



COUNCILLOR KATHRYN MORSE
DISTRICT 10 ONLINE NEWS
HALIFAX - BEDFORD BASIN WEST

DEAR RESIDENTS OF FAIRVIEW, CLAYTON PARK AND ROCKINGHAM,

As I write this newsletter, Nova Scotians are in a province-wide lockdown. After more than a year of fighting COVID, the situation is the most serious it's been. What is heartening is to see the continued cooperation with masking and social distancing along with the surge in people going to get tested. Other ways to help are to check in by phone with anyone you know who may feel isolated, and to support Feed Nova Scotia, United Way, The Salvation Army, the Fairview Family Resource Centre and others working in our community.

CURRENTLY SERVING ON:

- Regional Council
- Halifax and West Community Council
- Audit and Finance Standing Committee
- Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee
- Executive Standing Committee
- Community Design Advisory Committee
- Canada Games Centre Board
- Centennial Arena Board

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Kearney Lake Gets a Spruce Up

HRM will be making improvements to the Kearney Lake area this spring and summer. HRM's Transportation and Public Works staff will carry out two dozen projects including road shoulder and pothole repairs, asphalt patching, vegetation trimming, guard rail maintenance and sign repair or replacement. There will be better signage in the beach parking area and regular monitoring to reduce parking-related issues this summer. Along with the roadwork, HRM Parks and Recreation staff will spruce up the public beach: sand will be added, rocks will be cleaned up, the older bunker washroom will be removed and a private property sign will be added to the old dock. A buoyed swim area will be installed to protect swimmers from boat traffic. Three lifeguards will be working throughout July and August, with lifeguard

coverage extended until the end of the Labour Day weekend.

Next year, following a project by Nova Scotia Power to replace power poles, the entire beach area will be graded to provide better drainage and stop the sand from washing out. The grading will also reduce the steepness of the walking path and make the beach more accessible. The lifeguard storage will be moved to create more space and a second dock will be installed.

I would like to thank HRM staff across multiple departments for making this happen. I'd also like to thank members of the Kearney Lake Residents' Association for bringing their concerns forward and working with me to make Kearney Lake better for residents and summer users.

HRM Lakes Tested

Kearney Lake was one of 52 lakes within the Halifax Regional Municipality tested for water quality on March 31. Water quality samples were collected by helicopter and by boat. Testing is conducted every 10 years to check for nutrients, chlorophyll and heavy metals. This work is separate from the supervised beach water quality testing program, which is completed weekly in July and August at Kearney Lake and all municipally-supervised beaches. Results will be made public once they are available.



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Recent council decisions

Policing changes, parking changes

Council has given the go-ahead to a project that will identify alternative ways to deliver non-core police services. A consultant will review how civilians could fill specific types of public safety roles such as traffic enforcement and victim services and make recommendations to council. The consultant will develop alternatives with a committee of advisors from the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaw communities, as well as representatives from health care, justice, and education. The "Reimagining Public Safety" review is part of a plan to be finalized by December 2022. I think it's one of the more important projects council will be working on for the next few years and look forward to the final report and recommendations.

More modest in scope was a decision by council to remove the four-hour cap on parking on the Halifax peninsula and in downtown Dartmouth. Instead there will be hourly parking rates that will vary by location and time of day. The new digital pay stations have been tweaked to make them more readable and user-friendly. The digital parking stations allow HRM to collect data about parking spot supply and demand and adjust incentives to provide optimum parking access in the downtown.



Weekly Green Bin Collection is Back-and other budget highlights

HRM's 2021/22 budget includes some items that were scaled back due to Covid. For example green bins will once again be collected every week instead of every two week.

Here are some other items I voted for that passed:

- an additional \$1 million for traffic calming measures across HRM, with a focus on school zones;
- additional staff will be hired to help with the backlog in planning and by-law enforcement due to HRM's growth;
- quicker snow clearing for bus stops next winter;
- extra funds for Halifax Public Libraries to expand e-books, which are in high demand;
- restoring the urban tree planting program cancelled during Covid;
- blue bag pickup will be bi-weekly (saving about \$800,000 a year);
- and a one-year study of technical and policy options for body-worn police cameras.

