WELCOME FEBRUARY

As we settle into February, winter is fully upon us here in District 14.

I would like to thank residents for their continued patience and cooperation during the challenges that the season brings. Whether it's navigating changing road conditions, supporting neighbours, or participating in community initiatives, your efforts make a meaningful difference.

This month's newsletter includes updates on municipal projects underway, upcoming public engagement opportunities, and information on seasonal services and programs. As always, my office is here to assist with any district-related questions or concerns, and I appreciate hearing from residents about what matters most to you.

Thank you for staying connected, and I wish you a safe and warm February.

John

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME FEBRUARY 1
TABLE OF CONTENTS 1
FEBRUARY MEETING DATES 2
DATES TO NOTE 2
AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH 2
HRM BUDGET 2026/27 - KEY DATES 3
SNOW CLEARING 3
HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY NAMED TOP EMPLOYER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE 4
WINTER OPERATIONS REMINDERS 4
PARKING BAN 4
COMPREHENSIVE LITTER STRATEGY 5
THE PEOPLE PROJECT – COMMUNITY MEDIATION PROGRAM 5
HALIFAX WATER RATE INCREASES 6
RECYCLING 101 BOOTHS 6
HALIFAX TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY 7
TAX RELIEF FOR NON-PROFITS 7
PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS 7
2026 CENSUS JOB OPPORTUNITIES 7
2026 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS 8
REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE 8
SECONDARY SUITE INCENTIVE GRANT 9
FEEDING COMMUNITIES FUND 9
WINTER GARBAGE COLLECTION 9
COUNCILLOR JOHN YOUNG 10
INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE 10

FEBRUARY MEETING DATES

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

Regional Council:

- Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 10 a.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Budget Committee Meeting:

- Wednesday Feb. 4 at 9:30 a.m.
- Thursday Feb. 5 at 9:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Feb. 11 at 9:30 a.m.
- Thursday Feb. 12 at 9:30 a.m.
- Friday Feb. 13 at 9:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Feb. 18 at 9:30 a.m.
- Thursday Feb. 19 at 9:30 a.m.
- Friday Feb. 20 at 9:30 a.m.

North West Community Council:

- Monday, Feb. 9 at 6 p.m.

Standing Committees:

Appeals Standing Committee

- Thursday, Feb. 26 at 10 a.m.

Audit & Finance Standing Committee

- Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 10 a.m.

Executive Standing Committee

- Monday, Feb. 23 at 10 a.m.

Special Events Advisory Committee

- Tuesday Feb. 3 (**meeting cancelled)**

DATES TO NOTE

February 15 - National Flag of Canada Day
February 16 – Heritage Day
February 21 – International Mother Language Day

AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH

February is the 30th celebration of African Heritage Month!

Each year, African Heritage Month honours the experiences, achievements and enduring contributions of Black communities in Nova Scotia, while deepening our collective understanding of their history and impact on our society. Nova Scotia has 52 historic African Nova Scotian communities with a long, deep and complex history dating back over 400 years.

This year's provincial theme is *"Strength in Unity – Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power and Progress."* Unity is not passive, it is an active force that strengthens our communities, advances justice, and creates pathways for opportunity and growth.

City Hall will be illuminated in black, green and red and the Pan-African flag will be displayed at some of our municipal buildings in honour of African Heritage Month. Keep an eye on our website for more details about how you can commemorate African Heritage Month and what we're working on to build strong relationships,

partnerships, and alliances with African Nova Scotian communities across the municipality.

HRM BUDGET 2026/27 - KEY DATES

The Halifax Regional Municipality is advising residents of key dates for the 2026/27 municipal budget process.

The municipal budget funds all costs associated with servicing a growing municipality. This includes day-to-day municipal operations, priority initiatives approved by Regional Council and capital investments to purchase, construct, rehabilitate and replace assets.

There are several key dates in the annual municipal budget process. Residents will have the opportunity to speak directly to the Budget Committee during the budget process. During each week of meetings, time will be set aside for the public to provide comments and feedback.

Below are the key dates for the 2026/27 municipal budget process:

Feb. 4-6: Operations Budget Presentations

- Major Projects Office
- Parks & Recreation
- Planning & Development
- Public Works
- Strategic Infrastructure & Transportation Planning
- Halifax Transit
- Property, Fleet & Environment

Feb. 11-13: Public Safety Budget Presentations

- Community Safety
- Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency
- Halifax Regional Police
- RCMP Halifax Regional Detachment

Feb. 18-19: Corporate Services & Other Budget Presentations

- CAO's Office
- Finance & Asset Management
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal Services
- Auditor General
- Halifax Public Library
- Fiscal Services
- Mayor's Office

March 4 & 6: Budget Adjustment List debate

March 31: 2026/27 Municipal Budget and Business Plan approval

Please note that these dates are subject to change.

Residents will have the opportunity to speak directly to the Budget Committee during the process. Pre-registration is required by 4:30 p.m. on the business day prior to the meeting. Virtual participation will also be available.

