



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 10.4.1
Halifax Regional Council
April 17, 2011

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed _____
for: Councillor Greg Rankin, Chair, Transportation Standing Committee

DATE: March 26, 2012

SUBJECT: Request to Province – HRM Traffic Authority Ability to Reduce
Maximum Speed Limits

ORIGIN

Motion approved at the March 1, 2012 Transportation Standing Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Standing Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council endorse the draft correspondence included as “Attachment A” to this report to the Provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal requesting consideration be given to allow the HRM Traffic Authority to post maximum speed limits lower than 50 km/h.

BACKGROUND

At the March 1, 2012 meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee, a presentation was made by the Halifax Cycling Coalition (“HCC”) regarding their Kickstand Professional Workshop findings. One of the points raised by the HCC was designing streets with the safety of cyclists in mind, such as through the concept of reduced speed limits (ie. 30 km/h) in areas with bike lanes or in areas with high bike traffic. This concept is in use in areas of Europe and creates a safer environment for cyclists.

DISCUSSION

The Committee discussed reduced speed limits with HCC members and Mr. Ken Reashor, HRM Traffic Authority. It was noted that in areas of Europe, cities and municipalities have been granted the authority to impose reduced speed zones where they choose. It was also noted that the Province is developing a Sustainable Transportation Strategy, and this may be an opportunity to request this improvement for cyclist safety.

The Transportation Standing Committee approved a motion that that the Transportation Standing Committee request the Traffic Authority to draft a letter to the Nova Scotia Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, to circulate to whole of Regional Council, requesting the province to provide municipalities with enabling legislation to reduce motor vehicle speed zones to lower than 50 km/h. The draft letter requested is included as Attachment “A” to this report.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Transportation Standing Committee is comprised of eight members of Regional Council who have been duly elected to represent their districts. Transportation Standing Committee meetings are held once a month and are open to the public, unless otherwise stated. Agendas, reports, and minutes from these meetings are posted online.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose to not endorse sending the attached correspondence to the Minister, or request amendments to the attached correspondence.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment “A” Draft correspondence to Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Renewal from Mayor Kelly dated March 20, 2012.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.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: Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant, 490-6517

Attachment “A”

DRAFT

March 20, 2012

Honourable Bill Estabrooks NDP
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
2nd Floor, Johnston Building
1672 Granville Street
P.O. Box 186
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3Z8

Dear Minister Estabrooks,

Current legislation in the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act allows that the lowest maximum speed limit permitted to be posted on any highway in the Province is 50 km/h. Halifax Regional Council requests that consideration be given to allow the HRM Traffic Authority to post maximum speed limits lower than 50 km/h.

It is becoming increasingly more common for staff to receive complaints from residents regarding vehicle speed on their roadway in their neighbourhood. This is especially so where the actual speed of traffic may not be illegal, but is deemed inappropriate given the prevailing conditions. Roadway design deficiencies such as narrow travel ways, lack of sidewalks, narrow road shoulders and irregularities in alignment as well as abutting property features such as driveway locations are not always able to be addressed through roadway improvements.

The posting of a lower speed limit is viewed as one way to assist staff in addressing the concerns of residents and creating a safer walking and driving environment for all road users.

Your consideration of this request would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mayor Peter Kelly