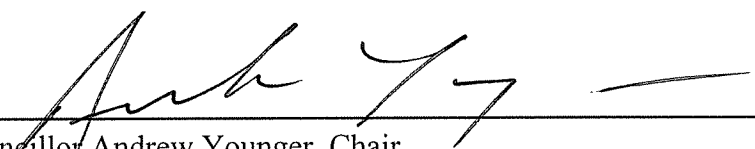


Halifax Regional Council  
September 30, 2008

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Councillor Andrew Younger, Chair  
Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee

**DATE:** September 22, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Undergrounding of Overhead Utilities in Capital District

**ORIGIN**

September 22, 2008 meeting of the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that HRM Regional Council:**

- 1. Approve the utilities underground application ranking, undertaken by HRM staff and Spring Garden Road and Quinpool Road be considered for funding approval.**
- 2. Funding for these projects be allocated as part of the associated Capital District Streetscape Improvements.**
- 3. Approve an annual funding review to be established to identify upcoming opportunities and associated costs, including Wyse Road.**

## **BACKGROUND**

At the September 22, 2008 Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee meeting, staff presented a report on this matter (attached). The Committee passed a motion endorsing the staff recommendation with minor revisions to recommendation 2, to highlight that the fact that this pertains to *Capital District* streetscape improvements; and to recommendation 3, to include Wyse Road in annual funding reviews to identify upcoming opportunities and associated cost. Staff have no difficulty with these minor revisions.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Please see attached staff report dated September 12, 2008.

## **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**

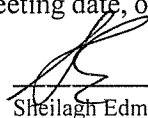
Regional Council could choose not to approve this report. This is not recommended

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 'A' - Staff report dated September 12, 2008.

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.

Report Prepared by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant



PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Energy and Underground Services Committee  
September 22, 2008**

**TO:** Andrew Younger, Chair and Members of Energy and Underground Services Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Mike Labrecque", written over a horizontal line.

**SUBMITTED BY:** For Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director, Transportation and Public Works

**DATE:** September 12, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Undergrounding of Overhead Utilities in Capital District

**ORIGIN**

- May 19, 2005 HRM Council Report - Underground Feasibility Study
- October 18, 2005 HRM Council Report - Pole Free Areas
- February 21, 2006 HRM Council Report - Underground Wiring Project Criteria

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Energy and Underground Service Committee recommend to HRM Council that:

1. The utilities undergrounding application ranking, undertaken by HRM staff, be approved and Spring Garden Road and Quinpool Road be considered for funding approval.
2. Funding for these projects be allocated as part of the associated streetscape improvements.
3. An annual funding review be established to identify upcoming opportunities and associated costs.

## **BACKGROUND**

In February 2008, the Energy and Underground Services Committee of Council recommend that:

“Regional Council approve the criteria to assess the merits of underground wiring projects, prioritize projects and allocate resources.”

This was in response to a motion passed by the HRM Council on October 18, 2005, authorizing staff to develop a criteria to assess the merits of underground wiring projects as a tool to prioritize projects and allocate resources, with priority to be given to the Capital District area.

## **DISCUSSION**

In response to requests to examine the feasibility of undergrounding in conjunction with a recently developed five year streetscape improvement plan for the Capital District, in addition to a multi use development application on the corner of Wentworth and Ochterloney streets, HRM staff undertook to apply the approved matrix evaluation to a number of utility undergrounding applications. The applications included:

- Ochterloney Street (Wentworth Street to Alderney Avenue)
- Spring Garden Road (South Park Street to Queen Street)
- Quinpool Road (Robie Street to Vernon Street)
- Gottingen Street (Cogswell Street to North Street)

The evaluation group was made up of representatives from a number of HRM departments, including:

- Transportation and Public Works
- Community Development
- Infrastructure and Asset Management
- Community Development

The methodology that was used to evaluate the four projects was the Underground Wiring Project Criteria (approved by Council, February 21, 2006). Each of the projects was reviewed and compared, using the five different criteria. The criteria range from Aesthetic/Heritage impact to Cost Sharing Opportunity Coordination. In summary, the projects received the following scores.

- |                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| • Spring Garden Road | 84 |
| • Quinpool Road      | 70 |
| • Gottingen Street   | 70 |
| • Ochterloney Street | 50 |

The evaluation process included one development project, and three streetscape projects. With both of these application types, opportunities may exist where the incremental cost to underground utilities in association with another activity is much more reasonable than if the undergrounding was

undertaken on its own. However, with opportunities exceeding the available funds, and as the list continues to grow with new development projects being approved, it is essential that priorities continue to be reevaluated, and a funding allocation process be identified such that opportunities in the pole free zone are not missed.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Capital Account # CDV00736 - Underground Wiring in Capital District has been directed to underground projects in the Capital District. None of the \$725,000.00 has been used to date. However, the priority list includes projects that far exceed this amount. The Spring Garden Road utilities undergrounding work has been approved by Council. There will not be adequate funds to accommodate any of the other identified undergrounding priorities. Project financing and Council authorization would need to be requested in the 2009-2010 Capital budget to cover Quinpool Road undergrounding, which is the timeframe identified in the Capital District Streetscape Program.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report does comply with the Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operation reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

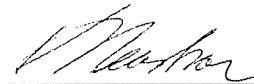
**ATTACHMENTS**

**APPENDIX A - Underground Wiring Project Criteria**

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.

Report Prepared by: Angus Doyle, P.Eng., Manager, Utilities Coordination, TPW, 490-5019

Report Approved by:



Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic and Right of ways, TPW, 490-6637

Report Approved by:



Cathie O'Toole., Director Infrastructure and Asset Management, 490-4825

## APPENDIX A

### UNDERGROUND WIRING PROJECT CRITERIA MATRIX EVALUATION - OCHTERLONEY STREET August 25, 2008

	Criteria	Max. Weight	Ochterloney Street	Spring Garden Rd	Quinpool Rd	Gottingen Street
1	<b>Aesthetic / Heritage Impact</b> Proximity to/and impact upon culturally / architecturally significant, or designated historic sites or streetscape/waterfronts.	30	15	25	15	20
2	<b>Benefit to Pedestrian Realm</b> Potential impact upon the pedestrian experience of the site. Review of existing spatial opportunities/constraints found within the public realm; e.g. enhanced pedestrian safety and snow removal operations, sidewalk width, pedestrian/vehicular counts, facade characteristics, pedestrian/vehicular visibility restrictions, existing public amenities/signage.	15	7	15	9	13
3	<b>Urban Forest Impact</b> Review of existing tree stock with an evaluation of the potential for increasing the urban forest. An appraisal of the capacity for an increased urban forest to aid in storm water intercept, prevent asphalt degradation, prevent significant tree loss within new development areas.	20	10	15	16	15
4	<b>Economic Impact</b> Based upon commercial assessments, the level of economic/commercial activity existing within the subject area. Priority to be given to major commercial corridors. Review of the condition of existing infrastructure and power plant reliability within area.	15	8	14	10	12
5	<b>Cost Sharing Opportunity Coordination</b> Funding partnerships and Capital project coordination between HRM business units and external agencies; e.g. BIDs developers, NSPI, Aliant.	20	10	15	20	10
	<b>Total</b>	100	50	84	70	70