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Item No. 6
Halifax Regional Council
May 18, 2010

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Reashor".

Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Acting Director, Transportation and Public Works

DATE: May 4, 2010

SUBJECT: Smart Car Program

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Staff

BACKGROUND

As part of HRM's desire to decrease dependence upon single occupant vehicle trips for the commute to work, a program was developed to provide staff with vehicles to be signed out for meetings, site visits and other HRM business. The program was developed in 2007, with cars purchased in the fall of 2008 and the program launched on April 22, 2009 as part of the Earth Day celebrations.

DISCUSSION

Providing fleet vehicles for use by employees is common throughout North America in both the public and private sectors. HRM has a municipal fleet consisting of vehicles designed to meet specific needs within the organization. This has resulted in staff who do not have access to municipal fleet vehicles having to drive their own vehicles to work so that they can be used for meetings, site visits and other HRM-related business. In order to decrease the reliance upon single occupant vehicle travel, HRM initiated a program that would enable any HRM employee to sign out a vehicle for short periods rather than using their own vehicle. Staff selected the Smart Car and initiated the process to develop the program.

Initially, HRM purchased three new Smart Cars to be located at Scotia Square, Alderney Gate and Eric Spicer. Each Smart Car was branded with the Commuter Options program name, Smart Trip and the HRM Logo. Three existing Smart Cars were added to the program that had been purchased by Municipal Operations, increasing the fleet to six vehicles. Each location has two vehicles, however, this is currently under review and it is anticipated that a few will be moved to other locations later this year to better match demand.

The cars are available to staff as required. While cars can be signed out beyond our usual business hours, the vehicles are not to be brought to individuals' homes. Each one is to be picked up and returned to its location after use, with keys being locked in their desk until they can be returned to the key holder.

As with many fleet vehicles, mileage and users are tracked. Forms are available in each car (see Attachment 1) and the users are required to fill them out. Information requested includes start and end mileage, name and business unit and mode of travel to work that particular day. We also request that each user sign a user agreement (see Attachment 2) indicating that they understand the policies and conditions of use for the program. As well, driver's licences are checked by the key holders to ensure that they are valid. The program has proven to be convenient, effective and well-received by staff. Booking of the vehicles and tracking of availability is done through the HRM GroupWise calendar, similar to the way meeting rooms are reserved.

The Smart Car program was not designed to decrease the overall number of fleet vehicles purchased by HRM. It is intended to promote a reduction in the use of private automobiles for the commute to work and encourage the use of more sustainable modes.

While there are no immediate plans to expand the program beyond the current number of vehicles, HRM staff plan to increase promotion for the use of sustainable modes of transportation over the next few months to encourage staff to switch from single occupant vehicle trips to using transit, car pools, and active modes. The availability of the Smart Cars will aid in this decision as one reason for needing to drive to work can be eliminated. The availability of the cars has proven to be particularly valuable to students and younger staff members, who may need access

to a vehicle for field work and may not own a vehicle. Since there is no minimum age requirement, it is accessible to all staff with valid driver's licences, unlike other options which often have a minimum age requirement.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

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 1: Smart Car Travel Log

Attachment 2: Smart Car User Agreement

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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Report Approved by:

David McCusker, Manager Strategic Transportation Planning 490-6696

SMARTTRIP

Smart Car Travel Log

Car #: _____

Location: _____

Week of: _____

Date	Time	Odometer Reading		Destination/Purpose	Name/ Business Unit	Mode of Travel to Work Today*
		Start	Finish			

**Please indicate if this is your usual mode of travel.
All information collected is for research and evaluation and will be kept confidential.*



User Agreement

Please be advised that the HRM will be evaluating the impact of providing cars for general use by employees. The intent is to see if there is a change in travel behaviour and modal choice. Therefore, it is important for all to fill in the Travel Logs located in each car and provide the data requested. We will be using this information for research and evaluation purposes only.

The following policies are conditions for the use of these vehicles:

1. A valid driver's license is required to drive these vehicles. It must be presented to the key holder, when picking up the key to the car. If a valid driver's license is not shown, the keys will not be issued.
2. The HRM cell phone policy and provincial laws related to cell phone use are to be adhered to. If the policy and provincial laws are broken, individuals will no longer be able to use the Smart Cars (**Located in glove box**).
3. Seatbelts are to be used at all times.
4. Fuel cards are located in each car. The policy, is to be followed (**Located in glove box**). If the tank is ¼ or less, it is required that you fill up at one of HRM's site. A map is attached.
5. The cars must be booked through GroupWise and travel time is to be included when booking. It is essential that the cars are returned at the time indicated as others will be waiting to use them at their requested time.
6. The travel logs must be filled out in their entirety.
7. Cars are not for personal use, cannot be brought home and are not to be used for travel to and from work.
8. Vehicles must be returned to their original location, (including assigned parking space) and the keys returned to the key holder. All efforts are to be made to return cars by 4:30 pm. However, if this is not possible, keys can be dropped off where indicated at each location. See attached diagram for location of drop box
9. Non-HRM staff cannot travel in these vehicles due to their size.
10. Cars are to be kept clean and returned in the condition they were found in. The Consumption of food and drinks is not permitted, unless drinks are in a travel mug.
11. Failure to conform to this policy will result in loss of privileges in the Smart Car program.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Location: _____