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Item No. 5
Transportation Standing Committee
December 8, 2016

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner & Director, Planning & Development

DATE: November 17, 2016

SUBJECT: Regional Goods Movement Opportunity Scoping Study

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the February 23, 2016 meeting of Halifax Regional Council, a motion was passed to undertake the Integrated Mobility Plan. The project charter approved for that plan included, "While the focus will be on intra-regional mobility, regional infrastructure that facilitates inter-regional goods movement will also be in scope."

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter:

Section 79 Power to expend money

- (1) The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for
- (m) promotion and attraction of institutions, industries and businesses, the stabilization and expansion of employment opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality;
 - (o) public transportation services;
 - (aa) streets, culverts, retaining walls, sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

BACKGROUND

In February, 2016 a Request for Proposals was issued for a Regional Goods Movement Opportunities Scoping Study. On June 27, 2016, the CAO awarded the contract for the study to Davies Transportation Consulting Inc. The study has now been completed and the final report approved by HRM staff on November 16, 2016.

DISCUSSION

The stated purpose of undertaking the work in the Regional Goods Movement Opportunities Scoping Study was to provide needed background and a strategic framework for how the movement of goods within the region should be integrated into the regional transportation network. The document will be one of several tools that HRM staff will use in developing the Integrated Mobility Plan, scheduled to be presented for approval of the Standing Committee and Regional Council in the Spring of 2017. As a background document, none of the recommendations in the Regional Goods Movement Opportunities Scoping Study will have any status unless brought forward through the Integrated Mobility Plan. For this reason, there is no need for the approval of the Standing Committee or Regional Council at this time. It is being presented to the Standing Committee for the information of its members and so that it can be released to the public and to stakeholders, in particular the Halifax Port Authority who are currently preparing a Ports Master Plan.

The Executive Summary from this report is attached and the link to the full report is provided below:

www.halifax.ca/traffic/documents/GoodsMovement.pdf

When the study was initiated, the following tasks were expected to be addressed:

- Review previous studies in the Halifax area and case studies from other cities
- From the large number of potential solutions to reducing the impact of truck traffic downtown, determine which hold the best opportunity
- Identify aspects of freight movement within the region that should be addressed in the Integrated Mobility Plan
- Identify what role the Municipality should be playing the management, monitoring and measurement of freight within the region

When the study was initiated, issues surrounding the operation of the port and the movement of goods had been somewhat static and it was felt to be an opportune time to engage stakeholders in discussing ideas related to improving the movement of goods. Soon after the study began, however, the Halifax Port Authority announced that it would be conducting its own master planning exercise to determine, among other things, how to build future capacity for larger container ships. Although this announcement created a “moving target” for recommendations coming out of the HRM study, the report succeeded in providing HRM staff with the needed background to engage with the Halifax Port Authority in the development of its Master Plan.

As the report states:

HRM is not the primary decision maker in planning for port infrastructure, but the city has a major stake in the outcome, and current decisions will affect the regional transportation system for decades to come. Close cooperation between HRM, HPA and other stakeholders is critical. The current Master Planning exercise by HPA may provide an effective mechanism for this cooperation to take place.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications of this report. Any financial implications related to the management of goods will be identified in the Integrated Mobility Plan.

