



# Councillor Bill Karsten

## Portland - East Woodlawn

### District 7 Newsletter

Halifax Regional Municipality

Summer 2009



### Dear Residents,

As the summer months approach I am pleased to be able to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a safe and fun summer!

I wish to wholeheartedly thank the many of you who expressed your support, kindness and best wishes to me, during my return to Council after the November '08 Municipal Elections. To say the least, I am honoured, privileged and humbled to have the opportunity to represent and serve you, the residents of District 7, for another term.

Over the past many months, Council has been in the midst of both budget discussions and a major decision on the future of development in downtown Halifax, through the public hearings for HRM by Design. This project was approved by Council on June 16th and has now put new planning policies in place to not only streamline the development process, but also to bring clarity to development regulations and reduce the debates over appropriate development in the core of our municipality. I have supported these changes on your behalf and believe it is a positive step forward for our great Municipality.

With summer comes road repair and paving. I continue to work with HRM staff on a strategic approach to repairing and maintaining our infrastructure. In total, we have in excess of 3,300 km of roads in our Municipality and although I am proud of the significant improvements achieved in our District, there is still much to be done. I ask for your continued patience and understanding as we strive to increase the quality of our infrastructure assets. I am also pleased to report that by the end of this summer we will have installed one new playground in the Russell Lake West area and replaced an existing playground on Poplar Dr. This will bring all of our District's playgrounds up to current standards.

As your Councillor, I commit to continue to work towards achieving positive results, for not only our District, but the entire municipality, and I encourage you to contact me should you have any questions or concerns at any time.

### How to Reach Me

Councillors' Support Office  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
Post Office Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5

Home Office..... 490-7032  
Cellular ..... 476-1855  
Fax ..... 490-5482  
Email ..... karsteb@halifax.ca

**HRM Call Centre.....490-4000**

24hr Police Non-Emergency:  
490-5020  
Fire Non-Emergency:  
490-5530

## New Woodlawn Library Location Announced

Four years ago, a report from the Library Board was presented to Regional Council indicating the replacement of the Woodlawn Library was one of its top two priorities. The current branch, at 4,000 sq.ft., has been undersized for many years, and yet has one of the highest circulation rates at around 400,000 items per year.

Two years ago, Council agreed to provide funding to determine a location for a new facility and followed this up with additional funding to outfit the new library. Many residents participated in meetings to shortlist sites and identify priorities for a new site. It was determined that to serve the existing catchment and new users, the library should be located between the Russell Lake area, the Portland Street business area, and the Main Street area. A search of available locations to lease or build began, and after several areas were researched a site was officially announced April 6, and approved by Regional Council on April 21.



*Councillor Karsten answers questions at the official announcement.*

I am pleased to announce the new location of the Woodlawn Library will be the former Empire Theatre building next to Atlantic Superstore off Portland Street. The new library will be over 17,000 sq. ft. It will include a standard community meeting room, and will retain one of the existing theatres, including screen, as an additional meeting space. The library board also decided to move the technical services branch from their current Sackville location to the new building. This will provide cost efficiencies to the library project, as well as relocating library employees to the area which will support local businesses. The new location has good transit access both with Portland Street routes that serve the existing site, and with crosstown routes which will open access to the library to more District 7 residents. The site is also next to many businesses and government services.

A larger Woodlawn Library is long overdue, and renovations have already begun. The new library is expected to open to the public in November of this year!

## Efficiencies to Save Money

Following you will find examples of how council and municipal staff have found efficiencies in municipal operations to minimize cost increases to residents and businesses. I trust you will find these tax saving initiatives interesting:

- The Alderney 5 Energy Project is a \$3.6 million energy-efficiency retrofit of five municipal buildings on the Dartmouth Waterfront. Construction was funded through an innovative partnership between our Municipality, the Federal government and High Performance Energy Systems – a local design-build-engineering firm specializing in geothermal energy applications. It is expected the Alderney 5 Energy Project will save \$350,000 per year in energy costs, avoid \$800,000 in future replacement costs, and significantly reduce maintenance with the new heating and cooling systems.
- It costs HRM approximately \$1,100 per intersection per year for electricity. With LED lighting the cost is reduced by approximately 86% to \$150/per year/intersection. 70 intersections have been converted to date, with more ongoing. Current savings are \$65,000 per year. All new intersections will be LED traffic lights.
- New contract with Miller for operations of Materials Recovery Facility has resulted in \$375,000 annual savings to HRM.
- A Telecommunications Analyst position has allowed over \$592,000 in savings through billing corrections, service optimization, and better use of telecommunication company resources. It is expected there will be annual savings of \$100,000 as a result of these changes.
- The HRM Printing Centre leased new equipment this year and reduced cost of copying by close to 10% for black and white copying and 50% for colour copying. As the printing centre handles the majority of major copying jobs for HRM, this is expected to result in savings of approximately \$115,000.
- HRM has continued to reduce costs related to energy consumption in existing facilities, and in the facilities that have been approved but not yet constructed. Many new projects, including the East Dartmouth Community Centre, avoid the use of fossil fuels for heating and cooling, and are constructed to high energy efficiency standards.

Council is always seeking ways to do business more efficiently. You can find more examples of cost saving measures at: <http://www.halifax.ca/budget/documents/Efficiencies.pdf>

## Did You Know?



1/3 of your property tax bill is a provincial charge to support the provincial budget. That means, on a property tax bill of \$2,200 the province takes \$730 leaving a municipal tax bill of \$1,490.

