

Item No. 11.1.5
Halifax Regional Council
April 1, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original signed by



SUBMITTED BY:

Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by



Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 4, 2014

SUBJECT: **DalTRAC Transportation Collaboratory Contribution**

ORIGIN

The HRM 2010/11 Corporate Plan stated that the goal of a well-planned transportation network allowing the easy flow of people, goods and services throughout the Municipality, would be achieved by building a more advanced computerized trip demand model. The approved 2011/12 Project Budget included \$160,000 for the development of a regional road network demand model and \$25,063 of that was committed to the DalTRAC Transportation Collaboratory to leverage \$195,143 in funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. HRM Legal Services has determined that this commitment is more properly categorized as a one-time contribution that requires the approval of Regional Council.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 79(1)(av) of the HRM Charter states that the Council may expend money required by the Municipality for a grant or contribution to ... (v) any charitable, nursing, medical, athletic, educational, environmental, cultural, community, fraternal, recreational, religious, sporting, or social organization within the Province.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve a one-time contribution of \$25,063 (exempt of HST) towards the creation of the Dalhousie Transportation Collaboratory (DalTRAC), with funding from Project No. CTU01285 – Road Network Model, as outlined in the Financial Implications section of this report.

BACKGROUND

On October 4, 2005, Mayor Peter Kelly, on behalf of Halifax Regional Council, and Paul Greenhalgh, President of NSCAD University and Chair of the Metro University Presidents' Consortium, signed a memorandum of understanding to pursue collaborative opportunities which included, among other things, improved transportation connections and strategic planning.

In 2011, Dalhousie University submitted a proposal to the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) to establish a transportation laboratory called "Dalhousie Transportation Collaboratory" (DalTRAC), under the supervision of Dr. Ahsan Habib. HRM offered a letter of support for the project and an offer to fund \$25,063 of the total \$195,143 investment proposed. The research infrastructure requested in the proposal was primarily based on the need to collect transportation data and model transportation demands within the Halifax Region. It was recognized that this effort would have benefit to both Dalhousie University in its research and to HRM in strategically planning infrastructure investments.

In January, 2012, CFI announced that it would fund the DalTRAC project.

DISCUSSION

This is before Council for approval as it is a contribution to an educational organization within the Province in accordance with Section 79(1)(av)(v) of the Charter. As such, and because it is outside of HRM's regular grants and contributions programs, it needs to be approved by Council.

Establishment of the DalTRAC facility is now completed and HRM has already benefitted substantially from the presence of DalTRAC.

Funding was approved through the Project Budget in both 2011/12 and 2012/13 to enhance the regional transportation demand model and to migrate it to the VISUM software package. The supplementary sheet indicated that this work would be done in collaboration with DalTRAC. HRM staff worked closely with DalTRAC in developing a new framework of transportation zones, relating those to census tracts and conducting an inventory and characterization of the transportation network. The result is that HRM and DalTRAC now own fully-functional network demand models that have already been used in transportation analysis (Regional Plan Review) and will be important in future work (Metro Transit System Review). We are aware of two other cities, St. John's and Winnipeg, who went through the same process of migrating networks to VISUM during this same time frame and both used over \$100,000 in consulting time, along with municipal staff resources, to complete the task. Due to the assistance from DalTRAC, HRM was able to achieve this with less than \$35,000 spent on consulting fees.

With DalTRAC now established, many research activities have been undertaken which have generated data and knowledge important to HRM priorities. Some of these (Share the Road Awareness Campaign) have been done without HRM funding and others (Bridge Bikeway/Pedway User Needs Survey) have been conducted with HRM funding support. In the

future, we expect to continue to take advantage of the presence of DalTRAC in our implementation of projects approved through the Project Budget process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The one-time contribution for the creation of the DalTRAC Transportation Collaboratory is funded by Project No. CTU01285 – Road Network Model. Budget availability has been confirmed by Finance.

Budget Summary:	<u>Project No. CTU01285 Road Network Model</u>	
	Cumulative Unspent Budget	\$680,706.27
	Less: DalTRAC Contribution	<u>\$ 25,063.00*</u>
	Balance	\$655,643.27

* This project was estimated in the Approved 2010/11 Project Budget at \$160,000

The remaining funds will be used to engage a consultant to review and optimize the transit capability of the model and to collect travel data to support and calibrate the model.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement has been undertaken with respect to the creation of the DalTRAC Transportation Collaboratory

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications to the creation of DalTRAC, although much of the research work that will be undertaken there is connected to the measurement, monitoring, and reduction of environmental impacts from the transportation sector.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may choose to not provide financial support for the creation of the DalTRAC Transportation Collaboratory. This is not recommended as the CFI acceptance of the Dalhousie proposal was based, in part, on funding from HRM and the Municipality has already benefitted substantially from the presence of DalTRAC.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

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: David McCusker, P.Eng., Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, 490-6696

Report Approved by:

Austin French, Manager, Planning, 490-6717

Financial Approval by:

Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO, 490-6308

Report Approved by:

Jane Fraser, Director, Planning & Infrastructure, 490-7166
