

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER

Lower Sackville



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SUMMER 2023



GREETINGS, FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS:

This has been a very rough 12 months. We have been through Hurricane Fiona, the wildfire in May, and in July we had the worst flood in recent history. As families, and as a community, this has been hard on all of us.

Fortunately, we also have family, friends, and a strong sense of community. That is one of the great things about Lower Sackville. I have heard many people, who are new to the area talk about the sense of community that they feel here.

We also have a challenge with homelessness. This isn't limited to Lower Sackville - this seems to be happening across the entire developed world. We are dealing with it in a different way than other parts of HRM, and we are seeing positive results.

HRM is updating the Regional Plan and the Suburban Plan. These documents define what will be developed in our community, and there are some public consultation sessions coming up. I would like your help so that those who live in our community have a strong say in the type of development that we will see here in the future. This will set the character of Lower Sackville.

One effect of the increased development in our community is the impact on First Lake. Over the past 30 years the Kinsmen Beach has been closed more often than it has been open due to a high E. Coli

count. I wanted to fix this. We tested the lake and found the source of the E. Coli problem. We are having a public information session, at the end of August, to share more information about this.

There is more to the past year than what we have seen with these natural disasters and other challenges.

Each year I meet with the HRM Public Works department. They take care of streets and sidewalks. We talk about what I would like to see in the budget for the upcoming year. I would like your feedback on this list of items.

You can find more information about each of these items inside this newsletter.

Once we get past the challenges of the flood, I do hope that you have a wonderful summer and fall.

Please remember that you can always get in touch with me via e-mail at paul.russell@halifax.ca or by phone at 902-240-0441, and you can see my calendar and set up an appointment on my website: paulrussell.ca.

I look forward to seeing you again.

Paul

HALIFAX



DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL - SUMMER 2023

FIONA...FIRE...AND A FLOOD

This has been a very difficult year for many of us. We had weakened systems from Fiona; most of us knew someone that was affected by the wildfire; and we have recently had a one-in-a-hundred-year flood that affected nearly everyone in our community.

We have learned from each of these, and we are making changes to our emergency management protocols.

Hurricane Fiona damaged some of our infrastructure, and the flood had a major impact on it. With the next hurricane season looming, we can expect more damage and we can expect that it will take more time to repair.

As of this writing, three streets are still closed in Lower Sackville. Repairs for these streets are moving through the procurement process, and they are the highest priority. I don't have a timeframe for when they will be reopened, but the expectation is that it will be this construction season.

In the meantime, please stay off the closed areas of the streets! They are not safe.

The weather will become more and more severe as time goes on. Please be prepared and have a 72 hour kit ready. This concept is new to us, but other areas have been through extreme weather so we can learn from them. Visit halifax.ca/emergency-preparedness to learn more and help you prepare your own kit.

At the very least it should have - for each person:

- 3 days of clothing
- 3 days of water (4 litres)
- 3 days of non-perishable food and a can opener
- medications and medical supplies
- a first aid kit
- critical papers
- battery powered flashlight and radio, and spare batteries
- toiletries and garbage bags
- cash in smaller bills

Please also sign up at halifax.ca/hfxalert to receive urgent notifications.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN LOWER SACKVILLE

Housing and homelessness are two huge concerns, and they seem to be affecting the entire developed world.

Right now, we have no apartments available in Lower Sackville, although some are being built. The past few years have impacted how fast these apartments can be built, however the population is growing faster than we can build places for people to live.

We (HRM) are working on streamlining some of our processes. An example of this would be allowing some developers, who are known to have good standards and practices, to receive approvals faster.

We (the community) do need to recognize that new buildings come with mortgages, and so rents in a new building may not be "affordable". We will see affordable rents in older buildings or those that participate in a government supported program.

When considering homelessness, we have a tenting encampment at the ball field on Cobequid Road and the shelter on Metropolitan Ave.

We (HRM) are working with Beacon House (who employs a social worker in the role of a housing support worker) and the RCMP in a collaborative manner to see how we can move those who have unstable housing or with no housing forward, and get them into appropriate and sustainable housing. This is a very successful model and is different from what is happening elsewhere.

This is a very complex issue, and we appreciate your patience and your support as we work through it.

There is much more information about this on my website at: paulrussell.ca/housing.

One part of the housing solution is to get more of the right type of housing. To help get this right, and to help make sure that Lower Sackville residents have a say in what is built in Lower Sackville, please have a look at the Regional Plan and Suburban Plan information.



DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL - SUMMER 2023

REGIONAL PLAN AND SUBURBAN PLAN

The Regional Plan is a document that HRM uses to define upcoming land use around the municipality. It talks about building forms and heights, how many units can go on a property, what rules govern residential, commercial, and industrial properties, the transit and water service boundaries, and much more.

The Suburban Plan is a subset of the Regional Plan that indicates what can happen outside the Regional Centre (the Halifax peninsula, and Dartmouth inside the Circumferential Highway).

Both of these documents are up for review. The Regional Plan is being reviewed and updated now, and the Suburban Plan is on hold for another year or two.

One of the underlying concepts in the proposed Regional Plan changes is that density has to be increased, especially for residential areas. This is because of the rapid population growth. Increased density generally means that buildings will be taller and we would be getting rid of P-1 and P-2 zones.

I need to know if you want increased density in Sackville so that I can represent you properly. To see more about these documents please visit shapeyourcity.ca/regional-plan.

There are also two public sessions where you can discuss the Regional Plan with HRM Planning staff:

Regional Plan PopUp

Saturday, September 9, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Farmers Market - Acadia Hall (650 Sackville Drive)

Regional Plan Open House

Tuesday, September 19, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Acadia Hall (650 Sackville Drive)



FIRST LAKE AND E. COLI

First Lake has had a water quality and E. Coli problem for years. I've written about it at paulrussell.ca/first-lake-water-quality.

In 2021 we did some testing and figured out *where* the problem was, but we didn't know the source of it.

In 2022 we used those results and contracted CBCL to do more testing to identify the source - pet, waterfowl, wildlife, or human.

What CBCL found was that the vast majority of E. Coli going in to First Lake is human. There is a link to this report in the website above.

We (HRM and Halifax Water) want to share the information with you and answer any questions that you may have.

A public information session is coming up where HRM environment staff and Halifax Water staff will be on hand to provide information on the tests, the results, and what will be done from here.

Public Information Session

Tuesday, August 29, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Sackville Arena (91 First Lake Drive)

My goal is to improve the health of First Lake so that we can enjoy the Kinsmen Beach, and the rest of the lake, without concern. Ultimately, I hope to see lifeguards back at First Lake.

With this testing we have taken some major steps forward to get there.

Please come to these sessions to find out more and share your thoughts.



DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL - SUMMER 2023

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Provincial Government Services	211
Municipal Contact Centre	311
Directory Assistance	411
Provincial Road Conditions	511
Phone Repair Service	611
Public Health Inquiries	811
Emergency	911
Paul Russell, District 15 Councillor	902-240-0441
Victoria Palmetier, Constituency Coordinator	902-490-2012
Councillors' Office	902-490-4050
Mayor's Office	902-490-4010
MLA Steve Craig	902-864-6271
MP Darrell Samson	902-861-2311
RCMP, Sackville Detachment	902-244-7208
Police, Non-Emergency	902-490-5020
Fire, Non-Emergency	902-490-5530
Halifax Water	902-420-9287
Sackville Sports Stadium	902-869-4141
Kids Help Phone	902-668-6868
Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team	888-429-8167
Victims of Human Trafficking Helpline	833-900-1010
Red Cross Home Equipment Loan	902-423-3680
Poison Control	800-565-8161
NS Legal Aid	902-420-7921
Access Nova Scotia	902-424-5200
NS Occupational Health & Safety	800-952-2687
NS Power	902-428-6230
NS Power Outage Line	877-428-6004
NS Property Valuation Services Corporation	800-380-7775

BUDGET PREPARATION

Each year I meet with the HRM Public Works department (they maintain our streets and sidewalks) to identify the priorities for Lower Sackville in the upcoming budget year.

Items on this list came from discussions with you while canvassing and since having been elected, and also seeing what else needed to be done.

The initial lists of topics are below. Please review this and let me know if you would like additional items.

- Sidewalks on:
 - o Old Beaver Bank Road
 - o Stokil Drive (between the schools)
 - o Riverside Drive (to narrow the street)
 - o Cobequid Road (between Glendale and Memory Lane, on the other side of the road)
- Advance Left Turns off Glendale at Riverside
- Various streets being resurfaced
- Traffic Calming using speed displays not speed humps

Although these are what I see as important, there may not be capacity for them in the upcoming budget year.

If you would like to discuss these priorities, or anything else, please e-mail me at paul.russell@halifax.ca or call me at 902-240-0441. You can also visit my website at paulrussell.ca and set up a time for us to meet.

I want to make sure that I represent you properly, and this means that I need to hear from you.

Please get in touch.



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.