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## Item No. 6

**Budget Committee  
March 19, 2025**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Budget Committee (Standing Committee of the Whole on Budget)

**FROM:** Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** March 12, 2025

**SUBJECT:** 2025/26 Budget Adjustment List for Consideration

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### **ORIGIN**

As per Administrative Order 1 and the Budget and Business Plan consultation schedule presented to Regional Council on November 19, 2024, staff are required to present the draft 2025/26 Business Unit Budget and Business Plans to the Budget Committee for review and discussion prior to consideration by Regional Council.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Over the course of the business plan and budget presentations, there were 25 potential adjustments to the budget identified. These range from significant reductions to the budget, increases for service changes and use of one-time funding. One option (BN023G) is staff identified savings which includes 30 different reductions that Budget Committee can consider.

Budget Committee can make changes to the 2025/26 Budget that will reduce the overall tax increase and/or increase the budget for new or enhanced services.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the 2025/26 Operating Budget, Capital Budget and Four-Year Capital Plan for Regional Council, incorporating any accepted items from the Budget Adjustment List, along with proposed amendments.

### **BACKGROUND**

On February 5, 2025 staff presented the 2025/26 Operating Budget Introduction outlining the fiscal assumptions and overall budget for 2025/26. The presentation outlined that the budgets prepared for the organization have resulted in a 7.6 per cent increase to the average residential tax bill. From February 12<sup>th</sup> to February 26<sup>th</sup> each business unit presented their respective budgets to Budget Committee. During these

presentations, Budget Committee passed motions for adjustments to be considered as part of the Budget Adjustment List (BAL). In total 22 items were added to the BAL with an additional three motions passed by Regional Council. At the Budget Committee meeting on February 26, 2025 the Budget Committee unanimously approved a motion put forward by Mayor Fillmore and seconded by Councillor Purdy that the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment with options for Budget Committee to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery. This report provides options that enable Budget Committee to keep the tax rate flat and also fulfils the obligation to ensure that Budget Committee is informed of impacts on fiscal health, service delivery, and risk.

## **DISCUSSION**

There have been motions passed for 25 adjustments to the 2025/26 Budget. These adjustments in their totality represent an overall reduction for the 2025/26 Budget of over \$26 million:

- 16 are items “budget overs” which would increase the budget by \$8,391,600
- 9 are items “budget unders” which would reduce the budget by \$33,188,800

If the BAL is accepted in its entirety without any other consideration the residential municipal tax rate would fall by 0.005 resulting in the average residential tax bill falling from a 7.6 per cent increase to 4.1%.

Staff have reviewed the options that are included on the BAL and have identified some approaches for consideration. There are also some items presented for information purposes only that offer some deeper cuts and service reductions if Council wishes to consider them.

### **Changes to BAL Items**

Several of the items on the BAL have revised dollar amounts since they were motioned at the BAL:

- BAL\_008 - RCMP Staffing, has been reduced by \$400,000 to \$1,018,700 to reflect the anticipated start of the new positions.
- BAL\_010 (BN021) - Options to accelerate the delivery of heritage conservation districts, has been reduced from \$310,000 to \$228,500 to reflect prorated positions.
- BAL\_025 (BN023E) - Charge insurance companies for fire services, has been reduced from (\$250,000) to \$0 as review has determined it is not feasible to implement.
- BAL\_001 (BN001) - Drop in centre funding and after-hours individualized mobile engagement team, has been reduced from \$1,650,000 to \$0 for the 2025/26 Budget as it can be funded from a reserve.
- BAL\_015 (BN012) - Removal of Armoured F350s and Armoured Rescue Vehicle, has been reduced from \$1,133,000 to \$603,000 to reflect that only the costs of the Armoured Rescue Vehicle as the Armoured F350s have already been acquired and have no budget impacts.

### **Future Budget Considerations**

Future tax increases can be mitigated through service reviews or increased recurring revenues, with the most sustainable approach being ongoing reductions which often require changes to how services are delivered or levels of service. Given the timing of the 2025/26 Budget, further meaningful reductions are not feasible (other than what has already been provided). If Budget Committee seeks long-term cost savings, staff should be given direction before the budget closes, or at the start of the 2025/26 fiscal year in order to have sufficient time to implement proposed service changes for the 2026/27 Budget.

Looking forward to 2026/27, HRM can expect annual new expenditures in the range of \$45-\$60 million. The main factors causing this are:

- Compensation increases from collective agreements and new staff
- Debt servicing and capital renewal funding for an increasing capital budget
- Inflation
- Contractual increases

All the factors above will continue to increase pressure on that budget. Utilizing one-time funding in 2025/26 to keep the tax rate low will add additional pressure for 2026/27 on top of the items above, as those one-time funds will need to be replaced by tax increases. That being said, it is recognized that for residents and businesses in HRM in 2025/26 there is a high level of concern regarding the cost of living and economic uncertainty. Although HRM property taxes are among the most affordable in Canada relative to other cities only 43% of residents feel they are receiving Very Good or Good value for taxes in the 2024 Resident Survey.

From a fiscal health perspective, reserve funding has begun to decline. Total funding for future Strategic Initiative (SI) projects was \$32 million in 2023/24. During the 2024/25 Budget, \$7 million of annual funding for the SI Reserve was removed lowering the reserve contribution to \$25 million. Further reserve funding reductions have been included for consideration on the BAL. If the funding to the SI reserve from the Climate Action Tax is removed, the annual reserve funding will fall to \$19 million. Reserve funding reductions do have an immediate impact on reducing the tax increase in a single year but likely result in increased costs in future years, and increased risk.

**Option 1 – (\$0 change in tax rate) - Use one-time funding and some on-going reductions to hold the tax rate flat and either do not fund any BAL over items, or only fund \$2 million in BAL items.**

This approach would result in reductions of over \$23 million. This would leave Budget Committee with an additional \$2 million which it can use toward “overs” from the BAL, or it can be put toward a tax rate reduction. If the full \$23 million is used to reduce the tax burden, the residential municipal rate for 2025/26 will decline 0.003 from where it is today. The tax bill impact for this scenario is outlined in Table 1:

**Table 1**

Parking Lot Tax Implications	25/26 Rate Impact	25/26 Avg Bill Impact	25/26 Avg Bill Impact	26/27 Avg Bill Impact
Beginning - 7.6% Tax Change	0.792	\$189.00	7.6%	0.0%
Further Staff identified savings	(0.025)	(\$82.00)	-3.3%	2.4%
<b>OVERALL RATE &amp; NET CHANGE</b>	<b>0.767</b>	<b>\$107.00</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

*Percentages may not add due to rounding*

This approach would avoid a tax rate increase for this year, but it would likely mean larger tax increases in 2026/27. As mentioned earlier, using the Central Library Reserve would mean a 1.4 per cent tax increase next year. Out of the additional savings discussed in BN023G, only \$3 million can be counted on long term. Because of that, using these savings would add another 1 per cent tax increase in 2026/27. Altogether, this plan to avoid a tax increase now would mean a 2.4 per cent tax increase in 2026/27, on top of any increases needed to cover inflation, contracts, or service changes to balance the budget.

To achieve no increase on the tax rate without impacting services, the budget needs to be reduced by \$21 million (from the 7.6 per cent proposed budget). To reach this level of reduction, one-time funding will need to be used. One approach to reach this would be to do the following:

- Not approving any “over” items on the BAL and using all “unders” (excluding armoured Vehicle (BAL\_015) and the operating portion of Urban Forestry (BAL\_011))
- Using \$10 million from the Central Library Reserve (BAL\_020 / BN023A)

- Using the operating, capital (BAL\_023.1 to BAL\_023.21) and FTE reductions (BAL\_023.30) outlined in BN023G – a total of \$10,523,000 in savings, \$3,000,000 of which are on-going.

This combination of measures would allow the Budget Committee to balance the budget without a tax rate increase this year, but it's important to be aware of the potential impact on future taxes.

If this option is chosen it will be important to continue efforts to reduce expenditures and reliance on property tax, increase funding from other levels of government and continue discussions to align or change services.

**Option 2 – (\$0.018 change in tax rate) - Use sustainable reductions to reduce the tax rate increase and do not fund any BAL over items**

This Option would apply the sustainable reductions below to reduce the overall tax burden.

- BAL\_018 (BN016) – Freezing Hiring the Proposed Community Safety Positions
- BAL\_022 (BN023C) – Land Lines Review
- BAL\_023.1 (BN023G) – Salt Recoveries
- BAL\_023.2 (BN023G) – Small Part Warranty
- BAL\_023.4 (BN023G) – Payments in Lieu and Tax Agreements
- BAL\_023.5 (BN023G) – P&D Heritage Grants
- BAL\_023.6 (BN023G) – P&D Permit Revenue
- BAL\_023.8 (BN023G) – IT Bell Contract Contingency

**Option 3 (\$0.022 change in tax rate) – Use sustainable reductions to fund some BAL items and maintain proposed tax rate increase**

This Option would apply the sustainable reductions noted in Option 2 but would use the funding to fund some BAL items instead of reducing the tax rate. Using the Options noted above, the following BAL items could be funded:

- BAL\_003 (BN003) – Community Crisis Diversion Pilot Service
- BAL\_008 – RCMP Staffing Request - 14 positions
- BAL\_006 (BN006) – Youth Advocate Program
- BAL\_005 (BN005) – Operate Ten Buses Beyond their Service Life
- BAL\_009 (BN009) – Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) for Transit
- BAL\_001 (BN001) – Drop in Centre Funding and After-hours Individualized Mobile Engagement Team (this will be funded from reserve during 2025/26)

This approach maintains the existing proposed tax increase while incorporating some service enhancements that seemed to have broad support from Council. It also ensures that ongoing reductions are matched with ongoing funding wherever possible, helping to support long-term financial stability and minimize reliance on one-time savings or funds for recurring costs, which will only lead to increased taxes in future years. Table 2 below further illustrates the impact of these changes.

**Table 2**

BAL Number	BN Number	Option Description	25/26 Amount	25/26 Avg Bill Impact
BAL_003	BN003	Community crisis diversion pilot service as outlined in Briefing Note BN003	\$ 463,800	\$ 1.63
BAL_001	BN001	Drop in centre funding and after-hours individualized mobile engagement team as outlined in Briefing Note BN001	\$ -	\$ -
BAL_008	NA	RCMP Staffing request - 14 positions	\$ 1,018,700	\$ 3.58
BAL_006	BN006	Youth Advocate Program as outlined in Briefing Note BN006	\$ 254,500	\$ 0.90
BAL_005	BN005	Operate ten buses beyond their service life as outlined in Briefing Note BN005	\$ 2,137,000	\$ 7.52
BAL_009	BN009	Human Resources Business Partner for Transit	\$ 113,800	\$ 0.40
BAL_018	BN016	Freezing hiring the proposed Training and Exercise Specialist and Community Outreach Coordinator FTE in Community Safety	\$ (220,000)	\$ (0.77)
BAL_022	BN023C	Land Lines Review	\$ (300,000)	\$ (1.06)
BAL_023.1	BN023G	Salt recoveries	\$ (150,000)	\$ (0.53)
BAL_023.2	BN023G	Small part warranty	\$ (150,000)	\$ (0.53)
BAL_023.3	BN023G	Investment Income	\$ (500,000)	\$ (1.76)
BAL_023.4	BN023G	Payment in Lieu and Tax Agreements	\$ (1,000,000)	\$ (3.52)
BAL_023.5	BN023G	P&D Heritage Grants	\$ (200,000)	\$ (0.70)
BAL_023.6	BN023G	P&D Permit Revenue	\$ (1,000,000)	\$ (3.52)
BAL_023.8	BN023G	IT Bell Contract Contingency	\$ (500,000)	\$ (1.76)
<b>Net Budget Change</b>			<b>\$ (32,200)</b>	<b>\$ (0.12)</b>

Average tax bill impact is approximate and for illustrative purposes

### Deeper Reductions and Service Changes

The additional reductions outlined in BN023G have been excluded from the BAL (BAL.023.22 through BAL.023.29). These items involve significant service changes or have previously been unpopular. As a result, they are not considered in the scenarios above. They have been brought forward as information because they are items that have been either utilized or discussed in the past, and are possible to implement for 25/26.

Since most reductions in BN023G are tied to service adjustments, they offer the most fiscally sustainable cost reductions. If BAL.023.23 through BAL.023.29 are implemented, they would lower the required average residential tax bill increase by nearly 2 per cent, with approximately 1.5 per cent being ongoing. However, these changes would also lead to service reductions.

**Table 3**

Reference	Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.23	Reduce District Capital by 1/2	One-time	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.24	Eliminate Weekly Green Bin Collection	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.25	Defer Benefits Plan Redesign by one year	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.26	Eliminate contracted Sidewalk Clearing (downtown Halifax, Dartmouth and Burnside done with internal resources)	Ongoing	\$ (8,000,000)
BAL_023.27	Change Bus Stop Snowclearing to 48 hrs from 24 hrs	Ongoing	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.28	Parking Revenue	Ongoing	\$ (2,000,000)
BAL_023.29	Defer implementation from Dec. 1 to April 1 Affordable Access Program for Multi-District Facilities	One-time	\$ (400,000)
<b>Total Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (13,900,000)</b>
<b>Total Ongoing</b>			<b>\$ (11,750,000)</b>

### Full Time Equivalents and Vacancies

As of the end of February, the municipality had 363 vacant positions and the total 2025/26 Budget for vacant positions is \$(23,531,400). Table 4 outlines the number of vacant positions and vacancy budget by business unit in the 2025/26 Budget.

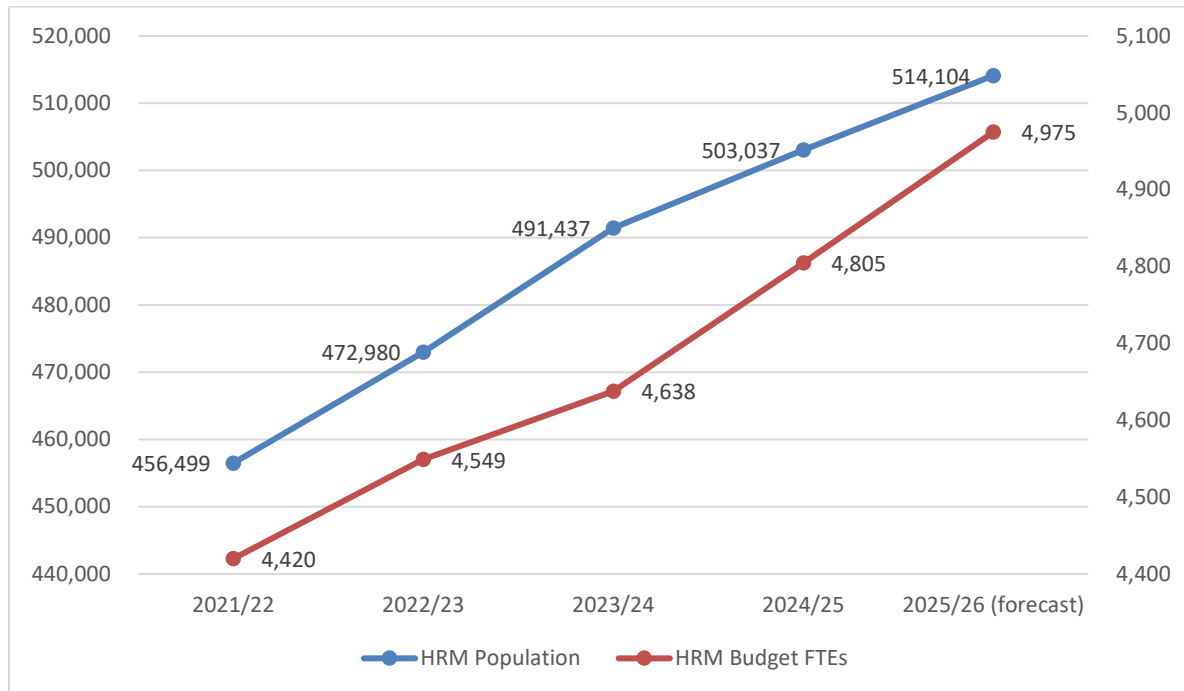
**Table 4**

Business Unit	Vacant Positions	Vacancy Budget
Chief Administrative Office	9	\$ (63,000)
Community Safety	11	\$ (681,800)
Finance & Asset Management	11	\$ (358,300)
Halifax Fire & Emergency Services	23	\$ (4,126,000)
Halifax Regional Police	94	\$ (2,215,000)
Halifax Transit Services	66	\$ (5,136,300)
Human Resources	2	\$ (329,600)
Information Technology	11	\$ (1,407,600)
Legal & Legislative Services	13	\$ (290,100)
Major Project Office	1	\$ -
Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Planning	2	\$ (129,600)
Parks & Recreation	24	\$ (1,995,800)
Planning & Development	40	\$ (1,894,300)
Property, Fleet & Environment	23	\$ (1,211,300)
Public Works	33	\$ (1,755,300)
<b>Total (excl Library and Auditor General)</b>	<b>363.0</b>	<b>\$ (21,594,000)</b>

As a result of the 2025/26 Budget being highly leveraged by vacant positions, the FTE review completed did not result in significant savings. However, as outlined in BN023G, BAL\_023.30 identified 9.5 FTEs that could be removed, or deferred in the 2025/26 budget that would result in a reduction of \$706K. Of note operations and public safety vacancies account for 87 per cent of current vacant positions, which is representative of core municipal services. Approximately 50% of vacant positions have an active recruitment ongoing.

The labour market is competitive, and in some areas the municipality is struggling to maintain sufficient workforce to maintain service at the desired levels.

Municipal FTEs per population served is relatively consistent at 0.96%. As has population has grown and increased demands on municipal services and new programs or services have been added the approved municipal staff complement (FTEs) has kept pace, however attracting and retaining employees has become more difficult.



Population figures are per StatsCan

## Process for BAL Debate

During the BAL debate, staff will track motions as items are added to the 2025/26 budget. The process will begin with the original proposed budget, which includes a 7.6 per cent tax increase. Motions may be introduced for individual items or multiple items can be combined into a single “bundled” motion to be included in the 2025/26 budget. If there is no appetite to include a BAL item in the budget, no action is required by the Budget Committee.

The BAL has been organized with an indexing. Items that have been added to the BAL have been given a “BAL Number”. BAL\_023 “FTE Review & Savings Outlined (various)” has a sub-indexing; an item that is part of BAL\_023 will have a BAL Number like BAL\_23.X. The BAL also references what Briefing Note an item relates to via “BN Number”.

Additionally, items not currently listed in the BAL may still be brought forward for debate if any Budget Committee member proposes a change.

Once the BAL is approved, staff will present the final budget and tax rates for ratification on April 8, 2025.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications to this report. Rather, it describes the Budget Adjustment List, which provides a series of individual items the Budget Committee may add to the Proposed Budget.

To ensure budget sustainability, all ongoing costs require long-term funding. Sustainability makes it easier for Regional Council to maintain or alter current services in the future without making additional taxation or program changes.

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

All budgets deal with a level of uncertainty, the 2025/26 Budget Outlook is no different. Budget assumption changes can pose a risk to the overall financial plan. Changes in assumptions could stem from unforeseen economic fluctuations, geopolitical events, or even internal factors like major projection shifts or unexpected expenses. Such changes can quickly make even the best budget obsolete. As of the timing of this report, the Q3 financial report projected that the municipality is running a small surplus in 2024/25. If the municipality finishes the year in a deficit position, that deficit will need to be funded in the 2025/26 fiscal year. Funding any deficit would require a further increase to the average tax bill increase.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement was required. In previous years to inform the development of the Budget Direction Report, surveys were conducted to understand resident priorities and where they would like to see municipal budgets directed. The most recent Resident Survey results were made available to Regional Council through an information report provided on January 14, 2025.

The 2025/26 Budget process also sought to solicit public comment by inviting members of the public to provide feedback prior to each business unit budget and business plan presentation.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Budget Committee can amend the motion for the two options outlined in this report. The motions to do that are below:

#### **Option 1 – Flat Tax Rate**

That the Budget Committee amend the motion to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the 2025/26 Operating Budget, Capital Budget and Four Year Capital Plan for Regional Council, incorporating the following items from the Budget Adjustment List Attachment A and B:

- BAL\_011 – Capital Portion of Urban Forestry Master Plan Tree Planting
- BAL\_018 – Freezing Hiring the Proposed Community Safety Positions
- BAL\_020 – Central Library Reserve Funding
- BAL\_022 – Land Lines Review
- BAL\_023.1 through BAL\_023.12 – Other Operating Budget Reductions
- BAL\_023.13 through BAL\_023.21 – Other Capital Budget Reductions
- BAL\_023.30 FTE Changes

#### **Option 2 – Sustainable Reductions**

That the Budget Committee amend the motion to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the 2025/26 Operating Budget, Capital Budget and Four Year Capital Plan for Regional Council, incorporating the following items from the Budget Adjustment List Attachment A and B:

- BAL\_018– Freezing Hiring the Proposed Community Safety Positions
- BAL\_022 – Land Lines Review



- BAL\_023.1 – Salt Recoveries
- BAL\_023.2 – Small Part Warranty
- BAL\_023.4 – Payments in Lieu and Tax Agreements
- BAL\_023.5 – P&D Heritage Grants
- BAL\_023.6 – P&D Permit Revenue
- BAL\_023.8 – IT Bell Contract Contingency

### **Option 3 – Sustainable Reductions to Fund Some BAL Items**

That the Budget Committee amend the motion to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to finalize the 2025/26 Operating Budget, Capital Budget and Four Year Capital Plan for Regional Council, incorporating the following items from the Budget Adjustment List as outlined in **Attachment A and B:**

- BAL\_003 – Community Crisis Diversion Pilot Service
- BAL\_008 – RCMP Staffing Request - 14 positions
- BAL\_006 – Youth Advocate Program
- BAL\_005 – Operate Ten Buses Beyond their Service Life
- BAL\_009 – Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) for Transit
- BAL\_001 – Drop in Centre Funding and After-hours Individualized Mobile Engagement Team
- BAL\_018 – Freezing Hiring the Proposed Community Safety Positions
- BAL\_022 – Land Lines Review
- BAL\_023.1 – Salt Recoveries
- BAL\_023.2 – Small Part Warranty
- BAL\_023.4 – Payments in Lieu and Tax Agreements
- BAL\_023.5 – P&D Heritage Grants
- BAL\_023.6 – P&D Permit Revenue
- BAL\_023.8 – IT Bell Contract Contingency

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Halifax Charter, section 35 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer shall (B) ensure that an annual budget is prepared and submitted to the Council.

93 (1) The Council shall make estimates of the sums that are required by the Municipality for the fiscal year.  
(2) The estimates shall include the probable revenue from all sources other than taxes for the fiscal year and make due allowance for:

- (a) the abatement and losses that might occur in the collection of the taxes;
- (b) taxes for the current fiscal year that might not be collected.

(3) The Council shall include an allowance to provide for any variation in the total assessed value shown on the roll that might result from assessment appeals.

(4) The Council shall include in its estimates the deficit from the preceding fiscal year.

(5) The Council may include in its estimates an amount for:

- (a) contingencies and unforeseen expenses in matters on which it may vote and expend money;
- (b) all or part of any surplus of previous fiscal years that will be available for the current fiscal year.

(6) The Council shall authorize the levying and collecting of a

- (a) commercial tax rate of so much on the dollar on the assessed value of taxable commercial property and business occupancy assessment; and
- (b) residential tax rate of so much on the dollar on the assessed value of taxable residential property and resource property.

