

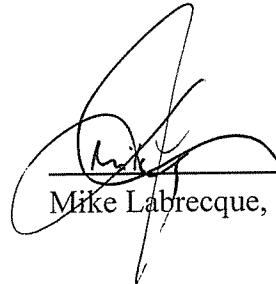


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Halifax Regional Council
November 16, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., A/Director, Public Works & Transportation

DATE: November 5, 2004

SUBJECT: Street Closures for Street Parties

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Petition presented to Regional Council on September 28, 2004 from residents of Duncan Street, Halifax, requesting reconsideration of the procedures for obtaining permission for street closures for street parties.

BACKGROUND

The Engineer for the Municipality has the authority under the Municipal Government Act (Part 12, Section 322) to temporarily close a street for any purpose beneficial to the public interest. Over recent years, the popularity of street parties on residential streets has steadily increased. Staff concur that these events are good for neighborhoods and are in the public interest. Approval has been granted to most requests and this year 56 street parties were approved.

DISCUSSION

Generally, the Engineer will authorize the closure of residential streets on weekends and holidays and after 6 p.m. on weekdays. Major arterial and collector streets are not normally closed for block parties. Streets will not be permitted to be closed for yard sales or for profit purposes.

For first time events or where an event has not been held for more than one year or for events where complaints have been received, the process is that organizers must obtain signatures of consent from abutting residents of the street to be closed. A copy of any flyer advertising the event should be provided. A minimum one week's notice is required between the application and proposed date of the event. There is currently no fee for the street closure permit.

Street closure materials (barricades, signs, cones, etc.) are supplied by HRM free of charge to the applicant, who is responsible for picking them up, returning them and for placing them at each end of the street closure on the day of the event in accordance with the sketch which is provided with the permit.

Staff does not feel that the process for obtaining permission for street parties is difficult as can be seen from the number of these events which were held this year. The requirement for consent of the affected property owners is reasonable in staff's view as it would not be fair for an owner to be denied access to their street without their concurrence. In fact, HRM's process for approval of street parties is less stringent than many other municipalities. In other areas there are requirements such as longer advance notice, liability insurance and fees.

In the Duncan Street case, there was a complaint that staff initially resisted the request for a mid-block closure. It is standard procedure for street closures to be barricaded at intersections for safety reasons and so that drivers are not inconvenienced by encountering the closure at mid block and having to turn around. This had never been a problem with other street parties and, in staff's view, fits in with the objective of involving the whole street neighborhood. In the end, the matter was resolved by HRM providing additional street barricades to enable placement both at the intersections and at the point of mid block closure.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None at this time

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

None at this time.

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:



Phil Francis, P.Eng., Manager, Right of Way Services

490-6219