

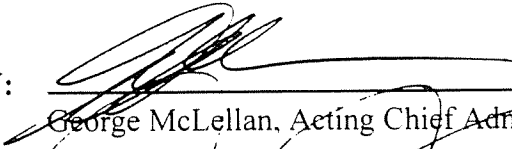
Halifax Regional Council

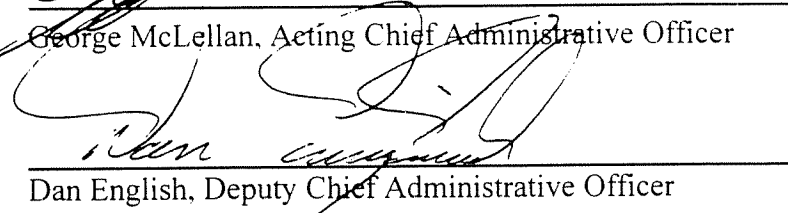
January 15, 2002

February 05, 2002
February 12, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


George McLellan, Acting Chief Administrative Officer


Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 2, 2002

SUBJECT: Civic Addressing By-law and Policies

ORIGIN

In November of 1999, Planning Services tabled an Information Report on the state of Civic Addressing within HRM. The report, in part, recommended that the municipality should consider adopting a Civic Addressing By-law to ensure HRM civic addressing standards are at the same level or higher than the proposed Provincial guidelines.

The current Civic Address Project necessitated bringing forward the By-law, Policies and Procedures at this time as staff felt that problems identified during the course of the Project could not adequately be resolved without these standards in place.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. approve First Reading of By-law Number C-300 (Attachment 1), respecting Civic Addressing and direct the Municipal Clerk to advertise for a Public Hearing and Second Reading on February 5, 2002;
2. approve in Principle the Civic Addressing Policies (Attachment 2) and the amendments to Administrative Order #15 respecting processing fees associated with By-law C-300 (Attachment 4) and direct staff to arrange for their formal adoption on February 5, 2002.

BACKGROUND

Prior to amalgamation, each of the four municipal units used a different procedure for civic addressing. Although none of the municipalities had adopted a Civic Addressing By-law, both the City of Halifax and the Town of Bedford had adopted policies regarding street naming and civic numbering. On the other hand, there were no formal policies or procedures related to civic addressing in the City of Dartmouth or in Halifax County.

The assignment of civic numbers was the responsibility of each municipal unit. The approval of new street names or renaming requests was also handled by each Municipality with the exception of Halifax County. The Halifax County Planning Advisory Committee submitted recommendations to the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation for final approval of all new road names or renamings in the County. It appears that the City of Halifax Council approved all new street names and any renaming requests, whereas Planning and Development staff in the City of Dartmouth and the Town of Bedford had final approval on any new street names.

At the time of amalgamation it was clear that a standardized system for civic numbering and street naming should be adopted for the entire Municipality. A harmonized Civic Addressing Program began a year after amalgamation and due to the lack of resources the standardization of procedures was implemented incrementally. The HRM Fire Prevention By-law (F-100) was adopted during the same time and included a section on the posting of civic numbers. F-100 (2.5.1.1 (2)) currently states that “the civic address shall be posted on or next to the building or unit in numbers of sufficient size and colour to be clearly visible from the nearest public road.”

Coincidentally, the E911 Service for the Province became operational the same month as the harmonized Civic Addressing Program was being developed. The enhanced E911 Service database included the caller’s phone number, civic address and associated police, fire and ambulance emergency responders. The Province and MTT are currently responsible for providing the enhanced E911 Service, and HRM is responsible for the civic address data.

In the 1999 Civic Addressing Service information report, staff indicated that the introduction of the E911 Service brought into focus shortcomings in the existing civic address database including community and street names, the signage of communities and streets, and the posting of civic numbers. A review of Nova Scotia’s E911 Service, conducted in 1999 by DMR Consulting Group, revealed similar concerns. Emergency service providers and other stakeholders interviewed concluded that some of the weaknesses of the E911 Service were directly related to civic addressing, in particular, poor visibility of numbers, lack of signage standardization, road naming inconsistencies, and problems with community names.

