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Halifax Regional Council
August 8, 2006

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Traffic Authority

DATE: July 25, 2006

SUBJECT: New Rules at the Armdale Rotary

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Item 12.1(i) raised at the July 4, 2006 meeting of Regional Council.

BACKGROUND

Councilor Mosher requested a staff report regarding clarity on how new rules for the Armdale Rotary apply; and further, that staff provide information to Councillors to assist in addressing concerns put forward by the public and media.

DISCUSSION

Effective October 1, 2005 the Province amended the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act to change how motorists are to drive through a rotary. The intent of this change is to make our rotary function like a “roundabout”. The new legislation eliminates the traditional practice of “one on one” merging and now gives the right of way to traffic within the circle. Therefore, all traffic approaching a roundabout must now yield to traffic within the circle; and, may only enter the circle when there is an adequate gap in traffic to safely do so. The attached appendix “A” distinguishes the old legislation from the new.

The change in legislation required that “Yield” signs be posted on both the Herring Cove Road and Chebucto Road approaches. These are supplemented with warning “Yield Ahead” signs and all five approaches have since been equipped with warning “Yield to Traffic in the Circle” signs. Traffic signals continue to be in effect on the St. Margaret’s Bay Road, Joseph Howe Drive, and Quinpool Road approaches. There has been no change to their display features, in that they indicate a red ball/green arrow which provides for a yield condition at all times except for during peak traffic periods when a red signal only indication requires traffic to stop. This is required to help traffic move around the circle. The existing traffic controls conform to the Motor Vehicle Act and to the intent of the new legislation. Also, the p.m. peak hour traffic restriction which was in effect for a portion of the circle has been lifted on a trial basis.

Physical changes to the alignment of each of the approach roads is required in support of the new legislation to better control traffic approaching and within the roundabout. These design modifications, which will include altering the angles of the approaches to and exits from the circle are being developed by consultants. This work is planned for completion next year pending budget approval.

There has been much publicity about the changes to the rules of the rotary. As a supplement to the installation of regulatory and warning traffic control signs, a public education campaign has been developed. This campaign includes on-going newspaper and radio advertising as well as planned television advertising to be implemented before traffic increases again in the fall.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Any costs associated with this initiative will be absorbed within the current operating budget.

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

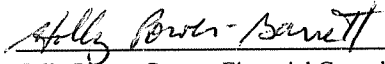
There are no recommended alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A

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.

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Financial Review : 
Holly Power-Garrett, Financial Consultant, 476-6942

APPENDIX “A”

Excerpts from the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act regarding Rules of the Road at a rotary:

Prior to October 1, 2005

Section 135 (1) The driver of a vehicle passing around a rotary traffic circle shall

- (a) drive his vehicle in a counter-clockwise direction around the island or the centre of the circle;
 - (b) yield the right of way to other traffic approaching the circle so closely as to constitute an immediate hazard.
- (2) The driver of a vehicle entering a roadway in or around a rotary traffic circle shall yield the right of way to traffic already on a roadway in the circle and approaching so closely to the entering highway as to constitute an immediate hazard.
- (3) The driver of a vehicle about to enter a rotary traffic circle or a roadway within the circle shall not delay entering the circle or the roadway so long that he impedes the movement of traffic following the vehicle.

Effective October 1, 2005.

Section 135 (1) The driver of a vehicle entering a roadway in or around a rotary or a roundabout shall yield the right of way to traffic already on the roadway in the circle and approaching so closely to the entering highway as to constitute an immediate hazard.

- (2) The driver of a vehicle passing around a rotary or roundabout shall drive the vehicle in a counter-clockwise direction around the island or the centre of a circle.