(7) Notwithstanding clause (6)(a), the tax rate for the part of commercial property that is identified on the assessment roll as being occupied by a seasonal tourist business is 75 per cent of the commercial tax rate.

(8) The tax rates must be those that the Council deems sufficient to raise the amount required to defray the estimated requirements of the Municipality.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A – Budget Adjustment List for Consideration
- Attachment B – Summary of Proposed Cost Reductions
- Attachment C – 2025/26 Budget Adjustment List Briefing Notes

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## Budget Adjustment List Summary

Budget Adjustment List Tax Implications	25/26 Rate Impact	25/26 Avg Bill Impact	25/26 Avg Bill Impact
Beginning - 7.6% Tax Change	0.792	\$ 189.00	7.6%
Additional	(0.027)	(91.40)	-3.7%
<b>OVERALL RATE &amp; NET CHANGE**</b>	<b>0.765</b>	<b>\$ 97.60</b>	<b>4.1%</b>

BAL Number	BN Number	Option Description	25/26 Amount	25/26 Rate Impact*	25/26 Avg Bill Impact*	Business Unit	Over/Under	Capital / Operating	Date Added
BAL_026	N/A	Community Mediation Pilot Program (moved by Regional Council)	\$ 100,000	0.0001	\$ 0.35	CS	Over	Operating	2/11/2025
BAL_003	BN003	Community crisis diversion pilot service as outlined in Briefing Note BN003	\$ 463,800	0.0005	\$ 1.63	CS	Over	Operating	2/12/2025
BAL_001	BN001	Drop in entre funding and after-hours individualized mobile engagement team as outlined in Briefing Note BN001	\$ -	-	\$ -	CS	Over	Operating	2/14/2025
BAL_002	BN002	JustFOOD Programming as outlined in Briefing Note BN002	\$ 328,900	0.0003	\$ 1.16	CS	Over	Operating	2/14/2025
BAL_004	BN004	Increase Staffing by Ten FTE Firefighters and Include a One-time Increase of \$150,000 for Required Uniforms and Personal Protective Equipment as Outlined in Briefing Note BN004	\$ 215,000	0.0002	\$ 0.76	HRFE	Over	Operating	2/14/2025
BAL_008	NA	RCMP Staffing Request - 14 positions <b>*Updated Costing</b>	\$ 1,018,700	0.0011	\$ 3.58	RCMP	Over	Operating	2/19/2025
BAL_006	BN006	Youth Advocate Program as outlined in Briefing Note BN006	\$ 254,500	0.0003	\$ 0.90	PR	Over	Operating	2/20/2025
BAL_007	BN007	One Sport Field Technicians for rural field maintenance and partnership support as outlined in Briefing Note BN007	\$ 51,400	0.0001	\$ 0.18	PR	Over	Operating	2/20/2025
BAL_005	BN005	Operate Ten Buses Beyond their Service Life as outlined in Briefing Note BN005	\$ 2,137,000	0.0022	\$ 7.52	HTS	Over	Operating	2/21/2025
BAL_010	BN020	Options to Accelerate the Delivery of Heritage Conservation Districts	\$ 228,500	0.0002	\$ 0.80	PD	Over	Operating	2/21/2025
BAL_011	BN019	Removing funding for 2,000 trees as part of the 2025/26 Urban Forestry Master Plan (\$944K Operating budget, \$892K Capital)	\$ (1,836,000)	(0.0019)	\$ (6.46)	PW	Under	Operating & Capital	2/21/2025
BAL_009	BN009	HRBP for Transit	\$ 113,800	0.0001	\$ 0.40	HTS	Over	Operating	2/26/2025
BAL_012	BN021	Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame Capital Campaign	\$ 300,000	0.0003	\$ 1.06	PR	Over	Operating	2/25/2025
BAL_013	BN022	Discovery Center Biodiversity and Aquarium Facility	\$ 200,000	0.0002	\$ 0.70	PR	Over	Operating	2/25/2025
BAL_014	BN011	Collision Data Reporting (BT45)	\$ -	-	\$ -	IT	Over	Capital	2/5/2025
BAL_015	BN012	Removal of Armoured F350s and Armoured Rescue Vehicle	\$ (603,000)	(0.0006)	\$ (2.12)	PFE	Under	Capital & Operating	2/5/2025
BAL_016	BN013	Budget requirements to expand Capital Project CT190006 – Road Safety	\$ 930,000	0.0010	\$ 3.27	PW	Over	Capital	2/5/2025
BAL_017	BN015	Outlining the funding for CT1000012 Ross Road Realignment, to be considered as an option over budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to consider in the 2025/26 Budget	\$ 400,000	0.0004	\$ 1.41	PW/PD	Over	Capital	2/5/2025
BAL_018	BN016	Freezing hiring the proposed training and Exercise Specialist and Community Outreach Coordinator FTE outlined in Community Safety's 2025/26 proposed operating budget as an option under budget	\$ (220,000)	(0.0002)	\$ (0.77)	CS	Under	Operating	2/14/2025
BAL_019	BN017	Funding Firefighters for Cancer Screening	\$ -	-	\$ -	HRFE	Over	Operating	2/14/2025
BAL_020	BN023A	Central Library Reserve Funding	\$ (10,000,000)	(0.0104)	\$ (35.19)	Fiscal	Under	Operating	2/5/2025
BAL_021	BN023B	Deed Transfer Tax Forecast	\$ (3,000,000)	(0.0031)	\$ (10.56)	Fiscal	Under	Operating	2/26/2005
BAL_022	BN023D	Landlines Review	\$ (300,000)	(0.0003)	\$ (1.06)	IT	Under	Operating	2/26/2005
BAL_023	BN023G	FTE Review & Savings Outlined (various)	\$ (11,229,800)	(0.0117)	\$ (39.51)	Various	Under	Operating	2/26/2005
BAL_024	BN023C	Climate Action Tax Reduction by 1/3	\$ (6,000,000)	(0.0062)	\$ (21.11)	Fiscal	Under	Operating	2/26/2005
BAL_025	BN023E	Charge Insurance Companies for HRM Fire Services	\$ -	-	\$ -	HRFE	Under	Operating	2/26/2005
<b>TOTAL OF ALL OPTIONS</b>			<b>\$ (26,447,200)</b>						

\*Rate & Bill impacts have been revised based on updated assessment

\*\*Total tax rate is set at 3 decimal points.

## ATTACHMENT B

Reference	Operating Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.1	Salt recoveries	Ongoing	\$ (150,000)
BAL_023.2	Small part warranty	Ongoing	\$ (150,000)
BAL_023.3	Investment Income	One-time	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.4	PILT & TA's	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.5	P&D Heritage Grants	Ongoing	\$ (200,000)
BAL_023.6	P&D Permit Revenue	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.7	Fuel (Carbon Tax Reduction)	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.8	IT Bell Contract Contingency	Ongoing	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.9	P&R Civic Events	One-time	\$ (100,000)
BAL_023.10	SITP/MPO savings	One-time	\$ (480,000)
BAL_023.11	Public Works Vacancies	One-time	\$ (300,000)
BAL_023.12	Finance and Asset Management Vacancies and Consulting	One-time	\$ (200,000)
<b>Total Operating Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (5,580,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ (3,000,000)

Reference	Capital Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.13	Corporate Fleet	One-time	\$ (600,000)
BAL_023.14	Community Planning Studies	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.15	New Park Capital	One-time	\$ (300,000)
BAL_023.16	Fleet Management	One-time	\$ (1,100,000)
BAL_023.17	Station Alerting	One-time	\$ (400,000)
BAL_023.18	Corporate Scheduling	One-time	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.19	Fuel management	One-time	\$ (250,000)
BAL_023.20	Enterprise Project Management (BT41)	One-time	\$ (250,000)
BAL_023.21	Records Management (BT55)	One-time	\$ (543,000)
<b>Total Capital Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (4,943,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ -

Reference	Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.22	District Capital	One-time	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.23	Weekly Green Bin Collection	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.24	Benefits Plan Redesign (deferral)	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.25	Contracted Sidewalk Clearing	Ongoing	\$ (8,000,000)
BAL_023.26	Bus Stop Snowclearing	Ongoing	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.27	Parking Revenue	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.28	Affordable Access Program for Multi-District Facilities	One-time	\$ (400,000)
BAL_023.29	P&R Grants	Ongoing	\$ (200,000)
<b>Total Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (13,100,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ (10,750,000)

# **ATTACHMENT C**

## **2025-26 Budget Adjustment List Briefing Notes**

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## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN001 - UPDATED: Top up Drop in Centre Funding and After Hours Individualized Mobile Engagement Team Funding

**COW Date:** February 12, 2025

**Business Unit:** Community Safety

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN001 (BAL_001)	Operating	\$0	\$1,650,000 (Ongoing)
	Reserve	\$1,650,000 (One-time Reserve funded)	\$0
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	<p>\$1,650,000 full annualized cost of both programs.</p> <p>In 2025/26, both programs with a combined cost of \$1,650,000 will be funded through the Options Reserve (Q421). In 2026/27, the required funding will be added as a pressure to the proposed Operating Budget for Community Safety.</p>		
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	<p>\$150,000 is funding to match Provincial funding commitment to host a drop-in centre for persons experiencing homelessness in the municipality.</p> <p>\$1,500,000 is full-year funding for the contracted After Hours Individualized Mobile Engagement Team (AIM team) and after-hours support team to support people experiencing homelessness, both in encampments and moving to or leaving Provincial shelters and temporary housing options.</p>		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Communities – Safe Communities		

#### Funding

Funding for these programs is available only in the 2025/26 Fiscal year through already committed approvals in the Options Reserve (Q421). Council approved Reserve withdrawals in June 2024 for these programs but due to timing of setting up the programs, the funds will be spent in the 2025/26 Fiscal year. If these programs continue past the 2025/26 Fiscal year, they will be added to the 2026/27 proposed Community Safety operating budget as a pressure.

#### Drop-In Centre

A drop-in center is a vital resource for supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and mitigating its negative impacts on the broader community. It provides access to essential services such as food,

running water, showers, and other supports that are unavailable in encampments. By offering these resources, the center enhances the health and safety of those sleeping rough while they await suitable housing opportunities provided by the Province. Additionally, it serves as a designated place for individuals to go, reducing the need for encampments in parks and event spaces. This centre is an integral part of the municipal strategy to address homelessness and effectively manage public spaces. The funding enables the municipality to align its support with the Province's commitment, as previously agreed in principle when the initiative was proposed.

### **AIM Team**

The AIM Team is a contracted service that provides supports to people experiencing homelessness after regular service hours, which in many cases are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. Persons who are sleeping rough but working, going to school, or participating in programs with service providers do not receive support by the majority of outreach efforts. When other services are closed is when many people then need support the most. People who may find themselves unable to maintain their shelter or temporary housing are often evicted in the evening or on a weekend or have been recently discharged by health and justice systems, and there are no resources to support them. When people do not have access to support or services is when there is an increase in disruption in and around the community. Building capacity of supports through the AIM Team ensures supports are accessible in the evening and weekends and can dramatically reduce the negative impacts of sleeping rough on those forced to do so and the community around them. The AIM Team is also able to offer transportation and other supports to people.



## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN002 - Food Security Top up – JustFOOD Programming

**COW Date:** February 12, 2025

**Business Unit:** Community Safety

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN002 (BAL_002)	Operating	\$328,900 (Ongoing)	\$328,900
Four Year Impact	JustFOOD Programming – \$328,900 full annualized cost		
Adjustment Description	As the implementation of Part B of the JustFOOD Action Plan was not fully funded in 2024/25, a top-up is required to enable the approved programs and ongoing implementation of the Plan.		
Priority Alignment	Communities – Affordable Communities		

The Community Safety business unit is recommending that funding for JustFOOD programming be altered from the budget.

To implement Part B of the JustFOOD Action Plan, as approved by Regional Council in February 2024, this funding is required to deliver the approved Year 1 programs, including Community Plots, Community Garden Grants, Food Asset Mapping, Emergency Food/Community Distribution Program, African Nova Scotian & Black Food Sovereignty Initiatives, Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiatives, the Virtual Food Hub, and Community Food Grants. Without program funding to implement these approved programs, the Municipal Food Team and Halifax Food Council will have to focus efforts on securing funds rather than on program delivery and fund generation to expand the implementation and impact of the Action Plan. This will further delay the advancement of the Action Plan and capacity to work together towards a more resilient food system, and greater food security and sovereignty for residents.

# Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

## BN003 - Community Crisis Diversion Service -

### Updated Costing of Contracted Costs

**COW Date:** February 12, 2025

**Business Unit:** Community Safety

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN003 (BAL_003)	Operating	\$ 463,800 (Ongoing)	\$ 463,800
Four Year Impact	\$ 463,800 full annualized cost.		
Adjustment Description	Adjustment is required to implement the contracted community crisis diversion pilot service.		
Priority Alignment	Communities – Safe Communities		

This adjustment reflects updated modeling for the costs associated with implementing the Community Crisis Diversion pilot service. This mobile crisis service is a Regional Council-approved action in the municipal Public Safety Strategy and the Police Transformation Study.

Community crisis diversion teams are contracted mobile units with staff trained in responding to non-violent crisis situations where a police response is not necessary and may not be helpful. They have been proven to divert calls away from emergency first responders and provide individuals in crisis with appropriate support to resolve the crisis. Crisis navigators receive calls from potential clients and other intake providers (such as 911) and if the situation meets established criteria, will dispatch the crisis team.

The adjustment includes costs identified by validating service level estimates included in the original 2024/25 budget, including salary and compensation, training, records management system, equipment, an accessible vehicle, maintenance, and fuel. It also includes contracted costs for call intake, evaluation and dispatch service. The adjustment does not include costs associated with the lease or purchase of land or facilities to operate the service, as it is anticipated that the service can be co-located with the Stabilization Centre.

This adjustment reflects the estimated costs of piloting the mobile Community Crisis Diversion Service in a small geographic area of approximately 70,000 to 100,000 people. The service would operate 24/7 with two vehicles, each staffed by two crisis workers, a manager, and administrative support. The call intake,

evaluation, and dispatch service would receive calls and transfers, and would evaluate, and, where appropriate, dispatch the mobile crisis service. They would also be responsible for records collection and management.

Without this adjustment, the service would not have sufficient budget to commence the pilot on a 24/7 basis or with the support of a call intake and dispatch provider.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN004 - Ten Firefighter FTEs and Equipment

**COW Date:** February 12, 2025

**Business Unit:** Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)											
BN004 (BAL_004)	Operating	\$65,000 (Ongoing) \$150,000 (One time)		\$696,000											
Four Year Impact	Staffing costs are pro-rated for the first year for a February 2026 start and will increase to \$1.2M by Year 4 for full year impact of their salary range. Equipment costs are required in the first year and then will be refreshed as part of the normal refresh cycle for the equipment.														
	<table><tr><td>2025/26</td><td>2026/27</td><td>2027/28</td><td>2028/29</td><td>Total</td></tr><tr><td>\$215,000</td><td>\$696,000</td><td>\$957,000</td><td>\$1,158,100</td><td>\$3,026,100</td></tr></table>					2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total	\$215,000	\$696,000	\$957,000	\$1,158,100	\$3,026,100
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total										
\$215,000	\$696,000	\$957,000	\$1,158,100	\$3,026,100											
Adjustment Description	Maximize training capabilities to address performance gaps in relation to Regional Council’s Emergency Response Time Targets (ERTT) and growth by adding another 10 FTEs (career firefighters) to the complement with a start date of February 2026 (ongoing cost).														
	The required uniforms and personal protective equipment required for these 10 career firefighters (one time cost in 2025/26).														
Priority Alignment	Communities – Safe Communities														

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) is proposing maximizing training capabilities to address performance gaps in relation to Regional Council's ERTT and growth by adding another 10 FTEs (career firefighters) to the current complement with a start date of February 2026.

HRFE conducted a robust Community Risk Assessment for the development of their Standards of Cover (SoC), approved by the CAO, as outlined last year in their business plan. The SoC was thoroughly reviewed by a peer assessment team who has recommended HRFE for accreditation with the Centre for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). As part of this process HRFE completed a four-year resource and capital plan to address the gaps identified through these assessments.

In keeping with the municipality's Council Priority of Communities, and the Administrative Priorities of Responsible Administration and Service Excellence, and in a time of unprecedented vertical growth and densification and community risk in relation to HRFE's ability to respond, HRFE continues to assess their

emergency response capacity and has developed a four-year resource plan to address the areas of concern where HRFE does not meet emergency response times.

HRFE assigns resources based on Regional Council's ERTT as outlined [here](#) along with community risk assessments. HRFE's performance in relation to an Effective Firefighting Force (EFF) has dropped to 55.5% in the urban city center. HRFE conducted significant assessments on the impacts of approved developments and community risk in developing their SoC. Regional Council's ERTTs identify performance for single-family dwellings, not for the more complex multi-family, high-rise, or institutional structure fires typically found in urban settings, which present significantly greater challenges in terms of response and resource requirements. HRFE's assessment includes both past performance and predictive analysis based on changes in the street network, GIS mapping, and approved developments by Planning & Development. Based on these assessed impacts, HRFE anticipates a drop in EFF performance by 10% in the next four years. It is also expected that there will be a significant drop in performance for first unit on scene times for fire and medical calls in the urban areas. HRFE's methodology has been validated by an independent third-party vendor and includes the Darkhorse predictive analytics application. HRFE is utilizing technology where possible to improve performance but even with these strategies emergency response times will be adversely impacted if additional resources are not added.

The addition of 10 career firefighters is in alignment with the resource plan to address the gaps identified and considers HRFE's training capabilities. This proposal would enable the staffing of the new West Bedford Station in the Summer of 2026 with new firefighters and avoid reducing the current staffing and service levels of two apparatus and six career firefighters on duty 24x7 at both Station 8 (Bedford) and Station 9 (Sackville) as is the case with two apparatus and six career firefighters on duty 24x7 at both Station 12 in Dartmouth and Station 3 in Halifax. These additional positions would also improve ERTT performance to the Clayton Park, Burnside, Fall River, Dartmouth, and Upper Hammonds Plains areas.

The addition of these firefighters would help smooth out the increased staffing required over four years to address the growth and community risk identified in the gap analysis in a way that the training division is able to accommodate the new staff. HRFE's training and operations divisions can only train two classes of 20 firefighters per year, including the new employees onboarded to replace retirements. Typically, one class of 20 firefighters will accommodate a year's worth of requirements due to attrition, leaving only one class per year of 20 firefighters to increase the complement of firefighters in any given year. If Regional Council opts not to approve this proposed adjustment, it will increase the risk to the community and firefighter safety by not having adequate resources to respond in a timely manner to the vertical densification and growth.

Total Change	24/25	Change	23/24	Change	22/23	Change	21/22	Change	20/21
91.20	626.70	17.10	609.60	36.00	573.60	25.60	548.00	12.50	535.50

The table above outlines the number of positions that have been added to Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency over the past four years.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN005 - Ten Buses Past Service Life

**COW Date:** February 19, 2025

**Business Unit:** Halifax Transit

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN005 (BAL_005)	Operating	\$2,137,700 (Ongoing)	\$2,170,700
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	\$4,308,400		
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	The additional cost to operate ten buses beyond their service life for an additional two years.		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Council Priority – Integrated Mobility		

To address short-term service quality challenges, Halifax Transit is proposing to postpone the retirement of ten diesel buses originally scheduled for replacement by electric buses in 2025. These buses will be retained in service beyond their useful life for two years. These buses are intended to be replaced with new buses in accordance with Halifax Transit's bus replacement and growth plan. The goal is to continue using these buses for two years, along with their associated operating costs below (including higher-than-usual maintenance expenses), to help tackle high-priority issues related to schedule adherence, overcrowding, and frequency on existing routes and trips.

These ten buses would provide Halifax Transit with an opportunity to mitigate some service quality and reliability issues, particularly those related to overcrowding and overloads.

Costs to Operate 10 Buses Past Service Life	(Year 1)
Compensation - Operations	\$ 955,500
Compensation-Maintenance	\$ 233,700
Maintenance expenses (Year 1)	\$ 660,000
Fuel	\$ 262,100
Licensing	\$ 26,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,137,700</b>

Costs to Operate 10 Buses Past Service Life	(Year 2)
Compensation - Operations	\$ 955,500
Compensation-Maintenance	\$ 233,700
Maintenance expenses (Increased in Year 2)*	\$ 693,000
Fuel	\$ 262,100
Licensing	\$ 26,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,170,700</b>

\*Year 2 has an expected increase in maintenance cost due to increased age of vehicles.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN006 - Youth Advocate Program

**COW Date:** February 19, 2025

**Business Unit:** Parks & Recreation

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN006 (BAL_006)	Expense	\$254,509		\$459,234	
Four Year Impact		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	Compensation	\$172,079	\$376,804	\$388,108	\$399,751
	Non-Compensation	\$82,430	\$82,430	\$82,430	\$82,430
	Total	\$254,509	\$459,234	\$470,538	\$482,181
Adjustment Description	Two Supervisors, two Youth Advocate Workers, and increased program budget to accommodate 14-22 additional spots for youth in the program and an expansion to all HRM.				
Priority Alignment	Council Priority: Safe Communities				

The Youth Advocate Program is a crime prevention program that works with youth ages 9-15 engaging in, or at high risk of engaging in criminal activity, by strengthening connections and reducing barriers to create safer communities. The program is designed to increase a youth's resiliency, developing pro-social skills, promoting self-regulation and fostering positive relationships. Additionally, it seeks to improve youth outcomes within the criminal justice system, help them achieve short-term goals and improve connection to long-term support services. Additional information on the program is included in the Background section of this Briefing Note

The program aligns with Council's 'Communities' priority, by supporting community safety, increasing inclusivity and removing barriers, and supporting community involvement.

Staff have identified an increasing need for services to support at-risk youth, for several reasons including:

- **Increased population**

While population has increased significantly since program inception, the number of youth ages 10-19 declined slightly between 2006 and 2021 but has increased sharply in recent years. Since the 2021 Census, the youth population (ages 10-19) has increased by 13% (5,813).

- **Increased referrals meeting the criteria & increased wait times**

Trends are suggesting that while the number of referrals per year has remained steady, a growing proportion of referred youth now meet the program's criteria. This has led to increased wait times for youth accepted into the program and more youth needing Youth Advocate Workers (YAWs). Currently, youth in crisis may face wait times of up to one year due to staff availability.

- **Need for culturally responsive solutions**

**Parental engagement.** Youth Advocate Workers (YAWs) assist parents and guardians in accessing services, participating in parenting support programs and supporting their youth. While parental engagement is crucial to the program's success, YAWs primary focus remains on the youth themselves. Recently, there has been a recognized need among YAWs for additional culturally responsive parenting support.

**Disproportionate representation relative to general population.** From 2007 to 2022, 40% of youth in the Youth Advocate Program (YAP) identified as Black, indicating an overrepresentation compared to the general population. Working with HRM's African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) team, YAP has identified a need specifically for African Nova Scotian Youth Advocate Workers.

Additionally, 11% of the youth in the program from 2007-2022, identified their race as Indigenous, also reflecting an overrepresentation. YAP, working with HRM's Diversity & Inclusion staff, has identified the need for an Indigenous Youth Advocate Worker to provide culturally relevant support.

**Changes in population distribution.** Staff have identified a significant increase in referrals of Newcomer and Immigrant youth to the program, paralleling the population growth in HRM.

