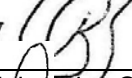
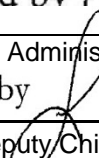




P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 11.1.7**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**November 10, 2015**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed by   
Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer  
Original Signed by   
Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** November 10, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Fire Stations Nos. 62 and 63

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### **ORIGIN**

**Motion** of Halifax Regional Council put and passed on April 28, 2015:

That Halifax Regional Council request a staff report and recommendation with respect to the implications of Fire Station 62, which is Harrietsfield, on the provision of fire protection including consideration of options for future fire coverage for Sambro, Harrietsfield and surrounding area including but not limited to the building of a new Fire Station in the community of Williamswood.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter 2008, c. 39, Part X, Fire and Emergency Services, section 304 confers legislative authority to maintain and provide fire and emergency services by providing the service, assisting others to provide the service, working with others to provide the service, or a combination of means.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Direct staff to prepare for Regional Council's consideration, a detailed capital/land/ operating costs for the consolidation of Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) in a new centralized location; and
2. Direct staff to initiate the process to decommission Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) and to initiate settlement discussions with the insurer for a cash settlement based on the estimated cost of repair for Station No. 62.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Fire Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) – 1070 Old Sambro Road, Harrietsfield**

Station No. 62 was staffed with 17 volunteer firefighters, 24-hours per day, seven days a week.

On January 01, 2015, Fire Station No. 62 was heavily damaged by fire and is currently out of commission. A structural engineer deemed the building unsafe for use as a fire station, including the storage of apparatus and equipment. As of today, the insurance replacement costs have not been finalized. The rough estimate provided by the Insurance Company's Engineer, to clean up the fire debris in the apparatus bays so they can be used for minimal use of the bays for storage is \$50,057. Currently, the building is not used as an operational fire station. The apparatus and equipment normally operating out of Station No. 62 have been relocated to other stations; the tanker is now located at Station No. 60 (Herring Cove); and the engine is now located at Station No. 65 (Upper Tantallon).

HRM Corporate Real Estate engaged a brokerage firm to locate a temporary suitable space to place the fire apparatus. The primary factor in determining an optimum station location is travel time, a component of total response time. Input from the volunteer firefighters and the local Regional Councillor helped identify a viable temporary solution. Only one viable option was found. Unfortunately, the necessary building upgrades and safety modifications were cost prohibitive for the owner, and the building was no longer a viable temporary fire station choice. While the review was underway for a temporary area fire station, the volunteers from Station No. 62 were relocated to Station No. 63 (Sambro).

### **Fire Station No. 63 (Sambro) – 160 West Pennant Road, Sambro**

During the 2014 E Platoon staffing reconfiguration, the crew size at Station No. 63 increased from two career firefighters to four; providing enhanced fireground efficiencies and firefighter safety. The reallocation of resources to Station No. 63 resulted from a review of operations, including a fire hazard and risk assessment.

Station No. 63 was designed to accommodate two career staff and a minimal numbers of volunteers. The building interior is not large enough for the increased career staffing. A 30' mobile trailer was leased and placed on site as an interim solution to accommodate the firefighters. The cost for the 30 foot trailer was \$565 / month and approximately \$1,130 was spent on the lease.

After the January 01, 2015, fire at Station No. 62, the volunteer firefighters were relocated to Station No. 63; the 30 foot interim trailer became overcrowded and not able to house the 4 career and 17 volunteer firefighters. A 60 foot trailer was requisitioned to replace the 30 foot trailer. The lease costs increased to \$861 / month; the trailer was put in place in mid-June. The new trailer provides office space for both the career fire officer and the volunteer station chief. Station No. 63, although not an ideal and centrally located, provides for a better response to the Harrietsfield / Sambro area compared to Station No. 62 (Appendix III).

