

Request for Council's Consideration		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included on Agenda (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Thursday)	<input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Monday)	<input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor
Date of Council Meeting: June 20, 2023		
Subject: Prioritizing Community Safety in HRM		
Motion for Council to Consider:		
That Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to		
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) develop a staff report outlining and prioritizing budgeted and non-budgeted initiatives within the 2023/24 Budget and Business Plan that will help mitigate and manage wildfire risk to communities;2) provide an update to Council on the progress to enhance crisis communication capacity, which is listed as an objective in the Strategic Priorities Plan for 2021-2025.		
Reason:		
<p>Community safety must be strategically elevated and prioritized in HRM's Budget. The Halifax Regional Municipality has been aware of significant egress and community evacuation needs for decades. Communities with limited egress and no piped water for firefighting have identified concerns to HRM and some residents have been working directly with HRM Emergency Management to develop neighborhood evacuation plans and advocating for the installation of more dry fire hydrants.</p> <p>The Evacuation Planning process for communities and neighborhoods has not been designed or delivered for consistent program implementation, nor have Crisis Communications plans or tactics been consistently developed, implemented, or practiced organization-wide. The development, monitoring, and evaluation of EMO training, practice, and program implementation remains inconsistent and emergent. This was evident during the Upper Tantallon and Hammonds Plains 900 hectares wildfire that destroyed multiple neighborhoods and resulted in the evacuation of over 16,400 residents and destruction of 151 homes and over 200 structures.</p> <p>Previous wildfires in Spryfield (2009) and Porters Lake, Mineville/Lawrencetown areas (2008, 2015) resulted in an identified need for immediate improved emergency management, disaster mitigation, wildfire management, and increased crisis communications capacity.</p>		

The prioritization of community safety must be elevated in HRM's Budget and Business Plan this year and in future years to effectively and adequately address these legacy challenges of provincial, former County of Halifax, and HRM community design and planning without appropriate egress or disaster management resources.

Outcome Sought:

Staff report that outlines budgeted and non-budgeted initiatives within the 2023/24 Budget and Business Plan and update on progress to enhance crisis communication capacity, which is listed as an objective in the Strategic Priorities Plan for 2021-2025.

Councillor
Pam Lovelace

District 13