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BRIEFING FORM

SUBMITTED TO: Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL: 
Peter Duncan, P.Eng., Acting Director, IAM

DATE OF MEETING: September 8, 2011

SUBJECT: Regional Plan Timeline / Rural Road Standards

ORIGIN

April 7, 2011, Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, 8.1 Motion
MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report outlining the proposed schedule of the Regional Plan coming forward to Regional Council and that the report identify the time line when the Rural Road Standards will be addressed.

BACKGROUND

During the April 7th meeting of Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC), the Committee discussed the timeline of the Regional Plan Review and the timing of the revision of the Rural Road Standards.

DISCUSSION

1. Regional Plan 5 Year Review Project

The proposed Regional Plan 5 Year Review workplan was presented to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee on August 11, 2011. The staff report

can be found at:

<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCcped/documents/Item6.1RegPlanandHRMbyDesignreview.pdf>.

The Standing Committee passed a motion recommending that Regional Council approve the scope and workplan for the project. This matter is anticipated to be before Regional Council for discussion and direction in September, 2011.

2. Rural Road Standards

The topic of rural road standards is proposed to be addressed as part of the Regional Plan Review project. This is identified in Attachment 2 of the above-noted staff report under “Chapter 3: Transportation – Item 3.4”.

Following the ECCS’s motion of April 7th, which also coincided with staff’s preparation of the Regional Plan Review scoping exercise, relevant Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Business Units met to discuss the matter of rural road standards. At that meeting, it was agreed that this topic merits review. The objective would be to explore opportunities to create a revised road standard that would be functional, safe, allow for proper storm drainage, be adequate for emergency response purposes and municipal services vehicles, yet would minimize the impact on the rural subdivision aesthetics and the environment. It was suggested that a working group be established to address these opportunities and constraints, and strive to develop a revised road standard that would address these matters. Key Business Units would entail Transportation and Public Works (TPW), Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM), and Community Development (CD), with as-required input from Fire Services, Halifax Water, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) and Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI).

Pending the outcome on Regional Council’s direction on the Regional Plan 5 Year Review scope and workplan, staff will immediately operationalize the proposed rural road standards working group.

ALTERNATIVES AND ASSOCIATED RISKS

None identified

IMPACT/BENEFITS

None identified

COMMUNICATION ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES

None identified for this report. Community Consultation will be a component of RP+5.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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