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Halifax Regional Council  
November 16, 2004

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Dan English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** November 08, 2004

**SUBJECT:** **Approval in Principle, Cost Sharing Agreement  
Provincial Interchange Country View Estates at Highway 118**

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### ORIGIN

This report originates with:

- ▶ Provincial commitment (1975) to fund and construct suitable access from Highway 118 to the Country View property at such time the lands are developed;
- ▶ 2003 Letter of Understanding between the Province and the Municipality with respect to the incremental cost to the Municipality for any required over sizing of the 118 interchange needed to support the connectivity to HRM's lands;
- ▶ August 2004, request from the Deputy Minister of Public Works and Transportation for a municipal cost sharing commitment; and
- ▶ September 10, 2004, Development application from North American for concept subdivision approval for the Country View lands.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council approve in principle approximately \$2.1M in cost-sharing funding relative to the construction cost of the proposed Provincial Interchange at Country View Estates and Highway 118 subject to:

- ▶ Public consultation with the community and Shubie Park stakeholders regarding the interchange design and highway impacts on the park.
- ▶ Council's subsequent approval of a standard cost-sharing agreement as prepared by the Province which will outline the specifics of the project including final design, budget and also terms and conditions for any municipal land acquisition by the Province if required.
- ▶ Approval through the 2005/06 Capital Business Planning process.

**BACKGROUND**

When Highway 118 was first constructed by the Province, part of the corridor land assembly process involved making a commitment, to the private land owner, to construct acceptable access to those lands being crossed by the highway when required to service development. These lands are commonly referred to as the Country View Lands and are now owned by North American Properties of Montreal.

In 2001, a Burnside Park Major Routes Traffic Access Study was prepared regarding servicing the Burnside Park area with roads. The Provincial obligation to construct an interchange on Highway 118 was known, and one result of the study was the confirmation of the value in using this interchange in the future to create a direct connection from Highway 118 into the east side of Burnside Park, which can be best articulated as an extension of Wright Avenue to Highway 118. The initial driver for planning of the Wright Avenue Extension was to make best use of the provincially-planned Interchange at Highway 118 to provide for long term transportation requirements for Burnside Park and to allow for the development of future phases of Burnside Park east towards Highway 118.

In 2003, HRM and the Province, through a cost sharing arrangement, engaged CBCL Consulting Engineers to undertake further study and prepare a design for an alternate location(s) for the interchange and roadway to connect between Highway 118 and Wright Avenue. The study was also tasked to consider the financial obligations of the Province's commitment to build an interchange and the Municipality's obligation rising from the additional traffic loaded onto the interchange as a result of the future connection of Wright Avenue.

The CBCL Wright Avenue Alignment Study identified and evaluated a series of options for the location and layout of the interchange, aimed at trying to maximize traffic operation while minimizing cost and impact on Shubie Park. The recommended location for the interchange is very near to the existing quarry access road and provides adequate separation distance from adjacent Highway 118 interchanges. The following table shows costs for three optional interchange layouts at this location:

<b>Interchange Option</b>	<b>Cost (\$ million)</b>
Basic diamond interchange (two lane overpass)	\$ 6.0
<b>Oversized diamond interchange (four lane overpass and double ramps)</b>	<b>\$ 8.1</b>
Interchange on relocated Highway 118	\$ 11.3

## DISCUSSION

In August 2004, North American Properties closed on the purchase of the privately held Country View Lands and has formally requested from the Province that access, via an interchange, to their lands be designed and constructed by the Province as soon as possible to accommodate their proposed retail and commercial development.

North American's decision to commence development of the lands has accelerated the Province's delivery of the 118 Interchange and a decision from HRM is needed with respect to the Municipality's interest in building in capacity now for the future connection of Wright Avenue to Highway 118 to service greater Burnside and HRM's holding lands to the north. The ability to connect and service greater Burnside from the proposed 118 Interchange is a key capacity and growth element for Burnside and supports HRM's regional competitiveness through enhancing our existing transportation systems and promotes links necessary to support a strong economy.

