

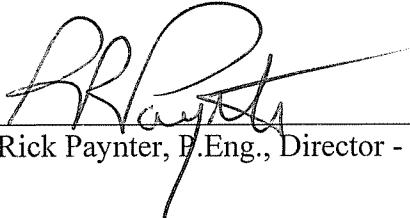


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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**July 15, 2003**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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

**DATE:** July 4, 2003

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive Review of Snow & Ice Operations

## INFORMATION REPORT

### ORIGIN

Public Works & Transportation Business Plan - 2003/04.

### BACKGROUND

The extent of expenditures incurred regarding the winter snow and ice program over the past two years has triggered the need to undertake a comprehensive review of that operation. The review process would focus on the following elements:

- a review of the effectiveness and efficiencies of the current service delivery model for snow and ice removal with a view toward benchmarking them against other models and/or municipalities;
- the need for management of road salt in light of Environment Canada's declaration of salt as Canadian Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA) toxic. This will include the development and implementation of a salt management plan for HRM;
- issues relating to winter parking that impact on snow and ice removal operations;
- challenges surrounding sidewalk snow removal and;
- fleet costs.

## **DISCUSSION**

In cooperation with Human Resources and Financial Services, Public Works & Transportation has commenced a review of all operational and financial components of HRM's snow and ice removal operations, including an independent audit of the major cost areas in the snow and ice program, namely: salary/benefits (i.e. overtime usage); hired equipment; fleet costs; material costs and; street and sidewalk winter program functionality. As part of the review process, the review team has also asked for input from staff about how to make the snow and ice program more cost-effective and efficient.

Staff are currently reviewing options for budget resource allocation including existing service standards relating to snow and ice operations to ensure that these are compatible. This includes a review of sidewalk snow removal operations within peninsular Halifax and a review of options for winter parking.

Currently as well, Public Works & Transportation staff are revising HRM's existing salting procedures to align them with the objectives of Federal Salt Management Guidelines. The goal for completion of this revision is the spring of 2004, and includes improved and expanded training for snow and ice personnel in salt management practises to ensure that the objectives of the salt management plan can be achieved.

It is anticipated that staff will be in a position to present the preliminary findings at an in-camera session of Regional Council in early September, 2003.

## **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.

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.

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