The responsibility for requiring the posting of civic numbers is a municipal responsibility under Section 123A of the Municipal Government Act (1998). This enables Council to assign or cause to be assigned civic numbers to buildings. Without a Civic Addressing By-law in place any recommendations or guidelines rely on voluntary compliance. For example, the Civic Address Data project has revealed that approximately 12,000 civic numbers in HRM are not posted, and although continuing public safety education may encourage the great majority of residents or owners to comply with this requirement, experience shows that enforcement will be required in a

number of cases.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the Civic Addressing By-law and policies is to standardize the assignment and display of civic numbers and street names. This standardization will complement a complete and accurate addressing database in support of all address users. Upon approval of the by-law, the policies and the procedures, HRM will have a set of civic addressing standards tailored specifically to the Municipality and that generally conform with the Provincial Guidelines.

A draft by-law was forwarded to all stakeholders in July, 2001. Stakeholders were invited to provide written comments and the second draft of the by-law was prepared based on the comments received and a legal review. The stakeholders included all internal departments of HRM, the Emergency Measures Organization (E911), the Department of Transportation, RCMP, Emergency Health Services, the Water Commission and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. Meetings were also held with a number of stakeholders to discuss specific issues. The third draft of the by-law was finalized this September, reviewed by Legal Services and re-circulated to all stakeholders. The final draft of the By-law was prepared after reviews by the Development Liaison Group and by the Program and Service Review Committee.

The by-law deals with existing civic numbers, prohibited postings, civic number posting specifications, and requires owners to maintain their number plate in good order. All existing civic numbers in HRM must meet the specifications of the by-law. The by-law also establishes a process for the review and acceptance of names for HRM public streets and private roads and the signage on these roads. The process for naming of new streets shall be in accordance with the Civic Addressing Policies. Renaming and renumbering requests will only be approved where they are not in contravention of the policies. Fees shall be charged for civic number and street name changes where they are not public safety concerns. The by-law will be administered by the Civic Addressing Coordinator whose duties will include the maintenance of the Civic Address File, the assignment of civic numbers, the approval of street names and the reassignment of either civic numbers and/or street names. The by-law includes enforcement provisions through summary convictions, summary offense tickets and municipal tickets. Although the by-law will provide staff the ability to prosecute offenders, the preferred approach is that of public education through coordinated efforts with local emergency service providers.

It is the intention of staff to work closely with internal and external stakeholders to increase public awareness regarding the importance of civic addressing. A number of emergency service providers indicated that it is imperative that civic numbers are posted on all residences prior to occupancy. The proposed by-law provides that a civic number be posted prior to the issuance of an occupancy permit and is included as an item in the final inspection check list. Continued cooperation between staff, the Development Liaison Group, and HRM Inspection Services will ensure that this requirement is being met.

Although Staff recognize that there are a number of separate issues between the rural and urban areas, the by-law is intended to provide a minimum standard for the entire Municipality. Civic

Addressing Staff will work with various local organizations to draft guidelines for specific areas. For example guidelines for downtown Halifax will likely differ from those for Burnside Industrial Park. The buildings in the downtown core generally have little or no setback and smaller civic numbers are appropriate, whereas in Burnside, large scale buildings are more common and require larger civic numbers posted in order to be readily identified.

The Civic Addressing By-law is one of three components in creating a standardized civic addressing program in HRM; the other two components are the Civic Addressing Policies and the civic addressing procedures which will be used in conjunction with the policies. The policies are intended to provide staff with direction on how to apply best civic addressing practices in the specific context of the municipality. The policy document deals with the procedures for naming and renaming and civic numbering guidelines, and notification and compensation where changes are to be implemented. In addition, there are policies dealing with the renaming and redelineation of General Service Areas.

Attachment 3A (Civic Address Corrections Project) diagram illustrates staff's recommended procedure by which civic addressing problems will be identified and prioritized for correction. The majority of the problems will be identified through Phase I of the Civic Address Project. The Civic Address Public Safety Committee will determine which problems are of concern to public safety and then prioritize each problem based on these concerns. Staff will present the final corrections list to Council for approval. Once Council has approved the corrections priorities list, staff will implement a corrections project, subject to budget approval. Staff recognize that through development, new public safety problems may arise that require action and each new issue shall be brought to Council and added to the existing corrections list as directed by Council.

