

COUNCILLOR TONY MANCINI

HARBOURVIEW—BURNSIDE —DARTMOUTH EAST

DISTRICT 6 NEWSLETTER



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SPRING 2020



DEAR RESIDENTS,

As we look back on the last year, I am so proud of everything we have accomplished in District 6. I really enjoyed my time as Deputy Mayor where I was privileged to represent the Mayor at lots of events and play a role in

promoting our Municipality at home and to representatives from around the world.

This month, your Halifax Regional Council will be approving our 2020-2021 Operating and Capital Budget. Through this process, we have been reminded of our strategic priorities as community leaders, and the progress and opportunities that are before us. In 2017, Regional Council approved a strategic plan that included six priority areas – Economic Development, Governance and Engagement, Healthy, Livable Communities, Service Delivery, Social Development and Transportation. We are working hard to act on these initiatives with the cooperation of our amazing staff and in collaboration with great community partners.

More details on the municipal budget and some of the accomplishments we can be proud of are in this newsletter along with important information about ridesharing, District Capital spending and much more. Thank you for continuing to work with me as we build a safe, active and healthy District 6!

CHERS RÉSIDENTS,

Quand on jette un regard rétrospectif sur l'année dernière, je suis tellement fier de tout ce que nous avons accompli dans le district 6. J'ai vraiment apprécié mes fonctions en tant que maire adjoint, où j'ai eu le privilège de représenter le maire à de nombreux événements et de jouer un rôle dans la promotion de notre municipalité au pays et à des représentants du monde entier.

Ce mois-ci, votre Conseil régional d'Halifax approuvera le budget de fonctionnement et d'immobilisations de 2020-2021. Par l'entremise de ce processus, on nous a rappelés de nos priorités stratégiques en tant que leaders communautaires, ainsi qu'aux progrès et aux possibilités qui se présentent à nous. En 2017, le Conseil régional a approuvé un plan stratégique comprenant six domaines prioritaires : le développement économique, la gouvernance et l'engagement, les collectivités saines et viables, la prestation de services, le développement social et le transport. Nous travaillons d'arrache-pied à la mise en œuvre de ces initiatives avec la collaboration de notre personnel incroyable et en collaboration avec d'excellents partenaires communautaires.

De plus amples détails sur le budget municipal et sur certaines des réalisations dont nous pouvons être fiers sont énumérés ci-dessous, ainsi que des renseignements importants sur le covoiturage, les dépenses en immobilisations du district et bien plus encore. Je vous remercie de continuer votre travail avec moi alors que nous bâtissons un district 6 sécuritaire, actif et sain!

HALIFAX



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CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

We are coming to the end of another four-year term for this municipal council. I'm so proud of the things we have accomplished in District 6 and across the municipality in the past four years.

A huge area of growth in District 6 will be the **Port Wallace community**. The Regional Plan identified Port Wallace as a potential future growth area. Community engagement has been an important part of the planning process. A Port Wallace Public Participation Committee was created in 2014 to oversee public engagement and to make recommendations regarding the secondary planning strategy. Background research, development of draft policies, costing of infrastructure and developing a Capital Cost Charge program is still ongoing and planning for the utility corridor that will service the area is well underway. Once the draft policy is complete, further public consultation will take place. More detail on this project can be found here: halifax.ca/about-halifax/regional-community-planning/regional-plan/port-wallace.

I'm so proud to see how much our Village on Main has flourished over the last four years – they are doing great work to connect and promote local businesses. Burnside continues to be a centre for economic development, not only for District 6 but the entire municipality.

The **environment** has been a huge priority for this Council. I'm proud to say the HalifACT 2050 plan is expected to return to Regional Council soon, this plan will guide efforts to reduce emissions for the municipality and help communities adapt to climate change. I was honoured to attend the 2019 Zero Waste Conference to learn more about sustainable practices from across the country. We are now advocating on a municipal level for Extended Producer Responsibility, banning single use plastics and are supporting the protection of Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes and the Purcell's Cove Backlands.

