365 days a year. Staff suggests the following changes be made to the rates presented for Council approval in Administrative Order 15:

| Area | Previous Rate | Suggested Rate |
|------|---------------|----------------|
| A | \$100 | \$65 |
| B | \$75 | \$65 |
| C | \$55 | \$45 |
| D | \$40 | \$35 |

3. Will property assessments be affected?

Conversations with a provincial tax assessment officer indicated that the absence or presence of a driveway may only result in a \$500 difference on the property assessment. The availability of an exemption has no bearing on the assessment. The tax assessment officer indicated the only way for assessments to go up as a result of the ability of a resident to obtain a parking exemption for their street, would occur if the market value of the homes rises. Conversations were then held with a real estate firm. Agents indicated that the ability to park on or off street does not carry a value. Parking is seen as a "variable" option that a value cannot be assigned to, as some home owners see the ability to park a vehicle as a necessity and others do not. They were unable to assign a value to a parking exemption.

4. More clarity on zone locations

A map showing the zones is attached.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time.

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.

ATTACHMENT

Map showing proposed parking zones.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.
Report Prepared by: David McCusker, P.Eng., Traffic Authority *DMC*

DMC/bmh

Map User: MACQUAK
14-JAN-2003
ReGIS
DVR Colour Laser Plot

Proposed Parking Zones



This plan was prepared for the internal purposes of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM).
HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of any representation on the plan.

Scale 1: 37934

