



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 18.1

Request for Council's Consideration	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included on Agenda (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Thursday)	<input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Monday)
<input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor	
Date of Council Meeting: September 24, 2019	
Subject: Wood debris pick-up service	
Motion for Council to Consider: That Halifax Regional Council direct the CAO to initiate a roadside pickup service of tree debris across the municipality, caused by Hurricane Dorian.	
Reason: Several Councillors have inquired about the potential for a residential property tree debris roadside pickup service, as was provided after Hurricane Juan.	
Outcome Sought: That Regional Council support the motion to initiate a roadside pickup service of tree debris.	
<i>Councillor David Hendsbee</i>	<i>District 2</i>



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Members of Regional Council
CC: Jacques Dubé, CAO
FROM: Brad Anguish, Director, Transportation and Public Works
DATE: September 20, 2019
SUBJECT: **Dorian Recovery Activities & Residential Support Update**

During Community Announcements at Regional Council on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, several Councillors requested an update from staff regarding municipal recovery plans. Staff's update follows:

Current Recovery Status:

In the days following the storm, in excess of 1000 requests were deemed critical / high and required immediate response.

Right of Way:

The table below outlines work completed to date and the priority of the work that remains in the public right of way. These requests are compiled from 311 and from visual sweeps completed by HRM staff.

Priority	Total Requests	Completed Requests	Remaining Requests
Critical / High	996	996	0
Medium	335	335	0
Low	1387	462	925
Total	2718	1793	925

Critical / High – Hospital route or NSP required. Tree blocking street or hanging limb with risk of falling in ROW.

Medium – Tree on house.

Low – Tree or branches/brush partially blocking street/sidewalk, sidewalk heaves

It should be noted that these request numbers do not include service requests within the provincial right of way in HRM; however, staff continue to advise provincial staff of areas requiring service.

Transportation and Public Works

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Staff also continue to manage two other major right of way impacts:

1. Crane collapse (District 7) - the Province of Nova Scotia has declared a localized state of emergency at the worksite where the crane collapsed. Staff is actively working with the province to provide municipal assistance and traffic management as required.
2. Closure of Powers Road bridge (District 11) - the bridge abutments were compromised. Assessment continues, and it is anticipated that the bridge may remain closed until spring 2020.

Parks:

Following the resolution of critical / high requests within the regional parks, Parks focus is now shifting to the cleanup and restoration of over 800 neighbourhood and district parks and trails. Staff also continue to deal with restoration activities within Camp Hill Cemetery.

Private Property Resident Assistance:

The municipality has implemented a number of service adjustments and programs to support residential, private property tree debris cleanup and removal:

- Increased curbside 5 bundle limit (for tree debris) to 10 bundles.
- Procured Halifax C&D Recycling locations (16 Mills Drive in Goodwood and 188 Ross Road in Westphal) to extend their hours of operation and accept residential tree debris at no cost to citizens until at least Friday, September 27.
 - Saturday and Sunday: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - Monday to Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Established five drop-off debris locations, at no cost to citizens, until at least Sunday, September 29.
 - 2 Lyle Street, Dartmouth
 - 144 Thornhill Drive, Dartmouth
 - 26 Thomas Raddall Drive, Halifax
 - 50 Cheviot Hill, Porters Lake
 - Kinsac Ballfield (near 1703 Beaver Bank Road), Beaver Bank
- Established a list of qualified haulers available to collect residential tree debris, at a cost to residents, and deliver it to a drop off location. Haulers can be added to the list by contacting 311 or emailing contacthrm@halifax.ca. The list of haulers can be found at www.halifax.ca.

Staff will continue to monitor the use of these services to citizens and will extend opening dates as may become necessary. Staff is currently exploring the potential to open additional sites as early as next week should the demand still exist. Based on the current hours of operation, until September 29, the estimated incremental costs of these services is \$100,000. HRM staff have been advised that this service to private property will not be recoverable through the Disaster Financial Assistance program.

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Consideration of Curbside Pickup:

Several Councillors have inquired about the potential for a residential / private property tree debris curbside pickup service, as was provided during Hurricane Juan. It is important to note that Hurricane Juan and Dorian were distinctly different storms with significantly different community impacts as shown below:

Circulation Pattern Comparison between Juan (2003) and Dorian (2019)¹



Approximate circulation pattern with hurricane Juan (2003) near the time of landfall. Peak wind gust in the Halifax area was 176 km/h



Approximate circulation pattern with post-tropical storm Dorian (2019) near the time of landfall. Peak wind gust in the Halifax area was 141 km/h

One of the major lessons learned from Hurricane Juan was the decision made on the second day after the storm to address residential tree debris curbside while trying to restore critical public infrastructure. This decision resulted in unnecessary delays in restoring power, public service and business continuity. The decision to not proceed with an immediate residential curbside program for post-tropical storm Dorian is considered one of the major contributing factors to HRM's rapid recovery.

Staff is continuing to not recommend curbside pickup service for the following reasons:

1. Public Safety and Mobility – bringing residential tree debris to the curbside will negatively impact safety and mobility throughout the municipality. Currently streets, sidewalks, parking spots, bus stops (Transit and HRCE) and sight lines are predominately clear of debris.
2. Liability – once the municipality requests citizens to bring debris curbside, HRM owns the waste and responsibility for damage that may follow. This is a significant concern given that our region is still in the early stages of hurricane season and more storms could follow.
3. Continued Focus on Public Infrastructure – as noted above, there is significant work left to be done to restore right of way and park assets to a safe condition.

¹ Environment Canada, Government of Canada

4. Risk to Operations – current recovery efforts are jeopardizing progress with routine seasonal work such as the crack/pothole filling program, concrete program, tree planting, leaf clearing, street sweeping and Winter Operations preparations (vehicle maintenance, plow installations and training). A curbside program would result in further reduction/elimination of these important preventative maintenance programs.
5. Access to Resources – Dorian’s impact was more widespread compared to Juan and, as a result, contracted resources typically allocated to HRM are now spread across the province and more difficult to access. For example, this has resulted in HRM needing to acquire several forestry crews from Ontario. Additionally, the Province of Nova Scotia has advised they will not provide resources or funding in support of a curbside pickup program. These facts make it difficult to assemble a timely, effective and affordable curbside program.
6. Costs – costs to provide the curbside pickup service are estimated in the range of \$2M and are not recoverable through the Disaster Financial Assistance program. Funding for this program would require Council approval. It should be noted that staff has confirmed that declaring a State of Emergency, (as was done for Juan but not Dorian), has no impact on whether HRM can make a claim or what damages HRM can claim. It should also be noted that the DFA program has not been formally established by the Province as of this date. If the program does get established, staff would anticipate that most incremental costs associated with municipal (public property) responsibilities will be reimbursed eventually (for example Hurricane Juan claims took many years to receive). Incremental costs for Dorian recovery to date are in the order of \$1M/week.
7. Precedent – Dorian was defined as a post-tropical storm as it made landfall. HRM is experiencing an increase in these types of storms and therefore the precedent of a curbside pickup program in response to Dorian may be a concern. Going forward, Regional Council may consider establishing a storm threshold above which public funds would be authorized to support certain aspects of private property damage.

Should there be any questions relating to this update, please feel free to contact me directly.

Best regards,

Brad