We are making **transit** more accessible by expanding our Low Income Bus Pass program that provides monthly transit passes 50% off for residents who qualify. We have also made major improvements to our Access-A-Bus program with the Access-A-Bus Continuous Improvement Service Plan. This plan includes investments in new technology, achieving a more adaptable service and the introduction of integrated trips, all contributing to a more efficient, accessible service for passengers. The Moving Forward Together Plan that rethought our entire transit system is still being implemented and so far has provided a huge increase in ridership from previous years. In November, 19 adjustments were made to transit routes through Burnside providing more effective and expanded service. We were even able to support the Boys and Girls Club by donating one of our used Access-A-Buses. This month, Halifax Transit are consulting the public on a Rapid Transit Strategy that would provide faster, more frequent, 7-day a week service and may even include electric or hydrogen vehicles. I'm looking forward to seeing more progress on plans for the Burnside Connector and Transit staff are engaging the public about increasing connectivity within Burnside and Dartmouth Crossing.

We are continuing to combat food insecurity by supporting the **Mobile Food Market** that provides affordable healthy foods in neighbourhoods that may not have access to a grocery store and

are investing in **recreation opportunities** like the Shubie Park trails, Cyril Smith Park and installing new pickle ball courts in Morash Park.

I'm so encouraged by the work that has happened in **Dartmouth North** over the last few years. We've added more community signage, made enhancements to several parks including collaborating with Nova Scotia Power to clean up Farrell Street Park and hosting a park opening barbecue last summer. By adding lighting and a trail this park is now a safer place for the community to gather. The community is really coming together thanks to amazing organizations like the Dartmouth North Public Library that now has an incredible outdoor library component. The Dartmouth North Community Food Centre and Dartmouth Family Centre continue to do great work, and I was so pleased that Regional Council voted unanimously to provide a special grant for their One Roof campaign. We also thank the Take Action Society, Boys and Girls Club, Freedom Foundation and Between the Bridges for all your great work in the community. More upgrades are coming for the Dartmouth North Public Library and we are hoping to invest in more public art particularly in the Dartmouth North area.

In 2019, we also received the Wortley Report, an independent report on **Police Street Checks**, that revealed that African Nova Scotian residents were six times more likely to be stopped and questioned for random street checks and were also more likely to be charged with crimes. In November 2019, Chief Dan Kinsella offered an apology to the African Nova Scotian community. The Department of Justice has declared a moratorium on street checks and Halifax Regional Police have committed to deleting 14 years worth of street check data by December 2020 unless it is involved in an investigation or court case.

There is still lots to look forward to in this 2020 coming year, including receiving the Cornwallis Task Force recommendations that will have a huge impact on how we commemorate our history. We will continue to invest in public safety by completing more traffic calming on problem streets including narrowing the four-way stop at the Montebello/Caledonia/Breeze intersection and by working towards an active transportation corridor in the Main Street and Lakecrest area. As a municipality, we are looking forward to hosting the North American Indigenous Games and showing off our great community to all of the athletes and visitors who will attend. It's an exciting time to be a part of the great things happening here in HRM!

MOIS DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Le mois de mars est le Mois de la Francophonie, un moment pour célébrer le rôle de notre communauté francophone ici dans la Municipalité régionale d'Halifax. La diversité est une partie importante de ce qui fait de notre municipalité un succès, et je suis tellement fier d'étendre nos efforts pour vraiment valoriser notre diversité, en particulier auprès de la communauté francophone, en ayant un membre du personnel désigné dans notre bureau de la diversité et de l'inclusion qui traduit nos messages d'intérêt public et investit dans l'affichage bilingue. Vous pouvez visiter halifax.ca/fr, notre site en français lancé en avril 2019 pour améliorer l'accès aux renseignements à propos des services municipaux essentiels.

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March is Francophonie Month, a time to celebrate the role of our French community here in the Halifax Regional Municipality. Diversity is a huge part of what makes our municipality a success, and I'm so proud to be expanding our efforts to truly value our diversity particularly with the Francophone community by having a designated staff member in our Diversity and Inclusion office, translating our Public Service Announcements and investing in bilingual signage. You can check out halifax.ca/fr, our French language website launched in April 2019 aimed at improving access to information about key services offered by the municipality.