In the spring of 2015, Station No. 63 developed septic drainage issues. An inspection determined the septic field had to be replaced. However, due to the necessity in maintaining an area response location and with the expected timelines and costs to complete a full septic field repair, a temporary septic tank was installed. Department of Environment regulations require the temporary septic tank to be pumped every three days. Since its installation in April, 2015 to July 03, 2015, the cost for pumping services was \$14,100.

Station No. 63, now the only location for the four daytime career firefighters and the displaced 17 volunteer firefighters from Station No. 62, has no training room or offices, or standard amenities required for 21 firefighters. The building can accommodate two fire apparatus.

## Emergency Response Analysis

The catchment area for Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) has a population density of 44.3 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The population density for the Station No. 63 (Sambro) catchment area is 18.51 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The 2006 Service Delivery Standard includes a 10 minute travel time for areas <100 people per km<sup>2</sup>. Travel time is the interval from when the truck leaves the station until it arrives at the scene of an incident.

Attachment 1 shows the 10 minute travel time coverage for Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield). Attachment II shows the 10 minute travel time coverage for Station No. 6 (Herring Cove). Attachment III shows the 10 travel time coverage for Station No. 63 (Sambro).

A recent review of the area fire station locations, demand and resource analysis using the service delivery model in place indicated that closing Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) would have minimal operational response delays providing Station No. 6 (Herring Cove) located at 245 Herring Cove Road (staffed 24-hours, 7 days-a-week by career firefighters), and Station No. 63 (Sambro) located at 160 West Pennant Road, Sambro (staffed by career firefighters, Monday to Friday, 10.5 hours per day excluding statutory holidays with volunteer coverage in the evenings, weekends, and statutory holidays) remain operational.

Attachment IV shows the 10 minute travel time from a centralized location in the Williamswood community and the 10 minute travel time from Station No. 60 (Herring Cove). The entire area covered by Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) would be covered by a new consolidated station in the Williamswood community with some overlap in coverage with Station No. 6 (Herring Cove). The analysis demonstrates that this would be an optimum location for a centralized station for the provision of fire protection to the Sambro, Harrietsfield and surrounding area.

## DISCUSSION

### Part I: COST CONSIDERATIONS

**Career Staffing Costs:** Station No. 63 (Sambro) is currently staffed with an E Platoon career firefighter compliment. The salaries and benefits are captured in the existing HRFE Operating Budget.

**Volunteer Honourarium and Stipend Costs:** Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) is currently staffed with volunteer firefighters. The honourariums and stipends are captured in the existing HRFE Budget.

**Firefighting Equipment Costs:** Both the career and volunteer firefighters at Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) are fully equipped. Any required replacement equipment is captured in the existing HRFE Operating and Capital Budgets.

**Training Costs:** Training costs for existing career and volunteer firefighters are captured in the existing HRFE Operating Budget.

**Station Operating Costs:** Station operating costs include the following: utilities (heating fuel, natural gas, septic maintenance, electricity and water), safety systems, pest management, plumbing and heating, grounds and landscaping, environmental assessments/cleanup, incidental interior maintenance. Station operating costs are variable – dependent on station age, state of repair and nature of on-site facilities. For fiscal year 2014/15, the operating maintenance cost for Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) was \$49,152; for Station No. 63 (Sambro) \$43,105.70; total for both stations is \$92,257.

As a comparison, station operating costs for the most recent, albeit larger stations are as follows:

- Station No. 60 (Herring Cove) 2014 Operating Costs: \$51,784
- Station No. 65 (Upper Tantallon) 2014 Operating Costs: \$71,481

One new station would be less expensive to operate than the cost to operate two separate stations.

**Repair Costs – Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield):** Staff has been advised by the Adjuster for the Insurers that the estimated temporary repairs to Station No. 62 are approximately \$50,057. This would provide minimal use of the vehicle bays for fire apparatus and equipment storage. This would not include any office space or training space. The loss is covered to the lesser of repairs cost or the replacement cost of the building. At this time we have been advised that the building is repairable.