### **Requests for services outside current program boundaries**

Within all three of these demographics, there is a need for specific training, education, experience, and approaches to support these youth. Staff are piloting an intervention program (SNAP®), with funding from the Federal and Provincial governments, for younger youth (ages 6-12).

### **Proposed Program Enhancements**

With these additional resources, an increased preventative program for younger youth, and increased municipal support for the program, the YAP can serve an expanded geographic boundary. Youth accepted into the program would be matched with a Youth Advocate Worker based on factors such as home address, school, gender, demographic, and staff waitlists.

To accommodate more participants, staff would add two Program Supervisors and two additional Youth Advocate Workers, focusing on supporting Indigenous and newcomer youth.

The two Program Supervisors would carry caseloads for two to three of the highest needs youth in the program and supervise five to six Youth Advocate Workers with regards to operations. The two new Youth



Advocate Workers would be designated to working with Indigenous and Newcomer/Immigrant youth respectively to provide culturally relevant supports. These Youth Advocate Workers will carry a caseload of five to eight youth at a given time. This allows for 14-22 additional spaces for youth in the program. Funding will also cover essential resources such as tutoring and incentives for youth. Additionally, existing positions have already been designated as African Nova Scotian Youth Advocate Workers.

Year	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Change
Position Count	279.8	269.5	274.4	300.8	297.1	17.3
<i>Change respect to previous year</i>		-10.3	4.9	26.4	-3.7	

The table above outlines the number of positions that have been added to Parks & Recreation over the past 4 years.

## BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Municipality was awarded 1.9 million dollars by the National Crime Prevention Centre to operate a 4-year pilot program called the Youth Advocate Program (YAP). Halifax Regional Police reviewed crime statistics and recommended six communities where the program would run. An evaluation of this pilot was awarded to Dalhousie University's Resilience Research Centre. The evaluation determined the model used in the YAP was effective in increasing pro-social/life skills competencies and resiliency and in decreasing isolation and negative rushes in the participants. These are factors directly related to the likelihood of a youth committing a crime.

When the pilot ended in 2011, Halifax Regional Council moved to maintain the YAP as a municipal service through the Community Development business unit, now Parks & Recreation. The YAP is embedded in the Youth Section under Parks & Recreation due to the expertise required in recreation, leisure education, youth engagement, and community development to make the program successful. In 2018, Halifax Regional Council approved the expansion of the YAP into three new communities. These three communities had originally been identified as possible sites for the program and were confirmed through RCMP crime statistics as needing such a program.

The YAP is a crime prevention program that works with youth ages 9-15 engaging in, or at high risk of engaging in, criminalized activity. It works to create safer communities by increasing the resiliency and pro-social skills of youth, improving the support networks of youth and families, and improving youth's trajectories within the criminal justice system.

Each youth accepted into the program gets paired one-on-one with a Youth Advocate Worker (YAW) in their community who supports the youth and family. Each YAW has a caseload of 5-7 participants, and there is a maximum of 45 participants in YAP at any given time. This program is voluntary for the youth and consent must be given by the parent/guardian and youth before a referral is made. If accepted, youth and families may exit from the program by choice at any point.

### **Desired Outcomes of YAP**

The Youth Advocate Program is evidence-based and uses researched evaluations at all stages of the program to determine a youth's progress.

- Increased resiliency
- Increased pro-social skills and regulated behaviours
- Increased positive relationships for youth
- Improved trajectory within the criminal justice system
- Achievement of short-term goals
- Connection to long-term supports

### **Youth Advocate Program Approach**

Each youth accepted into the program is offered an Individualized Action Plan that is culturally appropriate and takes into consideration the youth's abilities, skillset, and background. YAWs work with youth and families to help build relationships and connections within their community and to navigate existing barriers by creating plans that align with the youth's goals.

The YAP uses the principles of WrapAround which is a strengths-based planning process aimed to support and equip youth and families with the tools and skills to improve their lives. YAWs encourage youth to leverage their natural supports to build lifelong connections, bring appropriate support to the youth, and work in collaboration to provide support.

The YAP provides mentoring and safe spaces for youth and families to feel heard and valued in a one-on-one setting. The program challenges damaging stereotypes and negative misconceptions by conducting reviews of the existing supports in place with each youth and family to ensure that individual needs are being met, in terms of it's appropriately matched to their needs and supports are being delivered in a timely manner. Through these supports, youth can start to regain control over their life and feel an increased sense of worth and belonging.

By using Strengths Based, Trauma Informed, Appreciative Inquiry, and Harm Reduction approaches, the Youth Advocate Program meets the youth and families where they are. Individualized Action Plans are adapted as needed to respond to changes in the youth's life.

### **Components of the program/supports**

The program leverages a variety of supports for youth in different areas including:

- Recreation programming
- Mental health
- Tutoring
- Transportation
- Evaluation and assessment tools and connections to community-based services
- Supports navigating the criminal justice system
- Incentives tied to short-term goals, including gift cards and activities

- Food
- Emergency supports
- Graduation celebrations

Youth Advocate Workers leverage existing available resources. Should outside supports be exhausted, there are modest allocations for supplementary resources. In the case of mental health supports for example, YAWs exhaust available public supports, in-school supports, cost sharing opportunities & private health coverage and if the need still exists, the YAP supports 3 private therapy sessions.

A wide range of resources and supports are captured through individualized action plans for youth.

Youth may exit from the program for the following reasons:

- Family has requested service to end.
- Youth has moved out of program boundaries.
- Lack of participation from youth or family.

Youth who are exited may be re-referred and re-evaluated based on program criteria. If youth are accepted, it is acknowledged that they may be in a different place in their lives and are ready to engage in the program differently.

### **Girls United**

In addition to core programming, the Youth Advocate Program created the Girls United program in response to the high number of females identified in the program who were at risk of trafficking and/or sexual exploitation. Girls United is a crime prevention program working with female identified youth between the ages of 13-15 who are involved in criminal behavior and who also show risk factors for becoming victims of trafficking and/or sexual exploitation. The program is peer centered and peer led, with a focus on building strong positive relationships. The goal of the program is to educate, engage and raise awareness about the supports and services available to female identifying youth.

Through the Province of Nova Scotia's Crime Prevention Community Grant Application (previously the Lighthouse Grant), \$12,000 of funding for the program has been secured for the past number of years. Due to rising costs, the program has been supplemented by the Youth Advocate Program's operating budget.

The Community Safety Business Unit is currently reviewing HRM's services responding to the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth, including the Girls United Program, which will provide future direction for the program.

### **Projects Post COVID-19**

Since 2022, staff in the YAP have been working to review and update the program and have completed several initiatives including a historical program data review, a business plan, and a review of the program's geographical boundaries to ensure the program is relevant in the current climate.

### **Data Project & Analysis**

Staff identified a gap in data tracking and worked with the Community Safety Business Unit to identify funds in the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) grant to digitize all case files from 2007-2022. With this data, staff have started to be able to track high-level aggregated data on the YAP to determine historical information such as average time spent in the program, youth demographics, age at the time of referral, interventions put in place, and more. In addition to a final report that will be produced, staff will work to create a dashboard (based on Surrey BC's CHART Dashboard), which will be made available to the public.

### **Increased Need for Prevention Programs for Younger Youth**

In Nova Scotia, youth as young as 12 years old can face criminal charges. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in youth meeting program criteria necessitating a triage approach to intake criteria. Priority was given to youth at the highest risk of future involvement in the criminal justice system, often older youth who were already facing charges. Meanwhile, youth requiring more preventive support were referred to external service providers. This shift highlighted a trend towards intervention rather than prevention within YAP's operations. Consequently, staff have recognized a growing need for more preventive efforts targeted at younger age groups.

With funding support from the Federal and Provincial governments, staff are piloting an intervention program called SNAP®, which stands for Stop Now And Plan. SNAP is an evidence-based cognitive behavioural model that provides a framework for teaching children, ages 6-12, struggling with behaviour issues, and their parents, effective emotional regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills.

Because the SNAP program focuses on clinical interventions for youth at a younger age range and for families, staff see this program as meeting multiple gaps in services. The program would have its own referral system. If any youth are referred to the Youth Advocate Program within the SNAP age range, they and their family would complete SNAP as a front-line prevention. Any youth at the end of the short-term clinical program that still needed ongoing support would receive an internal referral to the Youth Advocate Program.

Over time the expectations are that with additional prevention happening at younger ages, that fewer youth would escalate behaviours resulting in criminal charges and overall, fewer youth would meet the criteria of the Youth Advocate Program.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN007 – UPDATED: Sport Field Maintenance

**COW Date:** February 19, 2025

**Business Unit:** Parks & Recreation

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)			2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN007 (BAL_007)	Expense	\$ 51,440			\$63,579
Four Year Impact					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	\$ 51,440	\$63,579	\$65,486	\$67,451	\$247,956
Adjustment Description	Briefing note update to include an increase of \$51,440 for one Sport Field Technicians for rural field maintenance and partnership support as outlined in Briefing Note BN007 within the proposed 2025/26 Parks & Recreation budget to the Budget Adjustment List as an operating over budget option for consideration.				
Priority Alignment	Council Priority – Involved Communities				

#### BRIEFING NOTE UPDATE

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Cuttell. THAT the Budget Committee direct the CAO to include an increase of \$51,440 for one Sport Field Technicians for rural field maintenance and partnership support as outlined in Briefing Note BN007 within the proposed 2025/26 Parks & Recreation budget to the Budget Adjustment List as an operating over budget option for consideration.

In a survey conducted as part of the Rural Recreation Strategy, residents residing in the municipality's rural areas expressed their concerns regarding the usability of sport fields, the lack of amenities and general maintenance of sport fields in rural areas.

Adding one Sport Field Technician would provide a limited increase in service for rural HRM sport fields. Some functions such as general maintenance duties could be performed. Other functions, such as work that requires loading and unloading equipment or changing tractor attachments is, for safety reasons, typically not performed by an employee working alone. When workload permits, other parks staff could be assigned to support the sport field technician. However, this could impact service levels in other areas, such as trail maintenance.

For the reasons outlined above, reducing the number of Sport Field Technicians from two to one, would significantly limit the duties that can be performed in rural areas until an additional existing Sport Field Technician is available to assist.

#### ORIGINAL BRIEFING NOTE CONTENT

This request is for two new permanent Sport Field Technicians that will assist with field maintenance and partnership support in rural communities. Regional Council approved the Rural Recreation Strategy in January of 2024 with several implementation and monitoring themes such as, application of a rural lens for recreation service delivery, expanding access to outdoor recreation in rural areas, and initiatives such as the piloting of rural depots.

The municipality has recognized that rural areas often face challenges in accessing adequate recreational facilities and services, which can lead to differences in community engagement and physical activity opportunities. Currently, the ball fields in rural HRM, especially those located on the Eastern Shore, may not receive sufficient maintenance and support due to limited staffing resources. Many fields have exceeded their useful life and while they wait for recapitalization, they require additional attention from operations and our community partners.

If this request is not approved, there will be an increase in complaints regarding fields. Without sufficient staff to meet demand, we may be faced with fields that are not ready and prepared for games which would be a safety and reputational risk to HRM. This lack of dedicated personnel could lead to suboptimal playing conditions, potentially discouraging community participation in sports and recreational activities.

Additionally, these positions will be available for the Winter Works program to further assist IMO in reaching their snow clearing targets.

Year	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Change
<b>Position Count</b>	279.8	269.5	274.4	300.8	297.1	<b>17.3</b>
<b><i>Change respect to previous year</i></b>		-10.3	4.9	26.4	-3.7	

The table above outlines the number of positions that have been added to Parks & Recreation over the past 4 years

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN009 - Senior Human Resources Business Partner Transit HR Service Delivery

**COW Date:** February 26, 2025

**Business Unit:** Human Resources

Tracking ID	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		
BN009 (BAL_009)	Operating	\$113,800 (One-Time / Ongoing)	\$127,800		
Four Year Impact	Staffing costs are pro-rated for the first year for a May start and then would be a full annualized cost for year two onward.				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	\$113,800	\$127,800	\$131,700	\$135,700	\$509,000
Adjustment Description	Additional HR Business Partner resource for Halifax Transit.				
Priority Alignment	Our People – Engaged and Skilled People				

#### BRIEFING NOTE UPDATE

We have assessed the possibility of reassigning existing resources to fill this role, but to do so would require the reduction of services being provided to another BU. The primary goal of creating this position was to accelerate the implementation of some outcomes at Halifax Transit, outcomes that will still be delivered even if the position is not approved. To redeploy existing resources to accomplish this acceleration would risk a failure to deliver services to other Business Units which is not recommended.

#### ORIGINAL BRIEFING NOTE CONTENT

Human Resources Business Partners (HRBPs) are assigned to business units to provide a full suite of HR services. The HRBPs work closely with the centres of expertise within Human Resources (Total Rewards, Employee Wellbeing, and Talent Management) as well as with team members within Employee Relations (Labour Relations and Respectful Workplace) to support leaders with the following:

- Employee engagement efforts
- Leadership coaching
- Organization and job design
- Conflict resolution
- Performance management, investigation, and progressive discipline
- Policy implementation and interpretation

- Succession and workforce planning
- Complex absence management, accommodation, disability, and return to work

Halifax Transit is the municipality's largest business unit and has high needs for coordinated HR services. HR issues such as staffing, engagement, and absenteeism have an impact on service delivery (bus and ferry) to the public and on costs of delivering service (including replacement costs for absent employees and increasing Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia rates). This senior resource will act as a functional coordinator for all HR services being delivered to Halifax Transit. Their initial focus will be to provide additional high-level support as the business unit transitions to new leadership.

There were 4,475.8 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) approved in the 2024/25 municipal budget and seven permanent HRBPs, for an average ratio of one HRBP for every 639 FTEs. There is one HRBP assigned to Halifax Transit who is responsible for providing support to 1,105 FTEs, almost double the average ratio. Halifax Transit also has a larger volume of grievances, employee complaints, absenteeism files, accommodation requests, and injury claims than other municipal business units.

Total Change	24/25	Change	23/24	Change	22/23	Change	21/22	Change	20/21
18	83	7	76	4	72	3	69	4	65



## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN011 - Collision Data Reporting (BT45)

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Information Technology

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN011 (BAL014)	Capital	\$0	\$0
Four Year Impact	Not applicable		
Adjustment Description	Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note outlining the funding for, Collision Data Reporting (BT45), with financial impacts to be considered as an option over budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to consider in the 2025/26 Budget.		
Priority Alignment	Council or Administrative Priority Area – Integrated Mobility Associated Outcome – Road Safety Strategy		

HRM's Public Works' Road Safety and Transportation division (PW) is responsible for maintaining a downward trend in the rate of fatal and serious injuries in the municipality, with a target of achieving zero fatalities and serious injuries for all road users in HRM by 2038.

In 2018/19, PW in partnership with Information Technology's (IT) Business Intelligence and Geographic Information Systems divisions, and Halifax Regional Police, developed an internal collision data analysis and reporting solution. The solution enables HRM to consume reported collision information and produce dashboard metrics, as well as conduct basic analyses on the data. The resulting outputs are available for both internal consumption as well as outwardly to the public, through HRM's Open Data Portal.

With the existing collision data, PW primarily focuses on the following key, point-in-time metrics:

- Number of fatal and injury collisions
- Collisions by mode (vehicle, pedestrians, cyclists)
- Frequency of collisions at intersections

PW wishes to expand the types and complexity of analysis they perform against collision data using industry-standard methods. Mature, purpose-built solutions are available in the market which leverage more advanced techniques for collision data analysis. The most expedient manner to augment PWs use of collision data is to procure and implement a proven third-party solution.

The new platform will enhance analytical capabilities, creating collision rates and predictive safety performance functions to ensure resources are allocated where they are most needed.

Consideration for the funding and delivery of a Collision Data Reporting solution (BT45) in fiscal 2025/26 will have two primary impacts: source of funding and IT capacity to deliver.

1. **Funding** – Would require Funding adjustments for the following projects included in the recently approved 2025/26 draft capital budget:

- **CI240003 – HRM Enterprise Service Management** (Inflight project)
  - Reduce 2025/26 funding request from \$260,000 down to \$10, 000
  - Add \$250,000 funding request to fiscal 2026/27 (previously \$0)
  - Work on this project will continue in 2025/26, leveraging previously approved funds with some project work being delayed until 2026/27
- **BT45 – Collision Data Reporting** (new project)
  - Add \$250,000 funding request to fiscal 2025/26 (previously \$0)
  - Reduce 2026/27 funding request from \$250,000 down to \$0

The net financial impact to capital budget for fiscals 2025/26 & 2026/27 is expected to be zero.

Budget Book Page #	Project #	Project Name	Current Funding Request		Revised Funding Requests	
			2025/26	2026/27	2025/26	2026/27
C26	CI240003	HRM Enterprise Service Management	\$260,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$250,000
C4	BT45	Collision Data Reporting	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0
Impact to Fiscal Budgets			\$260,000	\$250,000	\$260,000	\$250,000

2. **IT Capacity to Deliver** – IT is at full capacity as it relates to planned project delivery for fiscal 2025/26. The recommendation is to augment the scope of Project BT37 - Situational Awareness to include the procurement and implementation of the Collision Data Reporting tool. This may slow the progress of the planned scope for the Situational Awareness project but not in a significant enough manner to reduce the value of the initiative.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN012 - Removal of Armoured F350s – Emergency Response Team

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Halifax Regional Police

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN012 (BAL_015)	Capital	<b>2024/25 Armoured F350s:</b> \$0 <i>{No savings, sunk cost of \$475K}</i> Equipment Up Fit: (\$37K)  <b>Armoured Rescue Vehicle:</b> (\$500K) Equipment Up Fit: (\$100K)  <b>Change in Capital Budget: (\$637K)</b>	<b>2024/25 Armoured F350s:</b> \$0  <b>Armoured Rescue Vehicle:</b> \$0  <b>Change in Capital Budget: \$0</b>
	Operating (OCC)	2024/25 Armoured F350s: (\$18K)  Armoured Rescue Vehicle: (\$3K) <i>{Est. deployment date of Jan. 2026}</i>  <b>Change in Operating Budget: (\$21K)</b>	2024/25 Armoured F350s: (\$18K)  Armoured Rescue Vehicle: (\$12K)  <b>Change in Operating Budget: (\$30K)</b>
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	2024/25 Armoured F350s: (\$109K savings -> \$37K savings in Capital and \$72K savings in Operating Cost of Capital (OCC)) Armoured Rescue Vehicle: (\$639K savings -> \$600K savings in Capital and \$39K savings in Operating Cost of Capital (OCC)) <b>Total Overall Change in Budget Over 4 Years: (\$748K)</b>		
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note outlining the impact of removal of Armoured F350s – Emergency Response Team (\$475,000) and Armoured Rescue Vehicle – Emergency Response Team (\$600,000) from G36 of Vehicles, Vessels, and Equipment of the Capital Budget to be considered as an option under budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to consider in the 2025/26 Budget. The briefing note should contain information on type of vehicle (i.e., make, model, photos, or renderings etc.), proposed use of vehicle, and policies for use of vehicle.		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Communities – Safe Communities		

## Overview

Halifax Regional Police (HRP) is proposing the procurement of an armoured rescue vehicle (ARV) to better protect its officers and the public during high-risk incidents.

Policing is a complex and dangerous job. Every day, officers are sent into a variety of situations with little-to-no information to indicate what they are walking into. While it is not possible to mitigate all risks associated with policing, HRP and Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) have a responsibility to provide necessary equipment that is essential to the protection of officers and the public during emergencies.

In keeping with the municipality's Council Priority of Communities, and the Administrative Priority of Our People<sup>1</sup>, the procurement of an ARV is an important tool to help reduce the risk of injury to police and the public during high-risk situations. This request also aligns with the Board of Police Commissioners (BoPC) priority<sup>2</sup> of ensuring police services have the necessary policies, tools, and resources in place to ensure their health and safety, and the health and safety of the public now and into the future.

As one of HRM's emergency service providers, it is critical that HRP plan, prepare and train for potential high-risk situations which could occur within the municipality.

The Portapique mass casualty event in 2020, the Fredericton shooting in 2018, and the Moncton shooting in 2014 are sadly some of the tragic incidents seen in recent years which demonstrate the unimaginable does happen, and unfortunately, can happen close to home.

## Armoured Rescue Vehicle

An ARV is a specialized piece of equipment used in critical incidents. An ARV is designed to provide protection during high-risk operations. It is a commercially made four-wheel drive vehicle with reinforced armoured plating to provide enhanced high-level ballistic and fragmentation protection. The vehicle can carry first-responders and travel over varying terrain.

There would be no weaponry attached to the ARV. The vehicle would provide a secure environment for officers to respond to a variety of emergency calls and safely remove members of the public from dangerous situations.

An ARV would be an important tool in our toolkit so that HRP is prepared to respond to serious events. It is not a vehicle that would be seen on the streets of HRM regularly, it would only be used for specific incidents, training, or maintenance purposes and would have strict policies surrounding its use.

An ARV would serve as a general rescue vehicle as well as an Emergency Response Team (ERT) vehicle for the following types of calls:

- Citizen/officer rescue
- Barricaded subject
- Hostage-taking
- Active shooter(s)
- High-risk warrant services

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<sup>1</sup> [https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/budget-finance/strategicprioritiesplan\\_final\\_oct2024-web.pdf](https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/budget-finance/strategicprioritiesplan_final_oct2024-web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/media/84632>

- VIP details
- Tactical training
- High-risk prisoner escorts
- Any other high-risk situation where there is a reasonable belief a weapon is present and the utilization of the ARV could prevent death or injury to the public or members of the service
- Any other situation if authorized by the Chief of Police or designate including, but not limited to, disaster recovery assistance

HRP would like to assure Regional Council and members of the public that an ARV would not be used for routine crowd control or demonstrations. HRP reviewed, pre-planned, and had some form of a response to 197 demonstrations between January 1, 2023, and February 20, 2025. The RCMP Tactical Armoured Vehicle (TAV) was not used in any of these instances.

The ARV would also not be used for general patrol duties, parades, community events, or any other non-emergency situation other than those that have been previously listed above.

### **Current Practice**

When a serious incident occurs that exceed the capabilities, equipment, or training of regular patrol members, HRP's Emergency Response Team (ERT) is requested. ERT is selected to attend calls based on a risk assessment. This is the first step in the process. Additional information on the HRP ERT can be found on page 9 below.

Currently, if a high-risk situation were to occur in HRP jurisdiction and it was determined that an ARV would be an appropriate piece of equipment to deploy, a request would need to be made by a senior member of HRP to a senior member of RCMP to utilize their Tactical Armoured Vehicle (TAV - another name for an ARV).

### **Use of RCMP Tactical Armoured Vehicle**

When a critical incident<sup>3</sup> occurs, HRP stands up a Critical Incident Command. As part of this package, there would be an Incident Commander who would be responsible to oversee and mitigate the high-risk situation. One of the roles of the Incident Commander is to determine the resources and tools that may be required to deal with the unfolding situation. For example, the Incident Commander may determine that a hostage negotiator be brought in to assist in communicating with a barricaded individual.

The RCMP TAV can be requested for unplanned and planned events. Examples of events that could potentially trigger the use of a TAV include, but are not limited to:

- Active shooter(s)
- Citizen/officer rescue
- Barricaded subject
- High-risk warrant services

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<sup>3</sup> Critical Incidents are typically unplanned events such as hostage takings, barricaded persons, workplace violence, and other crisis situations.

