



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

Item No. 13.1.1
Executive Standing Committee
September 25, 2023

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY:



Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: September 14, 2023

SUBJECT: **2024/25 Strategic Business Planning and Budget Process**

ORIGIN

On January 12, 2021, Regional Council adopted a Strategic Planning Framework, established Priority Outcomes for their term and directed staff to develop multi-year plans to advance those outcomes. Consistent with past practice, the administration is seeking Council's direction on the approach and timelines for development of the 2024/25 business plans and budget.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Charter section 35 (1). The Chief Administrative Officer shall (b) ensure that the annual operating and capital budgets are prepared and submitted to the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve the 2024/25 Business Planning and Budget Schedule.

BACKGROUND

On January 12, 2021 Regional Council's Budget Committee approved the [2021-2025 Strategic Priorities Plan](#). This plan remains in place over the duration of the mandate of Regional Council but is reaffirmed annually. Adjustments may be made by recommendation to Regional Council by the administration resulting from the annual strategic planning process or by Regional Council to the administration during the tabling of the annual Strategic Priorities Plan presentation.

On October 26, 2021, Regional Council's Budget Committee approved the creation of an annual report that provides an update on progress toward the commitments in the Strategic Priorities Plan (SPP). This report, named the Strategic Performance Report, will be provided to Council each year accompanying the Strategic Priorities Plan presentation, and will include highlights, accomplishments, and performance results

associated with the previous year. Concurrently, the [Strategic Performance Snapshot](#), the municipality's public facing dashboard of strategic performance indicators aligned with the 2021-2025 Strategic Priorities Plan will be refreshed with results for the prior year (presently 2022/23).

The commencement of the business planning and budget cycle process begins with the adoption of or changes to the strategic business planning and budget process as well as the approval of the business planning and budget schedule.

DISCUSSION

Staff are not proposing any changes to the strategic planning process that will impact the presentation of content to Regional Council.

Staff are proposing to combine the corporate services business units into a single presentation. This would consolidate the presentations for the CAO business unit, Finance & Asset Management, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Legal & Legislative Services into one presentation. It is expected that this will result in a shorter presentation and streamline the process. Staff from all business units will be present to answer questions from Regional Council, and business plans would still be provided as discrete plans for each business unit. Following that presentation, the Auditor General and Property, Fleet & Environment business units would present.

Proposed 2024/25 Business Planning and Budget Schedule

The proposed schedule is included as Table 1. This schedule may be adjusted following direction from Regional Council at any stage of the process.

Table 1 – 2024/25 Business Planning and Budget Schedule

Subject	Budget Committee Date	Contingency Date
Report and Presentation: 2024/25 Strategic Priorities Plan Presentation / Strategic Performance Report	Tue., Nov. 28, 2023	N/A
Report and Presentation: 2024/25 Budget Outlook	Tue., Nov. 28, 2023	N/A
Report and Presentation: Capital Update and Advanced Tenders Report	Tues., Dec 12, 2023	N/A
Report and Presentation: Assessment / Budget Direction Update	Wed., Jan 24, 2024	Fri., Jan 26, 2024
Report and Presentation: Capital Budget Recommendation (Reserve Withdrawals, Multi-Year Projects)	Wed., Jan 24, 2024	Fri., Jan 26, 2024
Business Unit and Budget Presentations (Budget Committee)	Budget Committee Date	Contingency Date
Corporate Services presentation (bundled) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO • Finance & Asset Management • Human Resources • Information Technology • Legal & Legislative Services 	Wed., Jan 31, 2023	Fri., Feb 2, 2024

Auditor General Property, Fleet & Environment		
Halifax Public Libraries	Fri., Feb 2, 2024	Wed., Feb 7, 2024
Halifax Regional Police RCMP (Department of Justice)	Wed., Feb 7, 2024	Fri., Feb 9, 2024
Public Works	Fri., Feb 9, 2024	Tues., Feb 13 2024
Planning & Development	Tues., Feb 13, 2024	Wed., Feb 14, 2024
Parks & Recreation	Wed., Feb 14, 2024	Fri., Feb 16, 2024
Halifax Transit	Fri., Feb 16 2024	Wed., Feb 28, 2024
Reading Week (Dal / SMU) – Feb 19-23		
Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency	Wed., Feb 28, 2024	Fri., Mar 1, 2024
Community Safety Fiscal	Fri., Mar 1, 2024	Wed., Mar 6, 2024
Budget Contingency Date (Will be cancelled if not required)	Wed., Mar 6, 2024	Fri., Mar 8, 2024
March Break – March 11-15		
Report and Presentation: Budget Adjustment List (BAL)	Wed., Mar 27, 2024	Wed., Apr 3, 2024
Regional Council Meeting	Regional Council Date	Contingency Dates
Report: 2024/25 Budget and Business Plan Approval	Tues., Apr 23, 2024	Tues., April 30, 2024

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications related to this report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified; however, enterprise are risks are reviewed as part of the strategic planning process and mitigating initiatives incorporated into business planning activities to reduce or eliminate the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Executive Standing Committee could choose to:

1. Not approve the recommendation and request staff to develop an alternative schedule.

ATTACHMENTS

No attachments.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Michael Pappas, Director, Corporate Planning & Performance, Finance & Asset Management, 902.476.4696