The CBCL report recommends a blind diamond interchange employing a dual northbound on ramp located near the existing Whebby Quarry driveway (as shown on Attachment 2). The estimated construction cost of the proposed interchange is approximately \$8.1M based on Wright Avenue being four (4) lanes. The Province has formally requested that the Municipality agree in principle to a contribution in the amount of \$2.1M representing the Municipality's share (over sizing cost) associated with the future connection of its lands.

Council should be advised that a standard diamond interchange design at the recommended location could result in the outbound on/off ramps encroaching into Shubie Park. Although the extent of encroachment is relatively small (the ramp encroaches about 10m and the fill slope an additional 20m), it occurs in an active and sensitive area of the park. Also, as the ramps gain elevation to meet the height of the overpass, vehicle noise into the park may increase.

**Staff wish to emphasize to Council that this recommendation simply responds to the Province's request for a cost-sharing agreement that would apply only if an agreement can be reached on the interchange design and location. A cost-sharing agreement in principle is needed for the Province, HRM and Developer to proceed with public consultation, at which time the traffic/parkland issues will be discussed thoroughly with the public and members of Council. Council's recommendation on cost-sharing does not preclude Council from refusing to convey its lands to allow an encroachment into the park.**

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The recommended Approval in Principle has no impact on the approved 2004/05 Operating or Capital budget.

Following Council's Approval in Principle, a standard cost-sharing agreement will be prepared by the Province for Council approval that will outline the specifics of the project including final design, budget, and also terms and conditions for any municipal land acquisition by the Province. Any such cost-sharing agreement would be further contingent upon Council approval of \$2.1M funding from the 2005/06 Capital Budget.

**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 direct staff not to cost share at this time; however, this is not recommended. The cost to the HRM to undertake the necessary infrastructure improvements to the interchange after it is built to accommodate a future connection to it lands would be significantly higher than the funding being recommended.

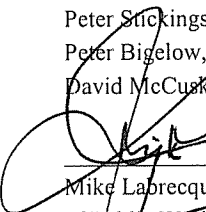
**ATTACHMENTS**

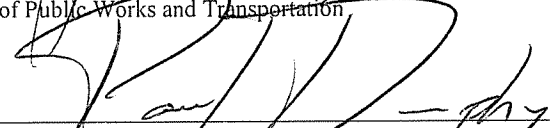
Attachment "1" - Area Map

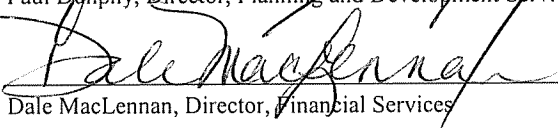
Attachment "2" - Alignment and Interchange Design Concept

