

COUNCILLOR KATHRYN MORSE DISTRICT 10 NEWSLETTER

*Serving the Communities of Fairview,
Clayton Park & Rockingham*



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

FALL 2021

WORKING FOR SAFER STREETS

More traffic calming is one of the most frequent requests I hear. It's a common request for all HRM councillors. "Traffic calming" refers to various ways of slowing vehicle traffic by changing the behavior of drivers. Lowering the speed limit is one of the most effective traffic calming measures but unfortunately it's not within the power of municipal councillors to change speed limits. The province decides which streets can have lower speed limits and the municipality applies for approvals, street by street, which is a slow process.

Physical measures such as narrowed streets, speed tables and speed humps, raised intersections and crosswalks, curb extensions, traffic circles and roundabouts, raised median islands, and allowing on-street parking, are all examples of traffic calming. I have brought many requests for traffic calming forward, but only certain types of streets qualify for traffic calming measures. Streets may be considered for traffic calming if they are:

- relatively flat
- within a residential area and classified as a "local street"
- not a multi-lane road
- have a posted speed limit not greater than 50 km/h
- longer than 150 meters
- not providing direct access to a fire station or emergency services building.

There are more than 400 approved requests for traffic calming on streets in HRM, and 190 streets waiting to be evaluated. Last spring, councillors voted to add \$1 million to the traffic calming budget to help address the backlog. In District 10, speed tables were added in the school zone on Willett Street and nearby streets.

As councillor, I can and do advocate for traffic calming, and I requested more focus on school zones. However, councillors can't determine which individual streets are calmed or how they are calmed. By provincial law, final decisions involving changes to roads must be made by safety experts at the independent Traffic Authority.

Along with increasing infrastructure budgets to address residents' safety concerns, for the past few years HRM's Regional Council has been requesting changes to the provincial *Traffic Safety Act*. These changes would allow the municipality to implement photo radar, reduce muffler noise, and reduce the default speed limit in residential areas to 40km/h. If enacted by the provincial government, these legal changes could significantly improve safety on HRM's streets.



CONTACT ME

Email: kathryn.morse@Halifax.ca

Phone: 902.497.7278

Mailing address: PO Box 1749
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

I do a weekly Facebook update for District 10 and invite you to follow me there:



**Kathryn Morse Councillor District 10
Halifax-Bedford Basin West**

CONTACT MY OFFICE

Ken Benoit, District 10 Constituency Coordinator

Email: benoitk@halifax.ca

Phone: 902.490.4050

HALIFAX



DISTRICT 10 NEWSLETTER HALIFAX-BEDFORD BASIN WEST - FALL 2021

REDEVELOPING WINDSOR STREET EXCHANGE

The Windsor Street Exchange at Fairview Cove is being redesigned to increase capacity, reduce congestion, and improve safety for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians. There are two options on the table. Both aim to handle 100,000 vehicles per day, about twice the current number:

Option A: Features two roundabouts and an overpass. The proposed roundabouts would be about half as big as the one at Armdale. Roundabouts offer safety advantages and keep the traffic moving.

Option B: Has five stoplights and is similar to the existing layout except for an overpass to provide better access to the MacKay Bridge.

You can view the concept designs and a video at **Shape Your City Halifax:** www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca Once the preferred option is chosen, HRM will go back to the public with a more detailed design next spring. The final design will be completed in 2023 and construction is expected to begin in 2024.

ZONING REVIEW FOR FAIRVIEW

When I campaigned door to door I heard a lot of concern about new buildings in Fairview being built too close to the street. This was permitted under the C-2C zone, introduced in 2016, that allows 100% lot coverage for new buildings on Dutch Village Road. I feel the C-2C zone has resulted in poor visibility for drivers and not enough room for pedestrians, cyclists, or street trees. Last March, I introduced a motion asking for a staff report to review the C-2C zone. The staff report is pending.

IMPROVING PARKING AND TRAFFIC FLOW

I have been working with residents and HRM staff to improve safety and traffic flow through various signage and parking changes. For example, at my request, a new *No Parking* zone was installed on one side of Kent Avenue near the entrance to Hemlock Ravine park to reduce congestion there. *No Parking* signs will be installed on Eliza Ritchie in Rockingham South and improvements for Wentworth are also being considered.

INTRODUCING MOTIONS FOR CHANGE

Motions are one of the ways councillors can make changes at City Hall. Along with the C-2C zone motion, I have introduced 3 other motions: 1) to develop a speedier approach to dealing with dangerous dogs than going through provincial courts; 2) request for new grants to cover insurance for outdoor community rinks; 3) request for ways to require affordable housing units in new buildings in suburban areas, while waiting for the suburban plan to be completed; 4) request for a better process to ensure council is considering climate adaptation measures in a timely way in the budget process. Staff reports are pending on these motions.

MONITORING FOR KEARNEY LAKE

Thanks to an initiative of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, HRM is bringing back a lake water quality monitoring program, with the goal of testing 73 lakes in the municipality. This is good news for Kearney Lake and many other lakes in HRM. The monitoring will be done twice a year by community groups and volunteers, with the data and test results being organized by the municipality and made available to the public. Water testing will begin in 2022.

SPRUCING UP TITUS PARK



Last spring I met with HRM Parks and Recreation staff to request a refresh for Titus Smith Memorial Park on Lacewood Drive. Staff agreed it was overdue. Over the summer new benches and picnic tables were added, along with three dozen new trees. The new trees are a mix of native and non-native species such as red oak, birch, and linden. There are also some beautiful spring-flowering trees, including a magnolia and two redbuds. It will be wonderful to see these trees grow and provide some much-needed shade and colour in the years ahead.



