COUNCILLOR JOHN YOUNG
DISTRICT 14 NEWSLETTER
Hammonds Plains - Upper Hammonds Plains - Lucasville - Middle & Upper Sackville

WELCOME APRIL

April brings a welcome sense of renewal as we move into spring. I hope those who celebrate Easter and all our residents had a great long weekend! As Leo Tolstoy wrote, *"Spring is the time of plans and projects."* We wish everyone a safe and restful holiday.

In this issue, you'll find updates on current initiatives, and opportunities to stay engaged in the weeks ahead. As always, thank you for your continued involvement and commitment to our community as we move into a new season together.

John

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MARCH MEETING DATES

Regional Council, Northwest Community Council and Standing Committee meetings will be held on:

Regional Council:
Tuesday, April 14 at 10 a.m.
Tuesday, April 28 at 10 a.m.

North West Community Council:
Monday, April 13 at 6 p.m.

Standing Committees:
Appeals Standing Committee

- Thursday, April 9 at 10 a.m.

Audit & Finance Standing Committee

- Wednesday, April 15 at 10 a.m.

Special Events Advisory Committee

- Wednesday, April 8 at 9:30 a.m.

DATES TO NOTE

Sikh Heritage Month

Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month

International Day of Pink – April 8

Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge - April 9

National Volunteer Week, - April 19 – 25

Earth Day - April 22

Administrative Professionals Day - April 22

National Day of Mourning - April 28

HRM 2026/27 BUDGET

After a long and at times difficult process, Regional Council has approved the 2026/27 municipal budget which includes an operating budget of $1.45 billion and a capital budget of $316.7 million at the March 31 Regional Council meeting.

The budget process began on Nov. 18, 2025, when Regional Council received the 2024/25 Strategic Performance Report and Snapshot. Over the following weeks, municipal staff introduced the 2026/27 municipal budget and capital plan; business units presented their budget and business plans; and Budget Committee finalized the Budget Adjustment List (BAL) of “overs” and “unders.” Throughout the process, many members of the public took the opportunity to speak directly with Budget Committee, through both in person and virtual opportunities.

Regional Council and staff have worked to find the best path forward, balancing the need for services we rely on and affordability for our residents.

The approved 2026/27 budget requires a 7.5 per cent increase to the average residential and commercial property tax bill. This means the average residential tax bill will increase by $284 in 2026/27.

Thank you to our municipal staff for their dedication, efficiency and professionalism throughout this process, and to the residents who took time to offer their feedback. You can

find out more about the final budget and the process on our website.

CHAMPION OF THE ENVIROMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Divert NS is offering up to $40,500 in scholarships to Nova Scotia Grade 12 students with a keen interest in the environment.

Nine scholarships of $3,500 and nine scholarships of $1,000 are available. To apply, students need to review the application package, write or record a summary of their recent environment activities and obtain a letter of reference from their school or community.

WILDFIRE SEASON

Wildfire season runs from March 15 to Oct. 15. While burning restrictions are in effect year-round, additional restrictions are in effect during wildfire season. Always check our Before You Burn website before starting a fire.

If burning is permitted, follow these safety guidelines:

- Never leave your fire unattended - unattended fires can spread quickly and become dangerous.
- Completely extinguish your fire - douse it with water, stir the ashes and repeat until everything is cool to the touch.

Residents can voluntarily register to receive a wildfire risk assessment for their property using the FireSmart standard. FireSmart is a program that helps people reduce wildfire risk by making homes and neighbourhoods less likely to catch fire from embers. It focuses on straightforward actions like basic home improvements, keeping buildings and yards free of combustible debris and managing nearby vegetation so fires are less likely to spread. To learn more about a FireSmart assessment, visit our website.

For more information about wildfire safety, visit our website.

REPORTING POTHOLES

Our road operations crews are always on the lookout for potholes, but we also reply heavily on residents to report any problematic potholes and sinkholes so they can be assessed and fixed as soon as possible. To report a pothole in

your area, just call 311 or you can report online. Depending on the location and depth of the pothole, the repair will be planned and prioritized. You can find out more about pothole repairs here.

SUBURBAN PLAN MAIN STREET VISIONIONG WORKSHOPS

The municipality is developing a Suburban Plan, a new planning document that will guide growth and change in our suburban areas, and we're looking for your feedback.

The goal of the suburban planning process is to update land use policies under one plan while respecting each community's unique history, characteristics and aspirations.

For the next phase of engagement on the Suburban Plan, help shape the future of your suburban main street! We're looking for community members to provide ideas for the design of buildings and public spaces, types of stores and services, accessibility improvements, and more!

