

COUNCILLOR TIM OUTHIT

BEDFORD - WENTWORTH DISTRICT 16 NEWSLETTER



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SUMMER 2020



DISTRICT 16 RESIDENTS,

The last several months have been very challenging for our community, province, country and the world. Almost everyone has been impacted somehow by the Covid-19 pandemic. Whether it was a loss or reduction of income, adjusting to working from home,

adapting to attending school or university online, teaching at home, childcare changes, the stress of waiting for a test result, not being able to interact with friends or family, or in some cases even the loss of a friend or family member. I have been so encouraged to see members of our community following the recommendations and restrictions of N.S. Public Health, but also coming together to assist others in our community. We have also endured the loss of lives as a result of a plane crash, helicopter crash, and a horrific mass murder. Many of us know someone impacted by these events, but we have come together and risen to these tragedies and proven that we are strong, resourceful, and compassionate!

Over the last several months I have endeavoured to provide you with daily updates on social media, and weekly by email, on HRM's response to the pandemic. This included service and program changes, budget revisions, advisories and programs from other levels of government, and support for local businesses that struggled and adapted and remained open during our lockdown to serve you and to employ residents. Regional Council has met virtually since the pandemic struck. We started by having almost daily calls with HRM staff and emergency measures personnel, and then meeting online several times per week to implement policy changes and to completely rework the upcoming HRM Budget. Prior to the pandemic, HRM was in a far more secure financial situation than many cities in Canada. We have low and falling debt, a growing tax base due to our population growth, and strategic capital reserves. However, the pandemic and shutdown impacted everyone. As you are likely aware, some residents and many businesses (particularly in the tourism and hospitality sectors) were unable to pay their property tax. We expect this to be the case again in October, so we reduced spending by \$80M and secured a low interest line of credit from the province to assist with cash flow

while folks catch up on their tax payments. We have reduced the number of capital projects this year, but kept some to strike a balance to stimulate our local economy. In addition we presented a list of shovel ready projects to the provincial and federal governments that we believe will qualify for their stimulus funding programs. We have been cautious not to dip significantly into our capital reserves yet because the municipality is concerned about falling commercial property assessments next year due to the pandemic and a projected recession.

During these tough times many good and positive decisions were made by Regional Council for our future. This included adoption of Package A of the Regional Centre Plan, progress on Affordable Housing, new policies for street and traffic calming, a Rapid Transit Plan, a Functional Plan for the Bedford Hwy, progress on equity, diversity and inclusion, parkland acquisition, and HRM's HalifACT 2050 climate action plan. I will address some of these issues and provide answers to FAQs (frequently asked questions) in this newsletter.

As always, I encourage you to contact me with your concerns, questions, and ideas.

How to Contact Tim

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Follow me on Twitter, Facebook and now Instagram for almost daily updates and news.

HALIFAX



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DISTRICT 16 EMAIL UPDATES

For those wishing to receive my updates via email, in addition to social media, please email johnsol@halifax.ca and include in the subject line District 16 Email Updates.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

- Q** - Why did HRM reduce green bin collection frequency this summer?
A - I did not vote for this service reduction but it reduced operating costs by \$1.2M at a time when HRM needed to cut \$80M from its operating budget due to the pandemic.
- Q** - Why didn't HRM reduce the frequency of blue bag collection instead of the green bins?
A - Several of us suggested this alternative. Unfortunately, only the green bin collection contract was up for renegotiation this year.
- Q** - Is District 16 getting a new and larger library?
A - Yes. Please see additional information under the Bedford Waterfront section of this newsletter.
- Q** - When will the Park & Ride and Transit facility be built on Innovation Dr?
A - The land has been acquired and funding is contained in the 2021 HRM Capital Projects Budget.
- Q** - What can be done to improve pedestrian safety at the HRM roundabout on Larry Uteck Blvd and Nine Mile Dr?
A - HRM Traffic Services and an outside consultant have completed a study with recommendations. Flashing lights and other improvements have been approved, funded, and are scheduled to be implemented this construction season.
- Q** - Our District is growing, and we need more tennis courts, basketball courts, a splash pad, more off-leash dog areas, and a skateboard park. Are these being planned?
A - Yes. Several of the larger facility needs such as rinks, a new community centre, gymnasiums, several new playgrounds, and new and better sport fields have already been addressed. I am working now with HRM, the Halifax Regional Centre for Education, residents, and user groups on funding, timelines, and potential locations for these further new amenities.
- Q** - Is Bedford - Wentworth going to get an indoor pool?
A - Both the approved HRM Facilities Master Plan and the HRM Aquatic Strategy have addressed the fact that a pool will be required in response to our growth. Our proximity to pools in Clayton Park, Dartmouth and Sackville will not be enough as our District continues to grow. A multi-purpose facility will be required in the longer term.
- Q** - Are we getting commuter rail?
A - No, but we almost did through a partnership with CN, VIA Rail and the other levels of government. Changes in leadership at VIA Rail, additional container traffic by rail out of the port (and in order to reduce truck traffic downtown) and CN's requirement that they own and schedule all infrastructure, made this impossible at this time. However, we are now fast-tracking Bus Rapid Transit, additional ferry routes, and road improvements. These plans have been approved by Council and investigation of funding options, and funding requests, are now underway.
- Q** - What is the traffic and infrastructure plan for Larry Uteck Blvd West?
A - Please see the West Bedford Transportation Infrastructure Master Plan in this newsletter.

