



**COUNCILLOR SHAWN CLEARY**  
DISTRICT 9 ONLINE NEWS  
HALIFAX WEST ARMDALE

WELCOME FEBRUARY!

February is African Heritage month and, traditionally, the month to celebrate “love” on February 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentine’s Day. February 19<sup>th</sup> is also [Heritage Day](#). This year’s honoree is [William Hall](#).

I encourage you to look into your heritage and that of your local community. You may be surprised at what you discover. For example, did you know that Westmount Subdivision streets are named after local residents who served in World War II such as [Edward Francis Arab](#), the 2021 Heritage Day honoree? Or that Saunders Park, located in this area, was the [first Halifax municipal airport](#) until 1941. What interesting facts can you discover about your family/community? Check out the recently approved [Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan](#).

If you have questions about a municipal program or service, contact me at [Shawn.Cleary@halifax.ca](mailto:Shawn.Cleary@halifax.ca) or call 902.579.6746.

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## COUNCILLOR SHAWN CLEARY

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### FEBRUARY MEETINGS

Regional Council, Budget Committee, Halifax & West Community Council and Regional Centre Community Council meetings will be held on the following dates:

#### Budget Committee:

Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.  
Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.

#### Regional Council:

Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.  
Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

#### Halifax & West Community Council:

Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

#### Regional Centre Community Council:

Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Please check our [website](#) to confirm dates and times as the meeting schedule is subject to change.

### DID YOU KNOW....

February is [African Heritage Month](#).

February 2<sup>nd</sup> is [World Wetlands Day](#)

February 2<sup>nd</sup> is [Ground Hog Day](#)

February 4<sup>th</sup> is [World Cancer Day](#)

February 10<sup>th</sup> is [Chinese New Year](#)

February 11<sup>th</sup> is [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#)

February 14<sup>th</sup> is [Valentine's Day](#)

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February 15<sup>th</sup> is [National Flag Day of Canada](#)

February 19<sup>th</sup> is [Nova Scotia Heritage Day](#)

February 21<sup>st</sup> is [International Mother Language Day](#)

February 24<sup>th</sup> is [Pink Shirt Day](#)

February 29<sup>th</sup> is [Leap Day](#)

### AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH



This year's [African Heritage Month](#) provincial theme, *Our Smiles, Our*

*Joy, Our Resilience as African Nova Scotians*, outlines the spirit of perseverance that people of African descent have demonstrated over the centuries. It can be said that smiles can tell a story, they can share joy and resilience. This African Heritage Month, celebrate the heritage, culture and the incredible spirit to overcome. The theme also aligns with the final year of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD) 2015-2024.

Nova Scotia has 52 historic African Nova Scotian communities with a long, deep and complex history dating back over 200 years. African Heritage Month provides us with another opportunity to celebrate our culture, legacy, achievements and contributions past and present. For more information about African History Month, please contact the [Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia](#): Phone: (902) 434-6223. Email: [contact@bccns.com](mailto:contact@bccns.com)

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### YOUR VOICE MATTERS

#### HAVE YOUR SAY

Your voice matters.

**Participate in the  
2024-2025 Budget.**

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The Halifax Regional Municipality is advising residents of the following key dates as part of the 2024/25 Municipal Budget process. On Wednesday,

January 31<sup>st</sup>, the municipal business units commenced their presentations on proposed budgets and business plans for the 2024/25 fiscal year. A copy of each presentation will be available on [halifax.ca/city-hall](http://halifax.ca/city-hall) before the meeting. Below are the scheduled presentation dates for each business unit:

**Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Contingency: Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>)  
Halifax Public Libraries

**Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>)  
Halifax Regional Police; RCMP

**Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>)  
Public Works

**Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>)  
Planning & Development

**Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>)  
Parks & Recreation

**Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Friday, March 1)

Halifax Transit

**Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>** (Contingency: Wednesday, March 6)  
Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

**Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>** (Contingency: Friday, March (TBD))  
Community Safety; Fiscal

**Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Contingency: Wednesday, April 3)  
Budget Adjustment List (BAL) Review. The BAL includes all additional items that business units have presented beyond their proposed budgets, including add-ons ("overs") and subtractions ("unders"). The Budget Committee will review all items on the BAL.

**Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>** (Contingency: Tuesday, April 30)  
Budget Approval. Regional Council reviews and approves the 2024/25 Budget and Business Plan and the 2024/25 Capital Budget

During each meeting, time will be set aside for the public to provide insight and comments. For residents to be added to the speakers list, pre-registration will be available until 4:30 p.m. the business day prior to the meeting. More information will be available on [halifax.ca/city-hall](http://halifax.ca/city-hall) before the meeting.

Residents will also be able to virtually participate any in-person meetings. Residents who wish to speak through the virtual option must still pre-register.

For more information on the budget process, visit [halifax.ca/budget](http://halifax.ca/budget).

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### 2024/25 BUDGET UPDATE



On January 24<sup>th</sup>, municipal staff returned to the Budget Committee with changes to the proposed 2024/25 budget that will lower the residential tax burden from 9.7 per cent to 8.9 per cent.

The proposed increase includes a residential municipal tax rate increase of 2.0 per cent. This amounts to approximately \$205 annual tax increase for the average residents.

The municipality is facing ongoing inflationary pressures and population growth, all causing significant cost increases in the 2024/25 Municipal Budget. This tax bill increase would allow all municipal services, projects and initiatives to continue as planned and budgeted for in past years.

Any reduction below 8.9 per cent may mean a reduction or loss in municipal services, or the delay of municipal projects and initiatives. Reminder, the 8.9 per cent is a starting point for further budget discussions.

### PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS



The Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) collects and analyzes sales and financial data to determine property values for each property in Nova Scotia. The [Property Assessment Notice](#) you receive each January shows the estimated value of your property one year ago, on January 1<sup>st</sup>, based on market sales and financial data. It also reflects the characteristics and physical state of your property on December 1<sup>st</sup>, one month before your Property Assessment Notice is mailed.

2024 property assessments are based on sales and financial data and reflect a market value as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and the physical state of properties as of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, including new



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construction, renovations, demolitions, and impacts from natural disasters.

This year's rate for the provincial government's [Capped Assessment Program](#) (CAP) is 3.2 per cent. The CAP rate reflects the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Nova Scotia as confirmed by the Province. The CAP limits the annual increase in taxable assessment for eligible residential properties to no more than the CPI rate for the year. About 68 per cent of residential assessments, 415,576 property accounts, qualify for CAP for 2024.

PVSC mailed over 645,000 Property Assessment Notices to Nova Scotia property owners on January 9, 2024.

Property owners can view detailed information on their assessment by accessing their "[My Property Report](#)" on the Property Valuation Services Corporation website. Use your Assessment Account Number and PIN access number to see your information. To obtain a PIN number, phone 1.800.380.7775.

Assessors are available to discuss assessments and answer questions by phone (1-800-380-7775) or email ([inquiry@pvsc.ca](mailto:inquiry@pvsc.ca)). For more information, [click here](#).

What do I do with my assessment notice?  
It is not necessary to do anything with it if you agree with the assessed value. If, however, you believe the assessed value is not a reasonable estimate then you can [contact the PVSC](#) at 1.800.380.7775 or follow the instructions on the back of your Notice of Assessment if you wish to appeal.

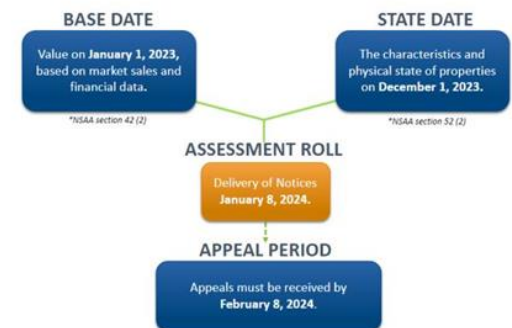
**Assessment Appeals must be received by PVSC before midnight on February 8<sup>th</sup>.** Signed appeal forms can be submitted by email, mail, or fax. For more information about the process and timeline, [click here](#).

### 2024 IMPORTANT DATES

The Nova Scotia Assessment Act (NSAA) requires that properties be assessed at market value.