Attachments 3B and 3C (Street Renaming Procedure and Civic Renumbering Procedure) diagrams illustrate the general procedures by which staff will implement renumbering and renaming corrections. The diagrams also provide for procedures allowing personal preference changes (i.e. those that have no public safety concerns). Staff is proposing a fee for such applications under Administrative Order #15 to discourage renaming and renumbering requests of this nature. Staff is also proposing both a pilot corrections project in a limited area and addressing some site specific high priority correction issues that will provide an opportunity to evaluate and improve the procedures before implementing corrections for the remainder of HRM.

Staff recognize that there are concerns for residents regarding the best time of year for both renamings and renumberings. Staff is sensitive to the issue and the bulk of the corrections work will be conducted during a defined period of time. This defined period of time will be determined based on Christmas mail and publication deadlines for phone books.

The policies and general procedures have undergone reviews within the Civic Address Data Project/Program and conform with both best practices from across North America and with the intent of the provincial government initiative in generating a province wide civic address database (NSCAF). In addition, the policies and procedures have been reviewed extensively by HRM's Program and Service Review Committee.

One important issue outside the legislative authority of HRM that needs to be addressed is the jurisdiction over roads outside the urban core. Currently the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works (DOT/PW) owns and maintains the majority of the roads in the rural area of HRM. There has been confusion in the past regarding responsibility for street naming and signage in this area. Staff will continue to work on negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding between HRM and DOT/PW which will ensure a standard method of civic addressing across the Municipality.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Funding is provided for the Civic Addressing Program within the 2002/2003 operating budget. Enforcement of the Civic Addressing By-law will be the primary responsibility of the Civic Addressing Coordinator. Cooperation and assistance with by-law enforcement will be required from the by-law enforcement section of Community Projects as well as Inspection staff of Planning & Development. It is not anticipated this will impact on existing resources. This issue has been discussed with both business units.

An on-going public education plan will have costs associated with it. It is the intention of staff to focus efforts on public education to encourage voluntary compliance with the by-law and policies. Provision has been made for minimal efforts in this regard in the 2002/2003 operating budget.

Funding for civic address corrections (Phase II - Civic Address Project) is being recommended through the 2002/2003 capital budget process. Specifically, monies are recommended to complete a corrections pilot project in the St. Margaret's Bay area and to address numerous high priority corrections elsewhere in the municipality. Canada Post are intending to replace rural route postal delivery service with civic address based delivery in the Tantallon Postal Service area (Hubbards to Blind Bay) in 2002. Canada Post are looking to HRM to supply them with the correct civic address data for this area, including community names and boundaries. The pilot project, if approved, will involve verifying, through public consultation, community names and boundaries as well as correcting street name and civic number issues which are of a public safety concern. It will address the posting of civic address numbers as well as ensuring the assignment of numbers where there is no record of a number being issued.

The pilot project will allow staff and Regional Council to test the adequacy of the Civic Addressing By-law, and the policies and procedures presented in this report and identify shortcomings which can be addressed prior to expanding the exercise to the rest of HRM. As well, the pilot project, upon completion, will enable staff to develop reasonable cost estimates/projections to correct civic address problems which are of a public safety nature throughout the rest of HRM.

Staff are not recommending that compensation be paid for civic address changes required to address public safety concerns. Staff hope to work with Canada Post to have them provide mail redirect service in these instances for a period of 6 months. Council may wish to consider covering the costs for new civic number plates where addresses must be changed. This could go some way to address concerns regarding the inconvenience and expenses associated with a

change of civic address. The estimated cost for this is unknown as yet. A nominal amount for this purpose has been provided within the proposed Phase II Civic Address Project budget.

MULTI-YEAR FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Phase II of the Civic Address Project has multi-year financial implications. The exact magnitude of this impact is not known at this time. Staff will be in a better position to provide Regional Council with a projection of the capital commitment required to complete Phase II in October/November of 2002 following completion of the St. Margaret's Bay area pilot project.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no recommended alternatives.

