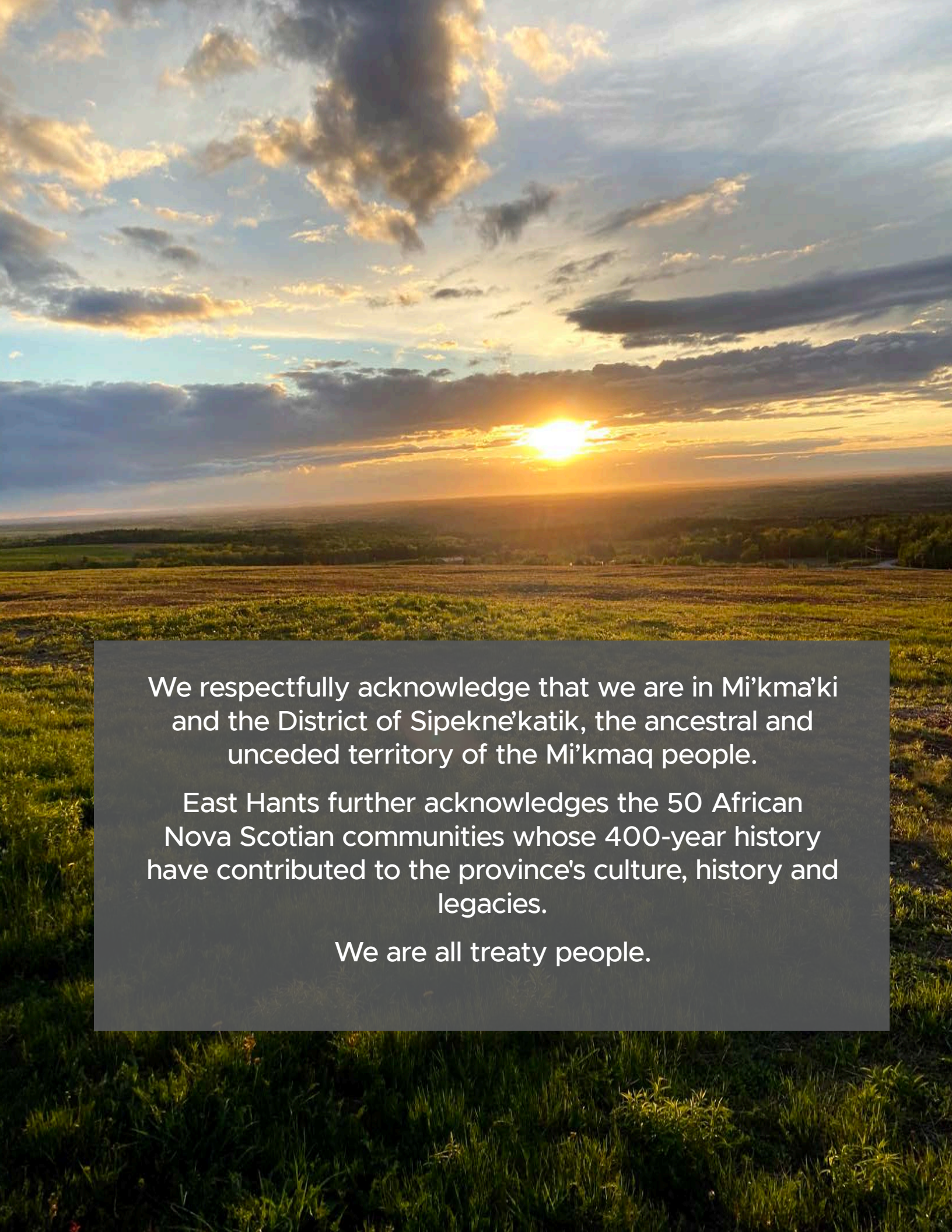




Municipality
of East Hants
**Annual Report
2022/2023**



EAST HANTS
We live it!



We respectfully acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki
and the District of Sipekne'katik, the ancestral and
unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

East Hants further acknowledges the 50 African
Nova Scotian communities whose 400-year history
have contributed to the province's culture, history and
legacies.

We are all treaty people.



Burntcoat Head Park

Table of Contents

Annual Report	3
Our Municipality	3
About East Hants	4
Message from the Warden	8
Message from the Chief Administrative Officer	10
Municipal Council 2022/2023	12
Municipal Governance	13
Municipal Staff	14
Senior Management Team	15
2021-2024 Strategic Plan Progress	17
Key Strategies	18
Sustainable Infrastructure	20
Corporate Excellence	22
Strong Community	24
Economic Prosperity	26
Municipal Operations	29
Infrastructure & Operations	30
Planning & Development	32
Parks, Recreation & Culture	34
Public Safety	42
Investing in our Communities	48
Treasurer's Report	51
Message from the Treasurer	52
Property Assessment in East Hants	54
Property Tax in East Hants	55
Financial Results 2022/2023	58
Consolidated Revenues and Expenses	59
Comparative Statement of Consolidated Revenues and Expenses	60
Capital Fund: Investing in our Infrastructure	62
Infrastructure Highlights: Completed Projects	63
Infrastructure Highlights: Work-in-Progress Projects	64
Operating Fund: Municipal Operations	66
Urban Service Rate	70
East Hants Water Utility	72
Reserves	74
Financial Condition Indicators	78
Municipal Grant Program: Investing in our Community	82
Consolidated Financial Statements	91



Shubenacadie

Our Municipality





About East Hants

The Municipality of East Hants is centrally located on mainland Nova Scotia. The northern and central parts of the Municipality encompass vast areas of forest with small communities and villages. Agriculture thrives along the scenic Minas shore and the Kennetcook River. This area includes the communities of Walton, Noel, Upper and South Rawdon, Maitland, Kennetcook, Stanley and Gore. Mount Uniacke and Lakelands, along Highway #101, is a community of seven lakes with a range of rural and suburban residents mixed with seasonal cottage-goers. Mount Uniacke is also home to one of two municipally owned business parks.

The portion of the Municipality referred to as "The Corridor" includes the communities of Enfield, Elmsdale, Lantz, Milford and Shubenacadie and is the most urbanized part of the Municipality. The Corridor adjoins Halifax Regional Municipality and is a short commute from Halifax Stanfield International Airport, Dartmouth and downtown Halifax. The close proximity to Halifax and Truro gives East Hants the advantage of a large workforce within a short commute and provides local businesses with access to a highly skilled workforce.

East Hants is in the District of Sipekne'katik, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. The population of East Hants and Sipekne'katik First Nation is over 25,000 with more than 18% growth in the last 20 years (2021 Census data).

The Municipality owns and operates the East Hants Aquatic Centre, the East Hants Waste Management Centre, Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre, Burntcoat Head Park and multiple parks, playgrounds and trail systems.

East Hants is home to one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in Atlantic Canada. As a community, East Hants is welcoming and provides a renowned quality of life where people can enjoy the perfect blend of rural and urban lifestyles.

Work, play, raise a family and build a business – do it all in East Hants!

5,000+
residential units
expected by
2033



55,000+
visitors to our
tourism sites

45+
parks, trails,
water access
points and
facilities





Our Mission

East Hants cares about people and their quality of life. Through program and service excellence, we are building a strong, thriving community.

Median Age → **43.6***

Population:
Under age 25 → **27.1%***

Population:
East Hants &
Sipekne'katik
First Nation → **25,631***

+8.87% Growth
in the past five years*

*All data for East Hants & Sipekne'katik
(Indian Brook 14) is from the 2021 Census.

Our Vision

East Hants is a vibrant, welcoming community that embraces rural and urban living – a place where everyone feels connected.



