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MEMORANDUM

TO: Active Transportation Advisory Committee
FROM: Eliza Jackson, Transportation Demand Management Co-ordinator, and,
David MacIsaac, Active Transportation Supervisor
DATE: February 12, 2020
SUBJECT: **HRM Bicycle Education & Promotion activities and Bike Week**

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with an update on HRM's proposed plans for education and promotion of bicycling in 2020. Specifically, we would like to let you know about changes to Bike Week that we would like to pilot in 2020.

For the past twenty years or so, HRM has worked with community groups, sponsors and others to support and host events that promote the benefits of cycling and that bring people together to celebrate all that cycling means to our communities. These events typically attract over 5000 participants per year and take place across the Municipality.

What's Changing?

The approach that we envision for bicycle education and promotion in 2020 is to extend and expand what has typically happened for Bike Week over the entire calendar year. We envision:

- 1) Continuing the community-events grant program. The grant amounts would likely remain the same, but events could be any time during the year and there would be more than one in-take period for applications.
- 2) Continuing to support "signature events" like the Mayors Bike Ride, Sunday Cycle, Switch and others with more flexibility for when they take place.
- 3) Continuing HRM communications and promotion support to let the public know when and where events take place.

This year, we are also launching a bicycling promotion campaign in the spring with the theme of "Get There by Bike". We expect that this campaign will be highly visible to residents, using tactics like bus ads, paid social media promotion, and more. We would like to use this theme as part of our support for signature events and community events over the year. This will have the benefit of tying community events into the broader campaign and amplifying promotion of community events through the resources being used to push the promotion of cycling more broadly.

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Why the Change?

We want to pilot this new approach because:

- We see cycling as a four-season form of transportation. With the implementation of the Integrated Mobility Plan, HRM is developing a broader approach to education and promotion that incorporates year-round initiatives to encourage the public to try and adopt more sustainable transportation modes. This new approach would hopefully encourage our community partners to host events in all seasons.
- We want to ensure each event is as accessible to as many people as possible. With the typical 10-day celebration, most of the events are concentrated to the weekend days and overlap with several other events. Last year, we heard from event organizers through the post-Bike Week evaluation that they felt this limited how many people could attend their event. Supporting events throughout the year will mean that groups are able to host events without having to compete with other events happening in the municipality and will have the freedom to choose dates that align well with organizational goals and capacity. We also hope that it means that bicycling promotion events can be incorporated into other larger community gatherings that take place outside of the typical Bike Week timeframe.
- We want to ensure that we have staff capacity to deliver on what means most to our organizers. With the current structure of Bike Week, staff time is increasingly in-demand but we can only provide broad support and promotion because there's just too much going on during the lead up to Bike Week. Having events spread out throughout the year means that we can be more focused in how we support and promote each event.

Our community partners are key to the success of Bike Week and our vision is that they will remain involved in an advisory role with this new structure. As per the Terms of Reference for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, we would like to discuss the role that this committee plays in advising on bicycle education and promotion, especially as it pertains to community outreach activities.