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Item No. 2
Halifax Regional Council
April 20, 2010

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Phillip Townsend, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

DATE: April 7, 2010

SUBJECT: Earth Day Activities

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

This report originates from Staff.

BACKGROUND

From www.earthday.ca:

Celebrated every April 22nd Earth Day is the largest, most celebrated environmental event worldwide. More than 6 million Canadians join 1 billion people in over 170 countries in staging events and projects to address local environmental issues. Nearly every school child in Canada takes part in an Earth Day activity. Environmental challenges abound as our daily actions pollute and degrade the fragile environment that humans and wildlife depend on to survive.

What can we do? Earth Day provides the opportunity for positive actions and results. First launched as an environmental awareness event in the United States in 1970, Earth Day (April 22nd) is celebrated as the birth of the environmental movement. Earth Day is a powerful catalyst for change. The first Earth Day, spearheaded by Wisconsin Governor Gaylord Nelson and Harvard University student Denis Hayes, involved 20 million participants in teach-ins that addressed decades of environmental pollution. The event inspired the US Congress to pass clean air and water acts, and establish the Environmental Protection Agency to research and monitor environmental issues and enforce environmental laws. In 1990, two million Canadians joined 200 million people in 141 nations in celebrating the first International Earth Day. In many countries, the global event brought pressure on heads of state to take part in the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to address issues such as climate change and the world wide loss of species. In Canada, Earth Day has grown into Earth Week and even Earth Month to accommodate the profusion of events and projects. They range from large public events, such as Victoria's Earth Walk (5,000 participants), Edmonton's Earth Day Festival at Hawrelak Park (30,000 participants), and Oakville, Ontario's Waterways Clean-up (2,000 participants) to the thousands of small, private events staged by schools, employee groups and community groups.

DISCUSSION

In preparation for Earth Day, Sustainable Environment Management Office (SEMO) staff have collaborated with community groups and other HRM departments, including Transportation and Public Works, Halifax Police, and Community Development to put together some activities for Earth Day.

Following the grave and heavy information that came from COP15, and struggles as Federal, Provincial, and Municipal governments grapple with the budget challenge resulting from an economy coming out of the tail end of a recession, consensus is that we need something to celebrate. We need something that brings the community together in a positive manner. We need something to make us feel good about ourselves. It is time to celebrate the beauty of our Municipality. It is time to celebrate the great environmental accomplishments that government, community groups, and citizens have achieved. It is time to celebrate all of the initiatives that we have in place in HRM and the effort that is ongoing in making our community the most liveable place in the world.. So, using

our Recreation Services Trails Information (<http://www.halifax.ca/rec/TrailsHrm.html>), It is time to: Get Out... Check It Out!

Working with our partners, we have organized several Earth Day (April 22) activities as follows:

Dartmouth HarbourFront Walk

Join HRM staff and members of Regional Council at 10:30 AM on April 20th in the parking lot by the Alderney Ferry Terminal and enjoy a 30 minute stroll along the waterfront on our HarbourFront Trail (<http://www.halifax.ca/rec/documents/HRMHikeRackCards-DartmouthHarbourfront.pdf>). Enjoy the beautiful view of the harbour! (Attachment One)

Noon Hour Bike Ride from Grand Parade

Organized with the Halifax Cycling Coalition, Clean Nova Scotia, and Halifax Regional Police, join us for a noon hour ride from Grand Parade. Bring your helmet and enjoy this parade of cycling! (Attachment Two)

Earth Walk with Adventure Earth Centre

At 5:30 PM, join the staff and youth leaders of HRM's Adventure Earth Centre for an evening Earth Walk and Nature Activities in beautiful Fleming Park. (Attachment Three)

Earth Day in the Garden: Build your own Potato Tower

Join Ecology Action Centre and the Goodness Grows Dartmouth Gardening Association at the Goodness Grows Garden in the back of the Findlay Community Centre to learn how to grow potatoes in a small, urban, spaces using vertical potato towers. (Attachment Four)

In addition to these community events, HRM will be:

1. Signing the International Charter for Walking;
2. Planting vegetable seedlings at the HRM Greenhouse for growing for Hope Cottage;
3. With Halifax Water, providing Ecology Action Centre with two rain barrels and \$1,000 for soil to help support Community Gardening efforts in the municipality;

April 22nd is Earth Day, and HRM is celebrating!

Please join us either in one of our events, other Earth Day events which will be listed in a variety of calenders (including the Nova Scotia Environmental Networks calender at www.nsen.ca), or doing your own celebration for Earth Day.