The 2024 Assessment Roll reflects market value as of January 1, 2023, based on sales and financial data.

The assessments also consider the physical state of properties as of December 1, 2023, including new construction, renovations, demolitions, and impacts from natural disasters.



Dec 11, 2023: The 2024 Assessment Roll was sent to Nova Scotia's 49 municipalities.

Jan 8, 2024: PVSC mailed 647,470 property assessment notices to Nova Scotia property owners.

Feb 8, 2024: Assessment appeals must be received by midnight on February 8, 2024. Signed appeal forms can be submitted by email, mail, or fax. For email, the appeal form must be provided as an attachment (scanned copy or photo).

### HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND

The Halifax region is experiencing an urgent housing shortage.

High interest rates, rapid population growth and supply shortages have contributed to this lack of housing.



As part of the [Housing Accelerator Fund](#), the municipality is collaborating with partners and other levels of government in a national effort to support housing. The municipality is proposing



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updates to planning policies to enable more density and flexible housing types in residential areas. Public feedback on the proposed changes can be provided until February 16<sup>th</sup>.

To learn more about the Housing Accelerator Fund and the proposed amendments, click [here](#).

### ICE THICKNESS TESTING DISCONTINUED



The Halifax Regional Municipality is advising residents that it will no longer conduct the [ice thickness testing](#)

[program](#).

Over the last number of years, there has been a decline in the number of days available for skating. Based on these changed climate patterns, including rapidly fluctuating temperatures, ice thickness testing is no longer feasible.

We realize that some residents may wish to continue skating on lakes, and there may occasionally be times when it is safe to do so.

Residents are asked to take safety precautions for themselves and their families by avoiding any further recreation activities on frozen lakes and ponds, including walking, snowmobiling, and skating.

Residents are reminded that the Canadian Red Cross recommends that ice be at least 15 cm thick

for individual skating, and at least 20 cm thick for group skating. Extreme caution is advised in areas where streams flow into and out of lakes. It is also important to note that ice conditions may vary over the entire surface of lakes and are subject to change with weather conditions. See a complete list of [guidelines](#) from the Canadian Red Cross regarding ice safety. For more information, click [here](#).

### CIRCUS CIRCLE PROGRAM



[Circus Circle](#) is Halifax Circus's outreach program for youth in difficulty. Circus Circle has been operating non-stop for over a decade, four times a week in 3 different locations so youth can more easily access the programs. There's no cost to the youth so there are no barriers for them to attend.

Circus Circle assists troubled youth better their lives through the discipline and self-confidence that come with developing and mastering circus skills such as juggling, unicycling and balance work, aerials, acrobatics and more. The teachers share their joy of performing and help youth learn in a safe and supportive environment.

Circus Circle is based on the Cirque du Monde, the very successful circus outreach programs of the Cirque du Soleil. Circus Circle was developed by Mike Hirschbach who worked for the Cirque for several years as a performer, and then as a Trainer

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of Trainers for Cirque du Monde in Canada, the U.S. and Africa.

At a December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 ceremony in Ottawa, ON, Governor General Mary Simon presented Mr. Hirschbach with the Meritorious Service Medal (Civil Division) for starting the Circus Circle outreach program in 2005: a safe space for youth affected by homelessness, street life, addiction and mental illness. Unique to Atlantic Canada, it allows participants to experience positive and creative recreation, learn new skills and build self-confidence, all while establishing meaningful connections and increasing resilience. Congratulations Mike!

Most youth will take the life skills they learn through social circus – discipline, trust, renewed confidence and contact with others – and apply them in their chosen directions. This may be a return to school, or contact with estranged families, or a commitment to social change and to helping others in similar circumstances.

For more information, contact:  
[info@halifaxcircus.com](mailto:info@halifaxcircus.com) or call 902-830-3123.

### 2022-2023 HALIFACT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Regional Council has received the annual report for [HalifACT: Acting on Climate Together](#). This is the municipality's long-term climate action plan to reduce emissions and enhance resiliency to a changing climate, while also promoting social equity and economic development. It was approved unanimously by Regional Council on June 23, 2020,

and is one of Canada's most ambitious climate action plans.

