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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**November 1, 2005**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Anstey, Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** October 27, 2005

**SUBJECT:** **Additional Committee of the Whole Sessions:**  
**Council Strategic Focus Areas**

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**ORIGIN**

Council has identified 12 strategic focus areas it wishes to discuss in terms of setting priorities. These strategic focus areas are to be discussed at Committee of the Whole meetings, and staff is concerned there is insufficient meetings scheduled before Christmas to allow full discussion.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

Council agree to hold additional Committee of the Whole meetings as shown in Attachment A to discuss Council's Strategic Focus Areas.

**BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION**

At the October 11<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole, Council identified 12 strategic focus areas, which in essence form Council's Action Plan and that convey Council's commitment to residents to deal with these areas in a timely fashion. The 12 strategic focus areas include:

- Regional Planning
- Youth
- Infrastructure
- By-law Enforcement
- Public Safety
- Taxation
- Traffic Congestion
- Transit
- Community Relations
- Community Recreation
- Community Development
- Economic Development

At that meeting staff was asked to recommend the process and timetable for dealing with these issues. For each of these areas, staff will prepare a status report and suggested approach to further action. Discussion will include a description of current initiatives, analysis of the issues, options for resolution, capacity and implications. Budget implications will be determined based on the direction provided by Council on each focus area.

Staff propose to introduce the discussion on infrastructure with a presentation on HRM's fiscal framework for 2006/2007. This presentation will provide high level projections of revenues and expenditures, given existing policies and assumptions. This presentation will lay the foundation for the infrastructure discussion, following which staff propose to discuss MRIF.

Staff also propose to provide a context around communities, which will provide a framework for discussing many of the subsequent strategic focus areas.

For those areas where Council's direction has budget and resourcing implications, timing is important. Staff have begun the budget process. This work cannot be completed until Council has provided direction on each of these strategic focus areas, and staff has had an opportunity to consider the best way to support directions. It would therefore be important to complete these discussions before the end of December. There are only 3 COW meetings scheduled in this time frame. Each of the 12 topics could easily take 2 to 3 hours for Council to discuss.

Staff are requesting additional COWs be scheduled, as shown in Attachment A. If the discussions take longer than allowed for in the schedule, staff will request additional COWs. Council should be aware that if the discussions move into January, there may be an impact on the normal timeline for presenting the budget to Council. In staff's view, it is important that Council fully discuss the topics, and if that requires more time, a delay in the tabling of the budget is acceptable.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

None

**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.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council could hold a full day workshop to discuss the Focus Areas
2. Council could consider holding additional COW's on Monday or Wednesday afternoons, in addition to the proposed schedule, to ensure all topics are dealt with before Christmas.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: COW Schedule: Strategic Focus Areas

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: Betty MacDonald/Director Governance and Strategic Initiatives

**Council Strategic Focus Areas**

<b>COW DATE</b>	<b>FOCUS AREA</b>
<b>November 8</b>	<b>Fiscal Framework</b> Infrastructure (including MRIF)
<b>November 15 (NEW)</b>	Taxation Transit Traffic
<b>November 22</b>	<b>Community Context</b> Community Relations Youth
<b>December 6 (NEW)</b>	Community Recreation Community Development Economic Development
<b>December 13</b>	Public Safety By-law Enforcement

Note: There is no Council meeting on November 29.