



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



ROCKINGHAM TRAFFIC CALMING: FLAMINGO TO BE NARROWED

Residents in Rockingham have contacted me recently with renewed concerns about the intersection of Flamingo and Meadowlark after an incident there last week. Apparently, there was a close call when a vehicle tried to pass a Halifax Transit bus and then had to slam on its brakes to avoid a school bus dropping off a six-year-old. Fortunately, no one was hurt. When I went door to door in Rockingham two and a half years ago, the intersection of Flamingo and

Let's Connect

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Meadowlark was one of the top concerns of parents and residents. Many drivers roll through stop signs and there is speeding happening as well. Because the 3-way stop is next to the playground everyone is naturally very concerned.

I brought these concerns to the municipality's traffic safety staff shortly after I was elected and have been advocating for changes ever since. Speed humps aren't an option for traffic calming on Flamingo because the



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Knightsridge fire station is nearby so other measures are required. The good news is HRM's traffic safety engineers have been working on solutions for Flamingo for at least 18 months, and there will be some major safety improvements this summer. To reduce traffic speeds, Flamingo will be narrowed between Dove and Knightsridge. Narrowing a street is a proven way of reducing both vehicle speeds and volumes. It was deemed the best solution for this street. A sidewalk will be installed along the playground side of Flamingo and a third crosswalk will be painted at the intersection with Meadowlark. Street parking may also need to be changed. A digital speed display sign has been installed at the bottom of Flamingo in advance of the crosswalk there. These upgrades should significantly improve safety on Flamingo. Once I know the timeline for construction I will confirm.

TRAFFIC CALMING FOR CLAYTON PARK AND FAIRVIEW TOO

After this post I expect to hear from residents in other parts of District 10 who will be upset they haven't seen improvements on their street. In a future post I'll talk about upcoming traffic calming projects for Clayton Park and Fairview. Please be assured I am aware of concerns across the district and am advocating for several traffic safety projects, but these changes take time.

Here's why: for each street, data must be collected, accident reports must be reviewed, analysis must be done, and if changes are recommended, staff must do the design and engineering work. To keep costs as low as possible, and to avoid ripping up newly paved streets, traffic calming projects must be scheduled in conjunction with other infrastructure projects, such as after Halifax Water's sewer line replacements. It takes a lot of coordination. Every traffic calming project takes at least two years from start to finish.

As I've mentioned before, councillors do not decide how and where traffic calming projects are installed. That would be dangerous. I can and do advocate for changes, but the decisions and designs are the responsibility of the municipality's engineers and traffic safety specialists. They are trained to apply national road safety standards to individual roads to come up with customized solutions.

HRM's traffic safety staff have to consider the entire municipality and prioritize where upgrades are most needed, and work within the budget council approves. Since council is trying to keep tax rates as low as possible, the infrastructure budget is never big enough to fix everything everywhere all at once. Citizen calls and emails to 311 (contactus@311.halifax.ca) are also considered when prioritizing projects.

But in the end, it's not just a money problem. Even if Regional Council approved huge sums to install traffic calming on every single street, we would still need drivers to take responsibility for slowing down and driving more safely.



WESTERWALD AND MAIN AVE DEVELOPMENTS APPROVED

Regional Council has approved the first two suburban developments in HRM that will be required to contribute



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to the municipality's affordable housing grant program. Both buildings are in Fairview: one is on Westerwald and the other at the corner of Main Avenue and Titus Street. Until recently, large suburban developments like these did not have to provide any community benefits because many of the planning and zoning rules haven't been updated for forty years.

In September 2021, I brought a motion to council to change the rules for suburban developments and to establish an interim contribution requirement until the suburban plan could be updated (possibly by 2026). As a result of that motion, last month, Regional Council passed the Interim Density Bonusing Program and now new suburban developments will have to contribute to HRM's Affordable Housing Grant Program. This program helps non-profit organizations like the NS Housing Trust build and renovate apartments to be rented out at deeply affordable, below-market rates. Essentially, contributions from for-profit housing will now be required and made available to support non-profit affordable housing. The contribution required is based in part on the floor area of the building and the value of real estate in the neighbourhood of the development. This change will result in millions more in funds for HRM's Affordable Housing Grant Program.

In a separate process I was also able to bring in zoning changes to require the Westerwald and Main Avenue buildings to have 1.5 m setbacks, through a change to C-2C zone (Dutch Village Road area). All future new buildings in this zone will be required to have 1.5 m setbacks. The setbacks will provide more room for future possibilities such as landscaping or widened roads and sidewalks. The developer of the Westerwald project is aiming to start construction next spring, with the Main/Titus project timeline still to be determined. You can find out more about the Westerwald project [here](#) and the Titus/Main development [here](#).