In each workshop, community members will work together to create a unique vision and guiding principles for their local main street area.

The workshops will be 2 hours and will include presentations, seated group activities and the opportunity to review photos, maps, modelling blocks and other materials to spark discussions.

You can register to participate in the full two-hour workshop or just drop by.

Workshops will run throughout March and April across our suburban communities. Check out the event nearest you below:

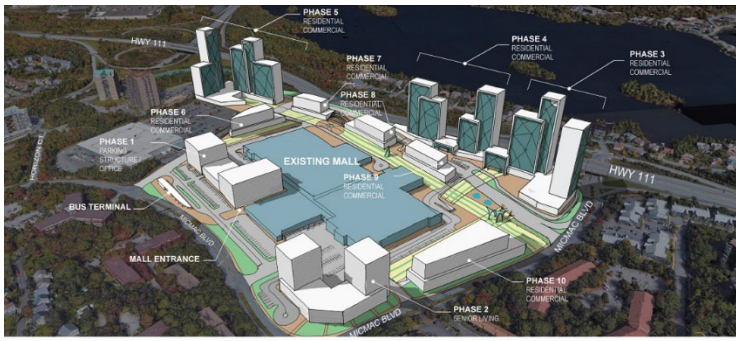
Main Road – Cow Bay Road – Shore Road (Eastern Passage) Main Street Visioning Workshop
Date: April 8
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Location: Fisherman's Cove Heritage Centre
Follow the event registration link **here**.

Sackville Drive (Lower and Middle Sackville) Main Street Visioning Workshop
Date: April 9
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Location: Acadia Hall
Follow the event registration link **here**.

St. Margaret's Bay Road (Timberlea) Main Street Visioning Workshop
Date: April 13
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Location: Lakeside Fire Hall
Follow the event registration link **here**.

You can also provide your feedback by taking our survey, you can find more details about the plan and the link for the survey here.

M DISTRICT FUTURE GROWTH NODE



M District Proposal 3D Context View, WM Fares Architects

On March 10, Regional Council held a public hearing regarding the M District Future Growth Node, a development proposal for the area around the current Mic Mac Mall.

The landowner, 4239474 CANADA INC, is proposing new developments in the area that would include 2,800 residential units, an addition to the existing shopping mall, new commercial and institutional uses, a new transit terminal, a network of private open spaces and pathways, a new park, public street and enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Staff completed two phases of public engagement already and after hearing from staff, the developer and the public, Regional Council voted to approve moving forward with the required planning changes for a development agreement at this location.

You can learn more about this development here.

MUNICIPALITY RECEIVES BEE CITY STATUS

The Halifax Regional Municipality has received Bee City status, as designated by Bee City Canada.

Bee City status recognizes the municipality's commitment to protecting and promoting pollinators by establishing and maintaining pollinator habitats, supporting community education and celebrating National Pollinator Week, held annually during the third week of June.

The designation also provides access to expert resources from Bee City Canada to support ongoing work under the municipality's Naturalization Strategy. Naturalization is a landscape management approach that focuses on biodiversity and making urban spaces more resilient. It includes the use of native or non-invasive grasses, perennials, shrubs and trees. Visit our website to learn more about the municipality's naturalization efforts.

HALIFAX WATER CUSTOMER PORTAL PRIVACY INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Halifax Water is continuing to respond to a privacy incident involving its Customer Connect Portal. Protecting customer information is a top priority, and the utility is committed to transparency as more information is confirmed.

The Customer Connect Portal remains offline while Halifax Water and the external vendor that owns and operates the platform complete a comprehensive investigation and verification process.

The investigation is ongoing and is focused on determining what information was accessible and to what extent. This privacy incident is limited to the online customer portal and is not impacting their day-to-day operations.

Customers are reminded to be cautious of unsolicited calls, emails, or text messages claiming to be from Halifax Water. Halifax Water is not contacting customers regarding this incident. If you receive a call and are unsure, hang up and call back using the phone number listed on the official Halifax Water website. Customers with questions or concerns can contact Halifax Water's Customer Care Team at 902-420-9287, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. You can find out more here.

ANNUAL SPRING WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

To minimize potential damage to municipal roads, the Halifax Regional Municipality has introduced its annual spring weight restrictions until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 26.

These restrictions are for heavy vehicles travelling on municipally maintained roads. Residents can view which roads are exempt from spring weight restrictions on this map. Regular weight tolerances apply on exempt roads.

The municipality's spring weight restrictions are consistent with those of the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works. More details of vehicle restrictions can be found on the provincial website.