Get Out... Check It Out!

Finally, for Earth Day, have a read of the Province of Nova Scotia's Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity (EGSPA) Act 2020 Vision. Our EGSPA legislation is one of the greatest blends of Environmental and Economic legislation anywhere in North America. Striving to meet the

goals of the Act is the focus of staff across both municipal and provincial government. (Attachment Five: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/EcoNovaScotia/pdf/2020FactSheet.pdf>)

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost to HRM to organize these events is less than \$500 which is contained within 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

Attachment One	Dartmouth HarbourFront Walk Poster
Attachment Two	Noon Hour Bike Ride Poster
Attachment Three	Adventure Earth Centre, Earth Walk Poster
Attachment Four	Earth Day in the Garden Poster
Attachment Five	EGSPA 2020 Vision

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: Richard MacLellan, Manager - SEMO, 490-6056



Earth Day- Harbourfront Trail Walk



Come celebrate our Municipality this Earth Day!
Participate in HRM's Dartmouth Harbourfront Trail Walk. Put on your walking shoes, fill your water bottle and join in the fun!

Come join HRM Regional Councillors, Staff and the community for a "coffee break" walk on the Dartmouth Harbourfront Trail to celebrate Earth Day!

Meet us in the Ferry Terminal parking lot for a 10:30 am sharp departure!



Brought to you by:



Check Online for other Earth Day Activities at www.halifax.ca/environment/semo.html



Earth Day-Bike Ride



Come celebrate our Municipality this Earth Day! Participate in HRM's Earth Day Bike Ride. Grab your bike, helmet and water bottle and join in the fun!

Start/Finish: The Grand Parade

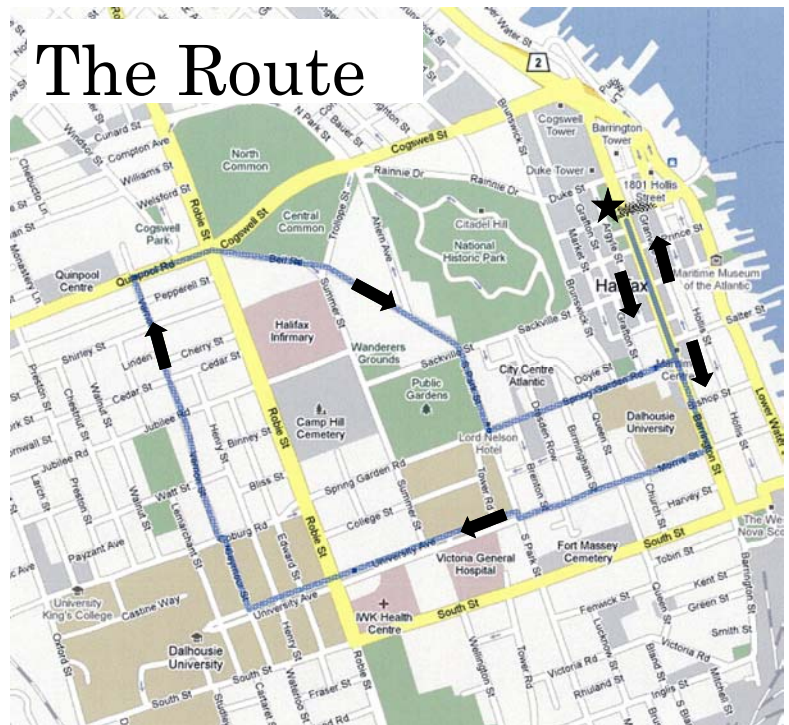
When: noon—1pm on April 22nd, 2010

Everyone Welcome * Rain or Shine

Join:

- HRM Councillors
 - Halifax Regional Police
 - HRM Staff
 - Halifax Cycling Coalition
 - Clean Nova Scotia
- for a **6 km** bike ride that will include a stop at the Dalhousie Campus Bike Centre.

The Route



Clean Nova Scotia
inspiring environmental change

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Check Online for other Earth Day Activities at www.halifax.ca/environment/semo.html



Come Celebrate
EARTH DAY
with the
ADVENTURE EARTH CENTRE!
Thursday, April 22

Come join the staff and youth leaders of HRM's Adventure Earth Centre for an evening of earth walk and nature activities in beautiful Fleming Park, followed by displays and refreshments.

6:00 Earth Walks...a 45 minute fun and engaging series of activities in the woods. (Small groups will depart up until 6:45)

7:30 Enjoy the displays regarding more earth-friendly choices, while enjoying some local and organic refreshments inside the AEC.