HRM'S REGISTRY TO MAKE RENTALS SAFER

Regional Council has passed a bylaw requiring all rental housing to be registered with the goal of improving maintenance and safety standards. The registry will help HRM do proactive inspections, rather than rely, as the city does now, on complaint-based inspections. In some cases, tenants are reluctant to request inspections because of fear of reprisals from landlords. The rental registry will also provide an inventory of housing and help HRM plan for future housing needs. Landlords will have until April 1, 2024, to register and it will be free of charge.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

HRM's 2023 budget is finished except for the final vote later this month. During a year when cities across Canada were struggling with rising costs of labour, supplies, fuel, and interest rates, I think council ended up in the right place with this budget. We had to find a reasonable balance between supporting the maintenance and new projects our fast-growing city needs while keeping costs and taxes as low as possible.

After three months of discussion, the tax bill impact for 2023 will be 5.8%. This is below the starting point of 8% proposed by staff but more than the 4% goal Regional Council was aiming for. As we worked through the budget, it became obvious the only way to get to 4% would be with major cuts. Those kinds of cuts were not worth saving \$80 on the average annual tax bill. Here are some of the items that were approved during the final budget session:

- \$14 million+ for a new Bedford West Fire Station which will support emergency response in Bedford, Larry Uteck and Rockingham
- An increase to the annual sidewalk budget of \$3 million (not the \$7 million I originally proposed, but \$3 million will almost double the number of sidewalks built each year)
- Funding for suburban and rural planning; a new suburban plan is urgently needed to replace the



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outdated zoning and planning rules from the 70s and 80s currently on the books for Fairview, Clayton Park and Rockingham; funds to hire a planner/coordinator to implement the Green Network Plan, approved in 2018;

- \$500,000 to expand affordable access program for recreation
- \$300,000 for the library collection (we aren't even treading water, much more funding is needed to meet national standards)
- Staff for HRM's new Public Safety Office
- Staff for HRM's HalifACT climate team
- Four supervisors to support safety on transit and at transit terminals (such as the Lacewood terminal)
- \$1.1 million to improve services and supports for the unhoused

EV CHARGING STATIONS ON THE WAY

This spring, HRM will begin installing 18 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across the region to encourage more residents to make the switch to EVs. Details are still being finalized, but there will be one charging station installed in the Clayton Park West area. Installation of all 18 charging stations will take about a year. HRM will charge competitive fees for the service.

JOIN THE LITTERATI ELECTORAL DISTRICT CHALLENGE!

The Halifax Solid Waste Resources team will be hosting a Litterati challenge in each municipal electoral district to see which district's residents can pick up the most pieces of litter!

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Does your district have what it takes? Join the challenge by first downloading the app and searching your municipal district number, plus the word "Cleanup." (e.g. District 10 Cleanup). Residents can also join using the code "HRM" with their district number (e.g., HRM1).

Alternatively, residents can join the municipality's ongoing **CLEANHRM** challenge using the join code **CLEANHRM**.

In June 2023, zero waste prize kits will be awarded to the top three litter collectors in each district for the month of May. In October 2023, a second round of prizes will be awarded for the top three litter collectors in each district for the timeframe of April 1 to September 30, 2023. Information on municipal electoral districts can be found by visiting [our website](#).

Using the Litterati mobile app and joining a HRM challenge will enable the municipality to collect information on litter hot spots and will help inform future initiatives to mitigate litter in our communities! Over 26,061 pieces of litter were collected through HRM's Litterati challenges last year.

FREE LITTERATI APP WEBINARS

Litterati is an interactive tool that allows residents to photograph and tag common pieces of litter that they find within their neighbourhoods and communities.

The data that is collected using the Litterati application will be used to see where litter clean ups are taking place, and track trends in the types of litter we are seeing in the community. This data will also be used to help inform and guide our waste education efforts around reducing litter.

Join the Litterati Electoral District Challenge!



Participate by downloading the app and searching your municipal district number, plus the word "Cleanup." (e.g. District 1 Cleanup).

Residents can also join using the code "HRM" with their district number (e.g., HRM1), or by searching "CLEANHRM" in the App.

Download the Litterati App to join the challenge!

 Download on the App Store

 GET IT ON Google Play





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The Municipality's Solid Waste Resources staff will be offering free webinars throughout the spring, summer and fall months to train residents and community groups about how to download the Litterati App and to explain how it can be used to benefit their cleanup efforts!

To get more information on Litterati, residents are encouraged to follow [Halifax Recycles](https://HalifaxRecycles) or visit halifax.ca/litterati.

municipality's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) hosts a brunch with the Mayor!

During brunch, youth will learn about YAC's work plan and give input on the types of changes you'd like to see the municipality take to better support youth!

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Registration is required. E-mail youth@halifax.ca to register for this event. There is limited space, register early! For more information, visit Halifax.ca.



NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK

National Youth Week takes place every year May 1 to 7 and is dedicated to the celebration of youth and their active participation in their communities.

Whether it is recreation, drama, sport, dance, civic engagement, art, volunteerism or leadership, young people are regularly engaged in meaningful activities during their discretionary time. National Youth Week is a time to honour their involvement!

This year's lineup of National Youth Week events has a variety of activities to participate in – from brunch with the Mayor, to potlucks, sports, baking, and so much more. Learn more about the schedule online at Halifax.ca.

NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK EVENT – BRUNCH WITH THE MAYOR

Join us on Sunday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at City Hall in celebrating National Youth Week as the



CHANGES COMING TO ANNUAL PARKING PERMIT FEES

Did you know? The Halifax Regional Municipality's on-street parking payment service provider, HotSpot, is now providing a new real-time web and mobile application map that will allow drivers to plan ahead for on-street parking options. The real-time map will help drivers plan their trip by identifying potentially available on-street paid parking locations before they begin their trip, making it easier to get to where they're going. Rather than displaying individual spots, the map will display parking availability by total number within a paid parking zone.

Changes to annual parking permit fees, visitor parking permits, commuter permits, carshare parking and the ability to purchase second permits are now in effect.

→ Annual parking permit fees will increase from \$40/year to \$75/year. Residents can purchase a second annual parking permit for \$175/year.

→ Annual visitor parking permits will shift to pay per-use:
👉 One day: \$15



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- 👍 Two days: \$25
- 👍 Seven days: \$35

→ Carshare vehicles will be able to park at any on street paid parking location.

→ Commuter permits will see price increases or price decreases, depending on the zone. Student commuter permits will change from a flat rate of \$35/month to \$10/month discount off the regular zone price.

→ All permits will shift to a digital format, removing the need for replacement fees.

These changes, supported by amendments to [By-law P1200](#) and approved by Regional Council, will streamline purchases, increase flexibility and create efficiencies in a new digital format. All current parking permits will remain valid until they expire. For more details, visit our [website](#) update to help ensure that the materials are collected.

The map can be accessed through the HotSpot app, or by visiting the [website](#).

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION & PROMOTION GRANT PROGRAM

- [Active Transportation \(AT\) Education and Promotion Grants](#) are intended to support projects to increase the number of people walking, bicycling and rolling and improving the safety of people using these modes. Projects may include:
 - Safety and skills training programs
 - AT promotions and marketing programs
 - AT education and engagement
 - Transportation Demand Management programs
 - AT related events
 - Etiquette programs

There are three types of projects measured in funding and reach:

- Small community project grant under \$1,000
- Large community project grant of \$1000 - \$5,000

- Major project grant over \$5,000

These grants are awarded to eligible applicants as outlined in the [Administrative Order Number 2020-011-ADM Respecting HRM's Grant Programs for Active Transportation and Recreational Trails](#):

- shall be located within the geographic boundary of the municipality;
- shall be a Community Organization at the date an application is made;
- shall have been a Community Organization for a minimum of one year prior to the date of submission of the application;

“Community Organization” means a Registered Non-Profit Organization (Society, non-profit organization; non-profit corporation) or a Registered Canadian Charitable Organization.

The AT Education and Promotions Grant supports municipal objectives for a multi-modal transportation system as described in the [Integrated Mobility Plan](#) and the [Active Transportation Priorities Plan](#).

JUNO AWARDS – COMING MARCH 2024



The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS) announced that The JUNO Awards are returning to Atlantic Canada, making their second visit to Halifax (Kjipuktuk) in **March 2024**. Halifax will host

a revered lineup of JUNO Week events from March 21-24, 2024. The 53rd Annual JUNO Awards will broadcast



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live on CBC from Scotiabank Centre on Sunday, March 24, 2024.

The JUNO Awards are being held in Nova Scotia's capital for the first time since 2006. The festivities return with the support of the Province of Nova Scotia, Halifax Regional Municipality, and the 2024 Host Committee. For first-access to JUNO Awards Broadcast tickets, information and updates, sign up [here](#).

UPCOMING APRIL AND MAY MEETINGS

Audit and Finance Standing Committee

Wednesday, April 19 at 10 a.m.

Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee

Thursday, April 20 at 10 a.m.

Active Transportation Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 20 at 4:30 p.m.

Regional Council:

Tuesday, April 25th at 10 a.m.

Heritage Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 26 at 3 p.m.

Transportation Standing Committee

Thursday, April 27 at 1 p.m.

Board of Police Commissioners

Wednesday, May 3 at 12:30 p.m.

Regional Council

Tuesday, May 9 at 10 a.m.

Please confirm dates and times on our [municipal website](#) as they are subject to change.

UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS

April 2023

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- Daffodil Month (Daffodil Day is on April 27)
- [Sikh Heritage Month](#)
- [Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month](#)
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- National Poetry Month
- **April 22-** Earth Day
- **April 26-**Administrative Professionals' Day
- **April 27-** Daffodil Day ([Canadian Cancer Society](#))
- **April 28-** [National Day of Mourning](#)
(commemorates workers who have been killed, injured, or suffered illness due to workplace related hazards and incidents).

May 2023

- Asian Heritage Month
- **May 1-** Ramadan Ends
- **May 1-7**
[Mental Health Week](#)
[National Youth Week](#) (Links to Halifax website with a schedule of events for the week of May 1, 2023)
- Safety & Health Week
- **May 5 -** [National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls \(MMIWG\)](#)

E-NEWSLETTER/SUBSCRIBE

I send monthly e-newsletters to community members. If you'd like to keep up to date with my Councillor news, please get in touch with my Council Constituency Coordinator, Ken Benoit at: 902.490.7184 or email: benoitk@halifax.ca.