HRM should be entitled to the full cost of repair if HRFE elects to have the repairs completed and re-open the station. If the station is deemed redundant and the works are not initiated, the settlement would be based on the estimated repair cost less taxes, overhead and profit. Until the temporary works are completed, it is unclear as to the scope of the final repair or the cost in the absence of the full tender process.

**Temporary Costs – Station No. 63 (Sambro):** With the closure of Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield), all volunteers and career staff were relocated to Station No. 63. However, the building was not large enough to accommodate everyone. A 60 foot trailer is being leased at a cost of \$861/month and will remain in place until a final solution is in place. The station recently had a septic tank problem which has been permanently repaired, costing approximately \$43,100.

## **Part II: OPTIONS**

- **Option 1 – Consolidate Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) in a Centralized Location**

The Fire Underwriters Study which was presented to Council, recommended closing Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) and replacing the two stations with a single centralized station; assigning the 'E' Platoon complement to the new station supported by the existing core of volunteer firefighters from Station Nos. 62 and 63. GIS mapping and the response analysis indicate a new location in the Williamswood community would provide optimum response coverage for the Harrietsfield/ Sambro Communities (Attachment IV).

Staff is recommending this Option as the preferred outcome. A new better located Fire Station will provide a significant improvement to the Harrietsfield and Sambro communities from one location. A new centrally location station will respond in conjunction with Station 60 (Herring Cove) and Station 6 (Herring Cove Road – 24/7), and will provide a fire response for the majority of the Sambro – Harrietsfield road network in the target response times.

The communities currently covered by two stations (#62 - Harrietsfield) and #63 - Sambro), could be better covered with one consolidated station in the Williamswood community with some overlap in coverage with Station No. 6 (Herring Cove). The analysis demonstrates that this would be an optimum location for a centralized station for the provision of fire protection to the Sambro, Harrietsfield and surrounding area.

- **Option 2 – Consolidate Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro) into a new Station located on the current 63 location.**

Demolish Station Nos. 62 (Harrietsfield) and 63 (Sambro). Rebuild a new station on the Station No. 63 (Sambro) site as it is the better located station of the two stations, to service the area in conjunction with Station No. 60 (Herring Cove). This would eliminate the unknown land acquisition costs and should be a quicker process.

Staff does not recommend Option 2 as the physical location of the existing Station No. 63 (Sambro) is not ideally situated for response to the entire area.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost to complete the report can be accommodated within the approved 2015-16 operating budget.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

There has been no community engagement to date. The volunteer firefighters associated with Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) and the local Regional Councillor provided input into potential alternative solutions.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

Implications not identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council could direct staff to maintain the status quo – initiate settlement discussions with the insurer for a cash settlement based on the estimated cost for repair to Station 62 and continue to lease a 60 foot trailer for Station No. 63 (Sambro) and house both career and volunteer firefighters at that location.

This is not recommended for the reasons outlined in the Discussion section of this report. Station No. 63 (Sambro) is not large enough to accommodate the operational requirements of four career firefighters and 17 volunteer firefighters. The measures put in place to deal with the lack of space were meant to be temporary until a permanent solution was in place.

2. Council could direct staff to initiate settlement discussions with the insurer to repair the damage caused by fire at Station No. 62 (Harrietsfield) and not renovate Station No. 63 (Sambro) to house the four career staff.

This is not recommended for the reasons outlined in the Discussion section of the report. Station No. 63 (Sambro) is not large enough for the daily staff compliment and a trailer would continue to be necessary.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment I: Station 62 Response Coverage  
Attachment II: Station 6 Response Coverage  
Attachment III: Station 63 Response Coverage  
Attachment IV: Proposed Fire Station Location