Over the past six years, Metro Transit has experienced ridership Growth of approximately 40 percent, resulting in more than 25 million passengers being served each year. This rate of

growth outpaces most comparably sized transit services across Canada. Over the past four years, the actual Metro Transit service has grown more than 60 percent.



Council has approved the integrated transit plan which will see an investment of more than \$150 million in new capital. This will result in service growth of more than 175,000 service hours. This

represents a further 25 percent growth over existing service levels. To improve security and safety of both passengers and drivers, council has approved the installation of security cameras on all buses and ferries. This installation is expected to be complete by June. A new bus terminal has been approved for Dartmouth near the Sportsplex to replace the undersized and outdated one now in use, and a second garage facility to accommodate required daily maintenance of the new buses is under construction.

Currently, the total cost of transit service in HRM is \$65 million per year. Council and staff have been working to find service efficiencies such as reducing the average age of the fleet. The average age of HRM's fleet has now been improved by approximately 25 percent. Newer vehicles are more energy-efficient and reliable resulting in cost savings.

As with most Canadian Transit Systems, only 53 percent of Metro Transit's operating funds are generated through fares. Nova Scotia is one of only a handful of provinces which does not provide municipalities financial support with the operation of transit services.

Transit has many benefits – whether or not you personally use it. On average, transit uses less fuel and emits less CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger kilometre travelled than cars. Increased use of transit reduces congestion on the roads reducing the need for road widenings, wear and tear on roads, and the need for additional – expensive – parking structures in business areas. This reduces future pressure on income and property taxes. Indeed, the Government of Canada estimates the reduced congestion from transit is worth between \$2.3 billion and \$3.7 billion to urban economies across Canada.

## HRM Ranks 1st in Sustainability

HRM was recently ranked first in sustainability for medium-sized Canadian cities in the annual review by Corporate Knights Magazine. HRM was ranked against cities such as Mississauga, Quebec, Vancouver, Hamilton, and Winnipeg. HRM ranked fifth overall against cities and towns of all sizes. Cities are assessed based on five categories: Ecological Integrity, Economic Security, Governance and Empowerment, Infrastructure, and Built Environment.

Initiatives such as Harbour Solutions, reduced pesticide use, composting and recycling programs, and municipal geothermal and district energy projects, were featured in the rankings. The entire survey and report is available online at [www.corporateknights.ca](http://www.corporateknights.ca)

## E-Waste

Recently, the province banned certain electronic items from landfill disposal in Nova Scotia. As a result, HRM can no longer accept the following in your bi-weekly garbage collection:

- Televisions
- Computers and peripherals (monitors, mice, printers, cables, etc)
- Telephones, fax machines, and answering machines
- Stereos, video cameras, digital cameras, clock radios, speakers, etc.
- Cell phones and wireless devices

In Dartmouth, these items may be dropped off free of charge at Bluenose Bottle Exchange at 99 Woodlawn Road or Burnside Recycling at 66 Simmonds Drive. Further information or drop off locations can be found at

[www.acestewardship.ca](http://www.acestewardship.ca)

## Transit Facts

- It costs \$3.69 per kilometre to operate a conventional Metro Transit bus
- It takes one year to plan and implement a new route, and costs \$500,000.
- 70,000 passengers ride Metro Transit each day.
- Even if you don't take the bus, each bus takes the place of 40 and 50 cars from the road, thus reducing traffic congestion.
- Metro Transit buses travel 40,000km per day – the equivalent of a trip around the world.
- Accessible Low Floor (ALF) buses are now the only ones manufactured in North America. 50% of all HRM routes are now fully accessible to mobility impaired passengers.
- The cost of a standard length bus is \$350,000.
- The cost of an articulated, 60 foot, bus is \$700,000.
- The cost of one Access-A-Bus (AAB) is \$90,000.
- The harbour ferry began service in 1752 and is the oldest, continuous salt water service in North America



## Citizenship Awards

An annual event that I enjoy tremendously is HRM's Citizenship Awards which recognize outstanding Grade 9 students. Recipients are selected by their individual school and chosen based on qualities of leadership, service in the community, and commendable performance in the courses at school. On June 16th at a Regional Council meeting, it was my privilege, along with Mayor Kelly, to present awards to three students from District 7.



*Mayor Kelly and Councillor Bill Karsten and Stephanie Webber.*



*Mayor Kelly and Councillor Bill Karsten and Celina Campbell*



*Mayor Kelly and Councillor Bill Karsten and Shelby Macdonnell*

## Phone numbers you may find useful

Mayor's Office: 490-4010

MLA, Cole Harbour

Darrell Dexter: 462-5300

MLA, Dartmouth East

Andrew Younger: 424-8637

MLA, Dartmouth South - Portland Valley

Marilyn More: 463-6673

MP, Dartmouth - Cole Harbour

Michael Savage: 462-6453

Animal Control: 468-9219

Halifax Water: 490-4820

HRM Aquatic Services -

Beach Program: 420-SWIM (7946)

Public Works - after hours: 490-4000

Subdivision & Development -

General Inquiries: 490-4435

Please Recycle



Due to Canada Post mailing zones, some residences that are not in District 7, may receive this newsletter. I apologize for any confusion caused and hope you still find the information useful.