The current process HRP follows to request the RCMP TAV for a planned event, such as a high-risk warrant service, is as follows:

1. ERT request:

- The Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO)<sup>4</sup> in charge of the ERT determines if the RCMP TAV is necessary to ensure the safety of both HRP members and the public during the incident
- If the ERT NCO determines the RCMP TAV is necessary, they would present the rationale to the Incident Commander, who has overall operational control

2. Incident Commander Review:

- The Incident Commander would review the ERT request for the RCMP TAV
- If the Incident Commander concurs with the request, a formal documented request is made to the RCMP, outlining all relevant information. The RCMP will thoroughly review the request from HRP and approve or deny it. The HRP Chief of Police is notified of the result

If approved, the TAV would come with four RCMP members who would work alongside HRP's ERT during the incident. In other words, not only does RCMP's TAV need to be in service and available for HRP to use, so too does four of their highly trained police officers.

In exigent circumstances where the incident is rapidly unfolding, such as an active shooter, the regular process for requesting the RCMP TAV may be circumvented given the totality of the circumstances.

The processes noted above ensures that all requests for the RCMP TAV are thoroughly evaluated and approved by the appropriate authorities, whether the situation is planned or arises unexpectedly.

### **RCMP Tactical Armoured Vehicle Availability**

The RCMP's TAV is an asset for all of H Division, meaning there is only one TAV for the entire province of Nova Scotia, stretching from Yarmouth to Meat Cove. If an incident is occurring in Yarmouth, the TAV would not be able to be utilized elsewhere in the province.

Between April 30, 2022, and February 1, 2025, HRP requested the RCMP's TAV in relation to 23 incidents. The chart below outlines the dates and call types the RCMP TAV was requested for during that period.

Date	Type of Call
22-05-04	Search warrant / homicide
22-04-30	Search warrant / firearms
22-05-07	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
22-10-03	Search warrant / firearms
23-05-04	Search warrant/ drugs and firearms
23-04-28	Search warrant/ drugs and firearms
23-05-26	Search warrant/firearms
23-09-28	Search warrant / firearms
23-10-27	Search warrant / firearms

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<sup>4</sup> A non-commissioned officer holds the rank of either Sergeant or Staff Sergeant

Date	Type of Call
23-11-09	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
23-05-04	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
24-03-09	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
24-02-23	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
24-06-17	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
24-07-17	Shooting barricade
24-08-20	Firearms/weapons warrant
24-10-03	Firearms call
24-10-06	Firearms/weapons warrant
24-12-17	Firearms warrant
25-01-02	High-risk warrant
25-01-24	Firearms warrant
25-01-29	Search warrant / drugs and firearms
25-02-01	Homicide arrest warrant

The RCMP's TAV is not always available when HRP requests it. In 2024, the RCMP TAV has been unavailable to HRP an average of 33% of the time due to RCMP calls for service and maintenance.

HRP does not track data related to unsuccessful RCMP TAV requests. The chart below shows four instances which can be recalled when the TAV was not available to HRP. In one of the identified cases, HRP was able to adapt their plans until the TAV was available for their use. Due to the nature of policing, that is not always possible.

Date	Type of Call
23-05-26	Search warrant/firearms – TAV unavailable
24-01-02	High-risk warrant – Originally unavailable
25-01-24	Firearms warrant - Unavailable at time
25-02-01	Homicide warrant – Unavailable – TAV out of town

Like RCMP, HRP would make its ARV available to RCMP or another policing agency within Nova Scotia, if it was required for a high-risk situation and available.

### **Armoured Rescue Vehicle Policy**

The ARV would be used in accordance with policies which will be established and approved by HRP.

HRP's Senior Policy Advisor has completed a jurisdictional scan of several policing agencies across Canada, all of which have their own ARVs. A policy related to ARV use has been drafted and is currently undergoing an internal review process.

Any ARV policy adopted by HRP will state that the ARV is to be approved internally prior to use and will contain direction around permitted and prohibited use of the vehicle. It will also outline how the ARV will be stored and that weekly inspections of the vehicle will take place.

## Armoured Rescue Vehicle Appearance

The actual appearance of the ARV would be determined by the recommended vendor based on the procurement process. Although the appearance of the ARV is unknown at this time, the following list outlines the basic specifications that will be part of whatever model ARV is chosen:

- F-550 chassis
- Vehicle Weight – 19,000lbs
- Diesel Powertrain
- Police markings
- Run flat tires
- Loud Hailer
- Emergency Lights
- Winch
- Hydraulic ram
- Chemical munitions injector<sup>5</sup>
- 360-degree observation rotation turret (not enclosed)
- Observation ports
- Infra-Red camera
- Roof mounted thermal camera
- Electric ballistic skirt<sup>6</sup>
- Inward facing jump seats
- Extended rear side steps
- Heated windshield
- NIJ level 4 armour equivalent

Information and photos on two commonly used ARVs by other municipal police forces in Canada can be found in **Attachment 1**.

## Armoured Rescue Vehicle Cost and Procurement Process

The estimated cost of the proposed ARV is \$600,000, as identified in the Capital Budget book on page G36<sup>7</sup>. It is anticipated that the life cycle of this vehicle would be 15 to 20 years.

HRM has received estimates from two vendors that were within \$10,000 of each other. Acquisition cost is expected to be under \$500,000. Additional funds have been budgeted to account for any upfitting, customization, inflation, and delivery charges. Property, Fleet & Environment has indicated that any leftover funds would be used towards other planned vehicles purchases. A detailed cost breakdown of the proposed ARV will be available once the contract has been tendered/awarded.

If HRM wishes to purchase a specific ARV, a sole source procurement could be considered as opposed to a competitive tender process. Additional information outlining the differences between a sole source procurement and a competitive tender process can be found on page 9 below.

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<sup>5</sup> Chemical agent munitions are a less lethal option that could be deployed in a critical incident, i.e. pepper spray

<sup>6</sup> Armour plate protection that descends to the ground to prevent shots being fired under the vehicle

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/budget-finances/2025-26-draft-capital-plan\\_digital.pdf](https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/budget-finances/2025-26-draft-capital-plan_digital.pdf)



## **Armoured Rescue Vehicles in the Canadian Landscape**

From coast-to-coast, many urban police forces within Canada have ARV's as part of their operational response capability including, but not limited to, the following policing agencies:

- Toronto Police Service
- Montreal Police Service
- Calgary Police Service
- Peel Regional Police
- Ottawa Police Service
- Edmonton Police Service
- York Regional Police
- Winnipeg Police Service
- Vancouver Police Department
- Durham Regional Police Service
- Halton Regional Police Service
- Waterloo Regional Police Service
- Hamilton Police Service
- Niagara Police Service
- London Police Service
- Saskatoon Police Service
- Regina Police Service
- Saint John Regional Police
- Fredericton Police Service

The majority of the police agencies listed above have had an ARV in operation for more than a decade. Images of the above ARVs can be found at **Attachment 2**.

## **Health and Safety Complaint**

In 2023, HRP's ERT responded to 150 events in an official capacity, 55 of which were deemed to be critical incidents. ERT also recovered 46 firearms during their operations. The type of firearms which were recovered ranged from pistols to high-powered assault style rifles.

These types of events present a high-risk of injury, including the risk of fatalities to officers and the public. An ARV is a means of mitigating the risk of personal injury to officers and the public in these types of high-risk scenarios.

As noted above, HRP currently relies on the RCMP TAV to satisfy its employee occupational health and safety obligations. Repeatedly, the RCMP TAV has been unavailable to HRP due to RCMP operations in Nova Scotia and vehicle maintenance.

There is currently an occupational health and safety complaint before the Nova Scotia Department of Labour in relation to HRP not having the appropriate tools to keep its members safe, in this case, an ARV.

## Purchase of F-350 Armoured Trucks

As part of the 2024/25 Capital Budget process, HRP put forward a request for two F-350 armoured trucks, which was approved by HRM. The F-350s will replace existing F-150 trucks, which are not armoured. The F-350s will be used by ERT for day-to-day operations and serve a different function than the proposed ARV.

The F-350s were procured through the public competitive tender process file 2024-0225. The tender was posted on April 8, 2024, and closed April 29, 2024. The purchase award was issued on May 21, 2024. HRM received one submitted qualified bid, and the contract was awarded to Exec Armor in Ontario.

On March 4, 2025, one of the two F-350 armoured trucks was delivered to HRM from the successful vendor for transfer of ownership and payment. The second F-350 armoured truck is tentatively scheduled to be delivered to HRM the week of March 24.

The total cost for these two vehicles is \$474,657 (net HST included). The options regarding the armoured F-350s are as follows:

1. Pay outstanding balance in full and accept the outstanding vehicle upon delivery
2. Pay outstanding balance in full and not accept the outstanding vehicle

The financial impact remains the same as HRM is contractually obligated to pay for the vehicles.

The one remaining F-350 armoured truck is currently in Halifax at an emergency vehicle upfitting vendor. The vehicle is having accessories installed at this location under the direction of the awarded vendor Exec Armor.

The modifications to the F-350s include the following:

- Spacecap installation
- Front reinforced bumper
- Enhanced vehicle electronics to accommodate radios, lighting etc.
- Equipment cabinets installed

Photos of the F-350s can be found in **Attachment 3**.

The F-350 armoured trucks are expected to be available to be placed into service in March or April 2025. Once in service, the F-350s will replace the current fleet of two F-150 trucks currently being used daily by HRP's ERT.

As mentioned above, the current F-150 trucks used by the ERT do not have any armour. Additional differences between the existing F-150 trucks and the F-350 armoured trucks include:

- Run Flat Tire system
- Body panels are reinforced with level 3 armor (sides, roof, and other areas)
- Certified bullet resistant glass
- Hidden reinforced front and rear bumpers
- A rear cap with higher height clearance inside

The F-150 trucks currently being used by the ERT were purchased in 2020 and 2022. They will be re-assigned to replace other aging, poor condition vehicles within HRM Corporate Fleet.

All HRM business units, except for Halifax Transit buses, have their vehicles procured through Corporate Fleet. This is true for Halifax Fire apparatus, snowplows, library vans, parking enforcement vehicles, etc. The reasoning for this is that Corporate Fleet is responsible for the procurement, disposal, repair, and maintenance of all HRM vehicles and mobile equipment, except for Halifax Transit revenue assets (buses).

The F-350s are included in the 2025/26 Capital Budget book only to identify \$475,000 of funds remaining in the Police Expansion account CV240005 as outstanding or potential carryover to the next fiscal due to the vehicles, to date, not being delivered to HRM for transfer of ownership, thus the invoice has not been paid.

### **Differences between F-350 armoured trucks and an Armoured Rescue Vehicle**

The proposed ARV and the F-350 armoured trucks serve different purposes.

The ARV is only to be used in high-risk situations which will be outlined in policy. The F-350 armoured trucks will look like regular trucks and be used daily as the ERT's primary method of transportation when responding to calls.

Some of the key differences between the ARV and the F-350s include, but are not limited to:

<b>F-350</b>	<b>Armoured Rescue Vehicle</b>
The F-350 has level 3 armour/ ballistic windows. However, armour protection is limited to the cab only	The ARV is fully armoured with level 4 armour – the highest available to police
The F-350 only seats four fully equipped ERT officers	The ARV seats up to 10 persons, including drivers
The F-350 is not able to carry a stretcher	The ARV designed to carry a stretcher for rescues
The F-350 is designed for routine patrol operations	The ARV is not intended for patrol operations. Its purpose is to provide a response to critical incidents such as armed events, warrant services etc.
The F-350 is not able to get close enough to a subject to utilize less lethal tools, conduct negotiations, or utilize other de-escalation methods without having to roll down a window or open the door of the vehicle	The ARV provides a safe platform for police officers to utilize less lethal tools, such as delivering a phone for negotiations. It also provides a face-to-face platform contact for negotiators
The F-350 is able to immediately respond to rapidly unfolding events	The ARV is stored until required for use and not immediately available. The ARV must also have trained drivers and be approved for use
The F-350 cannot be used in all firearm situations due to its armour limitations	The ARV can get much closer to an armed threat because of the level of armour, allowing it to be in close proximity to the threat
There is a diminished ability to provide rescue and aid under fire due to its limited space and armour protection available in the F-350	The ARV can provide lifesaving rescue to citizens and police officers while under fire due to its level of armour. It is also able to transport multiple people,

F-350	Armoured Rescue Vehicle
	including injured parties, given its size and ability to carry a stretcher

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### **Additional Information**

#### **Halifax Regional Police Emergency Response Team**

The Halifax Regional Police (HRP) Emergency Response Team (ERT) is a full-time unit of highly trained individuals. ERT is comprised of 17 members (three Non-Commissioned Officers or NCOs and 14 Constables).

HRPs ERT mandate is to respond to high-risk calls that exceed the capabilities, equipment or training of regular patrol members.

Included in these types of calls are:

- Armed and Barricaded Persons
- Hostage situations
- High-risk arrests
- High-risk warrant
- High-risk K-9 tracks
- Close protection details

All ERT members must have one year of police experience prior to applying to ERT and have completed a Tactical Operators Course. They also engage in continuous and scheduled training to ensure all mandatory training requirements are met. Some ERT members also have a higher level of medical training.

#### **Sole Source Procurement versus Competitive Tender Process**

Sending a vehicle to tender is a competitive procurement process to ensure that HRM, as a public entity, achieves best value for money while maintaining transparency, fairness, openness and consistency within the vendor community. Decisions are based on clear, well-defined criteria, ensuring compliance with all applicable legislation. This process is published publicly to attract the most qualified bidders so that the award is based on desired outcomes.

A sole source procurement is a type of alternative procurement that must meet defined criteria as set out in Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) and Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) trade agreements, with specific requirements that must be met to justify the use of an Alternative Procurement.

This specific purchase is subject to both trade agreements, HRM's Procurement Policy, Administrative Order 2022-012-ADM aligns with these agreements.

In instances where a sole source is considered, due diligence will be performed, as alternative procurement methods cannot be used to bypass competitive procurement processes.

**Attachment 1** – Cambli Blackwolf and the Terradyne Gurkha MPV

**Attachment 2** – Armoured Rescue Vehicles in the Canadian landscape

**Attachment 3** - F-350 Armoured Truck photos

## Attachment 1 - Cambli Blackwolf and the Terradyne Gurkha MPV

### The Cambli Blackwolf and Terradyne Gurkha MPV

The Cambli Blackwolf and Terradyne Gurkha MPV are two armoured rescue vehicles that are commonly used by other municipal police forces across Canada. A description of each is below for reference:

#### Cambli Blackwolf:

- Manufactured in Quebec, Canada
- Cambli submitted a bid to HRM during the ARV procurement process in 2019 and scored second
- This vehicle currently used by the Fredericton Police Force, the Saint John Police Force and RCMP
- The speed of the vehicle is identified as:
  - 0-60km/h: 8.5 seconds
  - 0-100km/h: 18.9 seconds
  - Top Speed: 155 km/h
- Video of the vehicle can be found [here](#) (please note, some accessories seen in the video are optional)

Sample Photos of the Cambli Blackwolf:





Terradyne Gurkha MPV:



- Manufactured in Ontario
- This was the successful bidder during HRM's procurement process in 2019, which was ultimately cancelled
- This vehicle is currently used by Halton Regional Police Service and the Winnipeg Police Service
- The top speed is identified as 110km/h

Both the Cambli Blackwolf and the Terradyne Gurkha MPV would be constructed on a Ford F550 or F650 4X4 chassis, due to the ARV being a larger heavier vehicle.

Sample Photos of the Terradyne Gurkha MPV:







## Attachment 2 - Armoured Rescue Vehicles in the Canadian landscape

### Armoured Rescue Vehicles in the Canadian Landscape

The following images depict the Armoured Rescue Vehicles (ARVs) of other Canadian policing agencies.

#### 1. Toronto Police Service



#### 2. Montreal Police Service





### 3. Calgary Police Service



### 4. Peel Regional Police



## 5. Ottawa Police Service



## 6. Edmonton Police Service





**7. York Regional Police**



**8. Winnipeg Police Service**



**9. Vancouver Police Department**



**10. Durham Regional Police Service**



## 11. Halton Reginal Police Service



### MPV

**Chassis:**  
Ford F550 4x4  
**Engine Options:**  
6.7L V8 turbo diesel  
6.8L V10 gas engine  
**Transmission:**  
6 speed automatic  
**Transfer Case:**  
2-speed transfer case with  
electronic shift on the fly 4x4  
**Fuel Capacity:**  
40 gallons / 151 L  
**GVWR:**  
19,500 lbs / 8,845 kg  
**Curb Weight:**  
16,800 lbs / 7,620 kg  
**Top Speed:**  
Tire rated @ 81 mph / 130 km/h  
**Transportability:**  
USAF air transport certified for C-  
130, C-17 & C-5 aircraft



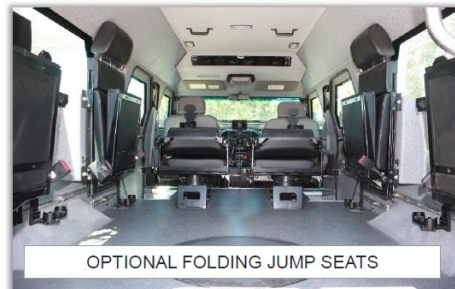
PROTECTION WITH PRESENCE



## INTERIOR



## INTERIOR



PROTECTION WITH PRESENCE



## 12. Waterloo Regional Police Service



## 13. Hamilton Police Service



#### 14. Niagara Police Service



#### 15. London Police Service





## 16. Saskatoon Police Service



## 17. Regina Police Service



## 18. Saint John Regional Police



## 19. Fredericton Police Force



### Attachment 3 - F-350 Armoured Truck photos

#### F-350 Armoured Truck

The image below is a reference picture of an F-350 with Space Kap.





The image below shows the driver's side view of the actual F-350 armoured truck that was purchased.



The image below shows the actual Space Kap that will be installed on the F-350 armoured truck.



## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN013 - Capital Project CT190006 – Road Safety Improvement

COW Date: February 5, 2025

Business Unit: Public Works

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN013 (BAL_016)	Capital	\$930,000 (One-Time)	N/A
Four Year Impact	N/A		
Adjustment Description	Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note identifying potential opportunities, impacts and budget requirements to expand Capital Project CT190006 – Road Safety Improvement to include additional items that could be delivered in the 2025/26 fiscal year.		
Priority Alignment	Integrated Mobility – Safe & Accessible Mobility Network		

In support of Regional Council’s priority to provide a *“Safe & Accessible Integrated Mobility Network”*, Public Works staff implements various measures through stand-alone and integrated projects as part of Traffic & Parking Management’s Road Safety Improvement Program.

The Road Safety Improvement Program focusses on the installation and upgrade of road and traffic related infrastructure to help address identified safety issues and reduce overall risk for all road users. Projects can range from larger, more complex infrastructure work such as full traffic signal installations or intersection upgrades to minor infrastructure to support improved pedestrian accessibility. The Road Safety Improvement Program also incorporates items such as purchase and installation of equipment or materials to enhance existing infrastructure (accessible pedestrian signal (APS) equipment, pedestrian activated beacons, durable pavement markings, etc.) as well as studies and assessments to support identification and prioritization of future work.

The capital budget associated with the Road Safety Improvement Program has steadily increased, since creation of the program in 2019, from approximately \$1.2 million to its current level of \$5.5 million. Workplans delivered through the Road Safety Improvement Program in the last three years (fiscal 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25) were in the range of \$4.7 million to \$6.1 million. Experience since creation of the program, and specifically in the last three years, has shown that with balancing of project complexity current internal and external resourcing can support successful delivery of a program valued at approximately \$5.5 million.



The current 2025/26 proposed capital workplan is estimated at \$5,400,000 and was created by assessing the size and complexity of various projects, identification of integration opportunities, project readiness and factoring in current internal and external resources to deliver. The proposed workplan was not adjusted as part of the initial budget reduction exercise prior to presentation to Budget Committee and so would represent a program that could reasonably be delivered as part of the upcoming construction season that fell within the current budget envelope.

Although the current program would represent what could be reasonably delivered within the 2025/26 fiscal year, somewhat larger programs have been successfully delivered in the past. Considering current timing, it would not be possible to include items that would require significant up-front work to be ready for delivery, such as intersection modification, major traffic signal upgrades, or traffic signal installation.

Where the request from Budget Committee specified consideration of items that could be delivered in fiscal 2025/26, staff reviewed the current workplan to identify opportunities to expand projects already included in the current work plan, add new items to the workplan, provide flexibility in delivery of smaller items, or help with readiness for delivery for future workplans. The following table provides a list of items that have the potential to be added to the current capital workplan and be delivered in fiscal 2025/26, along with estimated cost associated with each.

**Table 1**  
**Options for Expansion of the 2025/26 Road Safety Improvement Program**

Item	Description	Quantity	Funding
1	<i>RRFB Equipment</i> Purchase of RRFB equipment for crosswalk upgrades	11 crosswalks	\$80,000
2	<i>Signal Equipment</i> Purchase / installation of signal equipment to convert RA-5 to half-signal	5 crosswalks	\$150,000
3	<i>APS Equipment</i> Purchase and installation of accessible pedestrian signals	6 intersections	\$100,000
4	<i>Durable Pavement Markings</i> Expand durable / high visibility crosswalk marking	4 corridors	\$400,000
5	<i>Design Consultants</i> Contract design services to accelerate implementation of Top Ten High Collision Intersections upgrades	4 intersections	\$200,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$930,000</b>

### **Risk**

The timing associated with the request for increased funding to expand the current workplan provided limited time for staff to adequately scope additional locations identified for items 1, 2 and 3 in Table 1. As a result, there is potential that during implementation staff may identify more extensive work needed to support the installation, so there is risk that some locations may not be completed in the current fiscal year and would be deferred to a future year to complete the necessary work. There is also a risk that expanded / larger equipment orders could result in delays due to availability and supply chains, further increasing the risk of completing an expanded workplan within the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Expanding the Road Safety Improvements workplan in relation to items 1, 2 and 3 in Table 1 would also have potential to impact resources (staff, equipment, etc.) required for other programs such as the installation of signage for the 40 km/h Neighbourhood Speed Limit program, installation / relocation of radar speed display signs, and other capital projects requiring resources for installation / replacement of traffic signs or equipment.

Overall, expansion of the Road Safety Improvements Program workplan through the items identified in Table 1 is considered low risk. Although there is risk associated with program expansion to include items 1, 2 and 3, the equipment purchased for those items would still be on-hand and available, once received, to allow for flexibility to more quickly address other locations that may be identified and do not require significant additional work to accept an upgrade. Additionally, items 4 and 5 would have the bulk of work undertaken by a contractor and consultants so there would only be minor impact to current resources resulting in very limited risk to incorporating those items in an expended workplan to deliver them within fiscal 2025/26.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN015 - Funding for CT1000012 Ross Road Realignment

**COW Date:** February 5, 2025

**Business Unit:** Public Works

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN015 (BAL_017)	Capital	\$400,000		\$2,600,000	
Four Year Impact	The four-year impact to expedite CT000012 Ross Road Realignment requires the advancement of the \$3,000,000 budget from 2027/28 to instead be budgeted as \$400,000 in 2025/26 and \$2,600,000 in 2026/27. Funding of \$100,000 has already been approved for 2025/26 in the capital budget. The total cost of this project, including previously approved budgets, would be \$3,732,440.				
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28
	Current Approved Capital Budget	\$100,000	-	\$3,000,000	-
	Total Four-Year Impact	\$3,100,000			
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28
	Approved Capital Budget	\$100,000	-	-	-
	Expedited Capital Budget	\$400,000	\$2,600,000	-	-
	Total	\$500,000	\$2,600,000	-	-
	Total Four-Year Impact	\$3,100,000			
Adjustment Description	Provide a briefing note outlining the funding for CT000012 Ross Road Realignment, to be considered as an option over budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to considered in the 2025/26 Budget.				
Priority Alignment	Integrated Mobility – Safe & Accessible Mobility Network				

## **Background**

The Ross Road Realignment project involves the alignment of Ross Road with Lake Major Road forming a four-leg intersection. This intersection could be configured as a signalized intersection or as a roundabout. This project is being completed as a road safety priority.