HalifACT contains three themes of action:

1. Decarbonized and Resilient Infrastructure
2. Prepared and Connected Communities
3. Governance and Leadership

Within these, there are 17 subareas and 46 actions that are necessary to meet the targets established in the plan. HalifACT addresses the municipality's climate emergency declaration put forward by Regional Council in January 2019 and aligns with the 1.5°C pathway recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Acting quickly and effectively to address the climate emergency is complex and cannot be accomplished in isolation. HalifACT is a community plan, requiring not only Halifax Regional Municipality, but all major stakeholders and residents of the Halifax Region to collaborate and take collective action.

For more information, and to view the annual report, read the [staff report](#).

### POLICE CADET RECRUITMENT



Halifax Regional Police (HRP) is launching a recruitment campaign for its 2025 cadet class,

which follows on the success of the last three HRP Police Science Program classes. The next HRP





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Police Science Program is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2024. Applications close on February 28<sup>th</sup>.

*"We encourage candidates who represent the diversity of our community, who are compassionate and want to make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve to apply,"* says Halifax Regional Police Chief Don MacLean.

The program will be based at the Halifax Regional Police Training School in Dartmouth, which is a recognized private career college by the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education. Successful applicants will become cadets in a 38-week police training program that prepares cadets to become police officers with HRP.

HRP recruitment ambassadors and team members will be available to provide information and answer questions through in-person and virtual information sessions, via email, and through HRP's recruitment social media channels, @JoinHRP on X and on Instagram. For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

## CULTURE AND HERITAGE PRIORITIES PLAN

Regional Council has endorsed the proposed direction in the [Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan](#).

Sharing our Stories: Halifax Regional Municipality's Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan is a comprehensive strategy aimed at promoting and preserving the diverse, cultural heritage of the Halifax region. The plan outlines a set of 44 actions that will help to build a more inclusive, diverse, and

vibrant cultural community through focused investment, program development, service delivery and ongoing community engagement. The plan's actions will provide high-level guidance in budget and business planning across municipal departments in the areas of culture and heritage programming and will directly inform the 2023 review of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy.

One of the main objectives of the plan is to expand and improve the representation of equity-seeking groups across the municipality, such as Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, Acadian, 2SLGBTQ+, persons with disabilities, and immigrants and newcomers. Engagement with these communities led directly to the development of actions that will enhance the municipality's approach to diversity and inclusion throughout its programs and services. Click [here](#) for more information. [↗](#)

## CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA JOB FAIR

You're invited to attend  
**CANS Construction Job Fair**  
**February 8, 2024**

We welcome you to attend our construction industry job fair where we will connect job seekers and construction employers. Visit over 30+ employer booths to learn about their employment offerings. Our industry is thriving and employees are in great demand. Many of our employers offer competitive salaries, benefits packages, and so much more! **Build your career while helping to build our province!**

**Job Categories:**

- Office positions (including administrative, HR, accounting, legal roles and more)
- Trade positions
- Site positions
- Safety positions
- Design / engineering / architecture positions
- Building maintenance positions
- Transportation positions
- Entry-level positions
- Work placements and co-op positions

**What to Expect:**

- Casual dress code and a fun networking environment
- Coffee and snacks for all attendees
- 30+ exhibitor booths seeking full time, co-op and work placement employees
- Clear signage to help you choose where to spend your time
- An pre-event email to help you prepare and navigate the trade show floor

For a full list of potential job opportunities, [click here](#).

**Job Fair Details**  
February 8, 2024  
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Halifax Forum

**REGISTER NOW**  
[Click here to RSVP](#)

**CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA**  
Helping you build our province!

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### PARKS & RECREATION SUMMER STAFF RECRUITMENT

The Halifax Regional Municipality has launched recruitment efforts for casual Parks & Recreation summer staff positions.

A diverse range of positions are available in aquatics, inclusion and recreation at municipal facilities across the region. This opportunity is ideal for students and young adults looking to spend their summer working outdoors, supporting children's recreation and contributing to their local community. Hourly wages range from \$17 to \$20. The municipality will also be visiting job fairs, schools and community events throughout the winter to support recruitment. A full list of dates and locations can be found [here](#). Applications are now available, click [here](#).

