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### **Item No. 13.1.3**

#### **Audit & Finance Standing Committee May 21, 2025**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Audit & Finance Standing Committee

**FROM:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** March 14, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Increase to Project No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Recon and Award RFP 2024-0662 Halifax Common Playground

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#### **ORIGIN**

The approved 2024/25 Capital Budget, Supplemental Report Page B29 (Halifax Common Pool Reconstruction CB210020).

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Recommendation to increase Project No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Recon and Award RFP 2024-0662 Halifax Common Playground. The increase to Project No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Recon is required due to funding shortfall from excess amount of soil to be moved to create the playground.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Audit & Finance Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Approve an unbudgeted transfer of \$200,000 (net HST included) from CP200001 Park Recapitalization to CB210020 PR - Halifax Common Pool Recon. and,
2. Award RFP 2024-0662, Halifax Commons Playground Request for Proposals (RFP), to the highest scoring proponent, Turf Masters Landscaping Ltd., for \$1,042,339 (net HST included) with funding from CB210020 PR Halifax Common Pool Recon., as outlined in the Financial Implications section of this report.

## **BACKGROUND**

The existing playground on the Halifax Common was originally planned to be relocated during the 2023 Halifax Aquatic Centre project. The playground was to move adjacent to the existing skate park; however, the condition of the playground equipment was determined to be unsuitable for reuse or salvage. As an interim solution, when the nearby George Dixon Playground was being replaced several existing playground pieces were relocated and installed on the Halifax Central Common, south of the skate park. The reused playground pieces are acceptable as a temporary measure but are inadequate to meet the long-term needs of the public and requirements of the Halifax Common Master Plan.

On June 15, 2023, Regional Council approved an increase of \$2,000,000 (net HST included) to Project No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Reconstruction, to provide additional funding for a replacement playground on the Central Common. The replacement playground will be located between the skate park, ball field and aquatic facility. Features include; integration with the surrounding landscape to provide a variety of nature play opportunities, inclusive play for children of all abilities and accessible pathways. It would be constructed for high volume use with robust play structures and resilient surfacing.

Tender # 2024-0342 was awarded in August 2024 through a competitive bid process to supply and install water drainage infrastructure and reshaping the existing soils for the upcoming Halifax Common playground. After work had started onsite, consultants and contractors identified that there was more soil present on the site than was required for the playground and the excess soil must be relocated. The excess soil is to be placed between the adjacent existing soccer field and tennis courts, and shaped into a small hill in this area, on the Central Halifax Common, following direction of the Halifax Common Master Plan. Removing the soil from the site was considered, but the cost was significantly higher.

The additional costs to move the excess soil resulted in a shortage of funds to award the playground installation, which was tendered as RFP 2024-0662 Halifax Commons Playground. This report will authorize funding for the playground and award the playground work to the highest scoring proponent.

The playground replacement is identified in the approved 2024/25 Capital Budget, Supplemental Report Page B29.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Transfer of funding between capital projects**

Staff recommend a transfer of funds from CP200001 Park Recapitalization to CB210020 PR – Halifax Common Playground to award the playground construction. Budget availability has been confirmed by Finance.

### **Increase to CB210020 PR Halifax Common Playground**

With the above noted transfer of funding, staff recommend the award of RFP 2024-0662 Halifax Commons Playground.

RFP 2024-0662, Halifax Commons Playground, was publicly posted to Bids & Tenders website on December 6, 2024, and closed on February 6, 2025. A team, facilitated by Procurement, consisting of staff from Property, Fleet & Environment (Facility Design & Construction) and Parks & Recreation (Strategic Planning and Design and Parks Capital Projects) evaluated the proposals. Based on this review, Turf Masters Landscaping Ltd. was the highest scoring proponent with a total cost \$1,042,339 (net HST included).

Bids were received from the following bidders:

- Turf Masters Landscaping Ltd. \*
- Elmsdale Landscaping Ltd.
- Total One Contracting Inc.

\*Bidder is the highest scoring proponent.

**Scoring:**

Bids were evaluated using a scorecard process including evaluation of the Technical Proposal (70%), Cost (20%), and Social Value (10%).

**Scope of Work and Schedule:**

The scope of work includes the design, supply and installation of the playground equipment, walkways and seating options.

Contingent on award approval, it is anticipated the selected vendor will begin work immediately following award and be substantially complete by the fall of 2025.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Budget Summary:      Project Account No. CP200001 Park Recapitalization

Cumulative Unspent Budget (net HST included)	\$7,552,822
Less transfer to No. CB210020 (net HST included)	<u>\$ 200,000</u>
<b>Balance (net HST included)</b>	<b>\$7,352,822</b>

Budget Summary:      Project Account No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Recon

Cumulative Unspent Budget (net HST included)	\$ 904,147
Plus: Approved Increase (net HST included)	\$ 200,000
Less RFP 2024-0662 (net HST included)	<u>\$1,042,339</u>
<b>Balance (net HST included)</b>	<b>\$ 66,808</b>

RFP 2024-0662 estimated budget was \$1,048,260 (net HST included).

Unused funds will be returned to Project Account No. CB210020 Halifax Common Pool Recon.

**RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are safety risks associated with this construction project that will be mitigated by the contractor's safety program.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement was required.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No identified environmental implications.

## **SOCIAL VALUE**

RFP 2024-0662 included social value as a scored criteria. The proponents provided examples of their social value initiatives that were evaluated and scored as part of the procurement process.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The Audit and Finance Committee may choose not to approve the recommendation and not award the playground replacement work. Not approving the recommendation and not awarding the work would cancel the playground and leave the Halifax Commons without a playground. The playground is part of the Halifax Commons Master Plan and an expectation of the community.

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

### **Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, S.N.S. 2008, c. 39 as amended**

**79A (1)** Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if

- (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;
- (b) the expenditure is in respect of an emergency under the Emergency Management Act; or
- (c) the expenditure is legally required to be paid.

**(2)** The Municipality may expend money provided for in an operating budget or capital budget for a purpose other than that set out in the operating budget or capital budget for that fiscal year if the expenditure does not affect the total of the amounts estimated for the operating budget and the capital budget.

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### **Administrative Order One, the Procedures of Council Administrative Order, Schedule 2 - Audit and Finance Standing Committee Terms of Reference**

**8.** The Audit and Finance Standing Committee shall review and make recommendations on proposals coming to the Council outside of the annual budget or tender process including:

- (a) new programs or services not yet approved or funded;
- (b) programs or services that are being substantially altered;
- (c) proposed changes in any operating or project budget items;
- (d) the commitment of funds where there is insufficient approved budget;
- (e) new or increased capital projects not within the approved budget;
- (f) increases in project budget due to cost sharing; and
- (g) the creation or modification of reserves and withdrawals not approved in the approved budget.

### **Administrative Order 2022-012-ADM, The Procurement Policy**

Section 28(1) of the Procurement Policy provides that Regional Council may approve contract awards of any amount. Section 28(2)(a) further specifies that a contract award must be forwarded to Council for approval if:

- (i) the award commits the Municipality to making capital expenditures in a future fiscal year and exceeds the amounts allocated for the project in Council's multi-year capital plan;
- (ii) the award commits the Municipality to making operating expenditures in a future fiscal year and exceeds either \$5,000,000, or a term of 5 years;
- (iii) there is legislative requirement for Council to approve the award; or
- (iv) the CAO is of the opinion that the award is a matter best dealt with by Council.

Section 32 of the Procurement Policy provides that Regional Council may approve a contract amendment of any amount.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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