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PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Halifax Regional Council**  
**October 12, 2004**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Betty MacDonald  
Betty MacDonald, Governance & Strategic Initiatives

**DATE:** October 6, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Capital District Enhanced Maintenance Strategy

### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

In June, 2004, Regional Council approved operating funds in the amount of \$100,000 to be spent on enhanced maintenance initiatives within the Capital District. This report provides Council an update on those projects to be addressed under the scope of this funding.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Capital District Task Force has developed a strategy for use of the enhanced maintenance funds (\$100,000) which were approved by Council late in the 2004/05 budget deliberations. The approach which is being recommended focusses on enhancing seasonal and not winter maintenance since the funding was reduced from the original \$500,000 which would have enable some sidewalk snow removal to be considered.

Since its creation in 2001 and as an outcome of the vision for the Capital District, one of the key priorities of the Capital District Task Force has been to lead an integrated approach to service delivery particularly in the areas of maintenance, urban design, and safety. The focus of the efforts to date have included:

- the delivery of an enhanced maintenance plan for the Capital District during the high tourist season (May until end of September) to improve litter cleanup and graffiti. The program is delivered by pooling resources and coordinating municipal work crews from Real Property and Asset Management (RPAM) and Public Works with external agencies including downtown area business commissions and Waterfront Development Corporation.
- the creation of a maintenance reserve in partnership with downtown area business commissions to fund future maintenance needs.
- public education related to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of HRM and business and property owners for litter and graffiti cleanup.
- the completion of an Urban Design Project to enable better design and more strategic investment in public spaces within the Capital District.
- public opinion surveys aimed at evaluating performance levels and success related to maintenance efforts in the Capital District. Overall, the majority of respondents have indicated that maintenance within the Capital District is good to extremely good, however the results highlight the need for improvements in key areas such as litter and graffiti cleanup.

The above initiatives provide a solid foundation for maintenance planning within the Capital District. As highlighted in the Capital District Urban Design Project which was adopted by Council in 2004, there is a need to promote a higher standard of excellence and continued investment in the maintenance of Capital District streetscapes. Well maintained public spaces reinforce the distinct character of communities and result in safe, attractive, and comfortable places that all citizens and visitors can enjoy. As a result, public and private investment goes further over the longer-term and communities and regions flourish.

## DISCUSSION

Once Council approved the funding for enhanced maintenance, over the summer months Capital District staff met with a number of internal and external stakeholders to identify additional maintenance priorities outside of the regular maintenance program. These consultations included staff from Real Property and Asset Management (RPAM), Public Works, and Solid Waste, as well as the downtown area business commissions and the Waterfront Development Corporation.

On September 13, 2004 a recommended strategy was presented and endorsed by the Capital District Task Force. The recommended strategy focuses on three elements:

1. ***Extending the enhanced seasonal maintenance plan*** currently coordinated through RPAM by extending the season to December, and increasing services in key areas. Specific projects to be addressed include:
  - retaining seasonal workers until December,
  - additional power washing and bagging of metal garbage bins,
  - graffiti removal and purchase of graffiti removal supplies for use in spring 2005,
  - grants to the business commissions for early spring maintenance,
  - piloting perennial plantings as recommended in the Urban Design Study to reduce future maintenance requirements.

*This particular element will require approximately 30 percent of the budget.*
  
2. ***Implementing a phase one pilot program to introduce new waste sorting receptacles in select HRM Parks in the Capital District.*** These receptacles which should be installed by December of 2004, will enable the public to separate waste into four source separation streams for garbage, paper, glass/plastics & compost. In addition to the material separation, the waste separation containers will also have facilities for cigarette disposal in response concerns about litter and cigarette butts.

Many of these containers are in use by municipalities and the private sector throughout Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. Given that HRM is considered a leader in waste management in the province of Nova Scotia, it is essential that steps be taken to show leadership in waste management in public spaces. This first phase of implementing waste management strategies required by provincial legislation, will assist in building a business case for future budget preparations which will see further implementation of source separation in other public spaces throughout the region. The following parks have been identified for the initial pilot program:

- Grand Parade
  - South Branch Library (Spring Garden Road)
  - Nathan Green &/or Chebucto Landing & Sackville Landing
  - Public Gardens
  - Point Pleasant Park
  - Dartmouth Ferry Terminal Park
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A tender has been issued for the supply of the new receptacles and various options are being explored by RPAM Parks for servicing. RPAM is currently working with Solid Waste on a grant application to the Resource Recovery Fund Board for the next phase of the program to be considered for implementation in 2005/06. *This element is expected to account for approximately 50 to 60 percent of the budget.*

3. *Develop a public education campaign related to the above elements which will require approximately 10 to 20 percent of the budget.*

The above three part program will be delivered in partnership with area business commissions and the Waterfront Development Corporation. The effectiveness of the enhancements to be developed and implemented this fiscal year will be instrumental in determining future operational requirements to be considered as part of the budget deliberations for 2005/06 and beyond.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The projects referenced in this report will be funded from the Capital District enhanced maintenance funds approved by Council in 2004/05.

### **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**

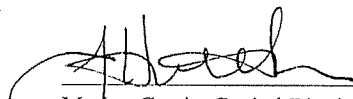
Council could provide direction on the scope of work to be addressed under the enhanced maintenance funding.

### **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.

Report Prepared by:

  
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Marion Currie, Capital District Project Coordinator

490-6735