Council could choose not to adopt the by-law, policies, or procedures as presented. This will preclude the development of a standardized civic addressing program in HRM which meets or exceeds Provincial standards. Correction of problems in the current civic addressing system will not be possible without a policy and procedural framework or the legislative authority to require change. This in turn will impact the integrity of the civic address database being developed through Phase I of the Civic Address Project which is required to improve delivery of our emergency services and reduce liability risks associated with utilizing poor quality civic address data.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft By-law Number C-300 Respecting Civic Addressing
2. Draft HRM Civic Addressing Policies - Administrative Order # 29
3.
 - A. Civic Address Corrections Project
 - B. Street Renaming Procedure
 - C. Civic Renumbering Procedure
4. Fees - Addition to Administrative Order # 15

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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ATTACHMENT 1
HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
BYLAW NUMBER C-300
RESPECTING CIVIC ADDRESSING

BE IT ENACTED by the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality under the authority of Section 313 of the Municipal Government Act as follows:

Short Title

1. This By-law shall be known as By-law C-300 and may be cited as the “Civic Addressing By-law”.

Conflict With Other Laws

2. Nothing in this By-law shall be construed as authorizing non-compliance with any laws, regulations, by-laws, lawful orders or directives pursuant to any other statute, regulation or statutory or regulatory authority that may require the posting of civic numbering on structures or properties or the posting of street names on private roads or which may specify standards in respect of the posting of civic numbers or street names.

Definitions

3. In this By-law:

- (a) “civic address” means civic number, street name and General Service Area;
- (b) “Civic Address File” means the official Halifax Regional Municipality database containing geographically referenced civic address information including civic points, street network file, and General Service Area boundaries;
- (c) “Civic Addressing Coordinator” means the Civic Addressing Coordinator appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer to administer this By-law;
- (d) “Civic Addressing Policy” means the official policies, guidelines and procedures dealing with the naming and renaming of streets, the numbering and renumbering of civic numbers and the renaming and redelineation of General Service Areas in Halifax Regional Municipality.

Civic Addressing By-law

- (e) “civic number” means the number assigned to a property by this By-law or by the Civic Addressing Coordinator;
- (f) “General Service Area” (GSA) means a geographic area contained within the municipal unit by which all street names are uniquely coded for the delivery of the NS E911 program;
- (g) “owner” means the person assessed for the property;
- (h) “private road” means any street, road or travel way which serves three or more structures or facilities and is not owned by Halifax Regional Municipality or the Province of Nova Scotia;
- (i) “property” means a lot, structure or facility;
- (j) “public street” means any street, road or highway owned by Halifax Regional Municipality or the Province of Nova Scotia;
- (k) “street name” means the official name of a street and street type as it appears in the Civic Address File; and
- (l) “street name sign” means the name plate and the sign post for either private or public roads.

Duties of Civic Addressing Coordinator

4. (1) The Civic Addressing Coordinator:

- (a) shall maintain the Civic Address File;
- (b) shall be responsible for the assigning of civic numbers to properties; and
- (c) by written notice to the owner and occupant, may assign, change or reassign civic numbers where reasonably necessary to resolve potentially confusing numbering discontinuities or irregularities and to insure an adequate supply of civic numbers for existing and future development.

(2) Unless a shorter notice period is agreed to by the owner of the property, the Civic Addressing Coordinator shall give the owner and occupant of a property at least sixty (60) days notice in writing of any changed or reassigned civic address.

Civic Addressing By-law

Civic Number Specifications

5. (1) The owner of a property shall keep posted on the property the assigned civic number.
- (2) The civic number shall be posted in the following manner:
- (a) civic numbers shall be in Arabic numerals only;
 - (b) the minimum height of numerals on residential properties shall not be less than 4 in. (100 mm);
 - (c) the minimum height of numerals on non residential properties shall not be less than 8 in. (200 mm);
 - (d) the colour of the numerals shall clearly contrast with the background upon which the numbers are displayed;
 - (e) the bottom of the numerals shall be a minimum of 48 in. (1.2 m) above grade;
 - (f) civic numbers shall be displayed on the same side of a public street or private road as the property is located;
 - (g) civic numbers shall be displayed in a location which is not obstructed from view when viewed from the closest place on the traveled portion of the public street or private road upon which the property is situated or from which it has access;
 - (h) civic numbers shall only face towards the public street or private road upon which the property is addressed;
 - (i) civic numbers shall be displayed in a horizontal orientation; and
 - (j) civic numbers shall either be composed of highly reflective material or be effectively illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- (3) Where the assigned civic number cannot be easily read when viewed from the closest place on the traveled portion of the public street or private road upon which the property is situated or from which it has access, the civic number shall be posted on the structure or facility and shall also be posted at the end of the access driveway.
- (4) Where the number is posted at the end of the access driveway it shall be on a free standing post, excluding utility poles and shall be double-sided, right reading and oriented perpendicular to the traffic flow.

