

Environment and Sustainability Committee
May 5, 2011

TO: Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Phillip Townsend, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

DATE: April 15, 2011

SUBJECT: Anti Idling By-Law

ORIGIN

April 7, 2011 Environment and Sustainability Committee:

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee:

1. Direct staff to prepare and present a recommended Anti Idling By-Law within business year 2011/2012, which would include the scope of the public engagement and education time frame; and
2. Direct staff to include the budgeting of educational, marketing strategy and enforcement resources to accompany an Anti Idling By-Law for 2012/2013.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Staff not proceed with drafting an anti-idling by-law in 2011/2012; and
2. Staff develop and continue a public education program using the March 2006 Reducing Idling in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Project.

BACKGROUND

At the April Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting, staff presented a recommendation to develop an Anti Idling By-Law based on precedence offered by Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and a number of other municipalities across Canada. It was envisioned that the delivery of such a By-Law would be a relatively achievable task in fiscal year 2011/2012. With this item in the Community Outcome Area - Clean and Healthy Environment, and numerous precedence in other municipalities, staff expected this project to be a positive initiative to promote the environment in HRM.

Initial media and public feedback was resoundingly clear: the initiative was not perceived as positive and as a result, Staff would like to change tactic on this initiative.

DISCUSSION

As a result of the initial feedback, Staff suggests in lieu of developing a By-Law in 2011/2012, that efforts be resurrected to promote the “Reducing Unnecessary Idling in HRM Project” (http://www.halifax.ca/environment/Reduced_Idling.html). By utilizing current project tools, signage, internal resources (from Marketing and Communications, HRM Staff) and partnering with community stakeholders, the Sustainable Environment Management Office (SEMO) staff can lead a project to educate and influence community behaviour.

The focus on this initiative is community idling.

In order to use budget resources effectively, it is contemplated that SEMO would partner with the Adventure Earth Centre HEAT Team (<http://www.earthed.ns.ca/heat/>). SEMO and Recreation staff has started working on possible projects to engage and involve the youth. Examples of such projects could be:

- Inclusion of Anti Idling in MindShift performance;
- HEAT Projects: example - driver education blitz at a parking lot or school;
- Educational Materials using Marketing and Communications Tools:
 - HRM Website
 - YouTube Video
 - Print Materials
 - Working with Driver Training Programs

HRM has internal marketing capacity and with the Adventure Earth Centre and SEMO Staff, conduits to deliver.

Efforts around corporate driving behaviour, and support of the Corporate Anti Idling Policy, will be separately advanced. The focus of this effort is community behaviour.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Staff anticipates that an effective community idling education initiative could be executed for approximately \$10,000 annually. Budget Capacity would be identified in D935 Sustainable Environment Management Office for this initiative.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the proposed Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report is in response to community feedback.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Staff could continue with the drafting of a by-law and public consultation as originally directed in April 2011. Staff does not recommend this action as initial public feedback was not positive, and as a result, staff would like to change tactic.
2. Staff could cease any initiatives around Anti Idling. This also is not recommended by staff.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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