



WELCOME MAY!

We got'er done! The 2024/25 municipal operating and capital budgets have been approved with an average tax bill increase of only 6.3% down from the starting point of 15%! Thank you for your input during the budget discussion process, your comments assisted me in making the best decisions on your behalf regarding municipal programs and services.

Now it's time to enjoy the month of May by commemorating Asian Heritage month, taking part in Open City, celebrating our new Poet Laureate, Anna Quon and much more!

To discuss a municipal program or service, please contact me at:
Shawn.Cleary@halifax.ca or 902.579.6746.

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MAY MEETING DATES

Regional Council, Halifax & West Community Council and Regional Centre Community Council meetings will be held on:

Regional Council:

Tuesday, May 7th at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, May 21st at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, May 28th at 10:00 a.m.

Halifax & West Community Council:

Tuesday, May 14th at 6:00 p.m.

Regional Centre Community Council:

Wednesday, May 22nd at 6:00 p.m.

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

DID YOU KNOW...

That May is:

[Asian Heritage Month](#)

[Bladder Cancer Awareness Month](#)

[Brain Tumour Awareness Month](#)

[Celiac Awareness Month](#)

May 2nd is International Harry Potter Day

May 2nd is World Password Day

May 3rd is World Laughter Day

May 4th is International Firefighters Day

May 4th is Star Wars Day

May 5th is Red Dress Day

May 5th is Cinco De Mayo

May 6th is Mental Health Week

May 7th is Teacher Appreciation Day

May 10th is World Lupus Day

May 11th is World Migratory Bird Day

May 11th is World Fair Trade Day

May 12th is International Nurses Day

May 12th is Mother's Day

May 13th is International Hummus Day

May 15th is International Day of Families

May 17th is International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

May 17th is World Hypertension Day

May 17th is Bike to Work Day

May 18th is Global Accessibility Awareness Day

May 18th is International Museum Day

May 19th is World Baking Day

May 19th is World Family Doctor Day

May 20th is Victoria Day

May 20th is World Bee Day

May 21st is International Tea Day

May 21st is World Meditation Day

May 22nd is International Day for Biological Diversity

May 23rd is World Turtle Day

May 25th is Geek Pride Day

May 28th is Amnesty International Day

May 28th is World Blood Cancer Day

May 30th is International Hug Your Cat Day

May 30th is World Multiple Sclerosis Day

May 31st is World No Tobacco Day

2024/25 MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROVED

On Tuesday, April 23rd, Halifax Regional Council approved the 2024/25 municipal budget with a tax rate increase of 6.3%, down from the 15% proposed at the commencement of the budget process.



2024/25 budget at a glance

OPERATING BUDGET \$1.04B

CAPITAL BUDGET \$0.31B

**MUNICIPAL AVERAGE TAX
BILL INCREASE 8.2%**

**TOTAL AVERAGE TAX BILL
INCREASE 6.3%**

**RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE
INCREASE 0.760 TO 0.770**

The average residential tax bill (including provincial contributions and mandatory tax) will increase by 6.3 per cent – or approximately \$214. This is based on the average single-family home assessment value of \$323,300.

The annual municipal budget funds all costs associated with servicing the growing region – including municipal operations, Regional Council-approved priority initiatives and investments to purchase, construct and rehabilitate municipal assets.

The 2024/25 municipal budget includes an operating budget of \$1.04 billion and a capital budget of \$306.5 million. This budget allows the municipality to keep pace with operating demands posed by significant growth,

inflationary pressures and also includes some investments in new or enhanced services. *"It was a challenging budget debate, through which I believe Council managed to support growth, maintain services and meet significant commitments to our communities,"* says Mayor Mike Savage.

The tax bill is the collection of all necessary levies – including the general property taxes, area charges and provincial contributions. For more information on how to read the tax bill, visit [here](#).

Effective the 2024/25 fiscal year, the municipality will no longer be required to collect and remit taxes to the Province of Nova Scotia for Housing and Corrections. Previously, these charges were included in the "provincial rate" section of residents' tax bills. While this change has no effect on the municipality's budget, it will lower the total tax bill – which includes the portion the municipality collects on the province's behalf.