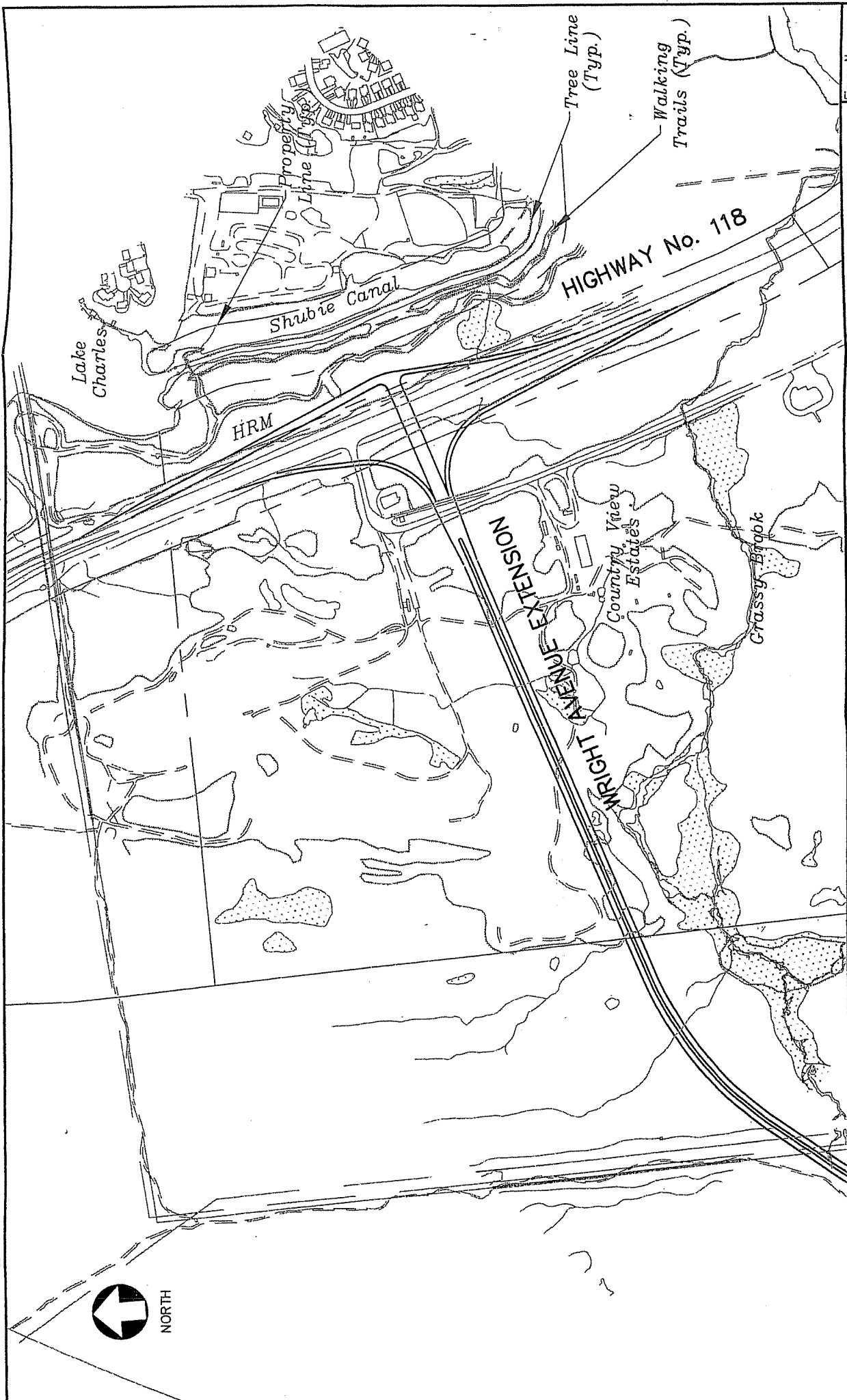
Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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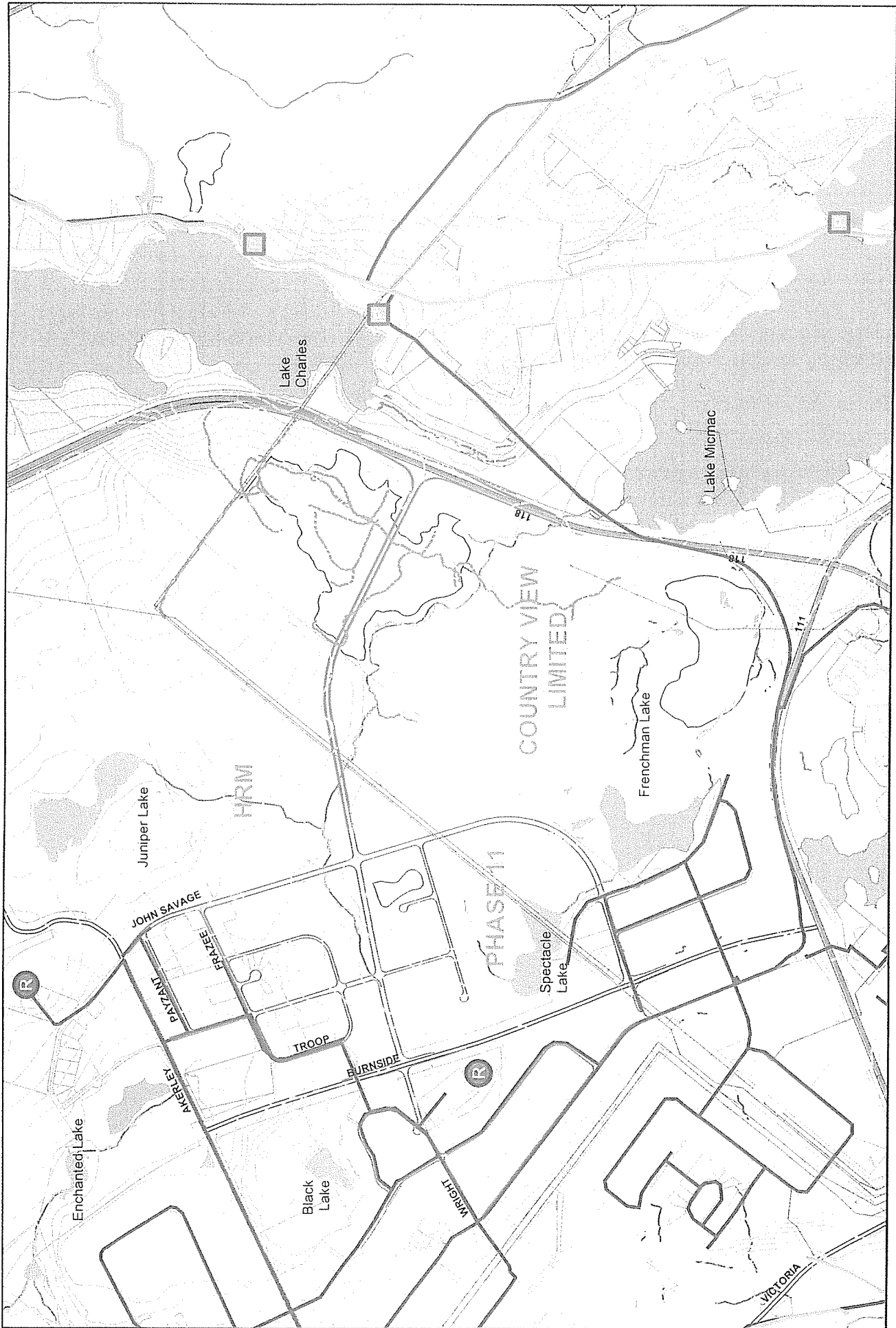
Report Approved by:   
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Paul Donphy, Director, Planning and Development Services

  
Dale MacLennan, Director, Financial Services



<b>CBCL LIMITED</b> Consulting Engineers <small>ISO 9001 CERTIFIED</small>	Date	Drawn	Checked	Approved	HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  WRIGHT AVENUE EXTENSION AND INTERCHANGE	FULL BLIND DIAMOND INTERCHANGE CONFIGURATION DUAL NORTHBOUND ACCELERATION RAMP	Figure No.  <b>2.6</b>
	JUNE 2003	T.M.D.	R.G.				
Scale		Contract No					
1:5000		031028					
Drawing File: FIGURE 2-6.DWG Date: 6/4/2004 9:56 A.M.							



- Sanitary Pumping Station
- Water - Reservoir
- Water Pipe
- Transmission Line
- Bike Path
- Trail Path
- Parks
- Old Growth Forest
- Property Lines
- Gravel Pit
- HRM Lands

**Figure 4.3**  
**LAND USE & UTILITIES**



Scale: 1: 20 000