Message from the Warden

On behalf of East Hants Council, I am pleased to present the Municipality of East Hants' Annual Report. The 2022/2023 fiscal year (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023) was a year of planning, growth and progress in East Hants. Our Council has passed the midway point of the 4-year term. This is an exciting point in our journey as we work towards the goals in our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

In 2022, the Municipality held a Special Election for District 4 – Shubenacadie, to fill a vacant position on Council after the resignation of Councillor Ian Knockwood. Carl MacPhee was the successful candidate and was sworn in on July 27, 2022. In other news, Councillor Michael Perry became Deputy Warden for a one-year term. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to former Deputy Warden Mitchell for his leadership and to all of my Council colleagues for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

As a Municipality, East Hants has focused on planning for the future this year. This included the challenging process of updating the East Hants Official Community Plan and developing long term plans for the former Elmsdale and Lantz school sites. Council also approved the acquisition of the former Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) line lands from Maitland to Stanley. Another success worth celebrating this year is the Shubenacadie River Park Revitalization project, which involved three levels of government support for path and ball field upgrades, a new playground, pickleball court and an accessible fishing area. Thorough and well thought out planning for these initiatives will ensure they remain assets that can be used and enjoyed by our communities.

East Hants was one of the many municipalities affected by Hurricane Fiona in 2022. Many of our residents experienced widespread damage and subsequent power outages. The Emergency Management team worked in collaboration with the province and other agencies to ensure accurate information was shared with the public and comfort centers were activated for over a week to provide a place for residents to charge devices, fill up water containers and have a hot meal.





I would like to commend staff and community members for their willingness to help neighbours and support those who needed assistance during the storm. A special note of appreciation goes out to our Volunteer Fire Departments, whose members were, as always, available for assistance at assorted fire halls in spite of many facing challenges from Fiona at their own homes.

Council's support of our public safety programs was highlighted this year by an expansion of the Fire Service medal program, now honouring those volunteers with 10- and 15-years' service. Working with the East Hants Fire Service we have updated the Financial Guidelines for Volunteer Fire Departments and provided over \$3.2 million in fire levies and other grants. We have also added two additional RCMP officers to our complement and two detachment assistants, as a pilot project, who will support our RCMP officers in the important work they do.

While making these and other investments in communities across our municipality, East Hants Council was pleased to be able to approve a budget for 2023/2024 which saw a four cent reduction to the residential tax rate and a three cent reduction to the commercial rate.

I invite you to read the 2022/2023 Annual Report, as it not only provides a snapshot of programs and services delivered by the Municipality of East Hants, but also serves as a progress report on the goals and objectives in our Strategic Plan. Looking ahead, we believe the best is yet to come for East Hants! Council will continue to work together and with staff to make sure that East Hants continues to be not only a great place to invest and do business in, but also a wonderful community in which to live, work and play!



Eleanor Roulston

Eleanor Roulston
Warden & District 11 Councillor

Message from the Chief Administrative Officer

East Hants staff continue to build on Council's key strategies by prioritizing the sustainability of our infrastructure, creating economic prosperity, building a strong community and ensuring corporate excellence in all that we do.

The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan is a document with vision that addresses the planning and building of infrastructure to support the needs of our growing communities. Construction of the Shubenacadie Wastewater Treatment plant began in 2022, adding long awaited capacity for future development in that community. Design for an additional tank at the Enfield Water Treatment Plant and active transportation routes along Hwy #2 and Hwy #214 are well underway, with construction beginning in 2023. Council has approved a financing model and design work for paving 'gap' roads within subdivisions in Lantz, Elmsdale and Enfield and established a traffic calming strategy for municipally-owned subdivision roads.



In addition to building our infrastructure, we are also focusing on long-term planning. As we work toward creating the vision of our community in 2050, we have commissioned a service capacity study for water and wastewater in the serviced area and an optimization study of the Lantz wastewater lagoon. Our Asset Management Program (AM) was a priority this year, with Council approving the AM Policy in November 2022 and subsequent delivery of an AM Strategy and Roadmap to the organization in January 2023.

Our Planning and Development Department has reviewed several planning applications this year, including an approved large scale comprehensive residential development (662 units) in Elmsdale and a potential 150 lots in Mount Uniacke through three approved applications. We continued to work on updates to the Community Plan and held extensive public consultations in the future planned areas of East Hants in 2022/2023. There is no doubt the level of development activity in East Hants will continue for the foreseeable future and we will continue to manage the expectations and challenges that come with this growth.

With growth comes the expectation of increased demand for recreation programs and services. In response, we have established a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for our recreation programs and services. In 2022, we delivered our first inclusion aquatic and recreation programs. We also expanded our recreation programming to include a popular senior social, indigenous art programs and ball hockey programming at the East Hants Sportsplex.

Our staff continue to support a strong growing economy for East Hants. Of note this year, Phase 2 of the Uniacke Business Park expansion brought 12 acres to market, selling very quickly and attracting millions of dollars of investment to the area. I am proud of the work our team has done supporting current businesses and entrepreneurs this year while also planning for our future.



Our commitment to exceptional service delivery was outlined in a Customer Service Strategy prepared in 2022 and demonstrated in part by our move to online issue reporting tools for our residents. We have made strides in improving the accessibility of our information through a new website design which will go live in 2023.

Maintaining a strong internal staff culture is important to East Hants, both for the attraction of new staff and the retention of our current team. A 2022 staff survey demonstrated that 9 out of 10 East Hants staff are satisfied with their job at the Municipality. In 2022 we made headway in succession readiness, an initiative to ensure that we prepare for the retirement of key staff, ensuring a smooth transition in service delivery for our residents. Our continued commitment to internal service improvements will be crucial to planning for the years ahead.

We are very pleased to have installed two new flag poles at the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre in order to fly the Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag on a permanent basis and to promote awareness of the cultural diversity of our community, build trust with communities in the municipality and support a sense of pride for municipal residents.

The pages that follow tell you more about East Hants and the work of which we are proud. It is my honour to continue serving staff, Council and our community in my capacity as Chief Administrative Officer for the Municipality of East Hants.

Kim Ramsay, CPA, CMA,
Chief Administrative Officer

Municipal Council 2022/2023



Warden Eleanor Roulston
District 11 - Rawdon-Gore



Deputy Warden Michael Perry
District 8 - Mount Uniacke



Sandra Garden-Cole
District 1 - Enfield



Norval Mitchell
District 2 - Elmsdale-Belnan



Eldon Hebb
District 3 - Milford-Nine Mile River



Carl MacPhee
District 4 - Shubenacadie



Keith Rhyno
District 5 - Maitland-MacPhees
Corner



Wayne Greene
District 6 - Walton-Noel-
Kennetcook



Walter Tingley
District 7 - Lantz-Milford



Elie Moussa
District 9 - South-East Uniacke



Tom Isenor
District 10 - Enfield-Grand Lake

Municipal Governance

East Hants Council provides a range of services to residents and businesses through six municipal departments and relationships with partners at local, provincial and federal levels. Meetings of Council are open to the public every month and live streamed to the municipal YouTube channel. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Council governs through a policy-based structure, continuously updating and improving its bylaws and policies. The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan is the roadmap that guides decision making and provides a balanced approach to achieving long-range goals and ongoing delivery of services to our communities.