A new [commercial taxation policy](#) came into effect on April 1, 2023, changing the way that commercial property taxes are calculated. Geographical tax boundaries for commercial properties changed from the previous urban, suburban and rural areas to one of five new tax areas, which are listed in [Administrative Order 2022-003-ADM, Respecting Commercial Property Taxation in Certain Areas of the Municipality](#). As well, for each tax area, rates will vary by assessed value of the property, within three tiers of assessment.



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The residential rate and commercial rates for each tier and tax area have been updated on the [municipal website](#).

"Our approach in this budgeting process has been to balance the demand and cost of services, while aligning spending with Regional Council's priorities and being fiscally responsible," says Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer.

Below are select highlights from the 2024/25 municipal budget, grouped by Regional Council-approved priorities from the [Strategic Priorities Plan 2021-25](#).

Communities

- \$2 million for a 24/7 fire station conversion in Hammonds Plains
- Funding for 22 new Halifax Regional Police positions and six new Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers
- \$2.3 million in continued Community Safety programs and new positions
- Funding for 10 new crossing guard positions

Prosperous Economy

- \$7.5 million in budgeted tax relief for non-profit and charitable organizations

Environment

- \$18.6 million for capital projects as part of [HalifACT: Acting on Climate Together](#)

Integrated Mobility

- \$271 million for the Mill Cove Ferry Terminal project

- \$2.4 million for funding of the [Integrated Mobility Plan](#)

For more information on the 2024/25 municipal budget, including all associated budget resources, visit [here](#).

MAY IS ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH



May is [Asian Heritage Month](#). This month

provides an opportunity to learn about the history, traditions, and achievements of Asian communities and to appreciate their significant impact on Canadian society.

There are many ways to celebrate Asian Heritage Month, such as:

- Learning about the diverse cultures and histories of Asian Canadians through books, documentaries, and online resources.
- Attending virtual events, festivals, and exhibitions that showcase Asian Canadian art, music, dance, and food.
- Supporting local Asian Canadian businesses and organizations.
- Engaging in meaningful conversations with friends and family about the importance of diversity and inclusion in Canadian society.

By celebrating Asian Heritage Month, we can deepen our understanding and appreciation of



the rich diversity that makes Canada a unique and vibrant country.

Obtain updates on events taking place across the municipality to celebrate Asian Heritage Month on our [website](#).

RED DRESS DAY – MAY 5TH



Wear red on May 5th in support of the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered

Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

According to the National Inquiry into MMIWG, Indigenous women and girls represented 16% of all female homicides in Canada. Service agencies estimate that of the trafficked or exploited women and girls they served, 51% of were Indigenous.

This day calls on each of us to speak out against the staggering rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ people.

In recent years, red dresses have become a symbolic representation of the more than 1,000 MMIWG across Canada. According to tradition, red is the only colour spirits can see, and is a way of calling the spirits of those missing and murdered back to their loved ones. On May 5th, wear red to not only honour the

voices of these women and girls, but to show your support of survivors, community members and those affected by the intergenerational trauma of this ongoing issue.

To learn more about this important day, visit this [website](#) and see the facts listed below:

- Indigenous women are more likely to report experiencing both physical and sexual maltreatment as a child compared to Indigenous men (14 per cent vs. 5 per cent) and are three times as likely to report being a victim of spousal violence as non-Indigenous women.
- In December 2015 the Government of Canada launched the National Inquiry into MMIWG. Its final report includes 231 individual Calls for Justice directed at governments, institutions, social service providers, industries and all Canadians.
- From 2005 to 2010, the National Native Women's Association's (NWAC) Sisters in Spirit (SIS) Initiative confirmed 582 cases of MMWIG over a span of 20 years. NWAC's research indicates that homicides involving Indigenous women are more likely to go unsolved. Only 53 per cent of homicide cases in the SIS database have been solved, compared to 84 per cent of all homicide cases across the country.
- From 2010 to 2014, NWAC continued to raise awareness and engage with communities through the creation of a



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comprehensive Community Resource Guide with the Evidence to Action projects. NWAC believed the violence against Indigenous women to be much more pervasive than publicly available data would indicate. This was confirmed in 2013, when the RCMP released a report revealing 1,181 cases of MMWIG.