There are several related projects located in this project area.

**Future Serviced Communities Study (Akoma Lands):** The Regional Plan Review has identified the need for additional serviced lands to accommodate population growth. With provincial funding support, the municipality is conducting a series of technical studies to inform decisions about potential serviced development in four study areas, one of which includes the lands owned by Akoma Holdings on the south side of Main Street just west of the proposed intersection realignment. The study will include a high-level assessment of the infrastructure requirements to support development of the site, including transportation. The findings of the study could inform secondary planning work for the Akoma lands, which would include more detailed study.

**Main Street Functional Plan:** The plan will review the functional aspects and transportation infrastructure needs of the Main Street corridor, considering current and future development scenarios. The Study Area includes the 5.5 km section of Main Street between Forest Hills Parkway and Ross Road. This study is planned to begin in 2025/26 and will examine opportunities for multimodal improvements. Results of the Main Street Functional Plan, once approved by Regional Council, will inform the approach to planning and design of the corridor over the next several years.

**107 Extension from Montague Road to East Preston:** Nova Scotia Public Works (NSPW) is currently in the planning stages of the 107 Extension that would see Highway 107 extended from Montague Road connecting to the existing 107, likely somewhere between Ross Road and Highway 7 at East Preston. Ongoing planning and design work that is expected to continue for the next several years will identify the final alignments and intersection configuration, which may impact the Main Street corridor and the Ross Road intersection.

**Coordination between the municipality and NSPW:** Ross Road is the divide between the municipality and provincially owned and operated roads. Any intersection improvement would need to be coordinated.

## **Impact on Priority**

Budget (\$100K) has been provided to complete the conceptual design of the Ross Road Realignment in 2025/26. There is risk in proceeding with design without the planning work completed in that changes may be required to the intersection as the other projects develop, but they are not anticipated to have large scale negative impact. The additional budget year is provided for cross agency design and acceptance, procurement, and tendering.

Detailed design work was planned to be completed in house. To advance the project more rapidly, this work would need to be contracted to an outside consultant. It is possible to have the design completed

to be tendered in the Spring of 2026, especially if alternate procurement methods such as Design Build are employed.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN016 - Hiring Freeze Savings

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Community Safety

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN016 (BAL_018)	Operating	(\$166,500) (Ongoing)		(\$222,000)	
Four Year Impact	The 4-year savings associated with the following positions would be as follows:				
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	(\$166,500)	(\$222,000)	(\$225,300)	(\$228,700)	(\$841,500)
Adjustment Description	Direct the CAO to provide a BN outlining saving for freezing hiring for the proposed Training and Exercise Specialist and Community Outreach Coordinator FTE outlined in Community Safety’s 2025/26 proposed operating budget as an option under budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to consider in the 2025/26 Budget				
Priority Alignment	Responsible Administration – Well-Managed				

At this time, Community Safety (CS) will rescind both positions from the BAL.

#### Training and Exercise Specialist

Emergency Management (EM) will separate the two components: training and exercise (planning – preparation) by assigning them to existing full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

- Exercise requirements will be transferred to the Business Continuity Specialist (BCS). A review of the BCS position and the exercising requirements confirmed that this integration is feasible with appropriate support.
- The training responsibilities of the Training and Exercise Specialist will be incorporated into an existing EM position.

#### Community Outreach Coordinator

Programs and Partnerships will evaluate a current vacant position within the BU to address the service needs of the Community Mobility Team.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN017 - Firefighter Cancer Screening

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Human Resources

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN017 (BAL_019)	Operating	\$0	\$0
Four Year Impact			
Adjustment Description	Covering early cancer screening for Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) volunteer and career firefighters		
Priority Alignment	Our People – Healthy & Safe Workplace		

#### Service Implications and/or impact on Priority

##### Origin

February 12, 2025: As part of the public participation component of the Budget Committee meeting, Halifax Professional Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 268 union president Brendan Meagher presented an overview of the current cancer risk for firefighters. Mr. Meagher concluded his presentation by requesting a motion from Halifax Regional Council to support early preventative screening for career and volunteer firefighters associated with the nineteen presumptive cancers recognized in Nova Scotia.

February 14, 2025: Halifax Regional Budget Committee requested a briefing note on covering cancer screening to be considered as an option over budget on the Budget Adjustment List (BAL).

##### Discussion

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency (HRFE) firefighters work to protect residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality through a variety of activities including, but not limited to, fire suppression, rescue and preventative actions. As demonstrated in 2023, HRFE firefighters are also called upon to support the increasing risks associated with climate change (Tantallon Wildfires & Flooding).

Although every effort is made to protect firefighters from work-related hazards, there is evidence that repeated and acute exposures to the conditions present in their work environment increase the likelihood of illness and disease. For example, firefighters face an increased risk of developing a variety of cancers

due to the occupational exposures as part of regular activities over a period of time (fire suppression, rescue and training exercises) and acute exposures related to catastrophic and extreme fire fighting.

In Canada, roles and responsibilities for health care services are governed by the Canada Health Act and shared between provincial and territorial governments and the federal government. The provincial government is responsible for the management, organization and delivery of health care services for their residents. Provincial healthcare must ensure all medically necessary services are provided by hospitals and physicians – if a service is considered medically necessary, the full cost must be covered by the public health care insurance plan. Oncology services are delivered by the provincial healthcare system. A gap exists with the recent research identifying the elevated risk faced by firefighters, and little research following these findings to identify the optimal screening protocols specifically for firefighters. HRFE is actively engaged with the medical research community to help develop and conduct research to determine these optimal screening protocols for firefighters.

In Nova Scotia, 19 primary site cancers have been recognized under the Firefighters' Compensation Regulations under Section 35 A of the Workers' Compensation Act of Nova Scotia as being work related occupational disease. If a career or volunteer firefighter covered by WCB is diagnosed with one of these primary site cancers and meets the minimum employment/volunteer periods they are entitled to benefits, medical aid treatment and any associated Permanent Medical Impairment. It is well established in medical science that early detection of cancers presents significantly improved outcomes and prevent deaths. However, despite the introduction of these benefits based on the science showing firefighters elevated risks, a comprehensive early detection and treatment program was not established.

Based on an initial review which included consultations with members of the HRFE management team, submissions from the IAFF, external conversations with the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and the Province of Nova Scotia it was determined there are no existing cancer screening programs for firefighters in Nova Scotia.

Cancer screening programs from across Canada were reviewed which include annual medical screening guidelines for primary health care providers (Toronto, British Columbia), [Health Canada's National Framework on Cancers Linked to Firefighting](#) with a specific focus on secondary prevention (cancer detection) as well as proposed cancer screening services from Atlantic Offshore Medical Services provided to IAFF.

While the desire to introduce regular cancer screening for HRM firefighters is well intentioned, caution should be exercised before expending funding due to the lack of clear validated medical research on screening protocols specific to firefighters. As an example, the proposal in front of council presents a gender bias potentially discriminating towards female firefighters based on screening at 10 years of service. Women are at high-risk of cervical cancer from day one of firefighting and some literature points towards annual screening from the age of 21 and beginning of employment for women. Factors such as this require consideration for each cancer type and need to be built into the overall program.



Without medical guidance on the appropriate frequency and types of testing it is difficult to properly account for the potential risks associated with some testing procedures (CT scan, colonoscopies, etc.), and each individual firefighter's health history and predispositions to various types of cancer need to be considered. In addition, beyond screening, there is a need to assess the availability and expertise of treating practitioners/clinicians and to more fully engage potential invested partners (WCB, NS Health, other fire services, etc.) to develop a broader strategic approach to establish a cancer screening program for firefighters at HRM.

HRFE has internal expertise, an established plan, begun consultations, implemented a working group under the health and safety committee based on HRFE's Strategic Plan that includes the strategic goal to "Foster Health & Wellbeing" including the strategic objective 1C.4 "HRFE will research center of excellence models and consult with HRFE members on a comprehensive firefighter physical health, wellness, screening, and rehabilitation centre program; and evaluate opportunities for integrated clinicians and a health trending program for firefighter specific longitudinal healthcare and wellness".

On March 4, 2025, staff met with our current occupational health service provider. During this conversation the service provider highlighted their process for cancer screening and firefighter health assessments in other jurisdictions across Canada. With respect to cancer screening for firefighters, they consider NFPA 1582 "Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments" the most appropriate model. They recommend that an occupational medicine physician team be the central point of coordination of the assessment process based on periodic medical examinations which include surveillance for cancers.

The development of a program for the occupational medical evaluation of firefighters requires additional research, consultation with the Province of Nova Scotia, the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, medical specialists and stakeholders. This also requires an assessment of delivery models and possibly a procurement process for the provision of the service and cost elements.

Based on the available evidence it is premature to provide funding for the creation of a cancer screening program for HRFE firefighters at this time. HRFE and Human Resources will continue to engage with appropriate system partners (NS Health, WCB-NS, medical community, service providers, etc.) to determine the most appropriate approach to provide early cancer screening for HRFE firefighters.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN018 - Moving funding for CR180006 – New Paving Street – HRM Roads

COW Date: February 20, 2025

Business Unit: Public Works

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN018	Capital	\$0	\$2,000,000
Four Year Impact	2025/26 \$0 2026/27 \$2,000,000 2027/28 \$2,000,000 2028/29 \$2,000,000		
Adjustment Description	That the Budget Committee request that the Chief Administrative Officer provide a briefing note on moving funding ahead from 2029/2030 to 2026/2027 for “CR180006 – New Paving Street – HRM Roads” for consideration on the 2025/2026 Budget Adjustment List.		
Priority Alignment	Responsible Administration – Well Managed		

#### Background

In January 2024, a report was brought to Regional Council titled “Gravel Road Paving Program – Halifax Regional Municipality Roads”, which reviewed the potential paving of all municipality-owned gravel roads and developed the Gravel Road Paving Program based on the following criteria:

- a. Cost-benefit of paving, compared to 20 years of maintenance
- b. Existing road conditions and level of maintenance
- c. Road classification
- d. Traffic volume
- e. Storm water management
- f. Winter maintenance
- g. Surrounding public amenities such as parks, schools, lake access, etc.; and further

Of the 78 municipally owned gravel roads, 63 were recommended for paving beginning in 2027. This program is anticipated to take approximately ten years to complete with a capital cost of \$1.5-2.0 million per year.

During the development of the 2025/26 Capital Budget Plan, Public Works refined the four-year Capital Plan with consideration of the municipality's operational capacity and engineering and construction industry capacity to strategically prioritize the delivery of the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Bicycle Facilities program, Active Transportation (AT) facilities, and multi-modal corridor projects, while maintaining focus on state-of-good repair work. As a result, spending on paving of gravel roads "CR180006 – New Paving Streets HRM Roads" was recommended as a priority beginning in 2029/30.

Given the timing of the construction season, the design and construction workplan for 2025/26 is well-underway and is considered complete. If Regional Council finds that gravel road paving should be prioritized above other work, design work could begin as part of the 2026/27 workplan, with associated capital funding beginning as early as 2026/27.

Prioritizing gravel roads paving would divert resources from other priority projects such as the AAA program, AT facilities, and state-of-good repair work for existing roads. At Regional Council's direction to re-prioritize, staff would complete a more extensive exercise to reprioritize the Capital program.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN019 - Urban Forest Management Plan 2025/26 Planting

**COW Date:** February 20, 2025

**Business Unit:** Public Works

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN019 (BAL011)	Operating / Capital	(\$944,000) Operating and (\$892,000) Capital	(\$43,000)
Four Year Impact	2025/26 savings of \$1,836,000 from not planting trees. 2026/27 savings of \$43,000 in operating costs of capital.		
Adjustment Description	Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note on the impacts of removing funding for approximately 2,000 trees scheduled for planting in 2025/26 as part of the Urban Forest Management Plan. This includes \$944,000 from the Public Works operating budget and \$892,000 from capital project PW01 - Urban Forest Management Plan Implementation, to be considered as a budget reduction for 2025/26.		
Priority Alignment	Responsible Administration – Well-Managed		

#### **Background**

Street trees are considered an integral part of the urban streetscape in the municipality, providing a myriad of benefits from heat island and noise pollution reduction to stormwater mitigation, traffic calming, and protection of pedestrians and cyclists from the vehicle portion of the roadway. Trees improve the livability of our municipality, and as 80% of residents live within the urban area of the municipality, street trees represent the primary connection of our residents to the natural environment.

Street and park trees enter the HRM Asset Registry in one of four ways:

1. Planted via greenfield development (subdivisions)
2. Planted via infill development (densification)
3. Planted via a Public Works, Parks & Recreation, or Facilities capital projects
4. Planted via the Urban Forestry Planting Program

Most trees planted in the municipality enter through the Urban Forestry Planting Program, which focuses on larger planting stock planted either in the road right-of-way or in urban parkland. The average price to plant a tree in a streetscape setting with a grass boulevard was \$930 in 2024/25, which includes a two-year watering program and warranty. Trees can also be planted using products such as soil cells, a

necessity for sustaining a tree to maturity in an area hardened by asphalt or concrete. These products can cost upwards of \$20,000/tree; however, costs have been declining with increased competition from new vendors.

The Urban Forestry Planting Program consists of both a replacement and new-tree component. The replacement component utilizes operational funding to replant street trees lost due to storms, disease, or trees that have come to the end of life. Recent increases in weather events and the introduction of invasive species have meant that the number of tree losses has increased in recent years, now totaling approximately 1,000 street trees/year. The second component utilizing capital funding represents growth, and plants new trees in streetscapes or urban parkland where trees have not previously been planted.

Since the adoption of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) in 2013, the municipality has planted ~18,000 street trees, shy of its goal of 26,700 or ~2,670 trees per year.

### **Urban Forest Management Plan (origin of Capital Project PW01)**

In 2023, a project began to update the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP). Due to the time required to complete the update, the municipality took a 'gap year' in 2024 and paused new plantings and committed to return to Regional Council prior to the next fiscal year with a planting plan informed by an updated UFMP. This update, named the Urban Forest Management Plan, is expected to be before Regional Council prior to 2024/25 fiscal year end; however, to prevent a second year of reduced planting, Capital Project PW01 was presented to Regional Council for consideration. PW01 budgeted \$892,000 for the 2025/26 fiscal year to plant approximately 1,000 net-new trees. This, coupled with a replanting target of ~1,000 trees, total approximately 2,000 trees planted per year.

### **Service Implications and/or impact on Priority**

All Public Works Urban Forestry tree planting is conducted by contractors. This delivery method ensures adaptability to annual fluctuations in budgets and allows for establishment of costs and provision of warranties.

While there is no service standard for tree replanting, residents have come to expect a tree to be replanted within a reasonable period from when one has been removed. In recent years, staff have typically been able to replant a tree within two years of a previous tree's removal.

Many new trees have been lost to hurricanes or invasive species such as Emerald Ash Borer in recent years and climate change is expected to increase the prevalence of these two stresses. A reduction in the urban tree inventory today creates greater demand on replanting efforts in future years. Further, as trees provide exponentially greater benefits at maturity than in youth, the sooner trees are replanted, the sooner residents experience their benefits.

## **Removing 2,000 trees from UFMP**

### **Operating Budget**

Pausing the replacement tree planting program in 2025/26 results in a one-year savings of \$944,000. With an average loss of ~1,000 trees per year, this would mean a reduction in total street tree inventory of ~1,000 trees.

Eliminating this budget for the 2025/26 fiscal year would mean that residents who have lost a tree in front of their property and are expecting a tree to be replanted, would have to wait an additional year.

### **Capital Project PW01**

Pausing Capital Project PW01 in 2025/26 would result in a one-time savings of \$892,000 and a second year of no net increase to the urban tree canopy. As the Urban Forest Management Plan planting target currently is proposed as a net 25,000 new trees over 25 years (1,000 trees/year), this reduction would either need to be considered in an amendment to the plan prior to its adoption or be considered in future years' planting programs as a deficit.

Capital Project PW01 is proposed to be funded by Capital Renewal funding and eliminating the project would not impact external funding.

## **Reducing tree planting by \$1,000,00 in 2025/26.**

### **Operating Budget**

Reducing tree planting by \$1,000,000 would necessitate a reduction of the replacement tree planting program in 2025/26 by 100 trees and result in a one-year savings of \$108,000. With an average loss of ~1,000 trees per year, this would mean a reduction in total street tree inventory of ~100 trees.

Reduction of the replacement planting budget by \$108,000 for the 2025/26 fiscal year would mean that ~10% of residents who have lost a tree in front of their property and are expecting a tree to be replanted, would have to wait an additional year.

### **Capital Project PW01**

Reducing tree planting by \$1,000,000 would necessitate the pausing of Capital Project PW01 in 2025/26, which would result in a one-time savings of \$892,000 and a second year of no net increase to the urban tree canopy. As the Urban Forest Management Plan planting target currently is proposed as a net 25,000 new trees over 25 years (1,000 trees/year), this reduction would either need to be considered in an amendment to the plan prior its adoption or be considered in future years' planting programs as a deficit.

Capital Project PW01 is proposed to be funded by Capital Renewal funding and eliminating the project would not impact external funding.

### **Additional Information**

In 2020, Halifax was designated as one of Canada's first 'Tree Cities of the World' and has maintained this recognition each year since. A program of the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, being a Tree City of the World recognizes Halifax globally for our leadership in Urban Forestry. Eliminating both the operating program budget and the capital planting project could jeopardize this recognition as this investment is a criterion for annual application.

### **Grant Funding:**

Opportunities for federal and provincial funding, as well as private partnerships for tree planting, are always being explored to reduce the municipality's costs.

- The recent federal 2 Billion Trees (2BT) initiative has resulted in a number of opportunities; however, most of these have been focused on obtaining a high tree count per dollar invested. As the municipality's tree planting program is focused on planting high-cost urban trees, the program has not aligned with most grants offered under the 2BT umbrella.
- In 2024, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) announced their Growing Canada's Community Canopies program under their Green Municipal Fund. Public Works staff met with FCM staff in 2024 and under guidance applied for a matched-funds planting grant in February 2025. If accepted, this grant would cover half of the costs of Capital Project PW01 for fiscal years 2026/27 and 2027/28, as well as half the costs for four Parks Naturalization projects. If approved, this funding totaling just over \$1 million would be predicated on a commitment from the municipality to fund the capital tree planting project PW01 for those years, albeit at only half the current proposed amounts.
- The municipality has a longstanding relationship with Tree Canada and has received numerous grants over the last several years. The municipality is again a recipient of the CN Eco Connections Grant for 2025/26, which will cover the costs of planting 50 trees on urban parkland, totaling just under \$50,000.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN020 - Accelerate Delivery of Heritage Conservation Districts

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Planning & Development

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN020 (BAL_010)	Operating	\$228,500 (Ongoing)	\$317,200
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	Partial year cost 2025/26: \$228,500 Annualized Cost 2026/27: \$317,200 Annualized cost 2027/28: \$326,400 Annualized cost 2028/29: \$336,000  Total four-year impact: \$1,208,100		
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	That the Budget Committee direct the CAO to provide a briefing note outlining the funding for options to accelerate the delivery of heritage conservation districts, in the amount of \$310,000 to be considered as an option over budget on the budget adjustment list (BAL) for Budget Committee to consider in the 2025/26 Budget.		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Responsible Administration – Well-Managed		

### Background

The Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan (CHPP) was approved by Regional Council in January 2024. CHPP is a comprehensive strategy aimed at promoting and preserving the diverse, cultural heritage of the municipality. The Plan outlines a set of 44 actions focused on investment, program development, service delivery, and ongoing community engagement. Important progress has been made on the delivery of the CHPP. As a short-term priority, CHPP identified three positions to support African Nova Scotia community action planning for 2024/25. These positions were approved by Regional Council in the 2024/25 budget, supporting the delivery of a workplan endorsed by Regional Council to advance community action planning in additional African Nova Scotian communities. The CHPP also identified three additional positions for 2025/26 to enable the implementation of various action items discussed in this memo. Staff within Planning & Development have already conducted preliminary work on the following action items: updating and revising heritage evaluation criteria, revising our approach to Cultural Landscapes, reviewing the grant programs, work being done by the African Nova Scotia Community Action Planning group, as well as new policy within the Regional Plan on heritage, for example. The three requested positions are described below for consideration as an option over budget on the budget adjustment list to support the work of the heritage team as identified in the CHPP.



## **CHPP Heritage, Culture and Planning Information Services Action Items**

### Action Item 1.2 Identity and conserve areas of historic and cultural significance

The purpose of this action item is to identify and conserve areas of historic and cultural significance in partnership with communities, including expediting the identification and recommendation to designate heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes and ensuring that the built and cultural heritage of both rural and urban communities are conserved.

Center Plan identifies 17 areas for potential designation as a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). Halifax Regional Council has prioritized Downtown Dartmouth as the next Heritage Conservation District after Downtown Halifax HCD, which will come to Regional Council this year. The process to initiate a HCD requires Regional Council and the Provincial Minister of Culture to approve a Background Study that outlines the rationale for adopting a HCD (required by the *Heritage Property Act*). Upon approval of the Downtown Dartmouth HCD background study, staff will initiate the consultation component of the project in 2025/26. The approval of the Background Study to the adoption of the HCD Plan and By-law can take over three years of staff time to complete.

CHPP identified two resources to support this action: Planner II (\$96,100) and Planner III (\$112,400).

An additional 2 FTEs will provide resources to expedite the work related to HCDs, as supported by the approved CHPP implementation plan. Further service level increases are described below in Funding Options. Staff also anticipate future HCDs will be identified through the Suburban Plan process, which will further increase the need for additional staff to support the new HCDs in the rural and suburban areas.

### Action Item 3.2 Promote increased reflection of Mi'kmaq, Acadian, and African Nova Scotian history

The purpose of this action item is to amend Administrative Order 46, Respecting Asset Naming Policies, to promote the increased reflection of Mi'kmaq, Acadian, and African Nova Scotian history and culture. Recommendations from the Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History emphasize the need for increased diversity in municipal asset naming and commemoration and direct the municipality to work with the Mi'kmaq community to achieve this. Expanding the municipal asset-naming process to reflect the broader diversity of the region was identified by several stakeholders during CHPP engagement, including Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, and Acadian communities. The risk of not advancing this position could lead to approving names that may not reflect the values of the municipality, which could result in undertaking the process a second time, reputational risk, as well all the costs incurred to making new signs to install. Further, such inaction will cause reprisal harm to HRM commitment to Mi'kmaq and Acadian and African Nova Scotians.

