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Halifax Regional Council
June 21, 2005

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan English". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 14, 2005

SUBJECT: Guyana Project

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Staff wish to provide Regional Council with information on the project with Nova Scotia municipal officials (known as Team Nova Scotia) and Guyana, South America.

BACKGROUND

In November 2002, FCM's International Centre for Municipal Development received \$4.7 million from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as part of a five-year Contribution Agreement to strengthen municipal governance and management in Guyana. Entitled the *Municipal Governance and Management Project* (MGMP), it represents a joint initiative between Guyanese and Canadian municipalities and the governments of Guyana and Canada.

In addition to the MGMP, the Inter-American Development Bank recently approved loans to Guyana to strengthen municipal infrastructure. These include a \$1 million waste disposal site rehabilitation project in Georgetown and a \$25 million urban development program involving Guyana's six municipalities. The purpose of this program is to strengthen municipal management and governance capacity.

In November 2003, FCM approached UNSM to determine if there was interest in Nova Scotia municipalities partnering in this project. FCM selected Nova Scotia because of certain similarities to Guyana in terms of population, coastal geography and its reliance on natural resources to fuel the

local economy in rural areas. In January 2004, the UNSM Board of Directors approved in principle the concept of an international partnership between Guyana and Nova Scotia municipalities. To determine whether this partnership would be viable, the UNSM Board approved an initial fact finding team to participate on a mission to Guyana. Consequently, Team Nova Scotia was formed.

Team Nova Scotia is represented by:

- ▶ Lloyd Hines, Warden, District of Guysborough
- ▶ Duart MacAulay, Councillor, County of Inverness
- ▶ Russell Walker, Councillor, HRM
- ▶ Dan English, Deputy CAO, HRM
- ▶ Debbie Kampen, CAO, Town of Trenton
- ▶ Alan Bond, Clerk/Treasurer, County of Antigonish
- ▶ Chris McNeill, Municipal Clerk, Region of Queens
- ▶ Stephen Feist, Municipal Advisor, Service Nova Scotia & Municipal Relations
- ▶ Ken Simpson, Executive Director, UNSM
- ▶ Lyle Goldberg, Policy Analyst, UNSM
- ▶ Janice Wentzell, Executive Director, AMANS

DISCUSSION

As part of the MGMP, a number of staff from Guyana are working with FCM and the six municipalities to develop and finalize their individual agendas. Each municipality has a municipal agenda process (MAP) team that is working in conjunction with municipal officials on the agenda process.

While each municipal agenda is unique, a number of similar priority areas have emerged, namely:

Environment/Solid Waste Management

- High incidence of littering
- Improper dump sites
- Inadequate and irregular refuse collection
- Legal framework to support solid waste management
- Lack of regulation and maintenance of septic systems
- Inadequate drinking water quality monitoring and protection

Infrastructure

- Poor cleaning and maintenance of drainage channels
- Absence of regular maintenance of roads, bridges and buildings
- Lack of technical skills

Revenue Generation

- Low incidence of payment and collection of taxes
- Narrow revenue base
- Lack of transparency and accountability
- Under-qualified staff

Governance

- Lack of leadership
- Lack of meaningful civil society involvement
- Lack of public confidence.

During Team Nova Scotia's mission to Guyana last Spring, a number of issues became readily apparent. The team felt that one particular area where Nova Scotia municipalities could offer some assistance to Guyana is in the area of solid waste. As Nova Scotia is a world leader in waste diversion as a result of its composting and recycling programs, potential exists to create a small pilot project on composting and/or recycling in one municipality. It was agreed that HRM could best collaborate on this specific project with Guyana municipalities.

In May, 2005, Brad Anguish, Director, Environmental Management Services participated in an Environmental Mission to Guyana. Brad delivered some training on Local Environmental Action Planning and assisted the Guyanese municipalities in developing their environmental project priorities. In the coming months, Brad will be mobilizing Team NS resources to support the implementation of various environmental projects (water, wastewater, solid waste, and stewardship) in each of the municipalities.

In March, 2005, Charla Williams, HRM Coordinator, Diversity Programs participated in a Technical Mission to Guyana. This mission focussed on identifying opportunities for Nova Scotia Municipalities to assist the Guyanese municipalities in developing their capacity in the areas of Participatory Governance and Municipal Leadership & Development.

Guyana experienced an extraordinarily heavy rainfall that commenced in late December 2004 and continued on into January 2005 (over 60 inches). The results of this rainfall resulted in extreme flooding of a major portion of the populated coastal area. At the request of the Municipal Governance and Management Project Office in Guyana, a mission was organized to conduct a rapid assessment of the state of emergency preparedness for the Municipality of Georgetown as well as its municipal public health and the public works functions. The Municipality's E.M.O. Coordinator was part of a three person assessment team and was tasked to assess the emergency preparedness portion of the mission. The Rapid Assessment Team was in Guyana from February 13-19, 2005. The report filed with the FCM contained over 20 recommendations in the areas of municipal preparedness and response, liaison with the central government and other agencies and personal preparedness. These recommendations were meant to be applied to all municipalities in the country, using Georgetown as an example.

A delegation from Guyana recently visited Nova Scotia to strengthen relationships and to have a first-hand look at municipal facilities and processes.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Any direct financial costs incurred by staff involved with this project, are incurred by FCM and CIDA.

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

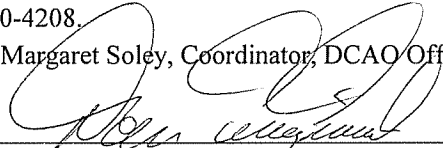
N/A

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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