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Item No. 10.1.4

Halifax Regional Council
May 27, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. L. Kaiser".

Geri Kaiser, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

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

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: May 20, 2008

SUBJECT: ecoMOBILITY Funding Applications

ORIGIN

Staff.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve the submission of funding applications under Transport Canada's ecoMOBILITY Program for the following two projects:

- (1) TDM Reserve
- (2) Guaranteed Ride Home Program

BACKGROUND

Transport Canada's ecoMOBILITY Program is part of the Government of Canada's ecoTRANSPORT strategy addressing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution from transportation sources. The ecoMOBILITY Program will provide financial support to municipalities and regional transportation authorities for transportation demand management (TDM) projects that reduce emissions by shifting automobile travel to other modes, reducing the number and length of car trips, and shifting trips to less congested times and routes. It will also build national capacity to implement TDM measures through research, training and the development of TDM resources and materials.

A total of \$4 million is available through the ecoMOBILITY Program and the contribution to any one initiative will be no less than \$50,000 and no more than \$800,000. Funding under the ecoMOBILITY Program is awarded through a competitive process. The deadline for applications is May 30, 2008.

DISCUSSION

TDM programs are an integral part of the HRM Regional Plan and are critical in ensuring that increasing transportation demands to not result in the need for major roadway expansion projects. Staff have developed two TDM projects that fit the timelines of our regional transportation strategy and match well with the criteria of the ecoMOBILITY Program. The projects, described below, are designed to work individually or to work together as a single larger project.

TDM Reserve

TDM Reserve is an initiative aimed at influencing travel choice through pricing signals. Initially, this will be done on a small scale, but could mature to have a substantial influence of transportation decisions.

TDM Reserve will be based around an HRM operating and/or capital reserve account. Revenues may potentially be generated from sources such as parking surcharges, new parking, transportation impact fees from development, rental of on-street tourism bus bays, advertising revenue from transit initiatives, etc. The reserves may be used to fund a number of projects related to transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and TDM programs such as ridesharing.

It is anticipated that TDM Reserve will start with small-scale, but meaningful measures, such as generating revenue from new parking meters and applying that to the operation of the proposed downtown transit shuttle. In the longer term, Regional Council may consider directing TDM Reserve towards more aggressive measures that may involve taxation and road tolls.

The ecoMOBILITY funding would be used to hire a consultant to research best practices and develop the framework for TDM Reserve. The total budget proposed will be \$140,000 with half coming from ecoMOBILITY. Some preliminary discussions with other potential funding partners

have been positive but have not resulted in funding commitments at this time.

Guaranteed Ride Home Program

The creation of a guaranteed ride home program will enhance the ability of the municipality to encourage commuting alternatives to the single occupant vehicle trip. The use of the private automobile for commuting to work is the most popular mode of transportation within HRM. There are many reasons as to why commuters choose to use their personal vehicles to travel back and forth to work. Some will say that they need the car for workday trips; others will say that there is no other way to commute since transit is not readily available or there is no one to share a drive with; while others will say that they may need their car to get home in an emergency or if they work late.

While it is unknown how many, if any employers, have initiated any type of guaranteed ride home program, it is essential that a program be developed that can be delivered to employers as part of a commuter options program. Encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation involves many things. Community-based social marketing techniques that lead to behavioural change are the most common programs that are used today in TDM. As part of the desire to encourage behavioural change, specific concerns need to be addressed in order to effect changes in commuting choices.

The emergency or guaranteed ride home program is an essential component of a commuter options program. In order to create a program that will not only be successful, but well used and well known, part of the work that will be required is research into programs that have been developed throughout North America. How the program is developed is essential to its success and that research will help to lay the framework for the program.

This program will require research into existing programs, the development of incentives, funding for the pilot program (chits, bus tickets, etc), promotion to employers and monitoring and evaluation. The hiring of a temporary staff person will also be required to undertake the above tasks. The total budget proposed will be \$120,000 with half coming from ecoMobility.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications unless one or both of the projects win Transport Canada funding. If they are to receive funding, it is the intention of staff to recommend, when the work program(s) are awarded by Regional Council, that they be funded from the approved Capital Budget for Transportation Demand Management (CTR00908). \$422,399 is currently available in CTR00908.

Budget Summary: CTR00908 - Transportation Demand Management

Balance as of May 23, 2008	\$ 422,399
Less: TDM Reserve Program	\$ 140,000*
Less: Guaranteed Ride Home Program	\$ 120,000*
Plus: ecoMOBILITY funding TDM Reserve	\$ 70,000
Plus: ecoMOBILITY funding Guaranteed Ride Home Program	<u>\$ 60,000</u>
Balance	\$ 292,399

*These are estimated costs of the TDM Reserve and Guaranteed Ride Home Programs. If ecoMOBILITY funding is not awarded we will explore implementing both of these programs on a smaller scale.

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

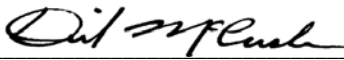
Regional Council may choose not to submit one or both of the funding applications. This is not recommended, as both programs have value in the development of TDM for the region and federal funding will lessen their total cost to the Municipality.

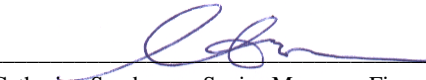
ATTACHMENTS

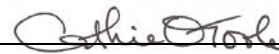
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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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