- The majority of MMWIG in the Atlantic region are mothers and under 31 years old.

2024 Volunteer Awards

Each year the Mayor and Regional Council recognize the extraordinary contributions of outstanding individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in our communities. This [annual event](#) puts a spotlight on amazing people who give of their time in our municipality. I am proud to announce the District 9 Volunteer Award recipients:



Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me presenting Pamela Brennan with the 2024 Volunteer Award.



Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me presenting Dave Reid with the 2024 Volunteer Award.



Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me presenting Isiola Ugwu with the 2024 Volunteer Award.



Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me presenting Tia Upshaw with the 2024 Volunteer Award.



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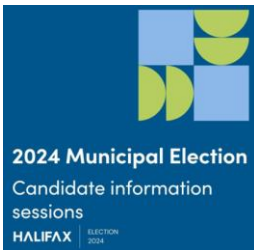
Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me presenting Ming Yao with the 2024 Volunteer Award.



Deputy Mayor Cathy Deagle Gammon and me with the District 9 Volunteer Award recipients for 2024.

Thank you for giving of your time, energy and skills to benefit the greater community. We are fortunate to have you in our district.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION SESSIONS - MUNICIPAL ELECTION



Residents interested in running in the 2024 [Municipal and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial \(CSAP\) Election](#) are invited to attend an upcoming candidate

information session. These sessions are designed to help equip potential candidates with important information and resources about running in the 2024 Municipal and CSAP Election.

May 2024

Registration is not required to attend the [in-person information sessions](#), but is required for the Wednesday, June 5th [virtual session](#) on Zoom. Attendees are encouraged to contact the Election Office in advance to inquire about specific accommodation requests. A closed-captioned recording of the online session will be made available on halifax.ca/election. For more information, click [here](#).

The sessions will take place on the following dates and times:

| Date and time | Location |
|--|--|
| Wednesday, May 1, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Wallace Lucas Community Centre 596 Lucasville Road, Lucasville |
| Monday, May 13, 2024 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. | Halifax Central Library 5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax |
| Wednesday, May 29, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Muquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre 12390 NS-244, Middle Musquodoboit |
| Wednesday, June 5, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Online session (hosted on Zoom) Register by June 4 at 4:30 p.m. |
| Thursday, June 20, 2024 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. | Dartmouth North Community Centre 105 Highfield Park Drive, Dartmouth |
| Wednesday, July 10, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Prospect Road Community Centre 2141 Prospect Road, Hatched Lake |
| Monday, Aug. 12, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Henry G. Bauld Centre 35 Wilfred Jackson Way, Westphal |



HRM 2024 Electoral District Boundary



SIGNAL OPERATIONS CHANGES



Effective Sunday, April 21st, there have been changes to the pedestrian signals at the intersection of Joseph Howe Drive and Highway 102 Exit 0.

Users of the multi-use pathway are now required to press the button to activate the pedestrian signal at any time of the day. When activated, the pedestrian signal will protect pathway users from turning vehicles by keeping the right turn lane on Joseph Howe Drive facing a red signal. The northbound left turn phase onto the on ramp will remain separated from the pedestrian phase.

This change resulted from continuous monitoring of intersection operations since previous signal changes were made. The previous operation involved a red display for right turning vehicles regardless of the presence of pathway users. This had resulted in safety concerns due to non-compliance, other situations of unsafe behaviours by motorists at the intersection, as well as extensive delays for transit and motorists.

We ask that drivers be aware of the changes and watch for pathway users when turning.

Pathway users, remember to press the button to activate the signal when you want to cross.

These changes are aimed at improving safety for everyone. For more information about the Strategic Road Safety Plan and other road safety countermeasures, click [here](#).

ARGYLE STREET – SUMMER ROAD CLOSURE



Halifax Regional Municipality is advising residents that Argyle Street, between Prince and Blowers streets, will be closed to motor vehicle traffic from Monday, April 22nd until Tuesday, November 12th.

Argyle Street will remain fully open to people walking, rolling, and cycling. Access to all stores and restaurants will be maintained. This is a seasonal closure, similar to previous years, and is intended to allow part of downtown to be more accessible for residents and visitors during the warmer months. It does not involve any construction.

