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**Item No. 21.4**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**April 8, 2025**

**TO:** Mayor Filmore and Members of Halifax Regional Council  
**FROM:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer  
**DATE:** February 6, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** District 11 Community Integration Fund Update

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### **INFORMATION REPORT**

#### **ORIGIN**

April 25, 2017, Meeting of Regional Council (Item 14.1.11):

#### **MOVED by Councillor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Mason**

1. Approve the Organics Management Strategy as outlined on page 7 of the staff report dated March 2, 2017;
2. Approve the Request for Qualifications Key Terms as outlined in Attachment A of the staff report dated March 2, 2017, as amended to add "grass" to Section 9, paragraph 2;
3. Direct staff to issue a Request for Qualifications and return to Council with the recommended Request for Proposals Key Terms for input and approval prior to its issuance;
4. Direct staff to make application for subdivision approval to expand the Northern and Eastern lot boundaries of 61 Evergreen Place by 200 meters North and 100 meters East as conceptualized in Attachment D to the staff report dated March 2, 2017;
5. Initiate a process to consider amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Land Use By-law to enable the expansion of HRM's Goodwood composting facility located at 61 Evergreen Place;
6. Follow the public participation program for municipal planning strategy amendments as approved by Regional Council on February 27, 1997; and
7. Approve in principle a community integration fund be established in the amount of \$1 million for the expansion of 61 Evergreen Place with \$350,000 in funding allocated toward the development of the Western Common Wilderness Common, \$325,000 in funding allocated toward infrastructure at the Prospect Road Community Center and \$325,000 in funding allocated to projects identified through a community consultation.

**AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On April 17, 2017, Regional Council approved a series of recommendations on the municipality's organic waste management program which were outlined within the Organics Management Strategy. One of these recommendations was to expand the Halifax Organics Management Facility in Goodwood. Historically, when the municipality has established or enlarged waste facilities it has provided funds, through a community integration fund, that are to be allocated towards improvements to community facilities or programs within that community. In approving the enlargement of the facility located in Goodwood, a community integration fund was established with the following allocations:

- \$350,000 toward the development of the Western Common Wilderness Common (WCWC);
- \$325,000 toward infrastructure at the Prospect Road Community Center (PRCC); and
- \$325,000 in funding allocated to projects to be identified through community consultation.

This report provides an update on each of the expenditure allocations, identifying that:

- the funds for the development of the WCWC have been used to accelerate the development of trails;
- through engagement with the PRCC's Board, an outdoor patio area and some components for disc golf have been identified as the likely infrastructure projects at the community centre; and
- community consultation in Goodwood identified several ideas for the allocated funding, but ultimately an enhancement to the future trailhead at the Old Coach Road, has been identified as the most viable option.

## **BACKGROUND**

On April 17, 2017, Regional Council approved a series of recommendations on the municipality's organic waste management program, which were outlined within the Organics Management Strategy. One of these was to expand the municipality's organics waste facility in Goodwood. When the municipality has established or enlarged waste facilities, it has provided funds through a community integration fund that are to be allocated towards enhancements to community facilities or programs. In approving the enlargement of the organics waste facility located in Goodwood, a community integration fund was established with the following allocations:

- \$350,000 toward the development of the Western Common Wilderness Common (WCWC);
- \$325,000 toward infrastructure at the Prospect Road Community Center (PRCC); and
- \$325,000 in funding allocated to projects to be identified through community consultation.

This report provides an update on each of the funding allocations.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since the approval of the community integration fund, there has been varying degrees of success in identifying and advancing projects under the funding allocations. The WCWC funding has been used to accelerate the development of the park. However, the determination of projects for infrastructure at the PRCC and projects to be identified through community consultation has been more challenging, although projects in these areas are now advancing.

### **Western Common Wilderness Common**

The \$350,000 of funding for the development of the WCWC has been straightforward in terms of its intent and expenditure. The amount was incorporated into the capital budget for the development of the WCWC and has been used for trail development in the Nichols Lake area. The funding, although modest in relation to the overall costs for the development of trail infrastructure, helped accelerate planned projects. This has included contributions towards trail development leading to a watercourse, that subsequently led to the recent completion of a bridge that highlights a waterfall near Nichols Lake.

### **Infrastructure at the PRCC**

The PRCC is subject to a partnership agreement between the municipality and the Resource Opportunities Centre Board (Board). The municipality is responsible for all capital improvements and major facility maintenance, whereas the Board provides oversight of staff that operate the facility and provide recreation programming and services. With the basis of the community integration fund being ideally for projects that exceed those that are typically provided by the municipality, the identification of a project at the PRCC has been challenging. In addition, although the \$350,000 of funding is not a small amount, it is not a substantial sum of money for many infrastructure projects.