For meeting details and agendas, visit halifax.ca/city-hall.

For more information on the 2026/27 municipal budget process, visit halifax.ca/budget.

SNOW CLEARING

Snow clearing in our municipality is a big job and if stretched into a straight line, it would reach from Halifax to Winnipeg. Streets and sidewalks are prioritized based on commuter usage and access to key infrastructure. Learn more: halifax.ca/snow.

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY NAMED TOP EMPLOYER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Canada's Top Employers for Young People is an editorial competition that recognizes the employers across Canada that lead their industries in offering exceptional workplaces and programs for young people starting their careers. We were recognized for our Bridging the Gap 18-month internship program, an opportunity for recent grads to learn about government policy, administration, operations, services and planning. Congratulations to the Bridging the Gap team for this special honour. We're grateful for all our amazing interns and the fresh perspective they bring to our team! Check out our current postings here.

WINTER OPERATIONS REMINDERS

We made it through another winter storm! For timely updates on winter operations and more information on service standards for road and sidewalk clearing in your area, please check out our website. Don't forget to sign up for alerts when the winter parking ban is being enforced, ensure your property and sidewalks are clear of any obstructions and stay safe!

SLED SAFETY

Sled safely this winter. Remember – municipal parks aren't set up, inspected or maintained for sledding, and obstacles can be hiding beneath the snow. Sledding in parks is at your own risk.

No matter where you sled, be sure to wear a helmet and watch for hazards like trees, rocks, fences, benches, and play equipment.

PARKING BAN

The overnight winter parking ban is in effect every year from Dec. 15 until Mar. 31; however, it is only enforced during weather events and clearing operations. When the ban is enforced, it restricts any on-street parking between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. Vehicles in violation of the ban will be ticketed and/or towed.

Remember to stay informed about the status of the parking ban and please think before you park.

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.

COMPREHENSIVE LITTER STRATEGY

At the Jan. 13 meeting, Council supported a review of relevant municipal by-laws and administrative orders to identify updates that would enable a more coordinated and effective approach to litter prevention and management. We will also be exploring opportunities to collaborate with provincial agencies for enforcement.

In addition, Council directed staff to develop an Adopt-A-Street pilot program for implementation in 2026/27, aimed at encouraging shared responsibility and increased community participation in keeping neighbourhoods clean.

Staff were also asked to prepare a briefing note for Regional Council's consideration on the potential need for additional enforcement resources as part of the 2026/27 budget process. For more information, read the staff report.

THE PEOPLE PROJECT – COMMUNITY MEDIATION PROGRAM

United Way Halifax, part of United Way Maritimes, and the Halifax Regional Municipality are proud to be offering The People Project, a local community mediation program designed to empower neighbours to navigate and resolve conflicts together with the support of a trained mediator.

Available to all residents in Halifax Regional Municipality, this project focuses on facilitating conflict resolution on issues like noise, parking, trees, fencing, snow removal, garbage, nuisance lighting, pets and shared driveways.

It's easy to take part:

- Fill out an intake form with basic information regarding the situation.
- If the situation fits the program criteria, a trained community mediator will be assigned to you and contact you.

- With guidance from the mediator, participants will work toward an agreeable solution that resolves the issue and builds understanding.

To learn more about the process or program, please visit United Way Halifax's webpage.

MAJOR SPORTING EVENT GRANTS

Regional Council has approved funding support for two major sporting events in 2026 through the Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve Grants Program.

The Marketing Levy Special Event Reserve is funded by a levy on overnight accommodations such as hotels and short-term rentals.

Regional Council agreed to support the 2026 U SPORTS Men's University Cup at Saint Mary's University in March with a $90,000 grant and support the 2026 ICF Junior and U23 Canoe Sprint World Championships at Lake Banook in July with a $1 million grant, pending approval of the 2026/27 budget.

Both events are expected to attract national and international visitors, generate significant economic activity, and enhance Halifax's profile as a host city for major sporting events.

For more information, read the staff report.

HALIFAX WATER RATE INCREASES

Halifax Water's proposed rate hikes for January and April have been approved by the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board.

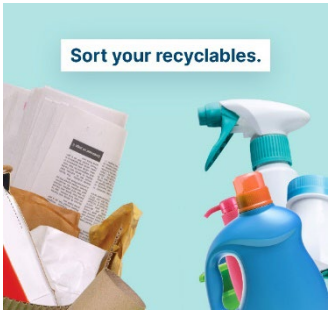
The rates will increase by 12.1 per cent starting January 2026 and an additional six per cent increase in April 2026.

The original proposal included a 15.8 per cent increase in January and a 17.1 per cent increase for April. This was rejected by the board, recommending Halifax Water adjust their revenue requirements.

The increase is expected to up the average household bill by $9.28 per month in January and an additional $5.11 per month in April.

Find out more on their website.