SINGLE USE PLASTICS

In HRM, it is estimated that we use between 125 – 208 million plastic shopping bags per year. Even though the bags can be recycled through our Blue Bag program, these bags still make up a visible portion of HRM's non-recyclable waste stream and account for over 3% of litter observed throughout Nova Scotia.

Banning plastic bags is a small step in reducing litter and ocean plastic, but it represents a larger political and cultural shift to encourage more reusable materials. Paper bags or higher quality reusable bags hold more, result in less waste and are more durable.

Nova Scotia is the third Canadian Province to ban plastic bags and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has committed to a country-wide ban on harmful single-use plastics as early as 2021. Thank you to my municipal colleagues, the province and all of the private sector organizations that have shown leadership on this important issue. Regional Council will soon be reviewing a report investigating the possibility of providing black and blue bins for collection, further reducing our plastic consumption.

STADIUM AND SHANNON PARK UPDATE

On December 10th, Regional Council voted to provide a one-time contribution of \$20M towards the construction of a community stadium to be payable upon completion of construction. The agreement is conditional on the selection of a site with access to major transportation routes and the necessary infrastructure acceptable to Regional Council. These conditions would prevent any financial support for a stadium at Shannon Park.

The \$20M would come from our Strategic Capital Reserve Fund. Using funds from the reserve will have no impact on the tax rate. Property taxes from this new building will eventually recoup the cost of this contribution.

I believe investing \$20M in an \$100M asset is worth it for the opportunities it brings. A stadium would allow us to host numerous National and International events that we cannot host now. These events will bring many visitors to our municipality. The stadium's operating model also proposes to have year-round programming facilitated by Sport Nova Scotia for youth and provincial sports organizations at no or minimal cost. HRM will also have access to the facility for programming.

This decision does not confirm we will be spending the \$20M, it simply means we will continue to engage with Schooner Sports and Entertainment (SSE) in finding an option that makes sense for the municipality.

Given Regional Council's decision, Canada Lands will now be working with HRM staff toward approval of the original master plan for Shannon Park that was developed with significant public engagement and submitted to the municipality in 2016. Canada Lands Company and the Millbrook First Nation continue to work collaboratively to develop their adjacent properties at Shannon Park.

POLICE COMPLIMENTS OR COMPLAINTS

Do you have concerns about the actions, service or conduct of Police in the Halifax Regional Municipality?

Complaints can be filed with the HRP Professional Standards office at 902-490-4127 or hrpprofstand@halifax.ca or through the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner at novascotia.ca/opcc

Complaints must be made within six months of an incident. You can also report positive stories about your interactions with Police to our Professional Standards team.

RIDESHARING (I.E. UBER/LYFT)

According to a recent citizen survey of over 13,000 residents, 88% of respondents wanted to see Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber, Lyft or other ridesharing organizations be permitted to operate in the municipality, the majority confirmed that the current supply of vehicle for hire transportation options is not meeting consumer demands.

Although both TNCs and the taxi industry operate vehicles for hire, their business models are different and need to be regulated differently. The existing business model of TNCs does not align with the structure of HRM's By-law T-1000, Respecting the Regulation of Taxis, Accessible Taxis and Limousines, so changes to the by-law are required for them to operate in the Municipality.

On January 14, 2020, Regional Council approved a motion that would amend our taxi by-law and administrative order to introduce new licensing requirements for TNCs and asked the Mayor to request that the province make amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act to enable us to charge a per-trip fee. Staff will return to Regional Council in the spring with the by-law and Administrative Order amendments to regulating TNCs and brokers.

NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES 2020

The North American Indigenous Games will be hosted here in Kijipuktuk (Halifax) from July 12 – 18 2020. These games will bring together over 5,000 athletes plus their families, friends and fans from across the country to participate in 16 sports and a cultural celebration. The Halifax Common will be abuzz with the cultural village, performances, demonstrations, art and softball. You can find more information about this exciting event at naig2020.com.