This past year, Council welcomed presentations from the following community organizations about the services they provide to East Hants:

- Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM)
- Corridor Community Options for Adults (CCOA)
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- East Hants Family Resource Centre
- Shubenacadie Canal Commission
- SPCA

The following bylaws and policies were amended in 2022/2023:

- Bylaw F-100 Local Improvement Charges Bylaw
- Bylaw IO-500 Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE) ----->
- Bylaw F-400 Exemption from Taxation

Council Policy Updates 2022/2023:

- Dangerous & Unsightly Premises Enforcement Policy
- Pre-Application Policy for Development
- Special Reserves Policy
 - This is a Council policy to allow staff and Council members more details on the Municipality's special reserves, including why they were created and how they are to be used. Reserves are critical to the future sustainability of the Municipality.
- Municipal Flag Policy ----->
- Community Grant Program Policy
- Council Remuneration & Travel Reimbursement Policy
- Tourism Grant Policy
- Not-for-Profit Insurance Grant Policy
- Acceptance of Donations Policy
- Asset Management Policy



Learn more about the PACE Program on page 23.



Under the updated Municipal Flag Policy the Progress Pride Flag was flown at the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre for the first time in June 2022.

Municipal Staff

Municipal staff at East Hants make up six departments that deliver services in: Financial Management, Infrastructure & Operations, Parks, Recreation & Culture, Corporate Services, Planning & Development and the Chief Administrative Office. Staff use the Strategic Plan to implement and prioritize initiatives in the organization's business plan.

There are 77 full-time equivalent positions across the organization, with an additional 60 casual positions at the East Hants Aquatic Centre. The average employee age is 41, with 27.5% of employees age 50+ as of December 2022.

Our workplace culture prioritizes learning and continuous improvement. The Municipality hosted 19 learning events for staff and partners in 2022/2023 and supported many instances of individual training for job-specific skills development.

In 2022, East Hants developed a Customer Service Strategy. The Strategy is another way to promote our brand of open, transparent and helpful government, one where people feel welcomed and listened to, respected and valued. The Strategy helps reinforce our customer service values and fosters the culture of service excellence we strive for.



Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals

In December 2022, six East Hants staff members were awarded the Diamond Jubilee Medals in recognition of their outstanding leadership and community contributions. Pictured on the left, the recipients were (from left to right): Andrea Trask, Tracy Dixon, Mike Brown, Corrine Giles and Kelly Ash. Sue Surrette is not pictured but was also a recipient.

Senior Management Team



Kim Ramsay, Chief Administrative Officer
Full Time Staff = 6.5

Core Services: Organizational leadership, legislative support to committees of Council, Council support & special research, human resources, occupational health & safety, communications, policy/procedure development (Council & Administrative), FOIPOP & privacy, issues management.



Sue Surette
Director of Finance | Full Time Staff = 11

Core Services: Financial management, treasury, budget & business planning, tax & water billing and collection, municipal fire levies and bookkeeping service for volunteer fire departments.



Adam Clarkson
Director of Corporate Services | Full Time Staff = 10.5

Core Services: Administrative support to volunteer fire departments, procurement & risk management, economic & business development, technology, records & information management, policy & real estate.



John Woodford
Director of Planning & Development | Full Time Staff = 11.65

Core Services: Planning & land use policy, regulation & applications, development control, permitting, fire & building inspection, bylaw enforcement, Geographic Information System services, animal control, emergency measures preparedness planning & response.



Jesse Hulsman
Director of Infrastructure & Operations | Full Time Staff = 23

Core Services: Solid waste management & education, road, sidewalk & streetlight maintenance, engineering services, capital project planning & management, environmental compliance reporting & optimization, water & wastewater management.




Alana Tapper
Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture | Full Time Staff = 14.35

Core Services: Policy development for aquatics, recreation, tourism, culture, parks & trails, recreation & aquatics programs & service delivery, community development & grants administration, tourism & events management, properties & facilities management, custodial services.



Burntcoat Head Park

A young boy with blonde hair is looking down at a tablet computer. He is wearing a dark grey hoodie. The background shows a white lighthouse with a red lantern room on top, situated on a grassy area with trees. A large green circular graphic is overlaid on the top right of the image.

2021-2024 Strategic Plan Progress



Key Strategies

The Municipality of East Hants launched the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan during the 2021/2022 fiscal year. It has four key areas of strategic focus each supported by goals and objectives.

Sustainable Infrastructure



Infrastructure represents the foundation of any community. It includes roads, facilities, and systems that keep the community functional and people moving. Our goal is to provide infrastructure that addresses the needs of our growing community.

Corporate Excellence



Success of the Municipality depends on public trust. This relationship with the public is achieved through open, transparent and fair decision-making, effective public policy, responsible financial management, exceptional service delivery, and effective communication. Our goal is to provide greater value to the community by improving the way we do business.

Strong Community



A strong community is where people feel a sense of pride, are safe, connected and active. This is achieved through long-range community planning and by supporting those who live, work and visit in East Hants. Our goal is to provide services, programs and facilities, through direct service delivery and collaboration with others, that allow people and businesses to thrive.

Economic Prosperity



A strong, competitive economy encourages entrepreneurship, stimulates opportunity, creates jobs and enhances the community's attractiveness. Through investment attraction, land inventory management and business support services, East Hants continuously improves the community's business environment and commercial tax base. Our goal is to have vibrant commercial districts that support the current and future needs of our community.

Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategic Goal: Provide infrastructure that addresses the needs of our growing community.

Objectives:

Plan for and create transportation infrastructure that improves the connectivity and accessibility of roads, tourism routes, multi-use trails and active transportation networks.

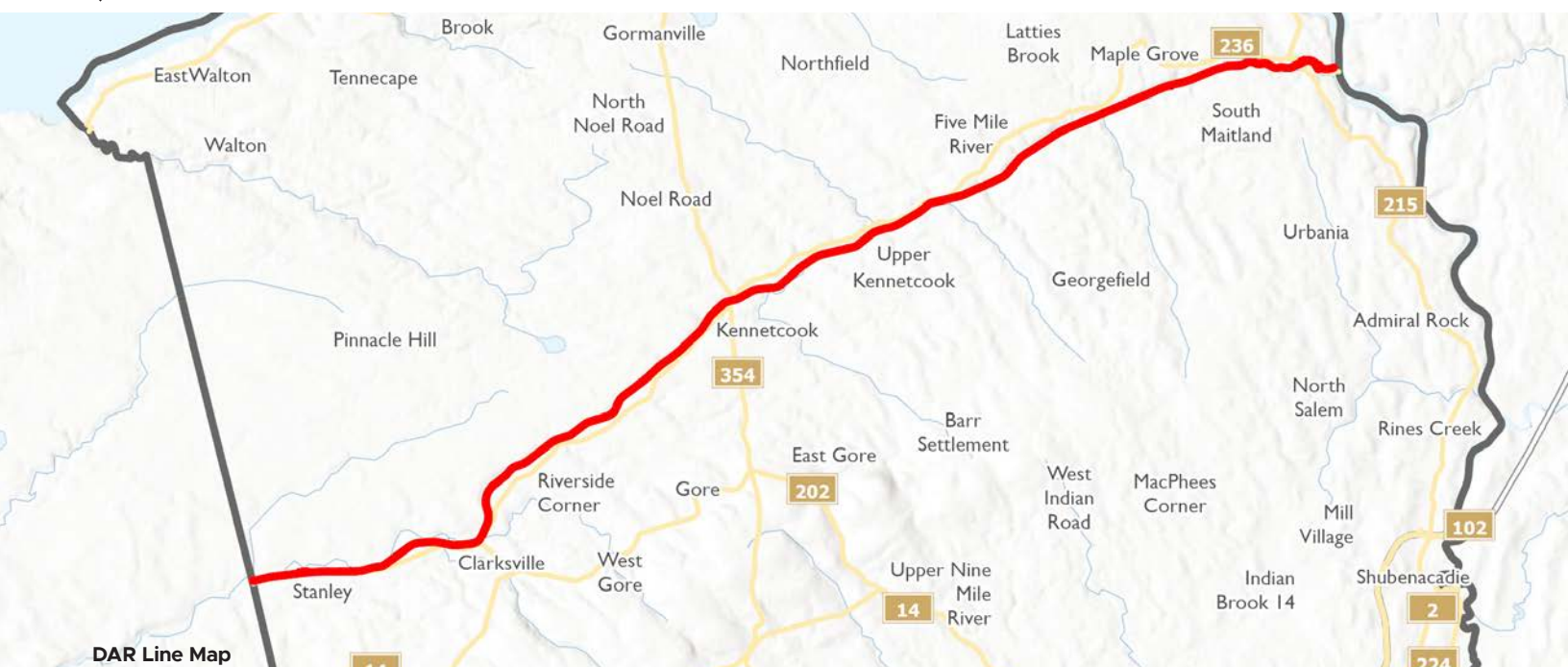
- ▶ The Active Transportation Highway #214 Project will expand transportation routes and improve connectivity to major destinations along Highway #214 in Elmsdale. In 2022, the design phase saw substantial progress.
- ▶ Completed the repaving of the top layer of White Road through its busiest section between Highway #2 and Catherine Street.
- ▶ The planning work to pave the gap gravel roads in subdivisions throughout Lantz, Elmsdale and Enfield took place in 2022.

