

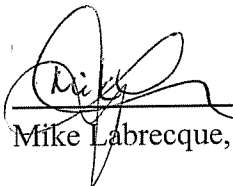
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Halifax Regional Council
February 22, 2005

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

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

DATE: February 14, 2005

SUBJECT: **Bus Shelter Damage & Vandalism**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council meeting of January 25, 2005, item 9.2.2.

BACKGROUND

Councillor Johns requested a staff report be provided on who is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of bus shelters, what the responsibility entails, what are the conditions of the agreement with the contractor and is the contractor living up to the terms of the agreement.

Councillor Murphy requests the report include ways the community may become involved as well as examine the designs and materials use for these types of shelters in other cities.

Council Mosher requested the report address the method of enforcement of penalties if the contractor is not living up to the contract.

This report is in response to these requests.

BACKGROUND

The 464 shelters at Metro Transit's 2500 bus stops include 100 advertising panelled shelters owned by Viacom Outdoor. There are three main styles of shelters, glass, aluminum and concrete that vary in age with the oldest being 20 - 25 years old and the newest installed last year.

The advertising shelters were installed in the mid 1980's by Mediacom (now Viacom Outdoor) as part of a contract for exclusive shelter advertising in the Halifax area. Part of HRM's current agreement with Viacom Outdoor includes regular cleaning and replacement of damaged panels on all HRM and Viacom glass style shelters. HRM is responsible for more substantial repairs required on the glass shelters and all repairs on the aluminium and concrete shelters. The regular cleaning identified in the contract includes cleaning each shelter every two weeks from April 1st to November 30th, and every week during the remainder of the year.

DISCUSSION

The issue of vandalism is an ongoing concern. Viacom Outdoor spends significant resources to replace the glass as required. In 2004, Viacom replaced 495 glass shelter panels. Viacom Outdoor has worked with HRM on several programs to try to discourage shelter damage and graffiti including working with Crime Stoppers and HRM Police Services (Community Response Initiative). Viacom has also decaled each shelter to encourage people to report any shelter vandalism they observe and to outline the penalties for anyone caught damaging shelters.

Staff has discussed using different types of material (e.g. plexiglass, lexan, etc.) instead of glass with Viacom Outdoor. They have experimented with other materials but have not found a suitable replacement to glass. Two issues with the other products tested are that they tend to turn opaque after being exposed to the elements and, although they were not broken as frequently, they were easily marked with graffiti.

Because many of the shelters are in more isolated locations, they are potential targets for vandalism. When vandals are reported and identified, charges can be laid and those involved have been required to cover the cost of repairs. Because damage can be done quickly, public participation by reporting this activity as it occurs could help discourage further incidents.

Staff regularly discuss shelter damage with Viacom Outdoor to seek better ways to discourage vandalism, ensure the timely reporting of damage, and the replacement of missing glass. The current shelter advertising contract expires May 30, 2005 and staff will identify the issues with replacing damaged glass as a component of the service to be considered in the RFP.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications 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

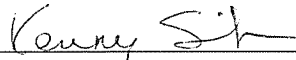
There are no recommended alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

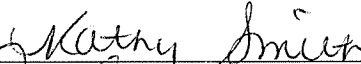
None

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.

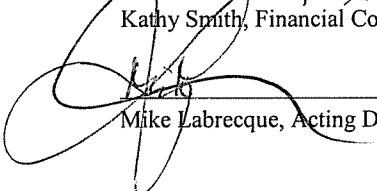
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