Q - Do you support the expansion of the Birch Cove Blue Mountain Park and Sandy Lake Park?

A - Yes, I strongly support both initiatives!

Q - Will HRM be adding black bins and blue bins, in addition to green bins, in the near future?

A - Maybe. This is a costly endeavour because of the need to supply the bins and various sizes of bins. In addition, it will require significant and costly collection changes, as well as process changes at the sorting and processing facilities. I believe more bins will come, but I do not have a timeline at this moment.

Q - What is being built at 910 Bedford Hwy?

A - This is the area where large rock breaking and site preparation work are being undertaken at the intersection of the Bedford Hwy and Moirs Mill Rd. The developer has site preparation and grading permits only. The previous development agreement has expired, and at this moment no application or proposal has been submitted to HRM Planning. When this occurs, a public consultation process will be initiated by HRM.

Q - What can be done about noisy vehicles and speeding violation enforcement in our community?

A - Halifax Regional Police have been very responsive to our requests, and I am appreciative of their support. The provincial government has updated their outdated Motor Vehicle Act and renamed it the Traffic Safety Act (TSA). It has been passed by the Legislature, but has not yet been Proclaimed as Regulations are still being drafted. The new TSA will allow municipalities to address noisy mufflers and potentially implement photo radar and/or red-light cameras, should they wish to do so. HRM Council and senior bureaucrats continue to advocate that the province allows HRM to reduce the default speed limit on residential side streets to 40km/h.

2020/21 CAPITAL WORK

Street Recapitalization

Panorama Lane – Douglas to Cul De Sac
Sunrise Hill – Meadowbrook to Basinview (2019 Carryover)
Windrock Dr – Basinview to Sunrise (2019 Carryover)
Asphalt Overlays:
Admiral Cove Dr – Eaglewood to Shore
Fort Sackville Dr – Shore to Camden
Larry Uteck Blvd – Southgate to Nine Mile
Larry Uteck Roundabout – Larry Uteck to Larry Uteck
Nine Mile Dr – Larry Uteck to William Borrett
Perth St – Wardour to Fort Sackville
Starboard Dr – Larry Uteck to 2nd Sobeys Entry

Microsurfacing

Gary Martin Dr – Hammonds Plains to Utopia
Gravel Road Paving

Planer Patching

Bedford Hwy – Fourth to Hammonds Plains
Ravines Dr – Southgate to Southgate
Crack Sealing:
Cadogan Dr – First to Second
Condor Rd – Eaglewood to End
Crozier Crt – Starboard to End
Cunningham Dr – First to End
First Ave – Bedford Hwy to Pine

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Hammonds Plains Rd – Sandy Academy Entry to Smiths Nighthawk Lane – Eaglewood to Snowy Owl
Raven Hill – Snowy Owl to Cul De Sac
Snowy Owl Dr – Condor to Cul De Sac
Starboard Dr – Friesen to Civic 317

Active Transportation

Sackville/Bedford Greenway Alignment (2019 Carryover)

Guiderails

Millview Ave (dependent on available funding) Panorama Lane

WEST BEDFORD TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN

Council unanimously approved the Bedford West Capital Cost Contribution Review. The report contained good news for West Bedford residents. The “CCCs” are paid by the developers of West Bedford and are used to improve infrastructure and facilities, in addition to the requirements for them to pay for infrastructure such as streets, pipes, sidewalks, trails, street lights, and to dedicate green space and playgrounds as they develop the community. The CCCs in the past have been used to pay for, or cost share, projects such as the Larry Uteck Interchange, widening of the Hammonds Plains Road and various sets of traffic lights. This Amended Infrastructure Master Plan will now allow the CCCs to be used for some safety and active transformation improvements over the next several years. These projects include traffic lights at Larry Uteck and Bluewater Rd, a roundabout at Larry Uteck and Broad St North, a roundabout at Larry Uteck and Broad St South, and multi-modal upgrades for active transportation along Larry Uteck Blvd West.

TRAFFIC CALMING FOR SAFER STREETS

Traffic calming helps make neighbourhoods safer. That means slowing down cars, trucks, and motorcycles by altering driver behavior. Studies have shown that only reducing the posted speed limit in an area has no significant impact on how fast people drive. Physical measures are more effective and could include speed humps, raised intersections and crosswalks, curb extensions, traffic circles or mini roundabouts, raised median islands or on-street parking.

