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**Item No. 11.1.7**

**Halifax Regional Council  
July 7, 2009**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
Wayne Anstey, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** June 24th, 2009

**SUBJECT:** **Project Substitution - Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF)**

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### **ORIGIN**

On November 24, 2005 the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) agreement was signed and HRM Council submitted a prioritized project listing encompassing the Conrad Bridge to Mic Mac Blvd., as one of three urban Active Transportation Trail Projects.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Regional Council approve substitution of the Burnside Drive trail corridor in Burnside Industrial Park and Innovation Drive active transportation trail corridor located in the Bedford West Development, on the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund priority list. Both projects would replace the Shubenacadie Corridor trail section between Conrad Bridge to Mic Mac Blvd.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Conrad Bridge to Mic Mac Blvd. section was one of three urban active transportation trail projects identified for the cost shared MRIF agreement. Council approved the three trail projects as the urban component of the agreement. In the case of the Mic Mac Trail Section the goal was to complete one of the last remaining gaps from Mic Mac Mall to Halifax Harbour. Estimated project costs totalled \$450,000.

Staff originally put forward the Shubenacadie Corridor (Mic Mac section) because of written support in principle from the private landowner and the MRIF provided the opportunity to construct particularly difficult trail sections which typically fall outside normal funding processes. However, negotiations to acquire a formal trail easement over the private property recently failed due to other legal issues associated with the same property.

The two active transportation project alternatives being put forward for Council consideration are the Burnside Drive trail and Bedford West regional trail. Both have been planned and designed over the past several months, but have not been put forward for funding approval. Both projects connect to existing AT trail infrastructure developments and are extensions of AT projects currently under development.

The Burnside Drive trail is a continuation of the connection along side the Highfield Drive overpass. This three metre wide trail will enable residents to cross from the west side of Highway 111 over the Burnside Drive area and into Dartmouth Crossing. This is part of a multi-use project that will see trail developed the length of Burnside Drive.

The Bedford West regional trail system has been designed to accommodate the needs of the immediate and greater communities. The system is both off-road and on-road. This part of the trail is being developed as a 3.0 metre wide multi-use facility that will be paved and able to accommodate all modes of active transportation including cycling, walking, inline skating and wheelchairs. It is part of a much broader system that will connect residents from Clayton Park to Jack's Lake Park and areas in between.

## **DISCUSSION**

The recommended substitution of the two urban trail components fits with the original intention of Council, that the AT trail elements form the urban components of the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund agreement. Remaining MRIF components of the agreement are situated in sub-urban and rural communities.

From a regional perspective the new projects advance the Active Transportation Plan, approved by Council in 2006, the Regional Plan and connect with the main arterial corridors of the Regional Trails Plan.

The two substituted trail sections financially fit within the approved budget envelope of \$450,000 dollars. \$350,000 is proposed for allocation to the Burnside Drive project and \$100,000 for the Innovation Drive multi-use trail section. The scope of work planned for both projects will complete functional units of the larger network.

One of the recent changes that occurred on the private property adjacent to the Conrad Bridge was the construction of the North Dartmouth Trunk Sewer / Multi-use trail. This outstanding segment of shoreline trail was intended as a secondary connector that would support and tie into the planned main regional AT corridor along the 111 Highway. However, the result is it partially provides an alternative off-road, on road connection between the Bridge and Mic Mac Mall. As well it functionally enhances the link to the Shubenacadie Canal Corridor and Shubie Park.

Pending Council approval, Staff will present the new projects to the Provincial Steering Committee which oversee the implementation of MRIF cost shared envelope. Subject to Council approval, the expectation is that provincial approval will be forthcoming.

With the majority of the 09 construction season remaining IAM Staff are optimistic that the tender process can be initiated and the projects delivered by the March 2010 deadline for expending the cost shared agreement monies.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The Shubenacadie Corridor trail is budgeted within capital project CDG00984 Regional Trails for \$450,000 (\$257,000 MRI \$193,000 HRM). The Burnside Drive trail corridor and Innovation Drive active transportation trail corridor will be substituted for the Shubenacadie Corridor trail along with its budget. Therefore there are no budget adjustments necessary as all activity will take place in the same account. Prior financial commitments to the MRIF cost shared funding agreement will remain the same. The target active transportation project priority list will change pending Council approval.

### **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 not approve the substituted active transportation projects as recommended and reallocate the \$450,000 dollars to another MRIF Project.

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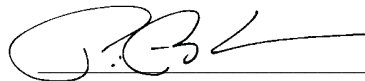
**ATTACHMENTS**

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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