CHPP identified one resource to support this action: the creation of a new Civic Addressing Coordinator (\$96,100). An additional FTE will enable staff to initiate the process of reviewing, updating, revising, and implementing changes to the municipality's Asset Naming policy to improve the recognition of underrepresented groups history and culture, especially Mi'kmaq and Acadian and African Nova Scotians. To achieve this goal, extensive public engagement will need to occur, and CHPP identifies this resourcing action as a short-term implementation priority.

### Options

The three positions noted above were identified in the CHPP for funding in the short term to support work related to culture and heritage. However, these positions are not recommended to advance as a bundle through the 2025/26 budget. Instead, these positions are recommended to be put forward in a future budget for consideration for the reasons outlined below.

Regional Council can consider **four options** regarding funding:

### Recommended Option

The recommended option reflects the recent direction from Budget Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of current vacancies and new FTEs proposed in this budget to find cost savings. Of note, Planning & Development had not advanced these positions in the draft budget due to an acknowledgment of other resourcing priorities and budget pressures notwithstanding Regional Council approved direction from CHPP.

**Recommendation: Direct staff to advance the three positions to accelerate delivery of the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan for consideration as part of the future 2026/27 budget process.** This alternative will result in a delayed implementation of Heritage initiatives requiring resourcing as identified in the approved CHPP.

**Alternative 1:** Direct staff to incorporate the three positions as part of the 2025/26 draft budget, ***funding all 3 positions as identified in CHPP***

Planner II	\$ 96,100
Planner III	\$112,400
Civic Addressing Coordinator	\$ 96,100
	<b>\$304,600</b>

The partial year costs for these positions in 2025/26 would be \$228,500.

The funding of these three positions will support the implementation of CHPP as follows:

Planners II and III by:

1. Expediting the identification and recommendation to designate heritage conservation districts and cultural landscapes and ensuring that the built and cultural heritage of both rural and urban communities are conserved;

2. Working with the Province to advance proposed amendments to the *Heritage Property Act* to allow for additional requirements related to the designation of cultural landscapes;
3. Exploring opportunities to support or collaborate on community-led mapping, conservation and asset-naming projects; and
4. Supporting engagement-driven approaches to land-use planning in collaboration with communities in areas of cultural significance and value

Civic Addressing Coordinator by:

1. Initiating the process of reviewing, updating, revising, and implementing changes to the municipality's Asset Naming policy which will have a significant impact on demonstrating HRM's commitment to improve the recognition of underrepresented groups, especially Mi'kmaq and Acadian and African Nova Scotians.

**Alternative 2: *fund two positions as identified in CHPP***

Civic Addressing Coordinator	\$ 96,100
Planner III	<u>\$112,400</u>
	<b>\$208,500</b>

Of the three positions, the two positions noted in Alternative 2 would have the greatest impact on workload/service level and the implementation of CHPP values. The Planner III position will enable staff to work on multiple HCDs at the same time and initiate background studies, concurrently. The Civic Addressing Coordinator will have the same impact as noted above in Alternative 1.

**Alternative 3: *fund only one position as identified in CHPP***

Planner III	\$112,400
<b>OR</b>	
Civic Addressing Coordinator	\$ 96,100

The Planner III position will have the largest impact on workload/service level for Heritage Conservation Districts, as described in **Alternative 2**. The Civic Addressing Coordinator position will have a significant impact on demonstrating HRM's commitment to improve the recognition of underrepresented groups; especially Mi'kmaq and Acadian and African Nova Scotians throughout HRM, as described in **Alternative 1**.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN021 - Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame Capital Campaign

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Parks & Recreation

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN021 (BAL_012)	Expense	\$ 300,000		\$ 0	
Four Year Impact					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$300,000
Adjustment Description	Council directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report to evaluate and provide options in response to the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame Capital Campaign request in the amount of \$300,000				
Priority Alignment	Communities – Support Community Involvement				

The Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame (NSSHF) presented to Community Planning and Economic Development Committee (CPED) on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (link to presentation: [Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame Capital Campaign - Presentation - CPED - February 13/25](#) and Handout: [Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame Capital Campaign - Handout](#) requesting a contribution agreement with the municipality to support the capital costs of a renovated Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame.

The NSSHF requested one-time funding amount of \$300,000 towards the total renovations' costs of \$5,515,362; the provincial and federal governments all have contributed funding.

The Nova Scotia Sports Hall Fame (NSSHF) is a non-profit organization in its 61<sup>st</sup> year of existence. Since 2003, the NSSHF has been located in the Scotiabank Centre (1800 Argyle Street), welcoming over 55,000 visitors annually. The facility always offered free admission, which will continue following reopening.

Coming out of COVID-19, the NSSHF recognizes the need to redesign and renovate the Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame facility. The facility had become outdated in terms of technology and visual storytelling. The renovation presents an opportunity to improve accessibility and the overall visitor experience. Specifically, NSSHF is adding about 35% to its square footage and is implementing the following key improvements:

- A larger museum area will provide more display space and better recognition of NSSHF inductees.

- The facility will be fully accessible.
- The entire collection of more than 8,000 artifacts will be housed onsite for optimal preservation.
- Inductees' stories will be better represented in museum content, so that all visitors can feel that this is a place “where we all can play.”
- Heroes from traditionally marginalized communities (African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, new Canadian, Special Olympic athletes, Paralympic athletes) will have areas of prominence in the rebuilt Hall of Fame.

The renovated facility is being designed by a local architecture firm, Harvey Architecture, and built by a local construction company, RCS Construction. A funding breakdown is as follows:

- Total Cost - \$5,515,362
- Provincial Government Funding - \$3,100,000
- Federal Government Funding - \$400,000
- NSSHF Commitment - \$1,200,000
- HRM Project funds from the Community Museums Grant Program - \$40,000\*
- Additional request to HRM - \$300,000

\*The NSSHF applied for and received project funds from the Community Museum Grants program, for the renovation, for \$20,000 in each of 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The NSSHF has also reached out to HRM Councillors to request funds from Councillors district funds.

### **NSSHF Construction Update**

As of February 28, 2025, the NSSHF has completed about 80% of phase 1 of construction. This includes walls, finishes, windows, flooring, doors, egress, etc. Completion is expected by late April-early May when phase 2 will begin, which consists of building the actual museum, including displays, graphics, interactives, millwork and simulation.

The newly redesigned Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame is expected to open in November 2025 in conjunction with the 2025 induction ceremony. While the exact date has not yet been confirmed to account for potential construction delays, the project remains on schedule.

### **NSSHF operational information**

Summary of Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame:

- Established in 1964
- 580 Inductees (225 from HRM)

- 12-member board (currently chaired by Jim Mills) and four staff
- Free-Admission facility which welcomes 55,000 visitors per year
- Average annual operating budget of \$600,000
- Annual operating funding from the Province of Nova Scotia of \$55,0000
- HRM Community Museum program operating grant of \$7,689 (2024)\*\*

\*\* Previous HRM Community Museum Grant Funding: 2018 & 2019 - \$6,000, 2020, 2021, 2022 - \$7,000 and 2023, 2024 - \$7,689

### **NSSHF education programing**

The NSSHF's "Future Hall of Famers Education" program has been running for more than a decade and has reached close to one hundred thousand children in the HRM school system.

The program aims to inspire and motivate youth by sharing stories of sport heroes. It is offered free-of-charge to schools, camps, and recreational groups, while also welcoming these youth-based groups to the Hall of Fame Museum for onsite visits. Recently, the Hall of Fame has provided free virtual presentations to thousands of students. Each virtual session is watched live by 200-300 classes, totalling over 5,000 students.

### **HRM Alignment**

The vision of the NSSHF is "that Nova Scotia sport achievements and history remain sources of value and inspiration to our communities, and sources of education to our youth." To the extent that the NSSHF encourages participation in sport particularly among youth, its vision aligns to the municipal role in recreation.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN022 - Discovery Centre Biodiversity and Aquarium Facility

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Parks & Recreation

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)		2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	
BN022 (BAL_013)	Expense	\$ 200,000		\$ 200,000	
Four Year Impact					
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$800,000
Adjustment Description	Council directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report to evaluate and provide options in response to the Discovery Center request of annual funding of \$200,000 for five years towards the operating of the Beaty Center for Marine Biodiversity.				
Priority Alignment	Environment				

The Discovery Centre presented to Community Planning and Economic Development Committee (CPED) on February 13, 2025, (link to presentation: [Discovery Center Biodiversity and Aquarium Facility- Presentation - February 13/25 CPED](#)) requesting a contribution agreement with the municipality to support the operational costs of the new Beaty Centre for Marine Biodiversity. The request was a five-year contribution agreement with annual funding of \$200,000 each year (2025/26 – 2030/31) totaling \$1,000,000. The annual operating cost of the Beaty Centre is projected to be \$1,526,000 with the remaining funds coming from fundraising, in-kind contributions and paid attendance.

The Beaty Centre for Marine Biodiversity is an interactive ocean and science aquarium that will offer educational and research experiences for HRM residents and visitors. Housed on the first and second floors of the Steele Ocean Sciences Building (located off Oxford Street), Dalhousie University's hub of marine biology and marine biodiversity research, the Beaty Centre will welcome students, visitors, and residents to learn about the innovative work being conducted to protect our vital ocean resources.

The \$13 million Beaty Centre for Marine Biodiversity is a partnership between Dalhousie University and the Discovery Centre that will feature 12,000 sq. ft. of exhibits developed and operated by the Discovery Centre to engage youth and visitors on today's most pressing marine biodiversity issues. Planned exhibits include educational displays of species facing extinction and aquaria filled with the diverse plant and animal life found off the coast of Nova Scotia. A blue whale skeleton suspended from the building's atrium will serve as a focal point of entry. The facility will also feature integration of three languages —Mi'kmaq, English and French—in all exhibits.

The Beaty Centre will allow youth of all ages to experience the wonders of the ocean and understand the importance of marine conservation. School programs will be offered in a supported and flexible way and allow teachers to address curricular outcomes and show their students potential education and career pathways. University students will have an opportunity to share their knowledge and apply their skills through internships and coop placement and volunteer opportunities.

### **Beaty Centre of Marine Biodiversity Opening Update**

The Beaty Centre for Marine Biodiversity is expected to open in the Fall of 2025. Currently, the Beaty Centre has hired the Operations Manager and key staff, while additional onboarding is expected in Spring/Summer of 2025. The installation of the skeleton of a blue whale is currently in process, which will be followed by installation of exhibits. Species collection and climatization is expected in late summer.

<b>Operating Revenue for Beaty Centre in 2025/26*</b>	
<b>Source of Revenue</b>	
Earned revenue	\$286,000
Fundraising	\$170,000
Dalhousie in-kind contribution (rent and aquaria support)	\$600,000
Discovery Centre in-kind contribution (marketing, HR, IT, exhibit support)	\$270,000
<b>Confirmed Total</b>	<b>\$1,326,000</b>
Request Municipal Funding (7.3%)	\$200,000
<b>Proposed Total</b>	<b>\$1,526,000</b>

\*Updated information received since Feb 13/25 presentation

### **HRM Alignment**

The HRM Environment & Climate Change climate adaption team focuses on coastlines, preventing erosion, reducing ocean pollution, resiliency and related initiatives. However, broader ocean-related work falls outside of municipal jurisdiction. The 2022-2027 Inclusive Economic Strategy acknowledges Halifax's Ocean advantage as a unique strength of the municipality and source of opportunities. Overall, based on initial review, alignment to municipal priorities and role appears to be limited.

If Council approves an operating contribution for the Beaty Centre, through negotiation of a contribution agreement, staff will further explore the Beaty Centre awareness and education programs and alignment to HRM priorities and programs, particularly with respect to environment & climate change.

HRM has supported the Discovery Centre with operational and capital support since 2017. Information on HRM funding to the Discovery Centre is listed below.

### **HRM Funding to the Discovery Centre**

- From 1995 to 2024, Discovery Centre has received annual operating funding of \$145,000 from HRM. Funding has supported ability to reach underrepresented communities across HRM and eliminate systemic barriers to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) learning.



- In September 2014, Council approved a \$2 million contribution to the new Discovery Centre for capital costs relation to the purpose-built facility. The new Discovery Centre, an \$18.5 million facility located on Lower Water Streeted, opened December 2016.
- The current contribution agreement has a five-year term and is effective until 2029 with an annual funding amount of \$200,000
- The current agreement includes:
  - 25% off the group rate for HRM Recreation Programming Day Camps.
  - Support for HRM's application for and advancement of Bee City status
  - Delivery of the GenAction Climate Action Program in at least 10 HRM schools annually.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023A – Central Library Reserve Funding

**COW Date:** February 5 & 26, 2025

**Business Unit:** Finance & Asset Management

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023A (BAL020)	Reserves & Operating	\$10M (One-Time / Ongoing)	NA
Four Year Impact	NA		
Adjustment Description	<p>Feb 5, 2025 - That the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note outlining funds committed to future capital plans not within the 4 year capital plan for the BAL to consider in the 2025/26 Budget.</p> <p>Feb 26, 2025 - That Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Council to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A. One-time use of Central Library Reserve</p>		
Priority Alignment	NA		

#### **Background**

The municipality has 17 reserves that are grouped into three categories:

- **Risk Reserves** – used for unforeseen financial risks and emergencies.
- **Obligation Reserves** – used for legally or contractually required expenditures.
- **Opportunity Reserves** – used for strategic investments and future initiatives.

Each reserve has its own Business Case that guides its funding source and permitted uses. Reserves are governed by Administrative Order Number 2014-15 ADM.

In the 2025/26 Budget and Capital Plan, nearly every reserve is being used as a funding source for specific initiatives and projects that align with their respective Business Cases. The only reserve without any current commitments is the **Central Library Recapitalization Reserve (Q536)**.

### **Central Library Recapitalization Reserve (Q536)**

Per its Business Case, this reserve was established to accumulate funds for the upgrade and eventual replacement of the Halifax Central Library. The purpose of the reserve is to ensure the municipality can plan for the replacement and enhancement of a significant community facility while maintaining stable and predictable property tax levels.

During the 2024/25 Budget, annual funding for the Central Library Recapitalization Reserve was removed, leaving **interest accumulation as its sole source of funding.**

### **Capital Fund Reserve (Q526)**

Per its Business Case, the intent of the Capital Fund Reserve is to accumulate funds from the operating surplus, the sale of municipal assets, and other sources to support the renewal and expansion of the municipality's asset base. These funds supplement available capital funding from operating capital and debt. The municipality is legislatively required to maintain this reserve. Section 120 of the HRM Charter outlines the requirement for a capital reserve fund to ensure financial stability and support long-term infrastructure planning. The Capital Fund Reserve is restricted to funding only capital projects.

Staff review the Capital Fund Reserve annually to remove commitments that are no longer required or have been fulfilled. However, within this reserve, there is one commitment that does not have any associated plans within the 4-Year Capital Plan: \$2.5 million committed toward a "Dartmouth Heritage Museum."

### **Considerations for Use in the 2025/26 Budget**

While the reserve currently remains unallocated, using this reserve for short-term operating budget relief would create a structural deficit by relying on one-time funding for ongoing operating expenses.

### **Issues with Using One-Time Funding for Ongoing Expenditures**

Using one-time funding, such as reserve funds, to cover ongoing expenditures presents several risks and challenges:

1. **Structural Deficit Risk:** If reserves are used to offset tax rate increases, the municipality will face a budget shortfall in the following year unless an alternative revenue source is identified. This will necessitate higher taxes or service reductions in next year's budget as this will increase the funding requirement by \$10M.
2. **Service Sustainability:** Core services such as public safety, transit, and infrastructure maintenance require consistent, stable funding. If one-time funds are used to temporarily cover costs, the ability to maintain service levels in subsequent years may be jeopardized.
3. **Erosion of Financial Stability:** Reserves are designed to provide financial stability, allowing the municipality to respond to emergencies or planned capital investments without sudden financial shocks. Depleting reserves for operational expenses weakens the municipality's ability to manage future risks.

4. **Lack of Long-Term Planning:** Funding ongoing services with one-time money defers necessary discussions about sustainable revenue sources, such as adjusting tax rates, service fees, or expenditure priorities.
5. **Increased Tax Burden in Future Years:** By using one-time funding to temporarily suppress tax rates, the municipality effectively defers necessary tax increases to future budgets. When those one-time funds are no longer available in the following year, the budget shortfall will require a larger tax increase than if incremental adjustments had been made over time.

#### **Alternative Use of Funds**

Another alternative would be to move the funds from the Central Library Recapitalization Reserve to another reserve where they could be used to fund other capital projects, including library projects. This approach would ensure the funds remain dedicated to capital investments while maintaining financial flexibility.

When the Halifax Central Library, which is currently only 10 years old, requires replacement in the future, funding can be allocated at that time in the same manner as for other capital projects. This strategy aligns with the municipality's long-term financial planning practices and ensures that essential capital investments are adequately funded when needed.

Staff also recommend uncommitting funds for the Dartmouth Heritage Museum. The funds within this reserve cannot be applied to operating funding. Therefore, the funds released would stay within the Capital Fund Reserve and can be put toward other projects that have a more pressing need for funding.

#### **Conclusion**

While Council may wish to explore various options to minimize tax rate increases, staff caution against using one-time funding sources like the Central Library Recapitalization Reserve for ongoing operating expenses. Maintaining financial discipline and preserving reserves will help ensure long-term fiscal stability and service sustainability. Reallocating these funds to another capital reserve would allow them to be used for future capital projects, including library-related investments, without undermining financial sustainability in the way that using the funds for a one time lowering of the tax rate will.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023B - Deed Transfer Tax Increase

**COW Date:** February 26, 2025

**Business Unit:** Finance & Asset Management

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023B (BAL_021)	Operating	\$(3,000,000) (One-Time)	
Four Year Impact			
Adjustment Description	That Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Council to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by: C. Increase Deed Transfer Tax estimate by \$3 million		
Priority Alignment	N/A		

#### **Background**

Deed Transfer Tax (DTT) is a tax which amounts to 1.5 per cent of the sales price of any property for which a sale has occurred and is payable directly to HRM. It has a direct correlation to the performance of the housing market, including the overall sales volume as well as housing price increases; as residential sales make up the substantial majority of total DTT. Commercial sales tend to be less frequent and therefore make up a much smaller portion of the total amount, with the exception of large dollar value commercial sales such as hotels, shopping complexes, large apartments, etc. which come with multimillion-dollar DTT remittances.

There was a period of significant DTT revenue growth between 2016-2021 driven by substantial price increases in housing, very high sales volumes, and extremely low borrowing rates, which saw peak revenue of \$81 million. During this period, significant annual DTT surpluses were used as one-time funding options towards the operating budget to keep annual tax bill increases low. Starting in late 2022 the Bank of Canada began to increase interest rates as a measure to combat inflation. The result was a cooling effect on the housing market which dampened sales volume as well as price increases. This caused DTT revenue to fall to \$75 million in 2022, \$67M in 2023, and a budget of \$65 million in 2024. This revenue decline, along with the corresponding budget/forecast decreases resulted in the need to increase average tax bills to a much higher degree to cover the ensuing gap in the operating budget.

Over the last several months, the Bank of Canada has begun to lower interest rates again although they remain relatively high. The expectation is that this moderate decrease in lending rates will lead to a small uptick in housing sales. This optimism has corresponded to a budgetary increase up to \$70 million for the 2025/26 fiscal year. Since then, the threat of trade tariffs by the United States has created economic uncertainty, which could create more uncertainty in housing sales and interest rates. In addition, effective April 1, 2025, Nova Scotia is doubling its Non-Resident Deed Transfer Tax from 5% to 10%. This could also have a negative impact on some housing sales. This means the currently proposed budget of \$70 million may carry a modest amount of risk in the probability of achieving this target.

As the DTT budget as currently presented represents an already risky increase of \$5 million over the previous year's budget, increasing the DTT forecast by an additional \$3 million to \$73 million would significantly increase the risk profile in this budget item. Housing sales volume would need to increase significantly in the 2025/26 fiscal year despite the economic uncertainties in order to achieve this new target. The risk of not meeting this revenue target could mean an operating deficit in the 2025/26 fiscal year which would need to be offset by a surplus elsewhere in the budget or covered through the 2026/27 fiscal budget. Additionally, this risk in one-time funding in the operating budget could mean that if sales volumes remain steady and the 2026/27 DTT forecast is in the \$67-\$70 million range again, that the resulting decrease from the 2025/26 budget would need to be covered by an alternate revenue source.



## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023C - Climate Action Tax

**COW Date:** February 26, 2025

**Business Unit:** Finance & Asset Management

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023C (BAL024)	Operating & Reserves	\$6,000,000 (Ongoing)	\$6,000,000
Four Year Impact	\$6,000,000 annually.		
Adjustment Description	That Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Council to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by:  C. Reduce Climate Action Tax by one-third at \$6 million		
Priority Alignment	Environment		

#### **Background**

The Municipality began collecting the Climate Action Tax (CAT) in the 2022/23 fiscal year. The tax was introduced as part of the 2022/23 municipal budget, adding a one-time 3 per cent increase to property tax bills specifically to fund climate action (on top of other general tax changes). In practical terms, the Climate Action Tax first appeared on Halifax property tax bills issued after this budget was passed in spring 2022, marking the start of its collection.

All revenue from the Climate Action Tax is earmarked for climate-related programs under *HalifACT*, Halifax's long-term climate action plan. The tax is dedicated to funding strategic climate initiatives – spanning both mitigation (reducing emissions) and adaptation (boosting climate resilience). It also serves as matching funds to leverage additional climate funding from other sources, including the private sector and federal and provincial governments. This tax was intended to be collected over a span of ten years and was intended to fund the projects identified over the first four years of the HalifACT plan.

A common misconception about the CAT is that it is an ongoing “3 per cent tax”. The CAT was a one-time 3 per cent increase to the average property tax bills in 2022/23. However, following the 2022/23 budget, it has not been a cause for any tax increases. In the current fiscal year, the CAT represented a tax rate of \$0.019 and \$0.077 for residential and commercial tax bills respectively. These rates which are adjusted

yearly to account for assessment growth, generate \$18 million annually, which is allocated to funding the Strategic Infrastructure (SI) reserve and is earmarked for HalifACT projects.

The funding model for HalifACT projects relies on annual contributions to the SI reserve, which is the used to service debt once projects come online. This approach allows the municipality to leverage the reserve balance and mitigate future tax increases.

### **Reduction Implications**

Removing \$6 million from the CAT will lower the proposed tax increase by 0.8 per cent in 2025/26. However, the trade off to lowering taxes in the upcoming budget is that the SI reserve will lose \$42 million over the remaining lifespan of the CAT if this reduction were maintained. Where there is no reduction to the capital plan for HalifACT, the decrease in CAT funding would reduce the SI reserve, resulting in additional reliance on tax-funded debt servicing rather than leveraging reserve contributions.

The projects that were allocated funding from the HalifACT reserve are the following:

- Electrifying public transit: Purchasing electric buses and expanding charging infrastructure including retrofitting a transit garage.
- Retrofitting buildings: Upgrading municipal buildings with energy-efficient systems, such as fuel-switching, better insulation, and solar panels.
- EV charging and fleet conversion: Installing public EV charging stations and converting the municipal vehicle fleet to electric or hybrid.
- Flood and storm resilience projects: Strengthening shorelines, flood-prone roads, and critical infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events.