Identify future water sources and related master planning.

- ▶ The Servicing Capacity Study began in 2022/2023. This study will help the Municipality review the capacity of water and wastewater infrastructure. It will also identify a list of upgrades and replacements required over the next 25 years.

Plan for the future use of key municipal land holdings throughout the Municipality.

- ▶ Council continued working on long-term planning for the former Elmsdale & Lantz School sites.
- ▶ East Hants Council approved the acquisition of the former Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) Line lands from Maitland to Stanley. The acquisition was a strategic investment that requires assessment of the land before developing long-term operational plans.





Establish an Asset Management Program that effectively manages municipal assets and plans for the long-term funding of the infrastructure needs of the community.

- ▶ Council approved the Asset Management Policy. This is a commitment to ensure municipal services are sustainable for future generations.
- ▶ Two documents were developed to detail the approach municipal staff will take to manage municipal assets and achieve activities and timelines. These are the Asset Management Strategy & Roadmap. ----->
- ▶ A key activity in 2022/2023 was establishing a road inventory and condition working group.
- ▶ A building condition assessment of the East Hants Sportsplex began in 2023.



- Examples of Municipal Assets:
- ▶ Roads & sidewalks
 - ▶ Machinery & equipment
 - ▶ Water & wastewater assets
 - ▶ Municipal buildings & parks

Invest in energy initiatives that support the sustainability of our organization and the community we serve.

- ▶ Piloted a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing program for homeowners to support efficient and/or renewable energy upgrades. Uptake in the pilot resulted in offering the program again in 2023. ----->



To-date, one PACE project is complete, with four more approved and a waitlist.

Build infrastructure that meets new regulatory requirements and positions the Municipality to provide accessible and sustainable services while accommodating growth.

- ▶ The Organics Transfer Station Structural assessment was completed. The fabric roof was removed and we received approval to operate without a roof from Nova Scotia Environment.
- ▶ The Enfield Water Treatment Plant Expansion is a multi-year project. There was substantial progress in the design phase in 2022/2023 with construction to follow over the next two years.
- ▶ The Shubenacadie Wastewater Treatment Plant project is a multi-year project to replace aging infrastructure. Construction began in 2022 and is ongoing. ----->



The new Treatment Plant will increase service and development capacity for Shubenacadie.

Corporate Excellence

Strategic Goal: Provide greater value to the community by improving the way we do business.

Objectives:

Enhance the financial framework that continues to support the long-term sustainability of the Municipality.

- ▶ Continued ongoing work on the financial statements to provide clear information to public.
- ▶ The Asset Retirement Obligation Policy was created. This policy addresses the new Public Sector Accounting Standard to ensure the proper treatment of asset when retired.

Prepare for succession of retiring employees while maintaining a high level of uninterrupted service for internal and external customers.

- ▶ Information Services met with employees who are eligible to retire in the upcoming year to document processes and procedures to ensure business continuity and smooth transitions.

Proactively manage organizational risk through tools and education of employees and Council.

- ▶ Mandatory Cybersecurity Awareness Training was completed by all staff and councillors and incorporated into the onboarding process for new staff.
- ▶ An internal cyber security review was completed to identify and mitigate exposure opportunities. Actions completed include limiting access of select software, programs and services to municipal devices and the installation of VPN to municipal phones.
- ▶ A security audit of the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre was completed in December 2022 using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Steps were taken to address recommendations in early 2023 with further actions budgeted for 2023/2024.



Lloyd E. Matheson Centre, Elmsdale



Improve the accessibility of municipal information, facilities, programs and services.

- ▶ Accessibility training for staff on creating content and documents.
- ▶ Council continues to support the East Hants Community Rider and increased grant funding from \$15,000 to \$50,000 for expansion of services. ----->
- ▶ Began building the new municipal public website to industry accessibility standards.

Recruit, develop and retain a diverse, high performing workforce.

- ▶ An engagement survey for staff was created by a third party to gather information on the culture in East Hants. East Hants outscored the Atlantic Canadian average on 42 of 43 survey questions and was on par with the other. East Hants' Employee Engagement Index sits at 84, a full 11 points higher than the regional norm. Our workforce is 97% engaged to some degree, compared to 81 percent of the norm and overall job satisfaction sits at 90% (versus 76% in Atlantic Canada).
- ▶ A Flexible Work Policy was developed for staff.
- ▶ There was a focus on staff events and training for team and relationship building. This included quarterly staff coffee chats to introduce new team members to all departments and BBQ events. ----->

Leverage the Municipality's culture of efficiency, effectiveness and continuous improvement to identify opportunities to improve service delivery.

- ▶ Launched the online dog tag purchase program for residents to register their pet online.
- ▶ Municipal Standards for Water, Wastewater and Transportation were updated with latest best practice.
- ▶ Launched *Report an Issue* - an online tool for residents to report issues with roads, sidewalks & streetlights. ----->

Build stronger relationships between East Hants and Sipekne'katik.

- ▶ Members of Council and staff attended the 2022 Freedom Day March from the former Residential School site in Sipekne'katik to the Shubenacadie River Park. Plans were made for staff to provide volunteer support and supplies at the 2023 event.



The Community Rider provides 450+ passengers with accessible and affordable transportation throughout East Hants and surrounding areas.



Quarterly Care to Share sessions provide staff with the opportunity to discuss and improve customer service across all departments.



The new online Report an Issue tool required collaboration across three departments to create, test and launch.

Strong Community

Strategic Goal: Provide services, programs and facilities, through direct service delivery and collaboration with others, that allow people and businesses to thrive.

Objectives:

Support tourism, heritage, sport, social recreation and the arts, enriching the quality of life for residents and attracting visitors.

- ▶ East Hants added pickleball and ball hockey programming at the Sportsplex in 2022/2023, adding variety to our recreational sports and promoting wellness to the entire community.
- ▶ Provided grants to non-profit groups to build and enhance recreation infrastructure (Page 82-88).

Long-term strategic planning for parks, recreation and related facility needs of the community.

- ▶ A Facility Condition Assessment for the East Hants Sportsplex was completed.
- ▶ The land agreement to construct a new playground in Walton was finalized.

Provide effective and efficient emergency management and support to the East Hants Fire Service.

- ▶ The Fire Service Financial Guidelines were updated. These guidelines set out how the Municipality accounts for public fire levy monies.
- ▶ Implemented the 10-year and 15-year Municipal Fire Service Medal Programs. These medals are awarded at Volunteer Recognition annual events.