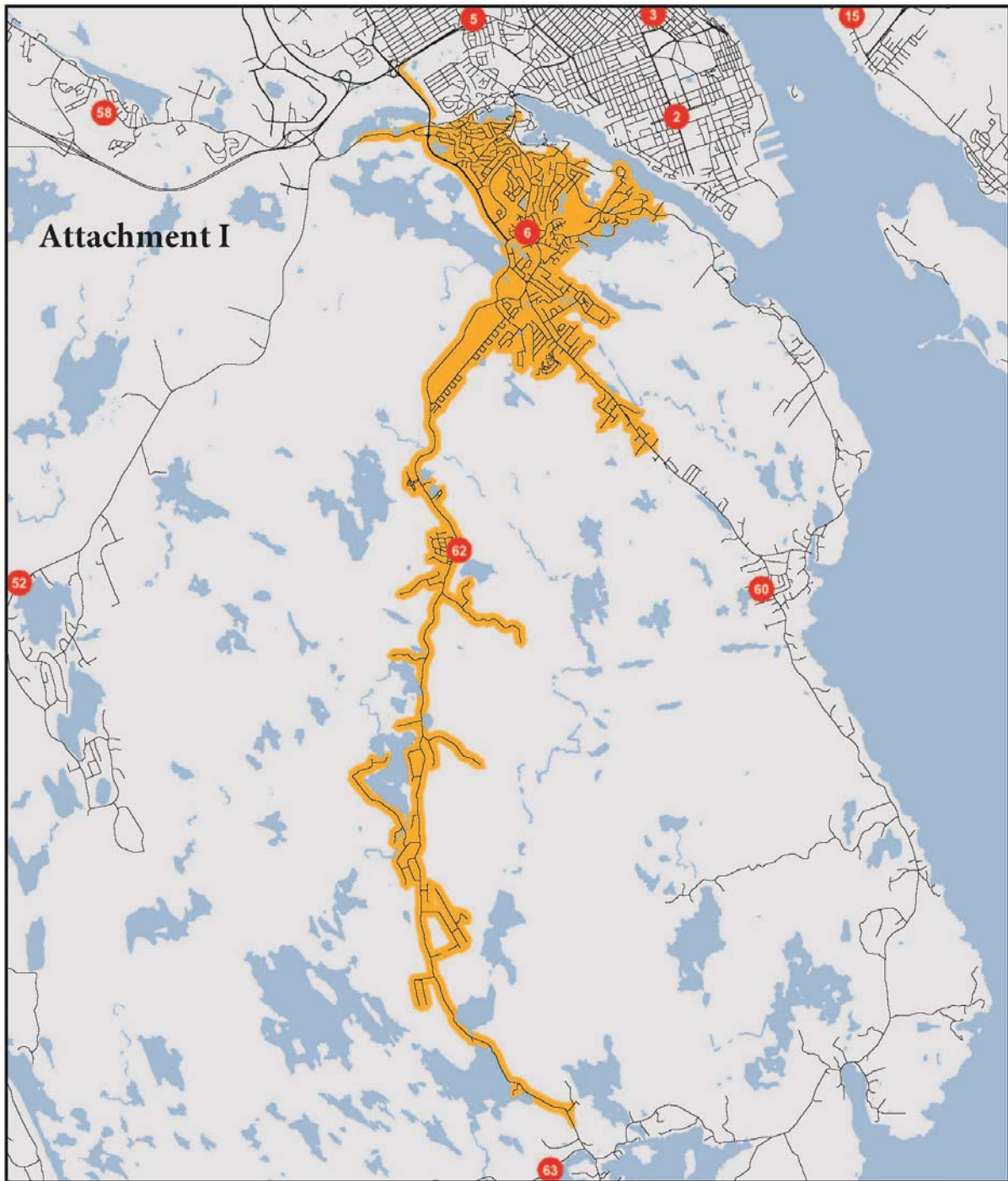
A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Deputy Fire Chief Roy Hollett 902.490-5036

Financial Approval by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Whitewood, Director, CPO, 902.490.6308

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Chief Doug Trussler 902.490-4239

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**Station 62 Response Coverage**  
Halifax Fire & Emergency