### SNOW REMOVAL STANDARDS

Crews begin their work before the winter weather event even begins. They do so by applying salt or brine, to streets and sidewalks across the region. Snow clearing efforts begin once the snow has begun to accumulate.

Unfortunately, all streets cannot be plowed at the same time. However, if your street is not plowed within the allotted times shown in the table below, please call 311. For more details on snow clearing standards follow this [link](#).



### Roads and On-street Bikeways



Priority Level	Type of Road	Service Standard for clearing (starts after end of event)	Minimum Accumulation	What surface should look like
1	Main arterial roads, emergency routes, Halifax Transit routes and roads with steep grades	12 hours	2 cm of snowfall	Bare
2	Residential streets, gravel roads and private lanes	24 hours	10 cm of snowfall	Snow covered but passable



### Sidewalks and Protected Bike Lanes



Priority Level	Priority Level Location/type of sidewalk or bike lane	Service Standard for clearing (starts after end of event)	Minimum Accumulation	What surface should look like
1	Downtown Halifax and Dartmouth	12 hours	5 cm of snowfall	Bare
1	Main arterials and school drop-off zones	12 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Bare
2	Halifax Transit routes	18 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Mostly bare with salt for traction
3	Residential streets and walkways	36 hours	15 cm of snowfall	Mostly bare with salt for traction



**When to contact 311**  
Once the service timelines have expired, you can report any snow or ice removal issues on municipal streets, sidewalks or bike lanes by emailing [ContactUs@311.halifax.ca](mailto:ContactUs@311.halifax.ca) or by calling 311.

Please note, clearing timelines may be exceeded during exceptional weather conditions.

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I am a member of Halifax Regional Council, Halifax and West Community Council, Regional Centre



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Community Council and the following boards and committees:

Transportation Standing Committee

Community Design Advisory Committee

Audit and Finance Standing Committee

Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

Halifax Climate Investment, Innovation, and Impact Fund Committee

Investment Policy Advisory Committee

Chain of Lakes Trails Association

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

#### Land Acknowledgement

The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The municipality acknowledges the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People.

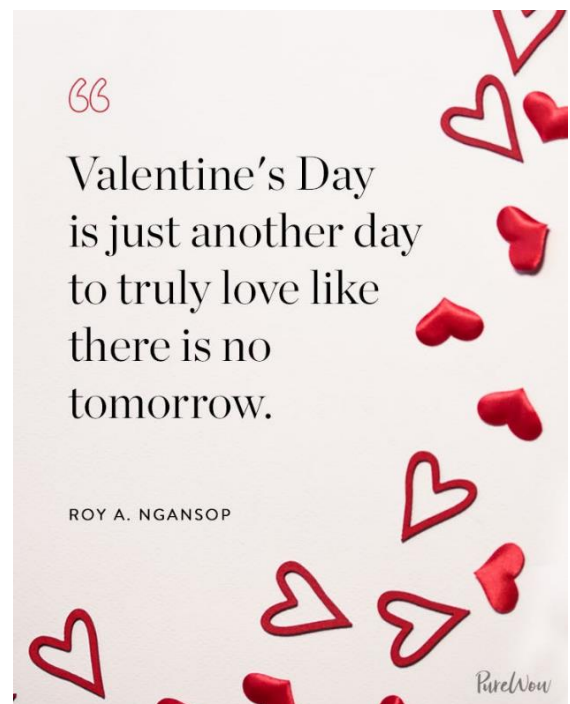
Halifax is committed to strengthening its relationship with Indigenous communities and honouring the significant contributions of Indigenous peoples. Another way the municipality has demonstrated this is by formalizing the official Land Acknowledgement:

*"The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The municipality acknowledges the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People."*

Historically, a Land Acknowledgment is a traditional practice shared amongst Indigenous groups to recognize the Indigenous land and

territory they are visiting. Making a respectful Land Acknowledgement now, remains a way to express gratitude and respect to Indigenous peoples for being stewards of the land we live and work on. It is a crucial step in reconciliation.

In Nova Scotia, we are all Treaty People; with that comes roles and responsibilities.



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