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Item No. 7.1
Budget Committee
February 28, 2024

TO: Chair and Members of Budget Committee (Standing Committee of the Whole on Budget)

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 28, 2024

SUBJECT: Proposed 2024/25 Halifax Transit Budget and Business Plan

ORIGIN

As per Administrative Order 1 and the Budget and Business Plan consultation schedule presented to Regional Council on October 3, 2023, staff are required to present the draft 2024/25 Business Unit Budget and Business Plans to the Budget Committee for review and discussion prior to consideration by Regional Council.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Charter, section 35 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer shall (b) ensure that an annual budget is prepared and submitted to the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Budget Committee:

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to incorporate the Halifax Transit proposed 2024/25 Budget and Business Plan, as set out and discussed in the accompanying plan and supporting presentation, into the Draft 2024/25 Operating Budget.

2. Approve the transit service modifications as proposed in the accompanying 2024/25 Annual Service Plan to the staff report dated February 28, 2024.

BACKGROUND

On January 12, 2021, Regional Council adopted a Strategic Planning Framework, establishing priority outcomes for their term, and directed staff to develop plans to advance these outcomes.

As part of the design of the 2024/25 Budget and Business Plan development process, the Budget Committee is reviewing each business unit's budget and proposed plans, in advance of completing detailed HRM Budget and Business Plan preparation.

This recommendation does not include the addition/removal of any proposed Budget Adjustment List options.

DISCUSSION

Staff has prepared the proposed 2024/25 Halifax Transit Budget and Business Plan consistent with the 2021- 2025 Strategic Priorities Plan approved on December 1, 2020, as well as budget outlook provided on November 28, 2023.

Following direction from the Budget Committee, staff will proceed to prepare the detailed Budget and Business Plan for inclusion in the proposed 2024/25 HRM Budget and Business Plan documents to be presented to Regional Council's Budget Committee, as per the process and schedule approved on October 3, 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in this report will lead to the development of a proposed 2024/25 Budget. There are no immediate financial implications from this recommendation. The broader financial implications will be discussed and debated as the budget is developed in more detail.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Although there is no immediate risk associated with this report, there may be risks associated with individual decisions during the budget debate that could favour short-term results over longer-term strategic outcomes. Individual decisions made during budget debate will, however, be considered for both short- and long-term impacts to levels of service, asset condition, and cost.

In addition, the administration seeks to reduce these risks in three ways: by providing Regional Council with several fiscal options to assist in the achievement of longer-term strategic outcomes, by assessing both corporate and capital project risk, and by providing the opportunity to draw Regional Council's attention to project or program related risks when reports are presented for consideration.

Enterprise 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

The 2024/25 budget process seeks to solicit public comment by inviting members of the public to provide feedback prior to each business unit budget and business plan presentation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Budget Committee could choose to amend the Budget and Business Plan as proposed in the supporting presentation through specific motion and direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare the Budget and Business Plan for inclusion in the proposed 2024/25 HRM Budget and Business Plan documents.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – 2024/25 Halifax Transit Proposed Budget and Business Plan

Attachment 2 – 2024/25 Halifax Transit Proposed Budget and Business Plan Presentation

Attachment 3 – 2024/25 Annual Service Plan

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: Hannah Forsyth, Coordinator, Halifax Transit

Report Approved by: Dave Reage, Executive Director, Halifax Transit

Financial Approval by: Jerry Blackwood, CFO, Executive Director of Finance & Asset Management