The debt on these projects is expected to peak in 2036/37, at which time the servicing costs on that debt is expected to be nearly \$35 million annually. If CAT funding is reduced, the HalifACT portion of the SI reserve will be exhausted in 2035/36. At that point, funding the debt servicing costs would require an immediate tax increase of over 3 per cent, followed by an additional 1 per cent increase the following year. If the funding is maintained, the increase would be less than 1 per cent in 2036/37.

Beyond HalifACT projects, the SI reserve faces additional funding challenges. The reserve (including CAT funding) is expected to have a balance of \$190 million by the end of the 2025/26 budget year and is projected to grow to \$244 million within three years. While this suggests the reserve is well-funded, it is expected to finance projects totaling nearly \$1 billion, posing significant long-term financial challenges.

### **Conclusion**

The Climate Action Tax has played a critical role in funding Halifax's long-term climate initiatives under HalifACT, supporting essential projects such as public transit electrification, municipal building retrofits, EV infrastructure, and climate resilience efforts. While the proposed reduction in CAT funding would provide short-term tax relief, it comes at the cost of a significant financial shortfall in the SI reserve,

ultimately shifting more reliance onto debt financing and requiring future tax increases. It is important to note that there is no change to the delivery of HalifACT projects, this just changes how the debt service costs are funded. The projects are still included in the approved capital plan.

If CAT funding is reduced, the HalifACT reserve could be depleted by 2035/36, leading to steep tax increases in later years. Maintaining the current CAT funding structure would provide stability in long-term financial planning, reducing the risk of sharp future tax increases while ensuring continued investment in vital climate projects. As Halifax continues to address its climate commitments, balancing fiscal responsibility with sustainable action remains a key challenge for municipal decision-makers.

If future federal and provincial budgets result in stable and predictable baseline infrastructure funding programs for climate action, then the HalifACT funding approach can be adjusted in future.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023D - Eliminate all under-used Landlines and Mobile Lines

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Information Technology

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023D (BAL_022)	Operating	(\$300,000)	(\$300,000)
Four Year Impact	It is anticipated the on-going annual savings will be \$300,000.		
Adjustment Description	THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Budget Committee to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by: d) Eliminate all under-used landlines @ \$600,000		
Priority Alignment	Responsible Administration		

IT has recently completed an eight-month long audit of the telecom service on landlines. To determine phone lines which are no longer regularly used IT called each line to validate ownership and utility of the line. Currently there are 2,259 active landlines for HRM. A significant number have been identified as no longer required or no response was received when calling the lines multiple times to determine their utility; however, it is realistic to expect that among the lines that did not receive a response there will be many which have legitimate business need.

The municipality's current landline contract allows for a maximum decrease of up to 10% of the overall number of purchased phone lines. The addition of other services such as mobile lines offsets the reduction in the contract value and allows for the cancellation of other land lines staying while within the 10% reduction requirement limit.

It is anticipated that the reduction in land lines that will be implemented will result in an approximate savings of \$300,000 for fiscal year 2025/26. Further reductions may be possible in subsequent years of the contract.

## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023E - Charge Insurance Companies for HRM Fire Services

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023E (BAL_025)	Revenue	\$0	\$0
Four Year Impact	N/A		
Adjustment Description	THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Budget Committee to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by: e) Start charging insurance companies for HRM fire services responding to 100 series highway calls @ \$250 thousand:		
Priority Alignment	Responsible Administration - Well-Managed		

This briefing note provides information on if HRM was to start charging insurance companies for HRM fire services responding to 100 series highway calls, could this assist in keeping the tax rate flat. There is unlikely to be a potential revenue source associated with this option, and in the short term there is likely to be an administrative cost associated with pursuing this, the reasons are outlined below.

During the 2023/24 budget and business planning period, staff reviewed the feasibility of customer billing for HRFE response to Motor Vehicle Collisions (MVA) on 100 series highways.

#### **Barriers to Implementing Charges:**

The following are barriers to charging insurance companies for HRM fire services at motor vehicle collisions when HRFE responds to calls on 100 series highways.

#### **1. Payment by Insurance Companies**

Insurers would only pay the fee if the at fault party does not reside within the boundaries of the HRM.

In consultation with the provincial Office of the Superintendent of Insurance, it was determined that Insurers will pay for reasonable charges for volunteer fire services for MVAs. Charges for services from fire departments that are municipally funded would not be paid unless the MVA occurred outside the

municipality where the legally liable party pays taxes. (in other words, the insurance companies would only pay the fee for non-residents of HRM).

## **2. HRM does not have permission from the Province to access Vehicle Ownership Information**

Vehicle owner billing could be permitted under the *Charter*, but it would be unfeasible to do without express permission from the Province for the municipality to receive information from the registry of motor vehicles regarding ownership of the vehicles for this purpose.

## **3. Bylaw requirement and ongoing administrative burden**

A new bylaw would be required, which could be nullified by the Province if there was substantive dissatisfaction with this policy route and if the Minister determined any part of it impacted development.

If these chargebacks were to be permitted and the municipality did receive access to vehicle owner information from the Province, there would then be an administrative burden of issuing these bills. For multi-vehicle collisions, there would need to be a way to determine who the driver at fault was, along with the percentage of the charge to be applied to each vehicle. Determining who is at fault in a collision for the sake of billing is not something that HRFE firefighters have been trained in, nor does HRFE have the knowledge on or administrative capacity to action without adding to their FTE count. Once those bills are sent out, each year the municipality would have to determine what to do about unpaid bills.

## **Conclusion**

With all these complicating variables it was determined by staff that this is highly unlikely to be a potential revenue stream.



## Budget Adjustment List Briefing Note

### BN023G - Other Revenues, Savings & FTE Review

**COW Date:** March 6, 2025

**Business Unit:** Finance & Asset Management

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
BN023G (BAL_023)	Operating & Capital	(\$11,229,800) (One-Time & Ongoing)	\$(3,519,900)
Four Year Impact	Various		
Adjustment Description	THAT the Budget Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a briefing note for an under-budget adjustment on the Budget Adjustment List, with options for Budget Committee to keep the tax rate flat with minimal impact to core service delivery, by:  g) others that the CAO may identify  2. A comprehensive review of current vacancies and new FTE's proposed in this budget to find cost savings.		
Priority Alignment	NA		

#### **Background**

Staff have completed a review of further budget reductions and an FTE review. These savings amount to \$11,429,800:

- \$5,580,000 is operating reductions
- \$4,943,000 is capital reductions
- \$706,800 is reductions from delaying hiring of new FTEs a further year

Most of the reductions identified are one time in nature and so are not fiscally sustainable. A further \$13,100,000 have also be identified, but these changes would require service level changes.

## **Operating Savings**

Following the final 2025/26 Business Plan and Budget Presentation staff was given direction to find other savings and reductions within the budget. That review has been completed, and the table below outlines potential reductions that Budget Committee can consider being applied to the budget

Reference	Operating Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.1	Salt recoveries	Ongoing	\$ (150,000)
BAL_023.2	Small part warranty	Ongoing	\$ (150,000)
BAL_023.3	Investment Income	One-time	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.4	PILT & TA's	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.5	P&D Heritage Grants	Ongoing	\$ (200,000)
BAL_023.6	P&D Permit Revenue	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.7	Fuel (Carbon Tax Reduction)	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.8	IT Bell Contract Contingency	Ongoing	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.9	P&R Civic Events	One-time	\$ (100,000)
BAL_023.10	SITP/MPO savings	One-time	\$ (480,000)
BAL_023.11	Public Works Vacancies	One-time	\$ (300,000)
BAL_023.12	Finance and Asset Management Vacancies and Consulting	One-time	\$ (200,000)
<b>Total Operating Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (5,580,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ (3,000,000)

\$2.58 million (46.2%) of the operating savings identified are one-time in nature. Therefore, these costs will come back next year and will require additional tax increases for the 2026/27 Budget if additional operating savings are not found in the interim and if there are not adjustments to programs and services.

Some of the reductions identified have inherent risk that if they do not materialise, they will put pressure on the financial results of the organization in 2025/26 and could cause a deficit. Any deficit that occurs in 2025/26 must be funded in the subsequent fiscal year, so would require additional increases in taxes. The items that increase risk are the following:

- BAL\_023.3, Investment Income – if interest rates decline due to the overarching economic state this revenue will likely not materialize.
- BAL\_023.6, Permit Revenue – requires that the current permit revenue trend continuing throughout 2025/26.
- BAL\_023.7, Fuel (Carbon Tax Reduction) – is dependent on the federal government eliminating the existing carbon tax during 2025/26.
- BAL\_023.8, Bell IT Contingency – this contingency is related to potential changes in various contracts and if there are significant changes to the contracts the funding will need to be sought elsewhere.

Other adjustments are a result of better information that has come forward as the budget was being presented:

- BAL\_023.1, Salt recoveries – adjusts the amount of revenue the municipality receives for selling salt to contractors as salt usage has increased.
- BAL\_023.2, Warranty program – is an increase to expected recoveries received for small part warranties throughout the municipality.
- BAL\_023.4, Tax Agreements & Payments in Lieu – is a result of information for tax agreements coming after the Fiscal Budget was presented.
- BAL\_023.5, P&D Heritage Grants – is a reduction to the expected amount of grants that will be issued in 2025/26 based on trend of actual payouts.
- BAL\_023.11, Public Works Vacancies – is a revision to the expected number of vacant positions in the Public Works budget in 2025/26.
- BAL\_023.12, Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Vacancies and Consulting – is an adjustment to FAMs budget based on updated vacant positions and expected use of consultants in 2025/26.

### **Capital Savings**

Reductions to the Capital Plan are outlined in the following table:

Reference	Capital Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.13	Corporate Fleet	One-time	\$ (600,000)
BAL_023.14	Community Planning Studies	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.15	New Park Capital	One-time	\$ (300,000)
BAL_023.16	Fleet Management	One-time	\$ (1,100,000)
BAL_023.17	Station Alerting	One-time	\$ (400,000)
BAL_023.18	Corporate Scheduling	One-time	\$ (500,000)
BAL_023.19	Fuel management	One-time	\$ (250,000)
BAL_023.20	Enterprise Project Management (BT41)	One-time	\$ (250,000)
BAL_023.21	Records Management (BT55)	One-time	\$ (543,000)
<b>Total Capital Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (4,943,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ -

The savings to the capital plan are mostly the result of delaying projects which are being funded through the operating budget as Capital Renewal. As a result of this (and the nature of capital project funding) all these reductions are one-time only, and the funding will need to be made up in 2026/27. Of the projects listed above the following two are not deferrals into 2026/27, rather they are adjustments to project costs:

- BAL\_023.21, Enterprise Project Management (BT41) – this is adjusting the total project costs
- BAL\_023.16, Fleet Management, - this is removing a portion of the project costs

### **Further Reductions**

If budget Committee would like to go deeper, the reductions in the table below related to service levels can also be considered. These options are presented because they can be quickly implemented, in some

cases are measures that have been used in the past during difficult budget years, or because they represent an area where the municipality is providing a newer service, or service to a level that is higher than other municipalities. Staff is not recommending any of them at this time, but wanted to ensure Council had the information available to them.

Reference	Item	Recurrence	2025/26 Reduction
BAL_023.22	District Capital	One-time	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.23	Weekly Green Bin Collection	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.24	Benefits Plan Redesign (deferral)	One-time	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.25	Contracted Sidewalk Clearing	Ongoing	\$ (8,000,000)
BAL_023.26	Bus Stop Snowclearing	Ongoing	\$ (750,000)
BAL_023.27	Parking Revenue	Ongoing	\$ (1,000,000)
BAL_023.28	Affordable Access Program for Multi-District Facilities	One-time	\$ (400,000)
BAL_023.29	P&R Grants	Ongoing	\$ (200,000)
<b>Total Reductions</b>			<b>\$ (13,100,000)</b>
Total Ongoing			\$ (10,750,000)

These reductions are more fiscally sustainable in the long-term and most of the reduction can be carried into future years. However, these reductions all represent a reduction in service levels.

#### **District Capital (BAL 023.22)**

This reduction would decrease the amount of district capital available to councillors in 2025/26. A similar approach was taken during the re-cast 'COVID' Budget for 2022/23. It can be used again to help mitigate the tax increase in the 2025/26 Budget. However, reinstating the amount in a future year would require a tax increase.

#### **Weekly Green Bin Collection (BAL 023.23)**

Summer weekly collection of green cart organics has been provided since a pilot of 15,500 homes was conducted in 2003. Since then, summer weekly collection has expanded to cover all areas of the municipality as an enhanced level of service.

Due to budget considerations related to the economic impact of COVID-19, summer weekly collection was not provided in 2020. Though best efforts were made by Solid Waste Resources and 311 Contact Centre to support residents in maintaining green carts and explaining why the changes were made, there was some level of dissatisfaction from residents over the change.

Contracted haulers need to hire approximately 100 seasonal staff and allocate approximately 40 additional collection vehicles to provide this service. In 2022, there were challenges with delivery of weekly green cart services attributed to labour shortages. This resulted in missed or late collection and in some instances a full cancellation of the service on certain days. Given their dependence on the Temporary Foreign Workers program to provide this service, and given changes to that program, haulers have acknowledged a risk for similar outcomes in 2025.

Under the terms of the Residential Curbside Collection Agreements, the municipality may choose which Collection Area(s) to provide summer weekly organics collection and the number of weeks that the service is provided. The municipality must provide a 60-day notice to the contracted haulers indicating the level of service required (i.e., April 30 for a July 1 start date).

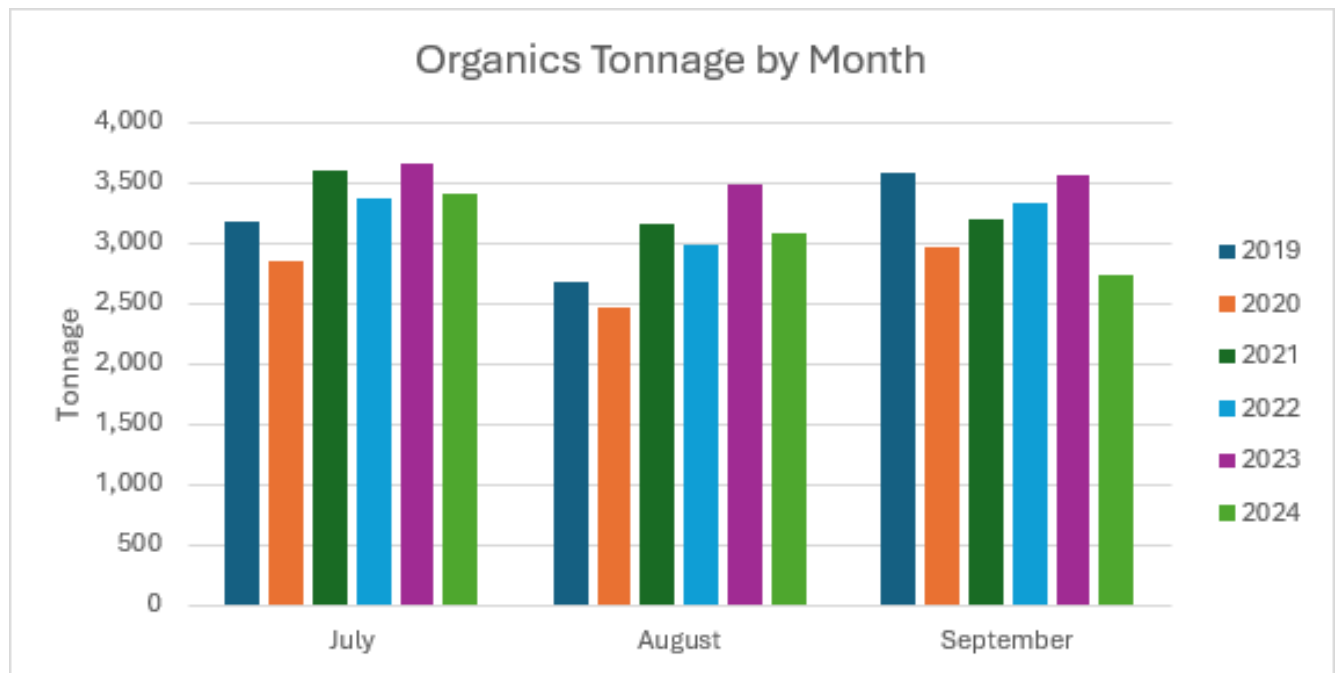
Table 1 provides a summary of the collection areas, including the weekly cost to provide enhanced services for July, August, and September. Table 2 shows HRM's total monthly Organics tonnage over the past six years for those months.

**Table 1: Cost of Weekly Summer Collection of Organics by Collection Area (2025/2026)**

Area	Collection Area Description	# of weeks	Cost per week	3 month total
1	Former City of Halifax	7	\$ 29,403	\$ 205,824
2	Former City of Dartmouth	7	\$ 17,974	\$ 125,822
3	Bedford, Hammonds Plains, Pockwock	7	\$ 13,553	\$ 94,877
4	Beechville - Timberlea, Herring Cove and all areas west (Prospect, Peggy's Cove, St. Margaret's Bay to Hubbards)	7	\$ 20,125	\$ 140,875
5	Sackville, Beaver Bank, Fall River, Waverley, Wellington, Dutch Settlement	7	\$ 24,699	\$ 172,897
6	Cole Harbour, Westphal, Eastern Passage, Cow Bay and Area	7	\$ 14,090	\$ 98,634
7	Porters Lake, Lawrencetown, Chezzetcook, Lake Echo, Prestons and Area	7	\$ 12,451	\$ 87,159
8	Elderbanks, Musquodoboit Harbour, Middle Musquodoboit, Sheet Harbour, all Eastern Shore	7	\$ 9,100	\$ 63,707
TOTAL			\$ 141,395	\$ 989,765

**Table 2: Total Monthly Tonnage July to September**

Note: Weekly organics collection was not provided in 2020.



Should Regional Council eliminate summer weekly green cart organics collection, the following risks and challenges may occur:

- Resident dissatisfaction. Residents of communities within the municipality have different reasons for favouring weekly collection of organics. In urban areas, proximity of homes causes odour concerns between neighbours. In rural areas, residents are concerned about attracting wildlife including raccoons and bears.
- The Otter Lake Waste Processing and Disposal Facility (Otter Lake) Compliance Plan was accepted by NS Environment and Climate Change (NSECC) on November 30, 2022, allowing deactivation of the Front-End Processor and Waste Stabilization Facility (FEP/WSF) to proceed. A key aspect of the Compliance Plan is meeting a long-term objective of less than 10% compostable waste (e.g., food waste) in the incoming residential garbage stream.
  - The Compliance Plan does not mandate the collection frequency of organics.
  - In 2020, when weekly green cart collection service was not provided, approximately 10% less organic material was collected curbside over the July to September period as compared to 2019 and 2021 through 2024.
  - It is unknown whether elimination of weekly summer collection of organics would lead to increased disposal of compostable waste in the garbage stream.
  - If deactivation of the FEP/WSF had not been achieved, the municipality would have seen



increased costs for the operation of Otter Lake in the order of \$2 million annually.

#### **Benefits Plan Redesign (BAL 023.24)**

Human Resources has reviewed the employee benefits plan and plan to redesign and update it for 2025/26. The goal is to enhance benefits for employees, improving retention and attraction. Delaying the redesign by a year would save \$1 million in the budget, shifting the cost and tax increase to 2026/27.

#### **Contracted Snow Clearing (BAL 023.25)**

Elimination of Contracted Sidewalk Snow Clearing is the largest of these “further reductions”. Adjacent property owners would be expected to clear sidewalks including any accessibility ramps, while traffic islands with sidewalk infrastructure would be cleared by the municipality.

Currently most sidewalks throughout the Municipality are Winter Maintained through Performance-Based Contracts, while the remainder are serviced by In-house resources. These contracts are fixed term for four years, with four additional option years, subject to annual CPI adjustments. Presently there are ten contracts containing Sidewalk Inventories, with an annual breakdown of values below.

<b>Sidewalk Contract Area</b>	<b>Tender No</b>	<b>2024/2025 Value</b>
WSZ1 - Eastern Passage, Cole Harbour	22-072	\$ 2,719,539
WSZ2 - Sackville, Fall River	17-052	\$ 475,844
WSZ3 - Bedford, Hammonds Plains	19-025	\$ 1,163,175
WSZ4 - Herring Cove, Timberlea	22-073	\$ 1,845,000
SWZ5 - South End Halifax	19-040	\$ 705,381
SWZ6a - Central Halifax	19-041	\$ 876,202
SWZ6b - North End Halifax	19-042	\$ 1,005,181
SWZ7 - Clayton Park	19-043	\$ 1,230,842
SWZ8 - Dartmouth	19-044	\$ 501,266
SWZ10 - Sheet Harbour	21-385	\$ 21,834
<b>Total Inclusive net HST</b>		<b>\$ 10,544,265</b>

All current contracts have similar language around cancellation of work.

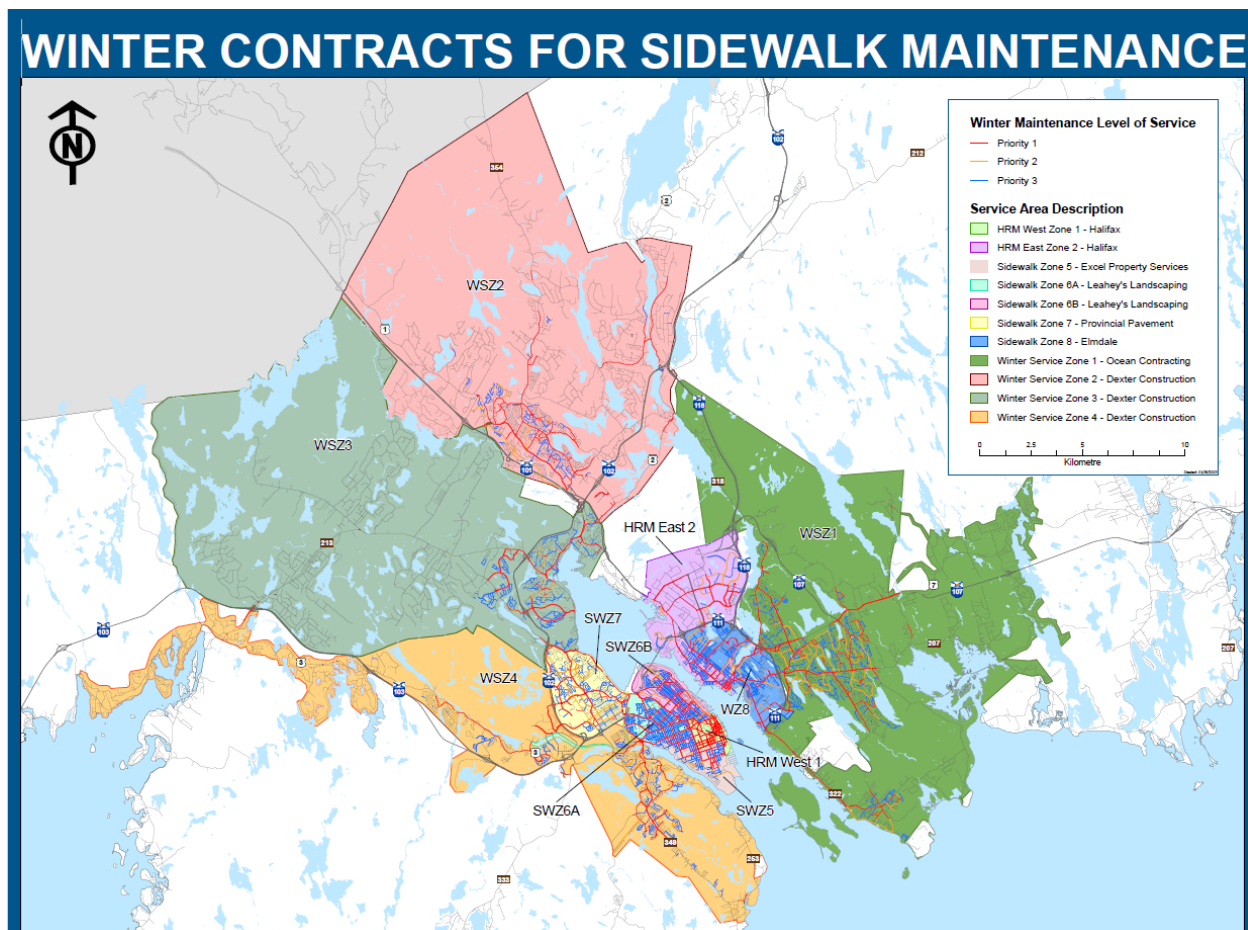
“HRM’s budget allotments and HRM’s Council approval, will determine the amount of work to be done. In addition to the enclosed terms and conditions, all or any part of this work may be reduced or cancelled at HRM’s sole discretion at any time prior to or during the term of the contract. The Contractor shall only be entitled to compensation for work that has actually been performed by the Contractor.”