If your street is owned and maintained by the municipality, it may be considered for traffic calming if it:

- is within a residential area
- is classified as a “local street” or “minor collector street”
- is not a multi-lane road
- has a posted speed limit not greater than 50 km/h
- is greater than 150m in length
- does not provide direct access to an emergency services building

You can initiate a review of traffic calming for your street by contacting 311.

PUBLIC SURVEYS ON CONSTRUCTION NOISE AND GRADE ALTERATION BY-LAWS

HRM is inviting residents to complete two online surveys seeking feedback on potential changes to existing municipal regulations relating to grading and construction noise in residential areas. The Grade Alteration and Stormwater Management By-Law Online Survey proposes condensing three existing grade alteration regulations

related to grading, excavation and topsoil removal—including the Topsoil By-Law 40, Bedford Grade Alteration By-Law and Pits Gravel Pits & Excavations By-Law 41—into one new Grade Alteration By-Law. New stormwater management standards are also proposed. Feedback will help simplify how land can be altered, and how stormwater can be designed and managed on private property during construction. This will help property owners to better navigate and meet regulations. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The Construction Noise Survey seeks to determine whether changes should be made to the Noise By-Law (N-200), including construction hours of operation in residential areas. This survey provides an opportunity for residents to share their experiences with construction related noise and provide recommendations for possible changes. This survey should take between five and 10 minutes to complete.

The surveys are located on HRM’s Shape Your City website: <https://www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/>. Participant feedback will be used to inform recommendation reports to Regional Council. The Grade Alteration and Stormwater Management By-Law Online Survey closes on August 18. The Construction Noise Survey closes on August 31.

DEWOLF PARK UPDATE



Those using these areas regularly will notice that they are busier than ever. HRM Parks has added more trash cans, more benches, more picnic tables, and more trash collection. I would appreciate receiving your feedback on the new black benches being tested in the Park. Develop NS (formerly the provincial Waterfront Development Corporation) has put their volleyball net back up, increased mowing and added more trash cans on their busy paths and wharfs.

THE BEDFORD WATERFRONT

Council recently approved the Rapid Transit Strategy recommending a new fast ferry terminal at Mill Cove and one at the bottom of Larry Uteck Blvd. As a result, there is renewed interest in master planning on the Bedford Waterfront. In the coming months, HRM staff and Develop Nova Scotia will be working together on potential opportunities to integrate these projects and align programming for this area, including the need to identify the site of a new library for District 16. This work is in its early stages, further updates and community consultation will take place as the project progresses.



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SANDY LAKE PARK



Sandy Lake Park and Beach enthusiasts will see some significant improvements this season. HRM Parks staff have improved the beach access and the benches, and the private property owner has removed the dilapidated cabin. Many thanks to both!

PARKS & RECREATION PLANNING

With all the new development and new residents within District 16, some parks have yet to be fully developed with facilities to serve the needs of our community. As part of the 2020/21 Parks and Recreation Business Plan, HRM will be developing a guiding plan for recreation facilities such as playgrounds, sports courts, sports fields and trails. This is to help inform future capital budgets as resources become available. Later in 2020, residents will be invited to participate in this project, first to identify gaps and opportunities in the park and amenities network, and then to confirm direction on priorities. Project information will soon be shared on the HRM website. Until then, requests for additional project information, questions, and comments can be directed to Stephen Cushing, Landscape Architect, at cushins@halifax.ca or to me.

HRM 2020 VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Each year the municipality recognizes volunteers who are nominated by community groups and organizations for their significant contributions to our community. While the celebration was postponed this year, I would like to recognize the volunteers and community groups from Bedford who were selected to receive a 2020 Volunteer Award.

Congratulations and thanks to the District 16 Volunteers for your service to our community!

Stephanie Graham
Alexander Hancox
Madeline Harper (Youth)
Darrell Johnston
Tanya MacLennan-Scott
Edward John McHugh
Christina Ruan
Dr. Yonggan Zhao

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020!



I am sorry that your graduation ceremony and other festivities were impacted by the pandemic. However, I congratulate you on your achievements and wish you great success in the future!

BEDFORD DAYS AND CANADA DAY IN DISTRICT 16

I would like to thank and congratulate the Bedford Days Committee and HRM Civic Events staff for putting together remarkable and thoroughly enjoyable virtual versions of both events. They celebrated and highlighted some of our event traditions, local talent, local businesses, and our beautiful community. I encourage you to watch these videos if you have not yet done so.

SMALL PROJECTS THAN CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE:

Glen Moir rocks!

Folks driving on Hammonds Plains Rd near Doyle St might notice something new in the public green space. Yes, it is a rock! However, soon it will be a rock with a Glen Moir Community sign on it. HRM, area resident Steve Warburton, Dexter Construction, and I have been collaborating on this for quite a while and it has almost come to fruition.

New Steps from Heffler to Landsburg

Thanks to HRM Parks staff for the new steps from Heffler to Landsburg. I appreciate the comments from residents advising me the old steps were deteriorating.

DeWolf Park

In addition, there were significant repairs to the brick walkways in DeWolf Park.



Please recycle.

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.