RECYCLING 101 BOOTHS



Learn more about new recycling rules by popping by one of HRM Solid Waste's Recycling 101 Booths.

On December 1, the provincial Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging, Paper Products and Packaging Like Products Regulations came into effect, meaning you'll be able to recycle more materials than ever before.

Find a booth near you and more information about these changes on our website.

HALIFAX TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY

The Halifax Regional Municipality is seeking feedback from passengers about accessibility on Halifax Transit's conventional bus, Access-A-Bus and ferry services.

Feedback from the public will help ensure continued improvements, making transit more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

Complete the survey here.

TAX RELIEF FOR NON-PROFITS

The Tax Relief for Non-Profit Organizations program is now open for applications.

The program can help eligible non-profit and charitable organizations reduce the amount of property tax they pay each year.

Organizations who are in receipt of HRM tax relief must submit an annual confirmation form by Monday February 2. You can also submit new applications to add a new property to the program.

For more information and to find the application paperwork, visit our website.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

At the Jan. 13 meeting of Regional Council, the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) presented the 2026 assessment roll to Council.

The PVSC is a non-profit governed by a board of directors who completes property assessments for the entire province.

The report is an important part of our budget process, as municipal tax rates are charged on assessed values.

To discuss your property assessment or lodge an appeal, please contact PVSC 1-800-380-7775 or inquiry@pvsc.ca. Appeals must be received by February 12. You can find more information about PVSC and assessments on their website or view the presentation to Council here.

2026 CENSUS JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Government of Canada will be conducting the next Census of Population in May 2026. To support this important project, Statistics Canada is hiring for supervisory and non-supervisory positions. Approximately 32,000 jobs are available across Canada!

We are looking for local people to help us collect accurate data in your community. These data are vital for planning and evaluating programs and services such as education, health care, childcare, housing, emergency services, roads, public transportation and job training.

Check out their website for more information.

2026 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

The Halifax Regional Municipality is now accepting applications for the 2026 Community Grants Program.

The Community Grants Program provides annual cash grants to registered non-profit organizations and charities located throughout the region. The program ensures organizations across the municipality have equal opportunities to seek funding for projects that help make their community a great place to live and work for all residents.

There are two types of grants available: a project grant of up to $5,000 and a capital grant of up to $25,000. Funding is available for projects in the following categories:

- Community arts
- Diversity and accessibility
- Environment and climate change
- Emergency assistance and public safety
- Community histories
- Leisure
- Recreation

Applicants are encouraged to review the Program Guidebook before applying. First-time applicants should contact staff for guidance prior to submission. The deadline to apply is Tuesday, March 31, 2026.

For more information, including how to apply, visit our website.

REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE

The Regional Plan sets out a common vision, principles, and long-range, region-wide planning policies outlining where, when and how future growth and development should take place.

In order to comply with provincial “Minimum Planning Requirements,” (MPRs) the Municipality has been working on amendments to the plan to reflect the needs of our growing municipality. The amendments were approved by Regional Council in June 2025; however the province rejected the plan so further changes were required.

On Dec. 31, 2025 HRM received a letter from the Provincial Director of Planning indicating that they have completed their review of the amendments. The review has identified that the HRM planning documents appear to affect a provincial interest and the documents will require review and decision by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Our Planning & Development staff are continuing to work with Provincial staff to provide advice and feedback if any changes are necessary. You can find updates on the Regional Plan here.

SECONDARY SUITE INCENTIVE GRANT

The Halifax Regional Municipality is offering money to help homeowners build a second unit on their property. This could be:

- a basement apartment or in-law suite;
- a backyard suite (like a tiny home or garden suite); or
- a duplex conversion (turning a single home into two units).

The Second Unit Incentive Program (SUIP) offers up to $12,900 in non-repayable grants and is part of the Housing Accelerator Fund. For more details on the program and how to apply, visit our website.

FEEDING COMMUNITIES FUND

Millions in funding for food-related initiatives will flow to communities across the province in the coming weeks using $4 million in proceeds from the sale of U.S. alcohol products.

The new Feeding Communities Fund will provide one-time funding to support meal programs, community fridges and pantries, mutual-aid groups and affordable food box or market programs.

The fund will have $2 million available for identified organizations and the remaining $2 million will be available to other eligible organizations.
Funding is available to non-profit societies, community organizations that are registered with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies, and federally registered charities or not-for-profit corporations.

Applications close Thursday, Jan. 29. The funding must be used to purchase food for distribution or meal programs. Feeding Communities Fund information and application can be found *www.novascotia.ca/apply-feeding-communities-fund-grant*.

.

WINTER GARBAGE COLLECTION

As the snow season approaches, please remember to place waste for curbside collection in a spot that won't interfere with sidewalk or road clearing. To help our crews keep pathways safe and accessible, place waste at the edge of your driveway, not on the sidewalk or road.

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"

(Inner Peace/Self-Confidence)

"When there is no enemy within,

the enemies outside cannot hurt you."

African Proverb