SUMMER RECRETAION JOBS

The Halifax Regional Municipality is recruiting applicants for summer positions in aquatics, inclusion and recreation programming across the region.

These are ideal job opportunities for teenagers and students with wages ranging between $17.75 and $24.75 per hour.

Visit our website for more information on dates and locations, as well as a list of job openings.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DATA DASHBOARD LAUNCH

The Halifax Regional Municipality's Planning & Development Dashboard is now live! This new interactive tool provides real-time information on permit and construction activities including current and requested permits, metrics on housing and projections of population trends.

Data is updated daily and includes filters that allow users to explore by community and by different permit and structure types.

Explore the dashboard here.

MICROTRANSIT SERVICE PLAN

Regional Council approved Halifax Transit's Microtransit Service Plan in February, and staff will be preparing detailed information on requirements to implement it going into the 2027/28 budget process.

Microtransit is an on-demand, shared-ride transit service primarily geared towards communities outside the conventional transit boundary.

If the project is approved, Lucasville has been selected to be the first community to receive Microtransit as a pilot in the plan's Proof-of-Concept stage.

Microtransit typically uses smaller vehicles and a digital booking system to coordinate rides efficiently over large areas.

Prior to launch, Halifax Transit would work in collaboration with community leaders to determine potential service hours, stop locations and ways to communicate with residents about the service. Regular engagement and feedback on the service would occur throughout the proof-of-concept stage.

For more information, check out the staff report.

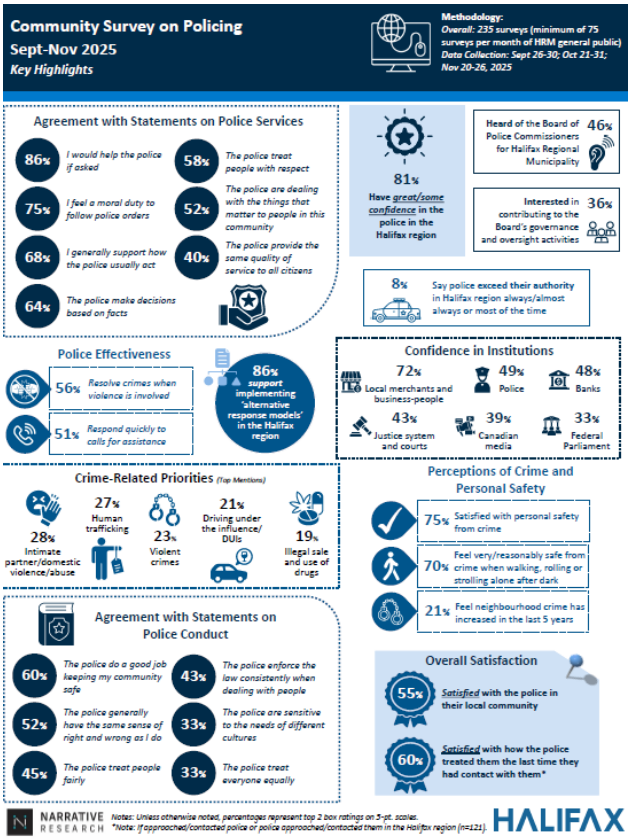
WELCOMING NEW POLICE SERVICE DOGS

Welcome Libby, Spirit, Yogi and Goose, four K9 officers who were presented their HRP Badges as official members of the Halifax Regional Police Force last month.

These four new police service dogs and their handlers will join the current staff of five K9 officers and provide support with airport and patrol based operations.

You can learn more about our K9 unit here.

POLICING FEEDBACK



The Board of Police Commissioners (BoPC) are looking for your feedback on policing in the municipality.

The BoPC is conducting a survey on your perceptions on community policing including police effectiveness, what the most important crime related priorities should be and much more. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. The first quarterly results are now available, and results will be reported quarterly with a final report and presentation in the fall.

You can find more information on our website.

RECYCLING UPDATE

Bottle caps and lids can now be recycled and tops that are the same material as the container (such as a plastic bottle cap on a plastic water bottle) can be left on for recycling.

If the top is a different material from the container (like a metal lid on a glass jar), please remove it before placing both in your recycling.

For more information on What Goes Where, download the Halifax Recycles app or click here.

CANADA GAMES CENTRE RE-NAMING

The Canada Games Centre is getting a new name! Last month, the Halifax Regional Municipality and Manulife Canada announced a 10-year naming rights partnership. HRM will receive $1 million over 10 years for capital facility improvements.

The new branding of the Manulife Recreation Centre will roll out gradually starting in May and there will be no changes to the facility ownership, operation or member or visitor access and fees.