Facilitate and advocate for the creation of community infrastructure and opportunities/services that lead to a healthy, active and engaged community for all.

- ▶ A development agreement was approved for an assisted living facility in Enfield.
- ▶ The Shubenacadie River Park Revitalization project involved three levels of government in 2022/2023. Upgrades were made to the ball field, playground equipment and path areas. This is now a space for all residents to enjoy.





Support and deliver programs that enhance the pride of place felt by members of our community.

- ▶ Council approved an update to the Municipal Flag Policy to enhance awareness of the cultural and demographic diversity in our community. This means the Municipality will recognize various social, cultural and community groups within East Hants through the raising of various community flags throughout the year. The Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag has been permanently raised at the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre. ----->



Ensure the East Hants official community plan is effective in managing changes in the community, reducing land use conflict and protecting both natural resources and community character.

- ▶ In 2022/2023 we continued to work on the update of the East Hants Official Community Plan. The plan update includes bringing land use planning to the unplanned areas of East Hants to align with Provincial Minimum Planning Requirements Regulations.
- ▶ Completed coastal erosion and coastal flooding mapping for the Fundy Shoreline and incorporated the results into the Plan Update. New regulations are proposed to protect properties and people and to reduce land use issues in erosion and flood risk areas along the Fundy shoreline.



Ensure policing model accommodates future growth and community needs.

- ▶ Council approved an increase of 11.3% in RCMP services. This includes an annual per officer increase of 2.47% and an addition of two (2) officers to the East Hants detachment.
- ▶ Council's Police Advisory Board met four times in 2022/2023.



Increase inclusion and access to the services provided to the community.

- ▶ The Municipality started inclusion recreation and aquatic programming in 2022/2023. These programs are for children who require extra support to participate in swim lessons and recreation programs.



Strengthen community connections between the Mi'kmaq and East Hants communities.

- ▶ Council and staff recognized the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation.
- ▶ The Survivors' Flag was raised for the month of October in honour of Residential School survivors.
- ▶ Offered Indigenous art classes through East Hants recreation programming.

Two additional flag poles were installed at the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre to allow for more community representation through flag raisings.

Economic Prosperity

Strategic Goal: Create a strong commercial and residential tax assessment base that supports the economic well-being of the community.

Objectives:

Create a 2050 vision for East Hants.

- ▶ Commissioned a Lantz Lagoon optimization study.
- ▶ Worked with Dalhousie students on a servicing Mount Uniacke report.
- ▶ Ongoing strategic planning for service capacity growth management.
- ▶ Undertook a Mount Uniacke Recreation Assessment to be completed in 2023.

Invest in transit that supports our community's workforce, accessibility and environmental stewardship.

- ▶ Economic and Business Development (EBD) proposed a project to develop Council's vision and a potential plan for transit as a service in East Hants. This project is continuing in 2023/2024.

Create a vision and plan for redevelopment of the Elmsdale Village Core.

- ▶ In 2021, Economic and Business Development worked with the local business community, residents and Council to develop a streetscape concept design for a 1 kilometre section of Highway #214 in Elmsdale. During 2022/2023, the EBD team continued to work with local businesses to implement this plan and to support the Corridor business community.

Plan for and develop future industrial and business park land.

- ▶ The Uniacke Business Park received increased attention as a destination for commercial and light industrial businesses. The Phase 2 expansion was completed in July 2022 and brought over 12 acres of commercial land to market, which were quickly purchased by new businesses. Uniacke Business Park has attracted businesses from many sectors including construction, manufacturing, ocean and seafood and automotive.





Attract and retain business investment.

- ▶ The Economic and Business Development team directly supported the attraction, expansion or startup of 12 businesses during 2022/2023, which will contribute an estimated \$13+ million dollars of capital investment through the purchase of land and the construction or renovation of buildings. ----->
- ▶ Provided support to 24 entrepreneurs who were working towards starting businesses.
- ▶ Online marketing efforts resulted in 21,334 visitors to the business development website. Work was done on the website to optimize the online lead generation of qualified prospective companies.
- ▶ Constructed a new entrance sign for the Uniacke Business Park to attract clients and investment.
- ▶ Shop East Hants Business Directory was promoted with over 100 businesses signed up for the Directory.
- ▶ Provided four workshops on diverse and pertinent subjects for 50+ business owners:
 - Succession Planning Workshop - Hosted in Elmsdale.
 - Immigration Information for Employers - Hosted in Elmsdale.
 - Attracting and Retaining Talent Workshop - Hosted in Mount Uniacke.
 - A Year of Recovery: Tourism Workshop - Hosted in Lower Selma. ----->



East Hants worked with a local brewery to expand their operations with a new facility in the Elmsdale Business Park.

Ensure the East Hants Official Community Plan is effective in managing the commercial and residential growth of the community.

- ▶ A number of developments aligned with the Community Plan goals were approved in 2022/2023, including:
 - The mixed-use Walkable Comprehensive Development District development in Elmsdale by FH Development Group.
 - A large lot subdivision with onsite services in Mount Uniacke by Chris Marchand.
 - A large lot subdivision with onsite services in Mount Uniacke by Ramar Developments Limited.
- ▶ Under consideration is the application by Elmsdale Lumber Company Ltd. to allow a Containerized Biochar Production Facility on their existing lumber mill site.
- ▶ 2022 development added \$10 million in commercial assessment and \$146 in residential assessment.



Business owners and operators were keen to participate in the in-person workshop and networking events across the Municipality in 2022/2023.



Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre

Municipal Operations



Infrastructure & Operations



Water & Wastewater

The East Hants Water Utility services customers in the Regional System (Lantz, Elmsdale and Enfield) and Shubenacadie. The Municipality also operates three wastewater treatment plants, serving the communities of Shubenacadie, Milford, Lantz, Elmsdale and Enfield.

2022/2023 was another successful year for the Regional & Shubenacadie Lead & Copper Sampling Program. 20 homes were sampled from the Regional Water System and 10 from Shubenacadie. Homeowners were given a water sample testing kit and instructions. All 30 samples were below the maximum acceptable concentration amounts for lead and copper, as outlined by Health Canada for drinking water.

Water Customers:

- ▶ Over 1 billion litres of drinking water produced.
- ▶ 2,432,891 million litres of wastewater treated.
- ▶ 129 new water meters installed (up from 57 meters installed in 2021/2022).



Lantz Water Tower

Solid Waste Program

The Solid Waste team in East Hants hosts environmental education events and campaigns to help residents learn more about garbage, recycling and organics. In 2022/2023, a new solid waste collection contract was awarded to REgroup and a new organics processing contract was awarded to GFL Environmental. REgroup is responsible for curbside pick up operations in our communities.

2022/2023 Events:

- ▶ 2 Community Household Hazardous Waste & Paper Shred Events.
- ▶ 1 Compost Giveaway event for residents to receive free compost.
- ▶ 1 Community Winter Warmer coat and snow suit donation campaign.
- ▶ 12 Exit Ramp Challenges completed by community groups at the six on/off ramp interchanges:
 - Nearly two tonnes (1,721 kilograms) of waste were collected.
 - \$6,000 in grants donated to community groups in exchange for their clean-up work.

Waste Management Centre

The Municipality owns and operates the East Hants Waste Management Centre. The WMC is open six days a week and welcomed over 11,000 vehicles in 2022/2023 to dispose of garbage, recycling and organics.

2022/2023 Statistics:

- ▶ 1,985 tonnes of organics (up 2.6% from 2021/2022).
- ▶ 1,028 tonnes of recyclables (down 6.5% from 2021/2022).
- ▶ 5,989 tonnes of waste (up 3.5% from 2021/2022).
- ▶ 327 tonnes of metal (down 18% from 2021/2022).
- ▶ 3,209 tonnes of construction & demolition (down 33% from 2021/2022).



