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Item No. 11.1.5

Halifax Regional Council
April 8, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dan English".

SUBMITTED BY:

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: March 17, 2008

SUBJECT: Early Opening of Capital District Sidewalk Cafés

ORIGIN

To coincide with the 2008 Men's International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World Hockey Championship, establishments within the Capital District area have requested permission to open their sidewalk cafés the week of April 21, 2008.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council permit sidewalk cafés, as approved by Transportation and Public Works, to be open as early as April 21, 2008 for this year only. The closing date of October 31, as stipulated by the Sidewalk Café Policy, will remain in effect.

BACKGROUND

On May 27, 1997, Regional Council approved the temporary use of municipal streets and right-of-ways adjacent to food and beverage establishments to be used for the creation of sidewalk cafés.

The HRM Sidewalk Café Policy stipulates specific guidelines for the approvals, permitting, construction and operation of temporary sidewalk cafés. Pertinent to this request, the Sidewalk Café Policy states that: “The months of operation shall be May 1 through October 31 unless otherwise approved.”

DISCUSSION

The Halifax Metro Centre will host the 2008 IIHF Men's World Hockey Championship from May 2nd through May 14th. This is an international event which will bring thousands of visitors, athletes and media outlets to downtown Halifax. In anticipation of activities leading up to the event, area establishments have requested that permission be granted to open their sidewalk cafés as early as April 21, 2008. It is believed that the early addition of sidewalk cafes would communicate a vibrancy and animation to all visitors of the downtown before and during the event.

Previously, in 2006, Council approved a request by Capital District establishments for an early opening on March 27th of that year to coincide with the Juno Awards events. No difficulties with street maintenance or safety due to the early opening were identified at that time. Further, HRM Operations staff are in the process of finalizing a schedule for spring clean up works for the Capital District and anticipate much of this work to be completed by April 15th.

Therefore, staff recommend approval of this request, with the following conditions.

1. The early opening date pertains to all cafés located within the established Capital District boundary area;
2. The early opening date is applicable to 2008 only;
3. HRM shall be held blameless for any damage to sidewalk cafés caused through snow removal operations; and
4. Establishments wishing to open a sidewalk café early, will be required to follow the HRM Streets and Roads Sidewalk Café Permit Application process, and abide by all the criteria within Sidewalk Café Policy.

Staff will work with café owners to provide them with advance notice of the early opening date and to ensure that they are made aware of the requirements for obtaining the necessary permits.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None.

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 deny the requested April 21, 2008 opening date of the sidewalk cafés.


ATTACHMENTS

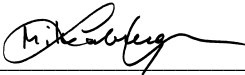
None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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