Civic Addressing By-law

(5) The Building Inspector shall not issue an occupancy permit for the property before the assigned civic number is posted for the property.

(6) The owner of a property shall post the assigned civic number prior to the issuance of an occupancy permit.

Existing Civic Numbering

6. (1) A civic number that was posted on a property that was customarily in use on the date of adoption of this bylaw is hereby assigned to that property until and unless the Civic Addressing Coordinator, by written notice to the owner and occupant, otherwise directs.

Maintenance

7. The owner of a property shall maintain the civic number for the property in good order.

Prohibited Postings

8. (1) An owner shall not post or permit to be posted any part of a civic address which is not assigned to the property.

(2) An owner shall not display on a property any number which is not the assigned civic number with the exception of a lot number, unit number, or a number which is clearly part of a business name.

(3) No lot number, unit number, or suite number shall be posted without the word "lot", "unit" or "suite" proceeding the posted number.

Street Naming

9. (1) The Civic Addressing Coordinator shall be responsible for the review, acceptance or rejection of names, in accordance with the Civic Addressing Policy, as submitted through:

- (a) the subdivision process for new public streets and new private roads and;
- (b) the application process for existing un-named private roads.

(2) Regional Council may change public street and private road names in accordance with the Civic Addressing Policy.

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Private Road Signage

10. (1) The owner of a private road which intersects a public street or private road shall take the following steps to name, install and maintain a sign at every intersection identifying the private road by name:

- (a) obtain approval from the Civic Addressing Coordinator of the name to be assigned to the private road or request the Civic Addressing Coordinator assign a name;
- (b) apply for, and use best efforts to obtain permission to install a street name sign from any person or regulatory authority whose permission is required by law to install said sign; and
- (c) where permission is obtained in accordance with clause (b), install, maintain in good condition, and replace as necessary, a sign in a manner consistent with any conditions attached to such permission and other lawful requirements, and in accordance with Provincial and Municipal street sign standards.

(2) Where the owner does not wish to undertake the requirements of Clause (c) of subsection (1), the owner may exercise the option to pay the required fees to the Municipality under Administrative Order #15, License, Permits and Processing Fees to have the street name sign manufactured and installed.

- (3) Maintenance of the street name sign shall be the responsibility of the owner.

Compliance

11. In the event of contravention of this By-Law, in addition to any prosecution or other remedy, the Municipality may:

(1) prepare a notice in writing to the owner deliver by registered mail, to undertake remedial action including, but not limited to, the posting or re-posting of a civic number on a property or the installation of a street name sign for a private road.

(2) if the remedial action has not been undertaken or completed within twenty-one (21) days of notification, the Municipality may enter upon the private property of an owner and undertake the remedial work, and charge and collect the costs of the work, with interest from the date of the completion of the work until the date of payment, as a first lien on the property affected.

Civic Addressing By-law

Offenses

12. Any person who violates any provision of this By-law is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction by a fine of not less than One Hundred Dollars (\$100) and not more than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) and to imprisonment of not more than thirty days (30) in default of payment thereof.

Municipal Ticket

13. A person who is alleged to have violated this by-law and is given notice of the alleged violation may pay a penalty in the amount of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) to an official designated by the Chief Administrative Officer, which official and place of payment shall be designated on the notice, provided that said payment is made within a period of fourteen (14) days following the day on which the alleged violation was committed and where the said notice so provides for payment in this manner, and such payment shall be in full satisfaction, releasing and discharging all penalties and imprisonments incurred by the person for said violation.

Repeals

14. Section 2.5.1.1 of Halifax Regional Municipality By-law F-100, the Fire Prevention By-law is repealed.