OPEN DATA RELEASES THREE NEW DATASETS

Three new datasets have been released on [Open Data](#), as part of an ongoing commitment to provide public access to data



created and managed by the municipality. The new datasets include:

- [Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016](#)
- [Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation 2021](#)
- [Transportation Analysis Zones](#)

The addition of these datasets brings the total number of Open Data datasets to 243.

A wide range of data can be sourced for free through the catalogue, such as transit routes and schedule data, solid waste collection schedules and area rates. New data releases occur several times throughout the year, with the most recent release on [February 15, 2024](#).

The Open Data initiative was launched in early 2014 to help improve resident engagement and enhance transparency on municipal data. The program was formalized by Regional Council later that year through the adoption of [Administrative Order 2014-006-ADM Respecting Open Data](#). For more information on the municipality's Open Data program, and to access all the datasets, click [here](#).

MOBILE LICENCE PLATE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

In April 2024, the municipality launched a Mobile Licence Plate Recognition program to enhance parking enforcement by introducing new photo technology to compliance vehicles.

Mobile Licence Plate Recognition (LPR) will enable automatic licence plate recognition to efficiently address parking violations. Camera-mounted compliance vehicles will identify parking status of parked vehicles. Information collected by the LPR vehicles can alert Compliance Officers of parking violations.

Learn about the Mobile Licence Plate Recognition program [here](#).

ANNA QUON - NEW MUNICIPAL POET LAUREATE



Halifax Regional Municipality's ninth poet laureate.

Halifax Regional Municipality is pleased to announce that Anna Quon has been named the

The municipal poet laureate is a resident poet, storyteller or spoken word artist who has achieved excellence among their peers and whose work demonstrates connection with and relevance to the municipality's citizens. They act as an ambassador and advocate for literacy, literature and the arts – which reflects the vitality of our community through appearances and readings of poetry at a number of civic events and municipal activities.

Anna will serve as the municipality's poet laureate until 2027.

"The poet laureate makes a valuable contribution to poetry, language and the arts for



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our municipality” says Mayor Mike Savage. *“Through the power of spoken word as an art form, their words connect us and inform us.”*

Anna’s poetry chapbook, *Body Parts*, was published in 2021 by Gaspereau Press and her latest novel, *Where the Silver River Ends*, was released by Invisible Publishing in 2022. This concluded a trilogy with her first two novels – *Low* (2013) and *Migration Songs* (2009). After winning Launch, a film pitch competition for underrepresented filmmakers, in November 2022, Anna created her first short documentary film, *Me and My Teeth* which premiered at the Lunenburg Doc Fest in September 2023. In addition to writing, Anna facilitates a bi-weekly writers' group for the Healthy Minds Cooperative and works part-time as a contract creativity facilitator for the Canadian Mental Health Association Halifax-Dartmouth Branch.

“I’m honoured and a little bowled over to have been chosen for this position,” says Quon. “My hope is to take poetry to, and bring poetry back from, some of the places in the municipality we might not usually think of when we think of poetry. I’m grateful that the municipality continues to support the Poet Laureateship, which will grant me a platform to serve, with my words, the residents of this city I love.”

Anna officially assumed the role by presenting a piece to Regional Council.

For more information, including previous poets laureate, click [here](#).

OPEN CITY – MAY



Mark your calendars – Open City Halifax returns on Saturday, May 11th! This annual event celebrating entrepreneurs and the small businesses that our make communities vibrant and welcoming, is happening across 5 districts this year: Downtown Dartmouth, Downtown Halifax, North End, Quinpool Road, and Spring Garden Area.

For more information, click [here](#) and follow on Open City Halifax to keep up to date.

[#DowntownHalifax](#) [#OpenCityHFX](#).





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I am a member of Halifax Regional Council, Halifax & West Community Council, Regional Centre Community Council and the following boards & committees:

- Transportation Standing Committee
- Community Design Advisory Committee
- Audit and Finance Standing Committee
- Investment Policy Advisory Committee
- Chain of Lakes Trails Association

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY'S 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 an important step in reconciliation.

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

