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**Information Item No. 1**  
**Halifax and West Community Council**  
**March 27, 2023**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** - Original Signed -  
Michael Lamplugh, Chair, Western Common Advisory Committee

**DATE:** March 8, 2023

**SUBJECT:** **Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan Annual Report**

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

September 27, 2017, Western Common Advisory Committee, Item 9.2.1.  
October 10, 2017, Halifax and West Community Council, Item 13.2.1.  
October 31, 2017, Halifax Regional Council, Item 14.4.1.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, clause 7A(b) and section 23, as follows:

7A The purposes of the Municipality are to

...

(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

23 The Council may establish, by policy, citizen advisory committees which shall advise the Council, as directed by the Council.

Administrative Order Number 2016-001-Gov, the *Western Common Advisory Committee Administrative Order*, section 12, as follows:

12. The Committee Chair shall, with the assistance of staff, submit a written report to the Halifax and West Community Council in accordance with section 6 at least once annually.

**BACKGROUND**

On June 15, 2010, the Western Common Wilderness Master Plan (Master Plan) was adopted by Halifax Regional Council.

On May 31, 2016, Halifax Regional Council established the Western Common Advisory Committee (the Committee) by adopting the *Western Common Advisory Committee Administrative Order*, and granted the Committee the following responsibilities:

6. The Committee shall monitor the phased development of the Western Wilderness Common and advise Council, through the Halifax and West Community Council, on the community perspective of the implementation of the Master Plan as follows:
  - (a) the Committee shall advise Council on detailed planning and development of the Park; and
  - (b) the Committee shall advise Council on environmental sustainability in the Park, including:
    - (i) public access and wilderness recreation programing;
    - (ii) impact of land uses, within and adjacent to the Western Common, on the Park;
    - (iii) ecological diversity and connectivity;
    - (iv) cultural landscapes; and
    - (v) park operational matters.

On September 27, 2017, the Committee passed a motion recommending Halifax and West Community Council recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to report annually on progress toward the implementation of the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan. The Committee suggested the report outline: budget allocation; progress of trail construction; construction issues; and, whether there are issues related to operations, accessibility or the environment.

On October 10, 2017, Halifax and West Community Council passed an amended motion recommending that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to report annually to Halifax and West Community Council on the progress towards the implementation of the Master Plan.

On October 31, 2017, Halifax Regional Council passed a motion directing staff to report annually to Halifax and West Community Council on the progress towards the implementation of the Master Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Western Common Advisory Committee met three times in 2022 with a focus on trail construction, standards outlined in the Master Plan.

### **Budget Allocation**

On May 25, 2022, staff advised that \$50,000 remained in the wilderness parks budget account for 2022 and additional funds were approved under the Regional/Wilderness Park Development in the capital budget.

Highlights of the capital budget for trail construction in the Western Wilderness Common include the following:

- Funding for trail construction is being allocated for future design and construction of water crossings at Nichols Run

### **Trail Progress**

#### *Nichols Run Crossing*

Preliminary design for the water crossing at Nichols Run has been undertaken and the next step is a determination of the best approach to construct the bridge based on the design.

### **Drysdale Bog property/zoning exchange**

On February 23, 2022, the Committee received a presentation from Stephen Adams and Greg Zwicker on behalf of MLP Developments on the Drysdale Bog. Following, Committee members visited the site and

noted different land use issues and the need to prioritize an access road to Big Indian Lake due to the minimal groundwork required for a trail.

### **Ragged Lake Industrial Employment Land Supply**

On February 23, 2022, the Committee received a staff presentation and information that the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) would like to match the amount of employment lands with the population growth in the future and for the industrial park to be as eco-friendly as possible. The Committee discussed environmental impacts and proximity to the Western Common and maintaining as much existing vegetation as possible.

### **Natural Surfacing Trails of Western Common Wilderness Common**

On August 23, 2022, Halifax Regional Council approved addendums to the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan to address the development and management of trails in the Western Common Wilderness Common.

#### *Future Trail Development*

Future trail development will consider the natural setting and topography of the Western Common, this is based on experience with earlier construction and consultation with the Western Common Advisory Committee, as outlined in the addendum to the Western Common Wilderness Common Master Plan.

### **Goodwood Organic Waste Facility**

On September 21, 2022, the Committee received a staff presentation on the new composting facility project and discussed building specifications and the use of concrete floors, current water monitoring program, new odor control system, absence of city sewer and water connection, plannings for existing facilities, and scheduling a site visit.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications related to this report.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Western Common Advisory Board is comprised of four citizen members and one Councillor. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Board are posted on Halifax.ca.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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