As stated above, no notice of reduction or cancellation of work is required to be provided, however it would be prudent to provide as much as possible – Currently 180 days notice is required to modify performance standards, which would be May 5, 2025 if changes were to occur prior to the start of the 2025-2026 winter contract period.

While In-House resources would continue to provide service to Downtown Halifax, Downtown Dartmouth and Burnside, an additional reduction of municipally provided service could occur if the Burnside area was

removed from the In-House inventory. Overall savings would be limited; however, staff and equipment could be shifted for the short term, to the remaining In-House inventory to focus on accessibility concerns, with future focus on the increased protected cycling infrastructure which will likely become a pressure in the coming years.

\*It should be noted that if the municipality transferred Winter Maintenance responsibilities to residents/businesses, additional costs would likely be incurred for increased enforcement. These costs could be slightly off set by revenues from enforcement actions and increased penalties for failure to clear. A mitigation program would be required to address non-compliance.



### **Bus Stop Snow Clearing (BAL 023.26)**

Transit Stops received an increase to the winter maintenance standard from 48 hours to 24 hours for the 2021/22 Winter season at a cost of approximately \$2M as directed by Regional Council. As per contract terms, the municipality entered into “good faith” negotiations to determine costs associated with the increased standard.

The current contracts require that any changes to performance standards are subject to 180 calendar days' notice. Should Regional Council wish to revert to a 48-hour service standard, written notice would need to be provided by May 5, 2025, and subsequent negotiations would need to occur to determine an appropriate reduction in payment. It should be noted that due to investment of equipment and resources, a full reimbursement of the previously adjusted total of \$2M would be unlikely. Preliminary discussions should occur soon to determine possible future reductions/savings if Regional Council decided to pursue this option.

**Contract language re: Modification of Service Standards:**

"At any time during the term of the contract, HRM may, at its sole discretion and upon one-hundred-eighty (180) calendar days' written notice to the Contractor, modify any of the performance standards set out in the contract, including but not limited to the performance standards contained in the Performance Standards Matrix – Appendix "G" If a modification to a performance standard materially affects the Contractor's operating costs, the contract price shall be adjusted accordingly, based on a profit margin of 15% on the reasonably estimated additional or reduced operating costs. HRM and the Contractor shall conduct good faith negotiations to determine the appropriate increase or decrease to the contract price. For this purpose, the Contractor shall maintain and make available for review by HRM's external auditors full and complete records respecting its operating costs for the contract. If HRM and the Contractor are unable to agree upon an acceptable increase or decrease to the contract price within sixty (60) calendar days, either party shall be entitled to refer the matter to a single arbitrator pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Act to determine an appropriate increase or decrease to the contract price. The arbitrator's decision shall be final and binding on HRM and the Contractor; however, if either party is unsatisfied with the arbitrator's decision it may elect to terminate the contract without cost or penalty by providing written notice to the other within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the arbitrator's decision."

**Parking Revenue (BAL\_023.27)**

Council can consider several changes to parking fees and hours as a means of increasing revenue to support the 2025/26 operating budget. Possible changes include extending paid parking hours by adding paid parking on Saturdays, Sundays, and extending weekday paid parking until 8 PM in high-demand zones such as Downtown Halifax, Spring Garden Road, and Downtown Dartmouth. Additionally, options to increase hourly parking rates and permit fees can be utilized to increase revenues. These measures could generate up to \$1.0 million in additional annual revenue, helping to offset rising municipal service costs while promoting sustainable mobility practices.

For detailed information on the specific parking revenue options and their anticipated impacts, please refer to **Attachment 1** with this briefing note dedicated to parking revenue options.

### **Affordable Access Program for Multi-District Facilities (BAL 023.28)**

This reduction would move the implementation of Affordable Access Program for Multi-District Facilities from a December 1st start date to April 1st. Delaying the implementation would result in \$400 thousand of savings in 2025/26.

### **Parks and Recreation Grants (BAL 023.29)**

Funding was earmarked for an anticipated grant request from an outside organization. As the formal request has not yet been received, this funding may be removed from the proposed 2025/26 budget. Should a formal request be made, potential funding sources would be considered as part of a staff report.

### **Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Review (BAL 023.30)**

The FTE review determined the 2025/26 Budget is highly leveraged with vacancies and the municipality has budgeted **\$23.6 M** for the expected savings from vacant positions. As a result, many new positions don't have a full year of funding within the budget. Thus, deleting new positions doesn't result in a large amount of a reduction. However, staff completed a review of positions, and the table below outlines positions that can be removed or have a new funding source:

BU	Position	Change	FTE count
PW	Utility Operator 2	Delay hire	1
PW	Utility Operator 2	Delay hire	1
PW	Utility Operator 3	Delay hire	0.5
P-D	Assistant Building Official	HAF Funding	1
P-D	Planner I	HAF Funding	1
P-D	Planner II	HAF Funding	1
P-D	Principal Planner	HAF Funding	1
PF&E	Accommodations Project Manager	Delay hire	1
CAO	Coordinator to Commissioner of Public Safety	Remove	1
Legal	Administrative Support/Intake Analyst	Delay hire	1
<b>Total FTE Reductions</b>			<b>- 9.5</b>

Overall this change in FTEs will result in a \$706,800 reduction to the 2025/26 budget and \$519,900 in the 2026/27 budget.

## Attachment 1: Potential Parking Revenue Increases

**COW Date:** March, 19 2025

**Business Unit:** Public Works

Tracking Id	Revenue, Expense, or Capital	2025/26 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	2026/27 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)
<b>Attachment 1</b> BAL_023.27	Operating	Up to - \$1,000,000	Up to - \$2,729,462
<b>Four Year Impact</b>	Additional annual revenues in the order of \$2.7 Million		
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	This Briefing Note outlines several options for increasing parking fees and service hours to support the 2025/26 operating budget		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Affordable and Sustainable Mobility Network		

### **BACKGROUND**

According to recent research out of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute, the typical urban on-street parking space has annualized land, construction and operating costs that total \$630 to \$2,600.<sup>[1]</sup> Offering parking for free, or at a highly subsidized rate, incentivizes car culture and provides benefit to the individual user as opposed to the broader community.

The Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP), section 3.5.5 Policies and Actions, suggests “Use the price of parking to encourage active transportation, transit and car-sharing:

Action 132: Set downtown parking rates high enough to influence mode choice and ensure a sufficient number of vacant short-term parking spaces, while not unfairly penalizing downtown businesses and institutions over similar uses in suburban areas, where parking is abundant and free.

Action 133: Set price ratios for short and long-term parking to encourage casual use of a vehicle over constant use”

The cost to provide municipal services continues to increase. Adjusting the hours and rates of paid parking is one option that can be used to attempt to recover rising costs of maintenance.

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[1] Todd Litman (2025), Comprehensive Parking Supply, Cost and Pricing Analysis, Victoria Transport Policy Institute ([www.vtpi.org](http://www.vtpi.org)); at [www.vtpi.org/pscp.pdf](http://www.vtpi.org/pscp.pdf).

## **SUMMARY OF REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES**

While not a complete list of possibilities outlined below, this table offers a collection of options to be considered for the 25-26 budget. Note that while any or all of the three options in the “Increase Paid Parking Hours” section could be implemented independently of the others, the two choices in each of the other three sections are mutually exclusive and cannot be stacked with another choice from the same section.

***Table 1 – Summary of proposed parking revenue opportunities***

<b>Proposed Change</b>	<b>25-26 Impact</b>	<b>Annualized Impact</b>
<i>Increase Paid Parking Hours</i>		
Add Paid Parking on Saturdays in Zones B, C, H	\$ 538,941	\$ 718,588
Add Paid Parking on Sundays in Zones B, C, H	\$ 161,682	\$ 215,576
Add Evening (6PM-8PM) Paid Parking on Weekdays in Zones B, C, H	\$ 192,775	\$ 257,033
<i>Increase Paid Parking rates</i>		
Increase by 25%	\$ 975,000	\$ 1,300,000
Increase by \$0.50/hr	\$ 712,500	\$ 950,000
<i>Increase Monthly Commuter permit fees</i>		
Increase by \$20/mo	\$ 149,430	\$ 199,240
Increase by 25%	\$ 102,390	\$ 136,520
<i>Increase Annual Resident permit fees</i>		
Increase by \$25/yr	\$ 29,269	\$ 39,025
Increase by 25%	\$ 25,551	\$ 34,068

## **REVENUE OPPORTUNITY AREA 1: EXTENDING PAID PARKING HOURS**

A review of Canadian Municipalities was completed to determine the hour where payment for on-street parking is required. Data is as of February 2025, as collected from the municipal websites for each municipality and is included in Appendix 1.

### **Scenario One: Adding Paid Parking on Saturday**

Charge \$2 per hour for paid parking from 8AM to 6PM in the three zones featuring the highest amount of weekend parking demand. Most jurisdictions scanned do charge for parking on Saturdays. Weekend parking is in high demand, especially in and around the downtown. Regional Council could direct staff to implement paid parking on Saturday in select zones- B, C and H (Downtown Halifax, Spring Garden and Downtown Dartmouth). This would require changes to the current enforcement schedule but can be achieved within the current staff compliment.

**Table 2: Forecasted Revenues from Paid Parking Sessions (8AM-6PM Saturdays)**

ZONE	AREA	Spaces	Added Hours	Rate	Occupancy	Revenue/ Week	Fiscal 25/26 Impact (52 Saturdays)
B	DOWNTOWN HALIFAX	510	10	\$2.00	50%	\$5,100.00	\$265,200.00
C	SPRING GARDEN ROAD AREA	294	10	\$2.00	50%	\$2,940.00	\$152,880.00
H	DOWNTOWN DARTMOUTH	259	10	\$2.00	50%	\$2,590.00	\$134,680.00
Total estimated Pay Station revenue							\$552,760.00
Estimated Ticket Revenue							\$165,828.00
TOTAL							\$718,588.00

The above noted revenues are calculated based on anticipated increased revenue from introducing paid parking on Saturdays and revenue resulting from subsequent enforcement of paid parking. The noted changes require amendments to AO15 and costs to promote the changes, as well as changes to on-street signage, resulting in labour and materials costs for the sign shop. Year one projected revenues have been adjusted accordingly (\$538,000).

#### **Scenario Two: Adding Paid Parking on Sunday**

Charge \$1 per hour for paid parking from 8AM to 6PM in the three zones featuring the highest amount of weekend parking demand. Most jurisdictions do not charge for parking on Sundays. Weekend parking is in high demand, however with delayed opening hours of most businesses Sunday has less demand than Saturday. Regional Council could direct staff to implement paid parking on Sunday in select zones – B, C and H (Downtown Halifax, Spring Garden and Downtown Dartmouth). This would require changes to the current enforcement schedule but can be achieved within the current staff compliment.

**Table 3: Forecasted Revenues from Paid Parking Sessions (8AM-6PM Sundays)**

ZONE	AREA	Spaces	Added Hours	Rate	Occupancy	Revenue/ Week	Fiscal 26/27 Impact (52 Sundays)
B	DOWNTOWN HALIFAX	510	10	\$1.00	30%	\$1,530.00	\$79,560.00
C	SPRING GARDEN ROAD AREA	294	10	\$1.00	30%	\$882.00	\$45,864.00
H	DOWNTOWN DARTMOUTH	259	10	\$1.00	30%	\$777.00	\$40,404.00
Total estimated pay Station revenue							\$165,828.00
Estimated Ticket Revenue							\$49,748.40
TOTAL							\$215,576.40



The above noted revenues are calculated based on anticipated increased revenue from introducing paid parking on Sundays and revenue resulting from subsequent enforcement of paid parking. The noted changes require amendments to AO15 and costs to promote the changes, as well as changes to on-street signage, resulting in labour and materials costs for the sign shop. Year one projected revenues have been adjusted accordingly (\$538,000).

***Alternatives to Consider for Saturday / Sunday Paid Parking:***

*Paid Parking in all Zones* – Instead of focusing on areas of high demand, paid parking could be implemented in all zones. This would have a higher up front cost, as more signs would have to be modified, but could recognize a small increase in revenues

*Variable Rates* – Time of day pricing could be implemented, rather than a flat \$2/hour (Saturday) or \$1/hour (Sunday) rate. This is not recommended to start out as parking occupancy through the day will not have been established yet.

*Free Parking for first X minutes of session* – drivers would still need to register their plate, but short visits would continue to be free, while those parking for longer time periods would have to pay. Winnipeg currently uses a pricing model like this for Saturday parking where the first two hours of a parking session are free, and any subsequent time is charged at an hourly rate. This would decrease the projected revenue significantly, as paid parking sessions Monday through Friday currently average around 110 minutes in length.

*Paid Parking for a period other than 8AM-6PM* – Charging for parking for a different number of hours on any one day of the week compared to another requires a new sign, as multiple times-of-day won't fit on our current signage.

**Scenario Three: Extending Paid Parking Hours on Weekdays**

Charge \$1.25 per hour for paid parking from 6PM to 8PM in the three zones featuring the highest amount of weekend parking demand. Most jurisdictions scanned are consistent with HRM's current practice of only charging for paid parking until 6pm. Current parking trends suggest that most sessions taper off from 5-6; however, demand remains consistent, especially in zones B, C, and H (Downtown Halifax, Spring Garden and Downtown Dartmouth), where there are more destinations likely to be visited in the evenings. Regional Council could direct staff to extend paid parking in these zones on evenings from 6pm to 8pm. This would require changes to the current enforcement schedule but could be achieved within the current staff compliment. This would, however, divert staff from regional work like addressing no stopping, blocked driveways and bike lanes.

The \$1.25 hourly rate is currently the rate paid from 5PM until 6PM in all zones; staff recommend adjusting this rate to match the 5-6PM rate if further rate changes are implemented.

**Table 4: Forecasted Revenues from Paid Parking Sessions (6PM-8PM Monday through Friday)**

ZONE	AREA	Spaces	Added Hours	Rate	Occupancy	Revenue/Weeknight	Fiscal 26/27 Impact (248 Evenings)
B	DOWNTOWN HALIFAX	510	2	\$1.25	30%	\$382.50	\$94,860.00
C	SPRING GARDEN ROAD AREA	294	2	\$1.25	30%	\$220.50	\$54,684.00
H	DOWNTOWN DARTMOUTH	259	2	\$1.25	30%	\$194.25	\$48,174.00
Total estimated pay Station revenue							\$197,718.00
Estimated Ticket Revenue							\$59,315.40
TOTAL							\$257,033.40

**Alternatives:**

*Paid Parking in all Zones* – Instead of focusing on areas of high demand, paid parking could be extended to 8PM in all zones. This would have a higher up front cost, as more signs would have to be modified, but could recognize a small increase in revenues

*Paid Parking on Event Nights* – Edmonton uses a pricing model in the area around the Rogers Arena where evening parking is only initiated on event nights where demand is highest. This would require some new processes to identify and advertise nights where event pricing would apply

**REVENUE OPPORTUNITY AREA 2: INCREASING PAID PARKING RATES ON WEEKDAYS**

Increase weekday rates for paid parking from 8AM to 6PM in on-street paid parking zones. On-street paid parking uses a time-of-day pricing model, where rates are higher during times of day where past demand was highest. For zones serving primarily commercial areas, the highest demand is around lunchtime, while those with primarily institutional destinations are busiest in the morning.

Current hourly rates range from \$1.25 to \$3.75 with Daily maximums ranging from 19.25 to 29.75, depending on the zone:

**Table 5: Current Paid Parking Rates**

ZONE	8AM	9AM	10A M	11A M	12P M	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	DAILY MAX
A	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.25	\$19.25
B	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$27.50
C	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.25	\$27.50
D	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.25	\$29.75
E	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.25	\$19.25
F	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.25	\$19.25
G	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.25	\$19.25
H	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$22.25

**Options:**

- A) An across-the-board percentage uplift – a 25% uplift across all days/times/zones shares the increased parking costs proportionately, with busier areas facing a greater increase than those with lower demand. This approach was used to implement the last fee increase in 2023, with no impact to parking demand. For ease of use for those patrons still paying with cash, staff recommend rounding all hourly rates to the nearest 25-cent increment.

**Table 6: Proposed Paid Parking Rates with a 25% Increase for All Zones/Times**

ZONE	8AM	9AM	10AM	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	DAILY MAX
A	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$24.00
B	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$1.50	\$35.25
C	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$1.50	\$35.25
D	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$37.50
E	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$24.00
F	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$24.00
G	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$24.00
H	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$3.25	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$27.75

- B) An across-the-board fixed value uplift – a fifty-cent uplift across all days/times/zones shares the increased parking costs equally, with busier areas facing the same increase than those with lower demand.

**Table 7: Proposed Paid Parking Rates with a 50 cent Increase for All Zones/Times**

ZONE	8AM	9AM	10A M	11A M	12P M	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	DAILY MAX
A	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.75	\$24.25
B	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$1.75	\$32.50
C	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$1.75	\$32.50
D	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.75	\$34.75
E	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.75	\$24.25
F	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.75	\$24.25
G	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$1.75	\$24.25
H	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$27.25

### Financial Impact

On-street Paid Parking revenue was approximately \$5.3 million for calendar year 2024. Demand continues to increase year over year, but, assuming flat demand, a 25% increase would reflect an approximate \$1.3 Million Dollar uplift to paid parking revenues. A flat 50-cent increase across all times and zones would add approximately \$950,000 to paid parking revenues.

### REVENUE OPPORTUNITY AREA 3: Increasing Parking Permit Rates

The municipality has leveraged the use of permit parking as an effect measure to control on-street parking in high-demand areas. Each of the following sections will explore various scenarios involving rate adjustments.

#### Commuter Permits

Demand for commuter parking permits remains especially high, especially in areas where there are large employers or institutions. Sales month over month versus the previous year continue to grow.

**Table 8 – Commuter Permit Price Change Scenarios**

Commuter Permit Scenario	Estimated annual impact to revenue	Notes
Maintain current pricing	\$ -	
Increase all permit zones by \$5 per month	\$ 49,810.00	Range of monthly permits from \$40-\$75 (\$10 less for Students)
Increase all permit zones by \$20 per month	\$ 199,240.00	Range of monthly permits from \$55-\$90 (\$10 less for Students)
Increase all permit zones by 10% per month	\$ 54,608.00	Range of monthly permits from \$38.50-\$77 (\$10 less for Students)
Increase all permit zones by 25% per month	\$ 136,520.00	Range of monthly permits from \$43.75-\$87.50 (\$10 less for Students)
Increase high demand permit zones by 25% per month	\$ 85,875.00	Only increasing zones with 75% sell-through in 2024

Eliminate the student discount	\$ 10,100.00	Assumes no impact to demand
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## Annual Resident Permits

Per By-law P-1200:

The purpose of the Annual Resident Parking Permit is to increase access to on-street parking for residents that own or lease vehicles.

Current Pricing is well below off-street market rates for parking, with a household parking two vehicles on street paying the equivalent of 68.5 cents per day.

**Table 9 – Annual Resident Permit Price Change Scenarios**

Annual Resident Permit Scenario	Estimated annual impact to revenue	Annual Permit Pricing (First vehicle/Second Vehicle)	Daily cost for ½ vehicles
Maintain current pricing	\$ -	\$75/\$175	20.5 ¢/68.5 ¢
Increase all permit levels by \$10 per month	\$ 15,610.00	\$85/\$185	23.3 ¢/74.0 ¢
Increase all permit levels by \$25 per month	\$ 39,025.00	\$100/\$200	27.4 ¢/82.2 ¢
Increase all permit levels by 10% per month	\$ 13,627.50	\$82.50/\$192.50	22.6 ¢/75.3 ¢
Increase all permit levels by 25% per month	\$ 34,068.75	\$93.75/\$218.75	25.7 ¢/85.6 ¢

All scenarios presented maintain an effective daily rate far lower than off-street options

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Paid parking rates are set by the municipality per HRM bylaw P-500 (The Parking Meter By-law) under the authority of section 154 of the Motor Vehicle Act, and Permit Rates per HRM By-law P-1200 (the On-Street Parking Permits By-law) under the authority of section 154 of the Motor Vehicle Act. Changes to either set of fees requires an amendment of HRM Administrative Order 15 Respecting License, Permit and Processing Fees.

Changes to the day/hours of paid parking would require updates to existing signage, as well as an awareness campaign to inform citizens of the change.

To accommodate these potential delays and expenses, Fiscal 2025-26 revenues have been decreased by 25% compared to anticipated ongoing annual impacts.

## APPENDIX 1

### PAID PARKING DAYS / HOURS CANADIAN JURISDICTIONS

City	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Calgary, AB	7AM-6PM	9AM-6PM	Free
Charlottetown, PE	8AM-6PM	Free	Free
Edmonton, AB	8AM-9PM (10PM on event nights)	8AM-9PM (10PM on event nights)	10AM-5PM (10PM on event nights)
Hamilton, ON	M,T,W 8AM-6PM; Th, F 9AM-9PM	8AM-6PM, with some excepted areas	Free
London, ON	8AM-6PM	Free, Time-limited 8AM-6PM	Free
Moncton, NB	6AM-6PM Downtown 6AM-10PM near Hospital	Free	Free
Montreal, PQ	9AM-9PM	9AM-6PM	1PM-6PM
Ottawa, ON	7AM-7PM	7AM-7PM	7AM-7PM
Regina, SK	8AM-6PM	Free, Time-limited 8AM-6PM	Free
Saskatoon, SK	9AM-6PM	9AM-6PM	Free
St Catharines, ON	9AM-6PM	9AM-6PM	9AM-6PM
St John's, NL	8AM-6PM	Free	Free
Toronto, ON	As early as 7AM – as late 12AM	As early as 7AM – as late 12AM	As early as 8AM – as late 12AM
Vancouver, BC	9AM-10PM	9AM-10PM	9AM-10PM
Victoria, BC	8AM-8PM	8AM-8PM	8AM-8PM
Whitehorse, YK	9AM-5:30PM	9AM-5:30PM	Free
Windsor, ON	9AM-6PM	9AM-6PM	Free
Winnipeg, MB	8AM-5:30PM	8AM-5:30PM, first two hours free	Free