All this and much more for a 1% tax increase.



Affordable Housing in HRM

Finding affordable housing is becoming a bigger challenge in HRM. The ongoing housing shortage is affecting people from all walks of life, whether you're struggling to find an affordable rental or a house to buy. Recently in District 10 houses have been selling for \$100,000 or more over the asking price, sharp increases that result in home ownership moving further out of reach for many. Public housing is the responsibility of the Province of Nova Scotia, not the municipality. Over the last 20 years, there hasn't been any significant new affordable housing added by any government, although the population has grown and inequality has worsened.

Even though housing is not a municipal responsibility, the affordability of housing is something that everyone on Council is concerned about. Here are some of the things Council has done to improve access to affordable housing:

- HRM was awarded project funding through the federal government's Rapid Housing Initiative, which will provide 52 units plus a 30-bed shelter;
- HRM Council has allowed secondary and backyard suites to be added to single unit, two-unit or townhouse dwellings to permit an increase in central and affordable housing;
- HRM Council has requested staff look at setting up a municipally-run housing authority
- Some HRM-owned surplus land is being made available for affordable housing projects. Last year HRM sold a parcel of land for a \$1 for an affordable housing project in Dartmouth.

- HRM Council has waived development fees, and delayed Halifax Water fees for up to 10 years, for affordable housing projects.

HRM council has asked the provincial government to allow the municipality to have Inclusionary Zoning. Those discussion are ongoing. If this request is approved, new larger-scale developments would be required to include affordable apartments and housing. HRM does not have the legal authority to make this a requirement of new developments, so approval is needed from the Province. Without major changes in the way housing is built and funded, HRM's housing crisis will continue for the foreseeable future.





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Windsor Street Exchange Redesign Underway

The Windsor Street Exchange will be redesigned this year with redevelopment a few years away. The exchange has evolved piecemeal and is now overcapacity at peak times, with 48,000 cars moving through per day. The goal of the redesign is to improve traffic flow, better accommodate the needs of the port, provide better access to Africville Park, prepare for the Bus Rapid Transit Green Route, and make it safer for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists. The engineers are considering various options such as a roundabout or a two-level solution. Once the Windsor Exchange is completed work will begin on the Bedford Highway redevelopment.

For more information:

<https://www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/windsor-street-exchange-project>



Report a Pothole or Sinkhole

Report a pothole or sinkhole on a municipally owned street or sidewalk.

<https://www.halifax.ca/transportation/streets-sidewalks/paving-repair/report-a-pothole>

Potholes are caused when the asphalt on the surface of a road has deteriorated from the top, but you can still see asphalt underneath

Sinkholes are caused by erosion from underneath, and when you look into the hole you cannot see any pavement.

If you are reporting a pothole on a 100-series highway, please contact Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR) at TPWPAFF@novascotia.ca. This includes ramps leading to and from the highway, as well as overpasses above 100-series highways.

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Federal/Provincial Representatives in District 10

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311 CONTACT CENTRE

More than a telephone number, 311 is your direct connection to municipal services. Call 311 and speak to our helpful operators for information about anything HRM-related: property taxes, illegally parked vehicles, recreation services, pet licenses, by-law concerns, litter and more:

Monday to Friday
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday
9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Or email: ContactUs@311.halifax.ca

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Keep up to date with District 10 and council news. Email Ken Benoit my Council Constituent Coordinator at ken.benoit@halifax.ca to get on the mailing list.

OR CONNECT ON FACEBOOK

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MOBILE FOOD MARKET FAIRVIEW

May 1, 15, 29
June 12, 26
July 10, 24
Aug 7, 21
Sept 4, 18
Oct 2, 16, 30

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