Exit Ramp Challenge, Spring 2022

Planning & Development

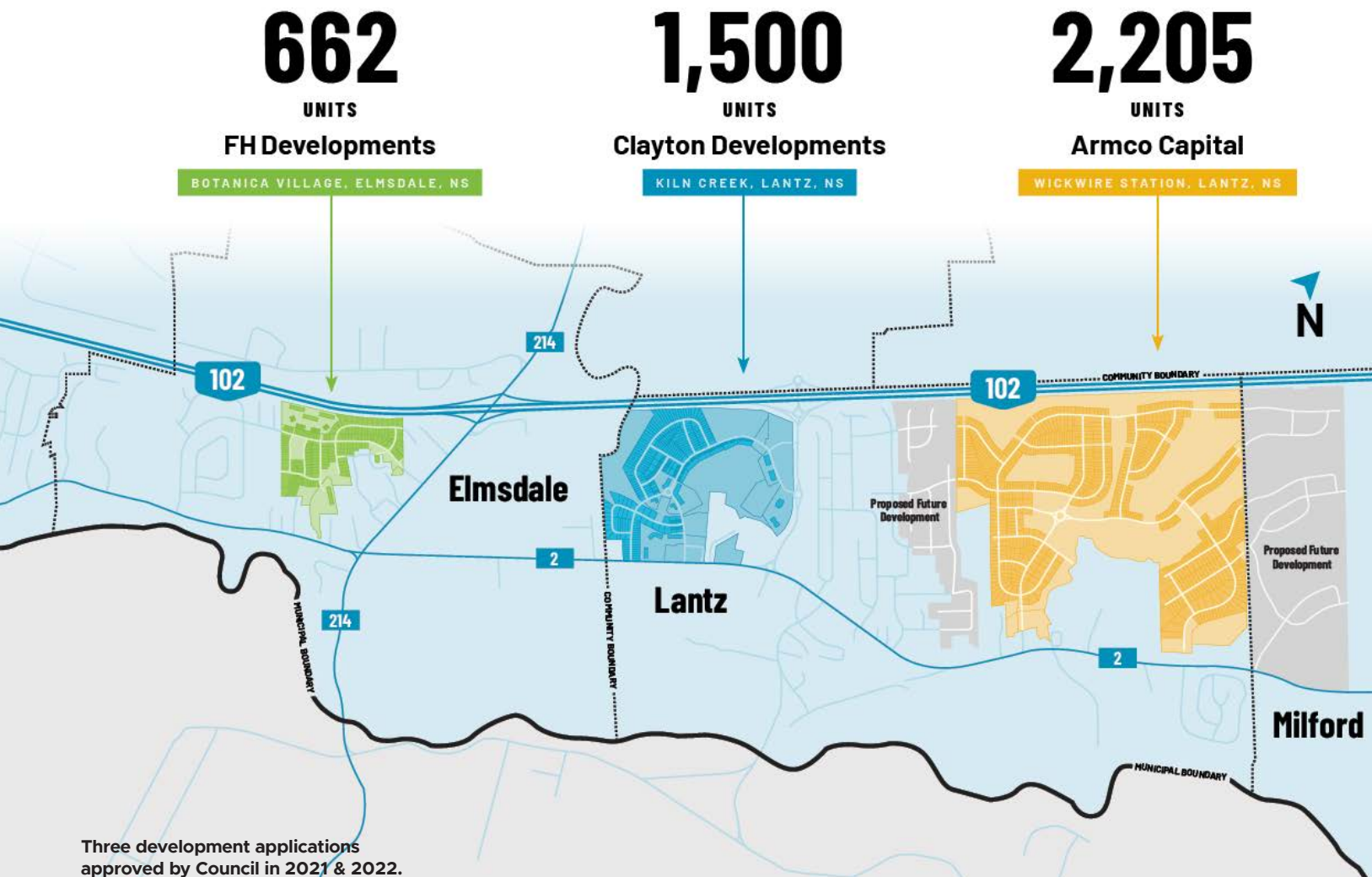


Concorde Way, Enfield

Community Planning

East Hants has an Official Community Plan that directs how the community grows and develops over time. In 2022/2023, we continued the process of amending our Community Plan so the entire municipality has comprehensive land use planning. This included preparing background information on multiple unit dwellings, coastal erosion and flooding and rural settlements. East Hants also hosted multiple community events and open houses for residents to provide feedback on the draft amendments to the Plan.

- ▶ 10 planning applications reviewed by Council, with 7 approved. The approved applications will result in 662 new dwelling units in Elmsdale, a new Village Core property in Elmsdale, 80 new dwellings in Mount Uniacke, expansion of a business in Mount Uniacke and a new 70 unit assisted living facility in Enfield.
- ▶ 12 planning projects completed for Council including bylaw amendments and a mixed-use centre review.
- ▶ 108 final plans of subdivisions approved, creating 295 new lots.
- ▶ 369 civic addresses issued as part of the building permit process for newly built homes and commercial buildings. Civic addresses can also be issued to landowners with vacant land/ campers in the un-zoned area for emergency services purposes.
- ▶ 14 new road listings (5 new municipal, 4 new municipal extension, 5 private named driveways).



Parks, Recreation & Culture



Shubenacadie River Park

Parks

The Municipality maintains an inventory of parks each year that includes 8 playground parks, 2 skate parks, 5 water access points, 40 acres of park land and 4,400 metres of walkways and trails. East Hants also maintains and operates 3 tourism sites: Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre, Dawson Dowell Park and Burntcoat Head Park. Activities of note in 2022/2023 include:

- ▶ Managed Provincial grant funds and assisted the following groups with project planning, development and implementation of their community projects:
 - Completed the Hants North Trail Expansion Project.
 - Lantz Recreation Ball Field Improvements.
 - Walton Fire Stormwater Improvements (ongoing).
 - Nine Mile River Trail Expansion (started spring of 2023).
- ▶ Over 1,000 meters of additional walkways were turned over to or developed by the Municipality.
- ▶ Shubenacadie River Park - new playground, walking loop, picnic shelters, pickleball court, accessible fishing area and new ball field fence.
- ▶ Burntcoat Head Park tree removal due to Hurricane Fiona.
- ▶ Courthouse Hill fence repairs.
- ▶ Signed an agreement with the Walton Volunteer Fire Department to install a playground on the property in 2023/2024.
- ▶ Upgraded railings on the stairway at Burntcoat Head Park.

Open Space

- ▶ As subdivisions are created, developers have a responsibility to support and create local open spaces. The following transfers were made to the Municipality in 2022/2023:
 - \$431,000 in cash in lieu contributions.
 - 76 hectares of land, trails and a floating dock in the Cottage Country subdivision, Mount Uniacke.
 - A 22 hectare parcel in Kiln Creek subdivision, including a park by the Nine Mile River.
 - A paved walkway constructed between Jessome Ave and Turner James Ave in Lantz.
- ▶ In addition, East Hants entered into agreements in Lakelands to receive 12.8 acres of property and purchase an additional 2.4 acres of property.

Buildings

- ▶ The Central Rawdon Hall was damaged beyond repair and subsequently removed. A future playground is planned for this area in 2023/2024.
- ▶ Surplus to Council's needs, the South Rawdon Hall was sold.
- ▶ Restoration work took place at the Nova Centre (former Elmsdale School) due to water damage and upgrades were made for heating efficiency.
- ▶ Shubenacadie River Park had the washroom/stage structure removed following fire damage.