You can find out more about this change here.

PROVINCIAL HOUSING LEGISLATION UPDATE

The Province of Nova Scotia has made amendments to the Housing Supply and Services Act, Housing in Halifax Regional Municipality Act, Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipal Charter that will extend the Executive Panel on Housing in the Halifax Regional Municipality and give the Minister of Housing new authority.

The Executive Panel on Housing is a joint planning task force created to address housing challenges. The panel will now be active for an additional two years.

The Minister of Housing will now have order-making authority with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Halifax Water to improve co-ordination of water, wastewater and infrastructure and the Minister of Municipal Affairs will now have temporary regulated authority to amend HRM's urban service area boundary to build out infrastructure required for growth.

You can find out more about these changes here

HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANE PILOT REPORT

At the Feb. 10 meeting of Regional Council, Mayor Fillmore introduced a motion for staff to investigate and provide recommendations on a potential pilot project for High Occupancy Vehicle lanes in current bus only lanes. A staff report will return to Council in June reviewing potential impacts to transit, enforcement opportunities, effectiveness, and feasibility on congested corridors in HRM.

CONST. SINCLAIR WILLIAMS ROOM

Last month, the Halifax Regional Police (HRP) gathered to celebrate the legacy of Constable Sinclair Williams, the first Black police officer in Dartmouth.

On Feb. 24, HRP unveiled a room dedicated to the late Cst. Williams at Police Headquarters on Gottingen Street.

The Constable Sinclair Williams Room will serve as a daily reminder of the important role he played in advancing diversity and inclusion within Halifax Regional Police and the communities he served. The room will be used for police news conferences, officer meetings, and other events. His family donated his uniform for exhibit, and a portrait of the constable will also be on display.

Cst. Williams joined the Dartmouth Police Department in 1968 and was known for his community leadership, volunteerism and as an entrepreneur.

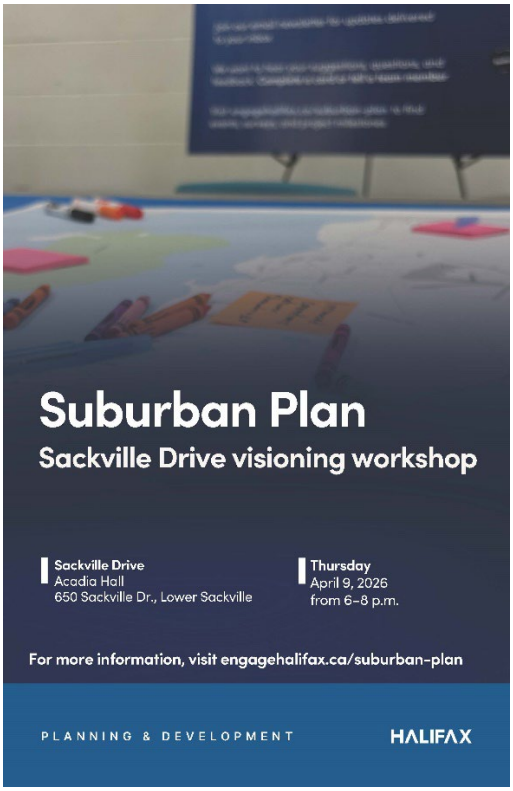
HOMESHARE PROGRAM

The Government of Nova Scotia has launched HomeShare, a new supported living option for Nova Scotians with disabilities.

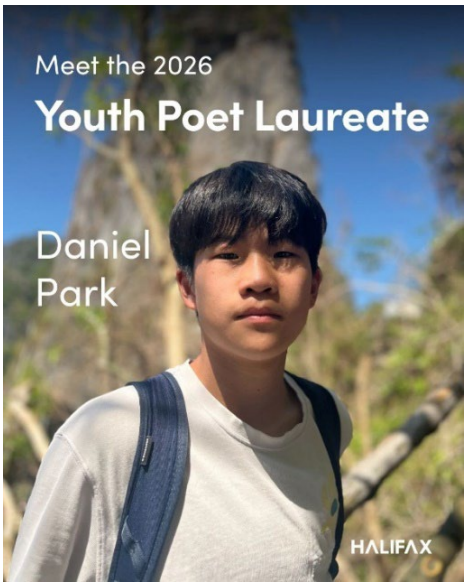
This Program provides people with disabilities with more choice, independence, and community connection, while also offering meaningful benefits to HomeShare providers. Providers receive funding and the opportunity to build a supportive living arrangement that can enrich everyday life for both parties.

For more information visit their website.

