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Halifax Regional Council  
January 13th, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Dale MacLennan  
Dale MacLennan, Director, HRM Financial Services

DATE: December 17th, 2003

SUBJECT: **HRM Assistance to Affordable Housing Initiatives**

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

December 16th, 2003: request from Councillor Bruce Hetherington to the CAO regarding the status of tax exemption for affordable housing initiatives in HRM. Specifically, the feasibility of providing short-term conditional tax exemptions to registered non-profit housing organizations. Such assistance would be for the rehabilitation of existing accommodations (structural, infrastructure, energy efficiencies, code compliance, or accessibility) or for the conversion of vacant properties in HRM.

**BACKGROUND**

Within the broader context of federal/provincial programs in support of homelessness and affordable housing initiatives, existing programs administered through the HRM Grants Program portfolio are providing assistance to non-profit housing initiatives through grants, tax exemption, property sales. The portfolio also administers assistance to private homeowners through tax rebates and tax deferral programs.

**DISCUSSION**

***1. Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Program:***

A review of the present *Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Program* (By-law T-201) is scheduled to begin in January, 2004. Staff are preparing a discussion document and consultation process for the approval of the HRM Grants Committee. Distribution of materials and public notification to commence in February of 2004.

The issue of accountability and/or measurable outcomes resulting from public tax subsidies to registered non-profit organizations in receipt of a full or partial tax exemption (ie. 50%, 75% or 100% exempt) is included in the discussion paper.

**2. Residential Tax Assistance Programs:**

Proposed revisions to Administrative Order 10 (residential tax rebates) and By-law T-300 (residential tax deferrals) are scheduled for the fourth quarter 2004. Draft proposals are in progress regarding: the deferral of local improvement charges, area-rated local improvement charges, dangerous and unsightly premises, and pro-rated tax relief for property loss due to natural or man-made destruction.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

None. This is an information report only. Any financial implications resulting from revisions to By-law T-201 would be considered through the regular business planning and budget deliberation process.

**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 other relevant legislation.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Not applicable - no recommendations.

**ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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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Report Approved :   
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