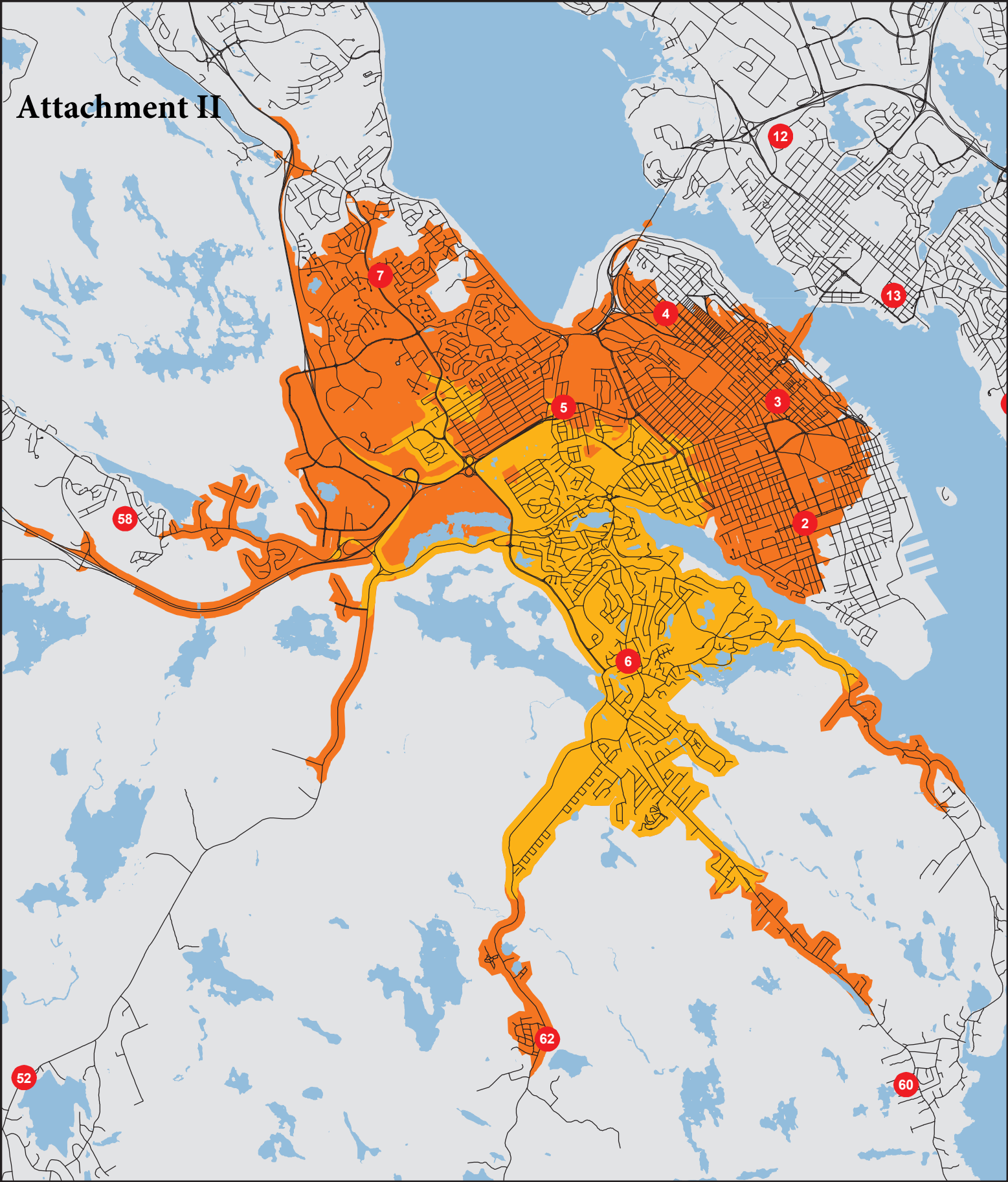


10 Minute Coverage

HALIFAX

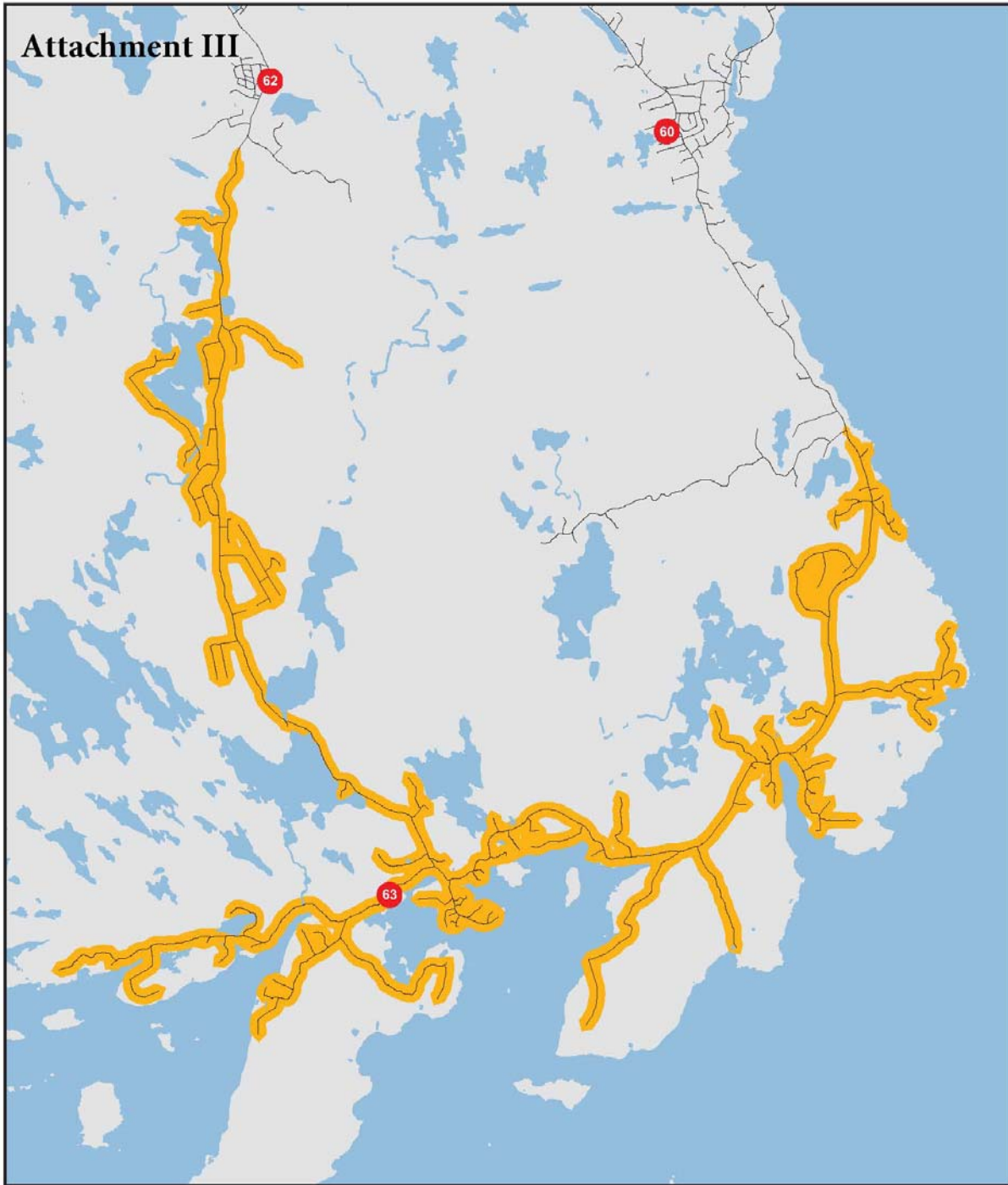


Attachment II





### Attachment III



**Station 63 Response Coverage**  
Halifax Fire & Emergency



 10 Minute Coverage

HALIFAX

# Attachment IV