SUBURBAN PLAN SACKVILLE DRIVE VISIONING WORKSHOP



2026 YOUTH POET LAUREATE



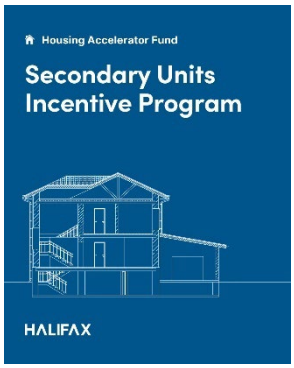
The Halifax Regional Municipality is pleased to announce that Daniel Park has been selected as the municipality's 2026 Youth Poet Laureate.

The Youth Poet Laureate program provides young writers with mentorship, public platforms and opportunities to explore issues that matter to them and to residents across the municipality.

Daniel will serve a one-year term from January to December 2026 and receive a $1,000 honorarium for the role. He will create new works of poetry, present at select Regional Council meetings, and advocate for poetry, language, arts and young writers through community events and speaking engagements.

Visit our website to learn more about the municipality's Poet Laureate programs.

SECONDARY UNITS INCENTIVE PROGRAM



The Halifax Regional Municipality has decided to expand the Secondary Suite Incentive Grant Program eligibility and timelines to support the creation of more small-scale housing options across the region.

Under new changes to the program, more than one secondary unit per property may now be eligible for funding (subject to land use requirements). Non-profit organizations and housing co-operatives are also now eligible to apply for funding.

The program offers eligible residents up to $13,000 per unit to help reduce building expenses related to water and wastewater. The Secondary Units Incentive Program offers non-repayable grants to help offset certain costs associated with building new secondary units, including backyard suites and internal conversions.

The application deadline has been extended from June 1, 2026, to Oct. 11, 2026, and the construction completion deadline has been extended from Oct. 11, 2026, to April 1, 2027.

For more details on the program and how to apply, visit our website.

COYOTE SAFETY REMINDER FOR RESIDENTS

The Halifax Regional Municipality reports the highest number of coyote sightings in Nova Scotia, with increased interactions in areas such as Eastern Passage and Fall River.

Coyotes are often attracted by accessible food sources, which can lead to aggressive behaviour, particularly toward pets. Wildlife officials advise keeping dogs on leashes, as off-leash dogs and smaller pets are at higher risk, especially during breeding season (late January to March) and denning season (April to May). Residents are encouraged to supervise pets, remove food attractants, and safely haze coyotes if approached.

Aggressive, injured, or sick coyotes should be reported to the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources at 1-800-565-2224 or to local municipal animal control or police.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Our Neighbourhood and Volunteer Services (NVS) Team will be offering a wide selection of FREE 101-level workshops for residents who want to be more involved in their community or better serve the community organizations they're working with.

Check out the training catalogue and the spring 2026 workshop schedule on our website for details.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Cheque Presentation to Lucasville Community Association Vice Chair Angela Downey

Mayor's March visit to Districts 14 and 15 at the Springfield Lake Recreation Center

2026 Halifax Black Film Festival with Cynthia Lucas

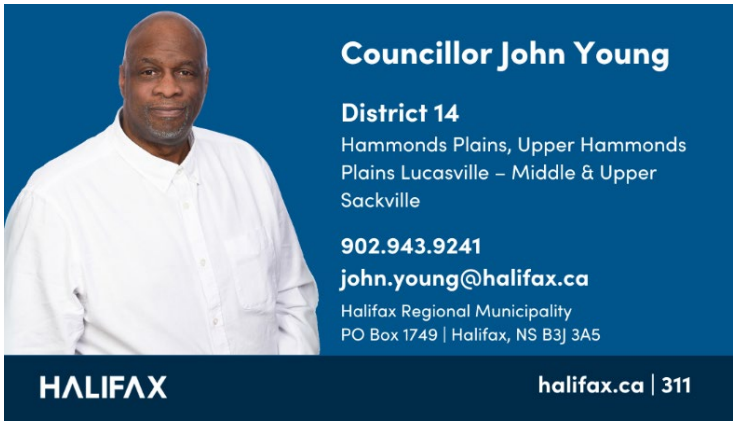
Mayor's March visit to Districts 14 and 15

COUNCILLOR JOHN YOUNG

I currently serve on the following boards and committees along with Regional Council

- Northwest Community Council
- Transportation Standing Committee
- Active Transportation Standing Committee
- Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities
- African Descent Advisory Committee

I encourage you to reach out to 3-1-1 or me at any time with municipal questions or concerns.



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"Words to Live By"

"He who runs after good fortune

Runs away from peace"

(Fortune will find you / you will have to find peace)

African Proverb