The Board collaborated with their members and HRM staff to identify a list of potential projects, though upon further investigation these projects would likely exceed the \$350,000. Additionally, there are site limitations related to grade surrounding the building and the Board did not want to rush to a decision regarding allocation of the funds. The Board determined an outdoor patio area and some components for disc golf have been identified and are now being finalized. Should there be a balance of funds following the development of the two projects, the remainder should be held in a reserve for the Board to access as needs are identified.

### **Projects to be Identified through Community Consultation**

The expansion to the organics management facility impacts residents in the community of Goodwood. On this basis, the focus of the community integration funding for projects to be identified through community consultation has been on potential projects to enhance this community. Such community integration funding has regularly been usually used for enhanced recreation facilities such as park assets. However, although the Western Common Wilderness Common is a prominent parkland in the area, there are no local parks in the community. This circumstance, along with the relatively low amount of funding allocation has made it difficult to identify potential projects in Goodwood.

For the community consultation, notices were mailed to property owners in Goodwood, which totaled 96 properties with invitations to attend a community meeting or to contact staff to provide feedback. The community meeting was held on February 20, 2024, which included an introduction by the then-local councillor<sup>1</sup> and a presentation by staff, which was followed by breakout discussions. Two potential projects were identified to help guide discussion:

- interpretive signage panels or installations related to the Goodwood area to be installed at a place such as a planned WCWC trailhead off the Old Coach Road; and
- allocation of the funds for the development of the WCWC or PRCC projects.

In addition, part of the meeting was devoted to “blue sky” opportunities for attendees to identify other potential community projects. Several ideas were generated but upon review would be challenging as community integration funding projects:

- Enhanced Community Maintenance: Community members have identified ongoing issues with blown litter, that appear to be a consequence of the types of industrial uses in the area. The funding of an enhanced maintenance program was identified as a possible funding project. However, the drawbacks of such a project are that litter is largely on private property; the project would have a limited duration as funding would eventually be depleted; and most substantially, the project could alleviate industrial property owners from funding their own initiatives to ensure that litter from their sites is not impacting the broader community.
- Future Community Projects Administered by Prospect Road Recreation Association (PRRA) oversight: The PRRA is a community organization that collects an area rate in the Prospect area and delivers funding toward recreation services and facility needs in the Prospect area. Originally there was an idea of having the \$325,000 fund managed by the PRRA to develop and administer a funding program for Goodwood community-based projects. However, initial discussions with the chair of the PRRA recognized such a program may be challenging to implement and administer without there being possible candidate projects.
- Community Beautification: Some meeting attendees identified a possible community beautification project through which property owners in the community of Goodwood along Prospect Road would have access to funding for landscaping improvements. The potential to implement this type of project as a municipal expenditure under the HRM Charter was considered. To offer a program of this nature, a Business Improvement District or not-for-profit would need to oversee the delivery of funds, as a project of this nature would be for the improvement of private properties. It was also recognized that evaluating various landscaping improvements on private lands as beautification projects could be difficult to evaluate.

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<sup>1</sup> The municipality's District boundaries have changed. Goodwood is now in District 13.

Prior to the community meeting, other ideas were raised, such as a potential scholarship program for Goodwood students wishing to study in environment or waste management fields, however, these ideas were not advanced further.

The idea of developing interpretive signage panels or installations related to the Goodwood area to be installed and enhance a future trailhead on Old Coach Road was discussed at the community meeting. A structure to protect users from weather, historic panels telling the stories of the area, and installation of other outdoor recreation facilities were identified as possibilities. Upon review, this project has the most merit of the ideas that were considered. It has therefore been identified as the most viable option for the \$325,000 funding allocation. The project would be an enhancement that is on municipal parkland, can be readily implemented, and would be a means to improve community identity that does not currently exist.

### **Next Steps**

The development of the Old Coach Road trailhead is being planned within the next few years as the next phase of construction of the WCWC. As this occurs, further engagement will occur with Goodwood property owners and residents to determine the types of trailhead and related parkland enhancements that may be realized.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The funds for the trailhead enhancement will be earmarked in the municipality's multi-year capital budget and will be aligned with the future development of the Old Coach Road trailhead, which will be subject to future Regional Council budget approvals. With the change in the district boundaries for Goodwood, the funding account CW200001 will be renamed to the "Halifax Organics Management Facility - Goodwood Community Integration Fund.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

As outlined within this report, community engagement occurred with the PRCC's Board and property owners and residents from Goodwood. Additional community engagement will be undertaken in the development of the Old Coach Road trailhead and enhancements.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

***Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, SNS 2008, c 39:***

**7A** The purposes of the Municipality are to (a) provide good government; (b) provide services, facilities, and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality; and (c) develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

**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;...

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.