Recreation

The Recreation team in East Hants brings a variety of programming each season to keep participants active, give school aged children opportunities for camp and drop-in sessions for those looking to switch it up week to week. Here are some highlights from 2022/2023 programming:

- ▶ Summer Day Camp programming had a total of 278 participants, with 13 Inclusion spaces filled.
- ▶ 8 In-Service Day Camps with a total of 126 participants.
- ▶ 3 Holiday Half Day Splash Camps with a total of 37 participants.
- ▶ March Break Programs:
 - Splash Camp at the East Hants Aquatic Centre, 16 participants.
 - Art Afternoon with Quentin Syliboy, 27 participants.
 - 6 Open Gym/Turf Times, approximately 200 participants across 3 locations.
 - Home Alone Course, 25 participants.
 - Babysitting Course, 12 participants.
- ▶ Funded drop-in badminton and pickleball through Community Health Board Wellness Funding.
- ▶ 3 free skates for residents at the East Hants Sportsplex.
- ▶ Return of Winter Fun Day at Findley Park.

New in 2022/2023:

- ▶ East Hants partnered with CanSkate to host a Learn to Skate program. Two schools participated with 58 students from Maple Ridge and L'nu Sipuk Kina'muokuum learning new skating skills.
- ▶ A new wellness program for seniors was launched in 2022 with great success - Senior Socials occurred on the first Tuesday of each month and had excellent attendance.
- ▶ Summer drop-in ball hockey for youth had 235 registrations over 14 weeks.
- ▶ Installed 3 East Hants Playboxes in municipal parks in Mount Uniacke, Belnan and Elmsdale.





Community Development

Our work with community groups continues to grow. Here are a few highlights from 2022/2023:

- ▶ Community Development e-newsletters sent quarterly to volunteers and community organizations with information, resources and opportunities.
- ▶ September Food Safety Course had 22 attendees from a variety of community organizations.
- ▶ Provided support to over 20 community groups with funding applications, community connections and bylaw/governance support.
- ▶ Launched a Virtual Volunteer Fair for community groups to connect nonprofits with potential volunteers. 14 organizations listed by the end of March 2023.
- ▶ Volunteer Networking Event for nonprofit groups held in Enfield with 23 participants representing more than 15 different community organizations.



Volunteer Awards

The East Hants Volunteer Recognition Awards Ceremony took place on April 29, 2022 at the Rawdon Fire Hall. 14 Shining Star volunteers were recognized, 10 Long Service Volunteer Fire Fighters and Becky Grant received the 2022 Model Volunteer of the Year Award.



Photos clockwise from bottom right: Becky Grant accepts the 2022 Model Volunteer of the Year Award; the 2022 Shining Star volunteer award recipients; roast beef dinner prepared by Rawdon Fire volunteers and served by Councillors.





Aquatics

- ▶ The East Hants Aquatic Centre team grew a lot in 2022/2023 - 23 new lifeguards/swim instructors were hired!
- ▶ A Day-Time Lifeguard Training Program was implemented.
- ▶ Addition of Inclusion swim lessons to Aquatics programming.
- ▶ Averaged 209 drop-in visits per day.
- ▶ Total of 3,006 registrations in 2022/2023 programs (up from 2,612 in 2021/2022).

Programming Registration	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Fall 2022	Winter 2023
Leadership	37	34	40	24
Parent & Tot	175	36	177	172
Preschool	170	64	154	163
Swimmer	439	142	372	374
Private	61	26	56	50
Adult	9	2	12	10
Fitness	33	23	35	38
Sport Programming	0	16	18	25
Inclusion	0	0	0	19
Total	924	343	864	875



Tourism

East Hants remains committed to supporting the tourism industry by funding operators of municipally-owned assets and non-profit tourism operators. Tourism grant funding directly assists in the operation of sites such as the Walton Lighthouse, Gallery 215, Beyond the Wharf Artisans, the Lower Selma Museum and more.

Burntcoat Head Park and Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre are both owned and operated by the Municipality. These sites attract an influx of visitors to East Hants and combined saw over 55,000 visitors in the 2022 season (mid-May to mid-October). This represented a full recovery to pre-pandemic levels.

One highlight of the 2022 season was an increase in cruise ship excursion traffic and bus tours. This new revenue source for the Municipality generates income to help offset the operation of our tourism sites and exposes both Burntcoat Head Park and the Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre to a predominantly US-based market of cruise travelers.



Burntcoat Head Park



Burntcoat Head Park

40,000+ Visitors

- ▶ Over 40,000 visitors with the return of international and cross-country travel.
- ▶ 415 participants in paid guided tours.

Fundy Tidal Interpretive Centre

15,000+ Visitors

- ▶ 15,209 visitors with 88% of visitors coming from outside Nova Scotia.
- ▶ Interpretive talks held daily during the tidal bore during operating hours, averaging 20 to 40 attendees per day in peak months.



Public Safety



East Hants Emergency Management Operations

Emergency Management Operations (EMO) is overseen by the EMO Planning Committee. The committee is made up of representatives from the Municipality, Red Cross, East Hants Fire Service, RCMP, Community Services, Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education (CCRCE), Nova Scotia Public Works, East Hants Ground Search & Rescue (GSAR), Natural Resources & Renewables and EMO Nova Scotia.

Training municipal staff to use the Incident Command System (ICS) continues to remain vital in East Hants' ability to respond to an emergency when needed. This includes the use of Alert Ready, a mass notification system, which can now be utilized by municipalities during an emergency.

In 2022/2023, East Hants experienced a storm that reinforced the importance of emergency preparedness. In September, Hurricane Fiona touched down and brought substantial damage to our area. After an event like this, action reports are completed with learnings and new processes are developed that will help prepare for events in the future.

Animal Control

- ▶ 615 dog tags issued (down from 648 previous year, 345 tags sold by third party vendors).
- ▶ 3 kennel licenses issued.
- ▶ Compliance rate is 13% (13% of dogs are registered).

The SPCA held the 2022/2023 contract for Dog Control Services:

- ▶ 38 complaints investigated by the SPCA.
- ▶ 36 online complaints received.

Building & Fire Inspection

- ▶ 455 Building Permits issued, totaling \$139,927,997 in estimated construction value.
- ▶ 2,092 Building Inspections completed.
- ▶ 391 new dwelling units created.
- ▶ 188 Fire Inspections.

Bylaw Enforcement

- ▶ 91 complaints investigated.
- ▶ 49 cases closed.
- ▶ 42 cases remain active.



East Hants Fire Service

Residents of East Hants receive fire and emergency response service from 13 mutual aid volunteer fire departments and one volunteer department in Brooklyn.



All volunteer departments in East Hants are required to adhere to the East Hants Fire Service Standard Operating Guidelines. The Financial Guidelines for Volunteer Fire Departments which provide the financial framework for efficient operation of fire departments in East Hants were updated in 2022.

The East Hants Fire Service is an independently registered association that works in collaboration with the Municipality; the fire departments are not directly part of Municipal operations. The Municipality provides independent bookkeeping services to 11 of the 13 departments.

In addition to the operating guidelines, all volunteer fire departments are required to meet annual registration requirements with East Hants and the Registry of Joint Stock Companies. They must adhere to the Municipal Financial Guidelines for Volunteer Fire Departments.

In 2022/2023, Council made enhancements to the Municipal Long Service Awards for fire service members. The awards now include recognition of 10 and 15 years of service to the community.

Fire Fighter Long Service Awards

Volunteer fire departments may nominate a fire services member for a Canadian Volunteer Fire Service Association Municipal Long Service Award medal for 30 years of service and additional long-service bars for 35, 40 and 45 years of service. There is also a 50 year medal available.

