

A Community Christmas Carol Sing-along, our New Community Centre Official Opening, and a Request for Action and Assistance

By Councillor Tim Outhit  
District 16, Bedford – Wentworth

I am pleased to announce that the Community Christmas Carol Sing-along will be held again this year in front of the Christmas tree in DeWolf Park. Bring your family, friends, and neighbours and join in the singing, or just listen and enjoy hot chocolate. We will gather on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm and will be led by CPA music teacher, Nathan Beeler. There may also be a few other entertainment surprises!

On Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm we will officially open the new Bedford-Hammonds Plains Community Centre located at 202 Innovation Dr. (next to the new CPA High School and our all-weather sports field). Please join us for a tour, celebration, and some live entertainment in new “cafetorium” and upgraded performing arts stage.

You may have read or heard in the media that the long expected Mainland Halifax North-Bedford Corridor Transportation & Wastewater Servicing Strategy was presented to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, I felt I had to publicly reject some of the findings and recommendations of the Transportation portion of the Strategy. I do not believe that the Bedford Hwy within Bedford-Wentworth or Birch Cove-Rockingham is capable of handling the increased traffic from previously approved growth, let alone the several proposed developments. Growth and development are positive, when prepared for and done properly.

The report recommends that the proposed widening of Bayers Rd and a potential and eventual expansion of a transit corridor in Hammonds Plains is sufficient. I do not. I believe that the Bedford Hwy needs improvements in Bedford-Wentworth and at the Fairview Overpass. We must fund and implement long needed and rumoured additional public transportation in our community and surrounding communities. The Strategy also references the need for the proposed Highway 113 (parallel to the Hammonds Plains Rd), and the long promised Rocky Lake Dr. to Burnside Connector. Both of these projects are provincial and not within the

control of HRM. I believe that the Burnside Connector will be completed within a few years and will be some help with the existing traffic congestion on the Dartmouth Rd., the lower portion of the Hammonds Plains Rd. and also Magazine Hill. However, I am skeptical whether the 113 will be built within the next 10-15 years or at all. On the positive side, the Strategy did include comments on the potential value and benefits of commuter rail to our community and HRM.

Over the past several years in Bedford-Wentworth we have leveraged our growth to receive long overdue sports, recreation, and performing arts facilities. I believe we must do this again in order to receive the transportation improvements long overdue, to address our current needs and projected growth. In Bedford West and South, we required improvements such as the widening of the Hammonds Plains Rd and the building of the Larry Uteck Interchange prior to homes being occupied and some projects being undertaken. Plus, the developer made significant contribution to the costs through what are known as Capital Cost Charges! This is my vision for other areas of Bedford-Wentworth. If we cannot attain this proactive planning approach, with timelines, milestones and triggers for improvements to be linked to our growth, then I am concerned that we might have to consider delaying, reducing, or rejecting some of the proposed development for our community.

For these reasons, I will ask Regional Council to delay several projects until such time as we re-confirm that we are still a “growth area” in the Revised Regional Plan and determine what new infrastructure we can negotiate. We need to see a revised and reduced Bedford Waterfront Vision brought forward, have the Commuter Rail Study completed, and pass the proposed legislation in which developers are required to help fund our traffic and public transportation needs (as we somewhat saw in Bedford South and West). My motion recommending this approach has been approved at the committee level, but will need to be approved by Regional Council in early December. I need your help and guidance. Please contact me at [outhitt@halifax.ca](mailto:outhitt@halifax.ca) to share your support or to provide alternate suggestions. The Corridor Strategy document can be accessed at <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCcped/131114cpedAgenda.html>.