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DUTCH VILLAGE ROAD UPGRADES

HRM planners and engineers are working on a major upgrade for Dutch Village Road. This will include a regular sidewalk on the west side of the street (not patches of asphalt), safer parallel parking instead of nose-in parking (no more cars backing out into traffic), accessible bus stops with proper cement pads, a separated bike lane, and repaving.

Visibility will be improved and crosswalks will be made shorter and safer. The reconstruction project will involve everything from moving power poles to building new “bump outs” at intersections to installing curbs and drains. There will be benches, trees and landscaping to beautify the street and make it more pleasant for walking.

There will be a plan to maintain traffic flow and ensure access to businesses and properties during construction. The timeline is not confirmed, but the project is planned to be constructed in stages over two years, starting in late 2022 or early 2023. Visit www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/dutch-village-road

BLUE MOUNTAIN - BIRCH COVE LAKES: A NATIONAL URBAN PARK?

HRM was one of the first municipalities in Canada to sign on to the National Urban Parks program, announced on August 5th by Parks Canada.

It's early days, but the agreement is for HRM to work with Parks Canada toward creating a possible national park at Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes, a wilderness area that runs from Bayers Lake to Tantallon.

The park boundaries have yet to be defined, however more than half of the area is already protected. Other green spaces in HRM will also be considered. The announcement of a National Urban Park program for Canada is a real turning point. It recognizes that conserving nature is an investment in healthy communities. It recognizes that more people want to enjoy the outdoors close to home.

It also recognizes cities like Halifax have an important role to play in conserving nature. Congratulations to the many people who have worked so long to get to this point, especially to the Friends of Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes.



Nature in our backyard: Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area

USEFUL NUMBERS

- Police/Fire Emergency 911
- Police (non-emergency) 902.490.5020
- Fire (non-emergency) 902.490.5530
- Halifax Water Emergency 902.490.6940

CONTACT 311

Call 311 or email ContactUs@311.halifax.ca for concerns such as illegally parked cars, fireworks or graffiti, to apply for licenses or building permits, to request information about garbage collection and transit schedules, and to report dangerous dogs or other animal concerns.

If you have already reported an issue to 311 and don't feel you're seeing results, please contact me with your file number and I'll work with you to get it resolved. When emailing 311, it helps to include a photo of the problem along with the civic address.

The hours for 311 are:

- Mon-Fri: 8a.m. – 8p.m.
- Sat-Sun: 9a.m. – 5:30p.m.



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.



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MORE HOUSING IN DISTRICT 10

HRM is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada. Our population is expected to increase by about 9000-10,000 people in 2022, as it's been doing for the past several years. District 10 will see its share of the growth.

Growth creates jobs and opportunities, but there is a downside - the housing shortage. Regional Council approved several initiatives to support more affordable housing and emergency housing in HRM, but recognizes more supply and more varieties of housing are needed. Here are some of the new housing projects underway in District 10:

210-214 Willett

Hazelview Developments (formerly Timbercreek) started demolition of townhouses near Dunbrack and Willett. Demolition of the round tower that location is expected to begin this winter. This is one of the largest construction projects underway in District 10, with a targeted completion date in the fall of 2025. The project will include 525-530 residential units in two 17-storey towers, 490-500 parking spaces, and ground floor commercial space

Dunbrack and Ruth Goldbloom

Fares Construction will start one of the final projects at Rockingham South this winter. The new multi-unit will be located at the corner of Dunbrack and Ruth Goldbloom, opposite the gas station. The developer has decided against the hotel that was part of the original plan and will build an apartment building instead. The project will include 76 residential units and five stories with ground floor commercial space. For more detail, search for Case 22539 on www.halifax.ca.

Seton Ridge

Approved in 2018, construction on the Seton Ridge housing development next to MSVU is set to begin in 2022. The former Sisters of Charity "Motherhouse" property will be developed by Southwest Properties. It will be mix of 167 single family homes and 18 medium and highrise apartment buildings, and ground floor commercial space. The multi-year project will add about 3000 new housing units for an estimated population of 7000, once completed. The original land sale agreement was made by the Sisters of Charity on the condition that a portion of the housing will be affordable.

SUPPORTING DISTRICT 10

If you have a community project you need some help with, let's talk! Over the past year, I've been pleased to provide **financial support** to:

Birdland Community Garden, Fairview Community Garden, Centennial Arena, Duc d'Anville School SAC, Fairview Heights School SAC, Halifax West High School SAC, Fairview Resource Centre, Friends of Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes, Rockingham Recreation Society, Salvation Army Fairview Citadel, Mobile Food Market and Square Roots Fairview/Clayton Park.



Birdland Community Garden

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Have a great idea for a community project? Need some cash to get it off the ground? HRM offers grants of \$5000 and \$25,000 for registered, non-profit organizations and charities. A wide variety of projects are eligible for the grants such as publishing maps or guidebooks, creating interpretive panels, buying safety equipment, or renovating a building for community use.

Applications will be accepted in January and up until March 31, 2022. For general inquiries or help with completing an application, please contact the Grants office at 902.490.7310 or email: nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca

CITIZENSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

Each year, HRM's Citizenship Award is presented to outstanding Grade 9 students. Schools choose their award recipient based on leadership qualities, volunteer work and academic performance. I would like to congratulate District 10 residents and 2021 Citizenship Award winners, **Jane Elliott (Clayton Park Jr High)** and **Wangari Mathenge (Gorsebrook Jr High)**. Well done!