

HRM PRIORITIES PLAN & BUDGET

The HRM Strategic Priorities Plan reflects the municipality's vision, mission, and values, and establishes our key areas of focus now and into the future. The four-year plan outlines priority outcomes and strategic initiatives, which guide how we track our progress and align our business plans and budgets. The plan also helps municipal employees understand how their work fits into the long-term goals of the organization, and how we're all working together to make a difference in our region. The Strategic Priorities Plan is developed at the start of a new Regional Council term and revisited each year as part of the annual multi-year strategic planning process. As our HRM Budget process is about to unfold over the next few months, each department will present its work plan for the upcoming fiscal year and its respective budgets to achieve their goals. HRM Council will assess and debate each department about its proposed priorities. During each and every budget meeting, the general public have an opportunity to speak on any aspect of the municipal budget. The proposed schedule of budget meetings and topics is contained within the Oct. 25/22 Council report: <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/221025rc1512.pdf>. Dates may change due to weather or prolonged debate over a particular subject or issue. If you wish to make any presentations before HRM Council about the municipal budget, then please contact the Municipal Clerks Office at clerks@halifax.ca or call 902-490-4212. Written submissions are also welcomed too. To learn more about the current 2021-25 HRM Strategic Priorities Plan, go to: www.halifax.ca/city-hall/budget-finances/budget/strategic-priorities-plan

HRM & NS PROPERTY TAX PROGRAMS

HRM has a variety of programs to aid homeowners with their property tax obligations. There are various options for payment plans, property tax rebates, or deferral of property taxes (payment is put off to a future later date). A homeowner with a LIC (local improvement charge) can also apply for a deferral of these charges. It is important that you know what choices exist. Some of these programs are available to homeowners with a combined household income of \$34,000 or less a year. The deadline to apply is December 31st. The HRM application form can be found at: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-halifax/AffordableAccessApplicationForm_2.pdf. Furthermore, seniors should know that there is a NS Provincial Property Tax Rebate for Seniors Program: This program is for those who have been receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement in January of the application year. Criteria requires you to have paid your property taxes from the prior year in full. A receipt from HRM showing property taxes are paid in full is required. Applicants to this program can receive a rebate on half of their taxes paid to a maximum of \$800. More details

about this provincial program can be found by calling 902-424-5200 or 211 or toll-free at 1-800-670-4357, or visit: <https://novascotia.ca/sns/access/individuals/consumer-awareness/property-tax-rebate-for-seniors.asp>. The deadline to apply is also December 31st. The application form can be downloaded from: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2-1781/property-tax-rebate-seniors-application-form-en.pdf>

INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS DAY - DECEMBER 10th

We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. Human rights are inherent to all human beings, no matter our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Learn what your human rights are, as well as your responsibilities. It has now been 74 years since the United Nations made the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Here are some global campaigns to promote our rights: www.standup4humanrights.org/en/campaigns.html

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NS

There are many groups, individuals, and organizations whose purpose is beneficial to the community but who are not registered as charities or qualified donees with the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). Charities and non-charities often partner to increase their community impact. The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) is an action centre for philanthropy. They provide support for communities, charities, and citizens to realize their individual potential and collective possibilities. If you want to learn more about charitable partnerships, please reach out to them at: infocfns@cfns-fcne.ca. The CFNS plays a crucial role in helping people give back to their community in meaningful ways. They can connect individuals, families and companies with causes that inspire them. CFNS pool resources, knowledge, and expertise, working with others for even greater impact. Let them help you realize your philanthropic goals by matching your interests with community needs and finding innovative ways to make every donation count for the long term. If you're interested in working with CFNS to grow your charity, honour a loved one, or simply give back to your community, call 902-490-9916, email infocfns@cfns-fcne.ca, or visit their website: <https://cfns-fcne.ca/> to learn more about the opportunities they provide. For example, there is the Eastern Shore Community Fund that provides an opportunity to help organizations that are vital to building stronger, more inclusive Eastern Shore communities: <https://cfns-fcne.ca/easternshorecommunityfund/>. You can also support the various CFNS campaigns directly through CanadaHelps: www.canadahelps.org/en/explore/campaigns/region/AC/

Your contribution will help them continue to build strong, vibrant, and diverse communities throughout Nova Scotia. For another example, there is the Eastern Shore Heritage Preservation Fund: www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/community-foundation-of-nova-scotia/campaign/eastern-shore-heritage-preservation-fund/

HOPE FOR WILDLIFE SOLAR PLAN

Hope For Wildlife (HFW) has installed 109 solar panels on their property in Seaforth. HFW's main building already uses a passive solar design and incorporates geothermal heating systems. HFW has been approved for a 30kW solar installation. The provincial approval confers only permission to install the panels and sell the power — it doesn't include money for the infrastructure and solar panels themselves. They are hoping to raise \$150,000 to complete this project. www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/hope-for-wildlife-society/campaign/solar-panel-project/

WINTER TIPS FOR GREEN CARTS

When temperatures drop, organic materials in green carts can freeze and cause issues. HRM Solid Waste Resources suggests some of these helpful tips: Line the bottom of the green cart with newspaper or boxboard, like a cereal box or yard waste bag, and line your mini-bin and green cart with a paper bag; food waste can be stored in the freezer until collection day, then deposited in your green cart just before collection; place your green cart in an area where the sun can reach it, if possible; wrap food scraps in newspaper, boxboard, or a paper bag; and put out your green cart for every collection, even if the cart is not full.

GOODWILL & PEACE ON EARTH

My wife Susan and I want to wish everyone the very best of this Holiday Season. During this joyful time of year there are many types of spiritual and cultural celebrations: Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noel, Season's Greetings, Happy Hanukkah, Al Hijra, and Kwanza. The message of 'Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All' is universal. Have yourself a blessed time with family, friends and neighbours. May we all strive to have peace, tranquillity and harmony in our daily lives. Remember those who may be less fortunate or are experiencing hardship and despair. Please give to your local food bank. Or better yet, give the gift of life and donate blood. May we all be blessed with good health and happiness throughout the New Year ahead and hopefully be pandemic-free!



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