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2020-2021 BUDGET

Regional Council will be approving the 2020-2021 Municipal Capital and Operating Budget this month. Over the last three months, we have received presentations from each business unit outlining their current initiatives, future opportunities to expand, savings, and evaluating their performance.

When we began budget deliberations, the initial direction was for a 1.5% increase in the tax bill for the average home (approximately \$30). HRM always focuses on the change in the tax bill, which combines the impact of assessment increases set by the provincial Property Valuation Services Corporation and the tax rate set by municipal council. While tax bills have increased over the last few years, in actuality, HRM has been able to cut the tax rate because rising assessments have brought in enough additional revenue to meet our rising costs.

This year, staff have found that we expect about a \$16.2 million surplus for the 2019-2020 budget. We also collected more revenue than previously anticipated due to the continued growth particularly in new apartment buildings.

During the process, Councillors could request additional expense items not covered under the proposed budget be added to a Budget Options List or “parking lot.” The “parking lot” items were debated and approved on February 12th and staff will create a completed copy of the budget for final approval. Both the surplus and the better than forecast assessment results made a big difference for the options list since it gave Council the ability to include items without further impacting the residential tax bill.

One-time expenses like land acquisition for the Downtown Dartmouth project, splashpad funding, an African Nova Scotian Affairs Economic Strategy and more will receive funding from this additional revenue. The remaining surplus was allocated towards capital projects, meaning we won't be taking on any more debt to accomplish these projects. Avoiding new debt will save HRM \$2.3M in 2021.

Other operating expenses that we decided to add to the budget this year included:

- Creating more jobs in our Clerk's Office, legal, parks maintenance, heritage planning, HalifACT climate change plan and recreation inclusion program.
- Investing in important community partnerships like the Street Navigator Program, VOLTA Partnership, Rural Transit and support for Multi-District Facilities like the Zatzman Sportsplex and Alderney Landing.
- Increasing our grant capabilities for the arts, heritage and Business Improvement Districts.
- Continued support for important initiatives like the library's food program, tree planting and pruning, parking enforcement, traffic calming in school zones, police and fire services.
- Funding to increase our Library collection to meet the demand.
- New Citizen's Survey
- Food Action Plan
- Accessible Taxi Grant Program (*requires charter amendments from the province)

In the end, even with these exciting additions to our budget the tax increase will only be 1.4%, less than we anticipated at the start of the process. Thank you to Councillor Sam Austin for creating such a thorough outline of this process, if you want more detail, please check out Councillor Austin's website – samaustin.ca

2019-20 DISTRICT CAPITAL

The District Capital Fund is used to fund larger-scale capital development projects and infrastructure enhancements that are deemed to benefit the entire community. Here's what we issued grants for this year:

Organization	Grant Amount
Banook Canoe Club – Clubhouse Repairs	\$2,000
Aberdeen Park Playbox	\$949
Daffodil Cancer Survivors Garden	\$2,000
NS Association of Turtle Patrollers – equipment	\$312.50
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Halifax – air conditioners, toys and tables	\$2,800
Dartmouth Family Centre – Barn upgrade and gardening supplies	\$5,200
Holy Trinity Emmanuel Anglican Church – Accessible washroom and lift	\$5,000
LakeCity Employment Services Association – new equipment	\$10,000
East Dartmouth Community Centre – sound system	\$300
Downtown Dartmouth Business Commission – banners for Lake Banook	\$2,500
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Halifax – bus repairs	\$3,000
Ian Forsyth Elementary School – Flag Pole	\$202
Dartmouth Crossing Speed Skating Club	\$2,500
Shubenacadie Canal Commission – Gate replacement	\$4,000
SonLife Community Church – Community Sign	\$500

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Delivery Note:

Due to the delivery routes followed by Canada Post, it is possible that some of these newsletters may appear in other Districts. If you receive it in error, I apologize for any confusion and hope you find its content useful.