2022 Recipients:

30 Years

Lawrence Colbert - Enfield VFD
David Barkhouse - Milford & District VFD

35 Years

Herbert Romkey - Milford & District VFD
Kevin MacLellan - Milford & District VFD
Wayne Barchard - Enfield VFD

40 Years

Cecil Dixon - Enfield VFD

45 Years

John Kingston - Uniacke & District VFD
Ralph Wardrope - Milford & District VFD

50 Years

Earl Isenor - Lantz VFD
Ron Hanrahan - Lantz VFD
Francis Ledwidge - Enfield VFD





Fire Services Grants

Each year, the Municipality provides financial support to the 13 fire departments who provide service within our boundaries. The primary source of funding is operating levies charged through the property tax bill. For more urban departments, these range from \$0.12 to \$0.17 per \$100 of assessment. For smaller rural departments that have significantly less assessment to draw from, the rates are \$0.22/\$100 of assessment, with the exception of Rawdon Fire with the rate of \$0.23/\$100 to fund much-needed infrastructure. Through the Fire Department Funding Policy, Council pays operating grants to the smaller, more rural departments. In 2022/2023, a total of \$62,106 in annual operating grants were awarded to the six rural fire departments of Rawdon, Kennetcook, Noel, Gore, Walton and Maitland. Funding for fiscal 2022/2023 is summarized below:

Fire Department	Fire Levy Collected & Disbursed	Annual Operating Grant/Support	Total
Enfield	\$547,012		\$547,012
Elmsdale	448,875		448,875
Lantz	283,480		283,480
Milford	161,290		161,290
Shubenacadie	232,781		232,781
Maitland	114,935	\$10,351	125,286
Noel	126,165	10,351	136,516
Walton	40,174	10,351	50,525
Gore	91,238	10,351	101,589
Kennetcook	104,677	10,351	115,028
Nine Mile River	189,195		189,195
Rawdon	151,617	10,351	161,968
Mount Uniacke	574,388		574,388
Brooklyn	61,106		61,106
Fire Service Risk Management		14,663	14,663
Training & Education		550	550
Total	\$3,126,933	\$77,319	\$3,204,252

Message from the East Hants District RCMP

As we reflect upon the past year, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the continued collective efforts made in ensuring the safety and well-being of our Municipality. In total, your East Hants District RCMP logged 4,742 calls for service, inclusive of proactive criminal interdiction and disruption efforts, statutory investigations, school and community presentations, traffic duties, collision investigation, preservation of peace and protection of property. Despite challenging times, we remain committed to upholding our duty, fostering trust and working cooperatively with the municipal governance, partners in public safety, community groups, businesses and of course, our residents.



Over the past year, our policing efforts in East Hants have been guided by the principles of public safety and shaped through engagement, transparency and collaboration. We firmly believe that building strong relationships with our community is fundamental to effective policing. My officers and staff are encouraged and supported to be out in the community as much as possible both on duty and off. We welcome interaction with residents and look forward to meeting you, hearing your unique story.

Through various community engagement activities such as municipal governance meetings, East Hants community meetings, our East Hants Crime Prevention Open House, partnerships with local organizations and interactions with you, we have worked diligently to ensure that our residents' voices are heard. We understand the importance of listening and responding to your concerns and we remain committed to implementing strategies that address the specific needs of our community.

In 2022/2023 the Nova Scotia RCMP has experienced a full turnover of our senior leadership. Your new RCMP Commanding Officer Assistant Commissioner Dennis Daley, Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Sue Black and District Policing Officer Superintendent Dustin Ward, are passionate about policing in Nova Scotia, and in leading the way through future challenges. They have visited with me and my team several times over the past year and have committed to ensuring we have the tools and support required to excel.





One example in the spirit of transparency is the implementation of body-worn cameras. This technology is currently being field-tested in 7 RCMP units across the province. Upon successful testing, a full roll-out to all units, including East Hants, will take place over the subsequent 12 to 18 months. The use of body-worn cameras will aid in transparency and accountability, ultimately increasing public trust. As we await that milestone, we will continue to keep you up-to-date on policing matters through social media platforms, public statements and regular updates through local news. By keeping you informed, we aim to foster a sense of shared responsibility in maintaining a safe and secure community.

Additionally, the East Hants District RCMP actively seeks collaboration with community members, local businesses, and organizations to tackle the root causes of crime and dysfunction, emerging challenges and to foster positive change. Together, we strive to develop innovative programs aimed at preventing crime, supporting the vulnerable and promoting inclusivity. By working hand in hand, we can leverage the collective strengths of our community to address these complex issues.

Annual Policing Costs	Amount
RCMP Officer Costs	\$4,490,175
RCMP DNA Case Expenses	16,370
RCMP Prosecution Expenses	9,401
RCMP Shared Services	260,206
RCMP Station (net of rent) Rawdon/Mt Uniacke	21,124
Total	\$4,797,276

In closing, we reaffirm our commitment to building a safer, stronger and more connected East Hants. Together, we can overcome challenges, embrace change and foster a sense of belonging for all residents. We are grateful for your ongoing support and we look forward to another year of collaborative efforts in serving our community.

Sincerely, your East Hants District RCMP Commander,

Staff Sergeant Cory Bushell

Investing in our Communities



Each year, Council makes significant contributions to the community through grants to non-profit groups, special events and community beautification. Millions of dollars are disbursed yearly to the provincial government as a mandatory contribution to the education system in Nova Scotia.

Contributions To Provincial Services

East Hants is required by provincial regulation to collect for provincial services in our tax rate. These mandatory provincial contributions represent approximately 19% of East Hants' annual general operating expenditures. In 2022/2023, the budgeted contributions to provincial services made up \$0.3076 cents of the \$0.85 general tax rate (36%).

Municipal Contribution	2022/2023	2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020	2018/2019
Education	\$5,835,048	\$5,682,864	\$5,487,396	\$5,296,776	\$5,152,788
Social Services	54,228	92,697	60,755	62,197	65,550
Corrections	292,963	292,216	291,481	290,053	289,216
Regional Library	169,300	169,300	141,986	141,986	141,986
Total	\$6,351,539	\$6,237,077	\$5,981,618	\$5,791,012	\$5,649,540

Grants

East Hants takes great pride in the ability to offer a wide range of funding to individuals and organizations within the Municipality through a grant process. Funding organizations offering municipal-type services to the community allows us to build on key strategies of Sustainable Infrastructure, Strong Community and Economic Prosperity. These groups include family-based resources, transportation services, sports, recreational programming and facility groups, senior resources and tourism associations. In 2022/2023, \$1,262,712 in grants was awarded to various groups. This amount includes tax exemptions for non-profit groups and the Municipal Tax Assistance Program, but excludes the fire department levies. A complete list of grants awarded can be found in the Treasurer's Report. Below is a table summarizing the grants by type for 2022/2023:

Grant Fund	Amount(s)
Annual Maintenance Grants for Municipally Owned Properties	\$18,000
Annual Staffing Grant for Municipally owned and/or leased Tourism Properties	6,000
Beautification Grants	16,257
Charitable Community Organization Tax Exemptions (Bylaw F-400)	323,430
Community Grants	83,774
Community Partnership Grants	131,812
District Recreation Funds	110,475
Dr. JT Snow Bursary	3,000
EMO Grants	34,666
Fire Department Annual Operating Grants	62,106
General Government Grants	21,625
Heritage Incentive Program	14,000
Municipal Tax Assistance Program (MTAP)	99,205
Provincial Recreation Grants	301,940
Recreation Access Program	2,934
Tourism Grants	33,488
Total	\$1,262,712





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Cover: Burntcoat Head Park
Photo: Dean Casavechia, Tourism NS