

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 26, 2009

SUBJECT: Transportation Committees

ORIGIN

Transportation Council Focus Area discussion on February 10, 2009, regarding the establishment of a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee to Council, and a Capital Transportation Committee (Authority) with the Province. A motion was put forward requesting the following:

“Moved by Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Sloane that Regional Council approve the formation of a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee comprising of three residents, three members of Council, three HRM staff, and one Provincial representative and, further, Council recommend that the Mayor approach the Province to form a Capital Transportation Committee (Authority).”

This motion was deferred pending a staff report clarifying the role and function of the these two committees.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- Council re-affirm its interest in the concept of a Capital Transportation Authority (CTA) and ask the Mayor to approach the Province regarding the establishment of a CTA.
- Council approve in principle a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee to be considered as part of the Transportation Council Focus Area and Committees of Council review, with mandate and scope to be determined.

BACKGROUND

During Council's presentation on the Transportation CFA, there was discussion of several committees related to transportation. This report clarifies their respective roles and responsibilities and proposes next steps for each.

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee:

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee is being proposed as part of the Transportation Council Focus Area. In essence, this Committee would function as a committee of Council whose responsibility would be establishing HRM's policies and goals around transportation. Membership would be Councillors, citizens, or some combination thereof. Its scope may encompass the responsibilities of the following existing advisory committees:

- Accessible Transportation
- Active Transportation
- Private Roads
- Northwest Transit

Further details will be brought back to Council later this spring as part of the report on Committees of Council reform.

Capital Transportation Committee (Authority):

The Capital Transportation Authority concept originates from a proposal HRM made to the Province in 2003. It stemmed from a situation where multiple agencies and levels of government (such as HRM, the Province, Bridge Commission, Port Authority, HIAA, etc) were creating separate, and sometimes conflicting, strategies around transportation services. In an effort to develop a streamlined and comprehensive strategy for the Municipality as a whole, HRM recommended the establishment of a body with all involved stakeholders which would align long-term strategic plans for a seamless transportation network. Services for inclusion under the CTA were mass transit, ferries, parking, major road networks and bridges. HRM originally saw it as a municipal agency with a board of Directors, reporting to Council through the CAO. The purpose of the CTA was to enable an efficient and coordinated transportation network, and support decision-making at the appropriate jurisdiction.

In February 2004, HRM was invited to appear before the Provincial Standing Committee on Economic Development to present on the CTA. Following this discussions with the Province continued, leading to the introduction of Bill 64, *"An Act to Establish a Transportation Authority for the Capital Region"* in the Legislature in October 2004. However the Bill did not proceed to second reading and was shelved.

Strategic Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee:

In the absence of legislation establishing a CTA, the Province and HRM agreed to establish an interim “Strategic Joint Regional Transportation Planning Committee” (SJRTPC) with key senior staff members from HRM, NS Dept of Transportation, Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Halifax Gateway Council and HRM citizen representatives. The Committee meets quarterly and its mandate is to review, advise and make recommendations around priorities, strategies and operational plans for the municipality's transportation network. The Committee is co-chaired by HRM's CAO and the Deputy Minister of NS Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal.

DISCUSSION

Transportation has been a priority for Council for several years, and is now even more prominent having been designated a stand-alone Council Focus Area. As work around Transportation intensifies and its scope broadens, it is timely to consider how best to ensure HRM has strong, overarching and consistent goals and is able to effectively communicate those both internally and to external partners. The establishment of a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee would create a vehicle to do this by allowing its members to develop expertise and a broad understanding of the overlapping issues involved.

The mandate for both the proposed Regional Transportation Advisory Committee and CTA is the “efficient and effective movement of people and goods throughout the Municipality.” However the two bodies would deal with it at different levels. The proposed Advisory Committee would deal solely with HRM's goals, policies and strategies, while the CTA would look at issues on a multi-jurisdictional level, with the intent of aligning transportation-related strategies of all involved parties

The Terms of Reference for the SJRTPC state that it should "eventually transition into the Capital Transportation Authority." The main difference would be a move from the information-sharing SJRTPC, to a body with decision-making authority. The current SJRTPC has been a useful vehicle for staff from involved stakeholders to share information and promote collaboration. Through participation in the SJRTPC, HRM has been able to access funding for four projects (Larry Uteck Interchange, Margeson Drive Interchange, Burnside Drive pedway and Northwest Arm/Old Sambro Rd intersection signals). In light of the federal infrastructure funding now available, this may be an opportune time to proceed with the transition to a CTA, as a possible independent body such as the proposed CTA may be able to leverage those funds in ways not available to individual levels of government.

It should be emphasized that the use of the term “Capital Transportation Authority” does not imply an Authority with the same powers as HRM's Traffic Authority. The term “Authority” is simply what other Canadian municipalities have called their equivalent bodies, most notably the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority which is the most advanced and comprehensive model in Canada. All previous discussions around establishing a CTA in HRM have been based on the assumption that any such organization would report to Council and that Council would appoint its Directors. This is based on Vancouver's model which reported to the Greater Vancouver Regional

District (municipal council), and now reports to a Council consisting of Mayors representing the 21 municipalities serviced by the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority.

If desire from HRM and the Province is present, staff could work on the scope, mandate and membership issues and bring recommendations back to Council for further discussion.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Incremental work associated with this initiative would be accomplished within the existing budget envelopes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

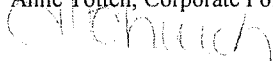
This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

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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