WHEN: 6:00 TO 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 22

WHERE: Adventure Earth Centre
68 Parkhill Road, Halifax
(The little stone church in Fleming Park)

WHO: Everyone welcome!

Please R.S.V.P. so that we have an idea of how many to expect. See you here!
490-4539 or peacet@halifax.ca





Earth Day-Potato Tower



Come celebrate our Municipality this Earth Day!
Participate in HRM's Earth Day Potato Tower Building.
Grab your hammer, soil and compost & join in the fun!

Where: Findlay Community Centre— 26 Elliot Street—adjacent to Sullivan's Pond in Dartmouth

When: 5:30—6:30 pm on April 22nd, 2010

Everyone Welcome * Rain or Shine

In the event of rain the workshop will move inside to Room 101

This spud's for you...

Earth day in the garden, build your own potato tower! Come learn how to grow potatoes in small, urban, spaces using vertical potato towers. Using affordable building materials and simple design, the towers allow any urban garden to grow a full harvest of potatoes. During the workshop we will build a tower for the Goodness Grows Garden and share design plans and growing tips for your home or community garden.



Brought to you by:



Check Online for other Earth Day Activities at www.halifax.ca/environment/semo.html

N O V A S C O T I A ' S 2020 VISION

Nova Scotia aims to have one of the cleanest and most sustainable environments in the world by 2020.

This commitment was adopted in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act, proclaimed in June 2007. The act sets out 21 far-reaching goals for the province, ranging from reduced air emissions and waste, to new energy standards for buildings and increased protection of our land and water. These goals are outlined below.

Ecosystem Protection

Protecting our most valuable assets-our natural environment

- Legally protect 12% of the total land mass of the province by 2015
- Adopt strategies to ensure the sustainability of forestry, mining, parks, and biodiversity by 2010
- Establish a policy to prevent net loss of wetlands by 2009

Air Emissions

Doing our part to fight climate change and improve the air we breathe

- Reduce GHG emissions to at least 10% below 1990 levels by 2020
- Adopt emissions standards for new vehicles by 2010
- Reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by 20% (from 2000 levels) by 2009
- Reduce sulphur dioxide emissions by 50% (from sources existing in 2001) by 2010
- Reduce mercury emissions by 70% (from 2001 levels) by 2010
- Meet the Canada-wide standard for airborne fine particulate matter by 2010
- Meet the Canada-wide standard for ground-level ozone (which contributes to smog) by 2010

Renewable Energy

Tapping into nature's source of energy

- Obtain 18.5% of Nova Scotia's total electricity needs from renewable sources by 2013

Water Quality

Restoring, preserving, and managing our precious water resources

- Develop a comprehensive water-resource management strategy by 2010
- Provide at least primary treatment to all wastewater treatment facility discharges by 2017
- Meet operating guidelines for all septage treatment facilities by 2011
- All municipal public drinking water supplies will meet the province's treatment standards by 2008

Contaminated Sites

Building our economy by renewing our land

- Develop regulatory tools to stimulate redevelopment of contaminated land by 2010

Solid Waste

Continuing to be an international leader in solid waste management

- Reduce Nova Scotia's solid waste disposal rate to no more than 300 kg/person per year (38% reduction from 2006 levels) by 2015

Sustainable Purchasing

Leading the way in the purchase of environmentally and socially responsible goods and services

- Develop and adopt a sustainable procurement policy for government departments by January 1, 2009

Energy-Efficient Buildings

Saving money and energy in our buildings at work, home, and play

- Require all new residential dwellings in the province to display an EnerGuide rating by 2008 (EnerGuide is a national energy efficiency rating, from 1 to 100. The higher the number, the higher the efficiency.)
- Require an EnerGuide rating of 80 on all new residential dwellings by 2011
- Construct a green-certified government building as a demonstration facility by 2015

Achieving the 2020 Vision

The province will be developing new strategies and policies to advance its 2020 Vision in co-operation with other levels of government, private industry, and the public. The Minister of Environment and Labour will report annually to the House of Assembly on progress made toward the goals.

Achieving the province's vision will require effort and commitment from all Nova Scotians. We are confident that we can live up to the challenge. The future prosperity of our economy and ecosystems depends on it.

This is an overview of the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. It is not intended to be a complete description and is not binding on the Crown. Please refer to the official version of the legislation, which is available online through the Nova Scotia Legislature website.