

### HRM APPROVES 2017-18 BUDGETS

HRM Council approved its 2017-18 \$741.5-million operating budget and \$187.3-million capital budget. Furthermore the 2018-19 operating and capital budgets (\$763.1 million and \$156.7 million, respectively) were also approved in principle. The average single-family home tax bill will increase by 1.8 per cent in 2017-18. Increases at less than the annual pace of inflation are anticipated in each of the subsequent three years. Debt will continue to decline and should be as low as \$245.8 million in 2017-18 and \$240.7 million in 2018-19, and reserve balances will increase to \$127.4 million in 2017-18 and \$134.9 million in 2018-19, maintaining the municipality's strong financial position. This two-year approval supports the delivery of Regional Council's strategic priorities adopted in December 2016. Regional Council has made its budget decisions with input from citizens and municipal staff, which is vital for Regional Council to adopt a fiscally responsible budget that provides us with a clear roadmap to achieve our priorities. In conjunction with Canada 150 program opportunities, HRM will leverage more resources—approximately \$5-million of public and private funding—to enhance Canada 150 celebrations and implement numerous parks and recreation infrastructure improvement projects throughout the municipality. For more information on the 2017-18 and 2018-19 operating and capital budgets visit [www.halifax.ca/budget](http://www.halifax.ca/budget).

The HRM Tax rates for 2017-18 per \$100 of taxable assessment are as follows:

- **Residential and Resource** general tax rates will be set at: **\$0.667** for the Urban area and **\$0.634** for the Suburban & Rural areas.
- **Commercial** property general rates of taxation will be set at: **\$2.869** for the Urban & Suburban areas and **\$2.542** for the Rural area.
- **Regional Transportation** Tax Rate for the Urban/Rural Commuter shed area will be set at: **\$0.048** and the Local Transit Rate for properties within 1Km of a regular Bus Route will be **\$0.098**.
- **Fire Protection** rate for those within reach of a fire hydrant will be set at **\$0.013** for residential and resource properties & **\$0.036** for commercial properties. For more information visit: <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/170411cow3.pdf>.

### HRM HONOURS ITS VOLUNTEERS

On April 12th, during Volunteer Appreciation Month, HRM honoured 39 volunteers and 1 community group from across the municipality. The following individuals from District 2 received recognition from their respective organizations for their tremendous contribution to the community: Dolly Williams, Rodger Smith & Pam Kaiser. Thank you all!

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week is May 7th–13th. Everyone should be prepared for a 72 hour period from any potential harm caused by a significant weather event or incident. Our district is very fortunate to have two Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Teams: Eastern Shore

JEM (Cole Harbour to Ship Harbour) and Sheet Harbour JEM (East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum). For more details please go to: [www.halifax.ca/emo/jems.php](http://www.halifax.ca/emo/jems.php). On Saturday, May 13th from 10AM - 1PM the eleventh annual "JEM Jamboree" will be held at the Porters Lake Atlantic Superstore parking lot. Their plan is to continue promoting efforts in emergency preparedness, training & community readiness. Our JEM Teams are looking for volunteers. Here are some more web-sites about EP information: [www.GetPrepared.gc.ca](http://www.GetPrepared.gc.ca) [www.publicsafety.gc.ca](http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca) [http://novascotia.ca/dma/emo\\_or\\_nsemo](http://novascotia.ca/dma/emo_or_nsemo) [www.halifax.ca/emo](http://www.halifax.ca/emo) or @HRM\_EMO

### MOBILE HSW DROP-OFF DEPOTS

Residents can drop off the following items at a local mobile Household Special Waste (HSW) Depot: batteries, leftover liquid paint, leftover corrosive cleaners, pesticides/herbicides, old or mixed gasoline, fuel oil & used motor oil, solvents & thinners, BBQ propane tanks, small propane cylinders, aerosol spray cans containing hazardous substances, pharmaceuticals & drugs, and smoke detectors. There will be a mobile drop-off depot at the Porters Lake Metro-X Park & Ride Terminal on Inspiration Drive by Hwy #107 Exit 20 on Saturday, May 27th from 9AM - 4PM. There will be another mobile depot on Saturday, September 9th at Oyster Pond Academy parking lot. For a complete list of dates and locations of HSW Drop-off Depots go to: [www.halifax.ca/recycle/hhw.php](http://www.halifax.ca/recycle/hhw.php). For alternatives to some household hazardous materials visit: [www.lesstoxicguide.ca](http://www.lesstoxicguide.ca)

### RURAL EXPRESS TRANSIT CHANGES

Starting this May 29th there will be some slight service adjustments to Rural Express Route #370. 'Stop & Drop / Pick-up' spot service will be added to this bus route at Cherry Brook Road, Main Street by Smitty's and Mic Mac Mall. The Mic Mac Mall Terminal stop will be beneficial not just for shoppers but for the workers trying to get there before the stores open. It will also help people trying to get into Burnside and Dartmouth Crossing by accessing other bus route connections from that terminal instead of going downtown to the Bridge Bus Terminal. Finally, there will be the added benefit of providing direct access into Metro on the deadhead return runs from Porters Lake in the afternoons that are currently running back empty. This will be a trial run for a six-month period. Evidence from this experiment will determine if these changes will continue or not. More information can be found at: [www.halifax.ca/transit](http://www.halifax.ca/transit).

### NS HIGH SPEED RURAL INTERNET

HRM has been working with local community groups on their applications to the Provincial Rural High-Speed Internet Funding Program. The following areas have been granted funds to expand internet capacity:

#### Sheet Harbour & Area Chamber of Commerce

- Region: Watt Section. Funding: \$75,000
- This project will consist of running 5.5 km of fibre through Watt Section. This will provide service to about 62 households, including the local EHS station, the Royal Canadian Legion, and local businesses. The new service

will offer speeds of up to 1G download and 20mg upload, up from current internet speeds of 1-1.5 Mbps.

#### Moser River United Board of Trade

- Region: Harrigan Cove. Funding: \$75,000
- The project will provide high-speed fibre internet, to be extended from the existing fibre along Highway #7 and to be installed in the neighbouring community of Moser River, offering speeds of up to 1G to about 32 homes in Harrigan Cove.

#### Moser River Community Hall Association

- Region: Moser River. Funding: \$75,000
- This project will extend fibre 34 road kilometers and pass about 120 addresses, including several local businesses, a Canada Post outlet, the local Volunteer Fire Service, and the local Comfort Centre, offering speeds of 1G.

#### Halifax Regional Business & Community Economic Development Association with Goffs-Devon Internet Initiative

- Region: Goffs-Devon Funding: \$75,000
- By extending fibre 5 kms to reach Goffs-Devon, the project will provide service via DSL to about 85 households and improve access for a fire station, golf course and several small businesses in the area. These groups and others are also making applications to the Federal "Innovate to Connect" to explore further rural internet expansion.

### SERVICE CENTRE & LIBRARY RENO

This summer HRM will be doing some extensive renovations to its Service Counter, Fitness Centre and Branch Library at the Village Plaza in Musquodoboit Harbour. As a result of a building condition assessment review, the current building does not meet certain infrastructure requirements for a municipal facility because the premises were initially built for commercial occupancy. Building issues such as: Electrical System Deficiencies; Mechanical Distributions System Deficiencies; Air Infiltration of the External Wall; Multiple Building Entrances; and Lack of Accessible Washrooms were identified. Therefore, the staff at HRM Parks & Recreation and at Halifax Regional Libraries worked with the local firm Abbott Brown Architects to address the "State of Good Repair" of the facility to extend the useful life of this building by another 5-10 years. The Tender for this project ( #17-166 ) closes on May 2nd. Once the bids are opened and reviewed, then a plan of moving and relocating services will be determined depending upon the availability of remaining funds left in its budget. Hopefully service interruptions will be kept to a minimal during the renovations. To see more about the floor plans and alterations, go to:

[www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/about/news/whatsup/branch-news/mh-news/renovation-preview.html](http://www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/about/news/whatsup/branch-news/mh-news/renovation-preview.html)

